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Unit 4 – Robin Hood

Teaching notes

Starter:

- **Dictionary race:** Provide pairs of children with dictionaries, and tell them that they are being challenged to a dictionary race! You will provide a word, and they will need to work together to find the definition as fast as possible. The fastest pair to locate and read out each definition from the dictionary will be declared the winners. Play the game using the following words: *thicket, archer, outlaw, peasant, tax, sheriff*. Once the game has been completed, ask the children: can they guess from the words which legend is the subject of our lesson today?

Main activities:

- **Main teaching activity:** Ask children to work in pairs to read the [extract](#) aloud to one another, taking turns to read alternate paragraphs. Remind them that they may choose to use a highlighter or a pencil to pick out key information from the extract. Now provide each child with a copy of the [comprehension questions](#) and ask them to work through the questions individually (you may wish to pair lower ability children together, or provide them with an adult support).
- **Pupil activity one:** Divide children into groups of three, and explain that their task is to retell the Robin Hood story *in their own words*. They don't need to worry about getting it exactly the same as the extract – in the time of Robin Hood, most people wouldn't have been able to read and write and so they would have told stories orally, passing them from person to person. Inevitably, this would mean that the story got changed or embellished with each retelling! Ask the children to use [Resource 1 – Retelling Robin Hood](#) to help them gather their ideas for the retelling. What events can they remember from the extract? What attention-grabbing vocabulary are they going to put into their retelling, to excite their audience? How are they going to divide the story up among themselves – will one child narrate while the other two retell the dialogue, or will they split the story into beginning, middle and end? Allow plenty of time for the children to rehearse their retelling before they share their version of the Robin Hood story with the class.

- **Pupil activity two:** Provide each child with a copy of [Resource 2 – Robin Hood's arrows](#). Explain that their task is to fill Robin Hood's quiver with arrows – by searching for words and phrases in the [extract](#) that describe how Robin Hood feels and behaves, and writing them on the dotted lines of the arrow shafts. How many arrows can they complete? (You may wish to pair lower ability children to support each other in completing this task.)

Plenary:

- **Predictions:** What do the children think happened next in the fight between Robin Hood and the stranger? Ask them to work in talking partners to predict what might happen next in the story. Take feedback, ensuring that the children give reasons for their predictions. You may wish to reveal what actually happens at the end of the story: that the stranger knocks Robin Hood into the water and wins the fight! Once Robin has climbed out onto the bank, he shakes hands with the stranger and makes friends with him. The stranger turns out to be Little John, who becomes one of Robin's greatest allies.

Taking it further:

- **Soundtrack:** Ask the children: what is a soundtrack? Establish that it is music that accompanies a film, which helps to convey the atmosphere of the story. Ask groups of children to imagine they have been asked by a film company to compose a soundtrack for the events in the **extract**. What instruments will they use? How will they create the atmosphere of the forest in springtime? How will they create a feeling of tension when Robin meets the stranger on the bridge? If they like, they may also choose to write lyrics to accompany their composition.
- **Home learning activity:** There are many stories about the legend of Robin Hood. Challenge the children to research another tale of Robin Hood and retell it in any way they choose. They may like to make a recording of themselves telling the story orally, or they could make an animation of the tale, or they could even bring in props to help them retell the story 'live' in front of the class.

Robin Hood – extract

It happened on a bright sunshiny day in early spring. All through the winter Robin and his men had had a very dull time. Nearly all their fun and adventures happened with people travelling through the forest. As there were no trains, people had to travel on horseback. In winter the roads were bad, and the weather so cold and wet, that most people stayed at home. So it was rather a quiet time for Robin and his men. They lived in great caves during the winter, and spent their time making stores of bows and arrows, and mending their boots and clothes.

This bright sunshiny morning Robin felt dull and restless, so he took his bow and arrows, and started off through the forest in search of adventure.

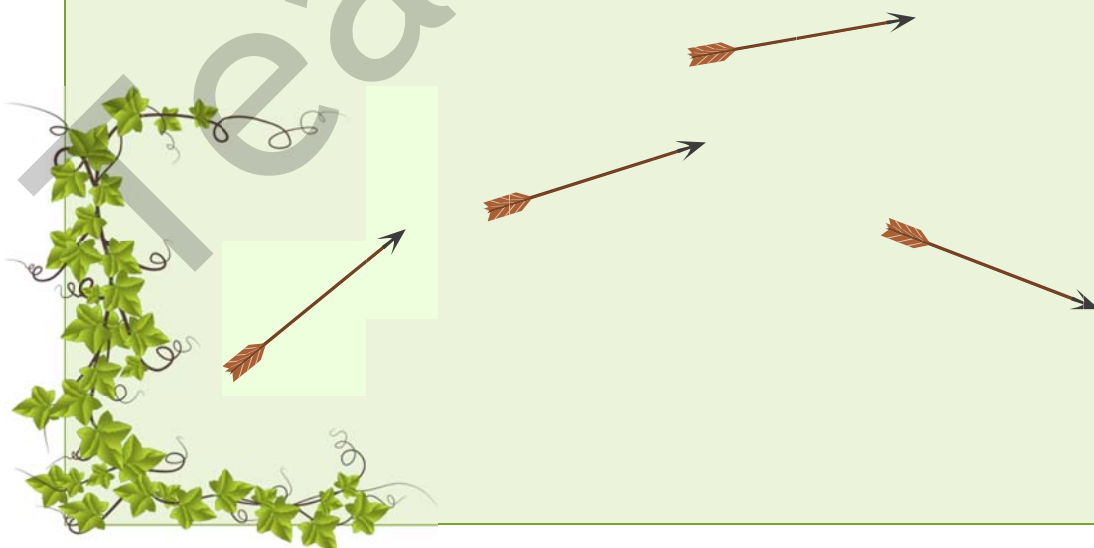
He wandered on for some time without meeting any one. Presently he came to a river. It was wide and deep, swollen by the winter rains. It was crossed by a very slender, shaky bridge, so narrow, that if two people tried to pass each other on it, one would certainly fall into the water.

Robin began to cross the bridge, before he noticed that a great, tall man, the very tallest man he had ever seen, was crossing too from the other side.

“Go back and wait until I have come over,” he called out as soon as he noticed the stranger. The stranger laughed, and called out in reply, “I have as good a right to the bridge as you. You can go back till I get across.”

This made Robin very angry. He was so accustomed to being obeyed that he was very much astonished too. Between anger and astonishment he hardly knew what he did.

He drew an arrow from his quiver, and fitting it to his bow, called out again, “If you don’t go back I’ll shoot.”



"If you do, I'll beat you till you are black and blue," replied the stranger.

"You talk like an ass," said Robin Hood.

"If I talk like an ass you talk like a coward," replied the stranger. "Do you call it fair to stand with your bow and arrow ready to shoot at me when I have only a stick to defend myself with? I tell you, you are a coward. You are afraid of the beating I would give you."

Robin was not a coward, and he was not afraid. So he threw his bow and arrows on the bank behind him.

"You are a big, boastful bully," he said. "Just wait there until I get a stick. I hope I may give you as good a beating as you deserve."

The stranger laughed. "I won't run away; don't be afraid," he said.

Robin Hood stepped to a thicket of trees and cut himself a good, thick oak stick. While he was doing this, he looked at the stranger, and saw that he was not only taller but much stronger than himself.

However, that did not frighten Robin in the least. He was rather glad of it indeed. The stranger had said he was a coward. He meant to prove to him that he was not.



Back he came with a fine big stick in his hand and a smile on his face. The idea of a real good fight had made his bad temper fly away, for, like King Richard, Robin Hood was rather fond of a fight.

"We will fight on the bridge," said he, "and whoever first falls into the river has lost the battle."

"All right," said the stranger. "Whatever you like. I'm not afraid."



Comprehension questions

Name: Date:.....

1. Name **two** reasons why people did not travel through the forest in winter.

1.

2.

2. How did Robin and his men spend their time in winter? Name **one** activity.

.....

3. Look at the paragraph which begins: *'He wandered on ...'*
Find and copy a word which means **unsteady**.

.....

4. Why was Robin astonished when the stranger told him to go back?

.....

5. *'You are a big, boastful bully ...'*
Circle the word closest in meaning to **boastful**.

unkind

ugly

bragging

frightening

6. Why does the stranger think that Robin is being unfair?

.....

7. *'Robin Hood was rather fond of a fight.'*
Explain in your own words what this means.

.....

.....

8. Put the following events in order. The first one has been done for you:

<input type="text"/>	Robin went off through the forest in search of adventure.
<input type="text"/>	The stranger agrees to fight on the bridge.
<input type="text"/>	Robin threatens to shoot the stranger with his bow and arrow.
1	Robin and his men lived in caves during the winter.
<input type="text"/>	A tall man begins to cross the bridge.

Comprehension answers

1. Name **two** reasons why people did not travel through the forest in winter.

The roads were bad and the weather was cold and wet.

2. How did Robin and his men spend their time in winter? Name **one** activity.

a. making stores of bows and arrows

b. mending their boots and clothes.

3. Look at the paragraph which begins: *'He wandered on ...'*
Find and copy a word which means **unsteady**.

Shaky

4. Why was Robin astonished when the stranger told him to go back?

Because he was accustomed to being obeyed.

5. *'You are a big, boastful bully ...'*

Circle the word closest in meaning to **boastful**.

unkind

ugly

bragging

frightening

6. Why does the stranger think that Robin is being unfair?

Because Robin is armed with a bow and arrow, while the stranger only has a stick.

7. *'Robin Hood was rather fond of a fight.'*

Explain in your own words what this means.

That Robin enjoys fighting.

8. Put the following events in order. The first one has been done for you:

2	Robin went off through the forest in search of adventure.
5	The stranger agrees to fight on the bridge.
4	Robin threatens to shoot the stranger with his bow and arrow.
1	Robin and his men lived in caves during the winter.
3	A tall man begins to cross the bridge.

Resource 1 – Retelling Robin Hood

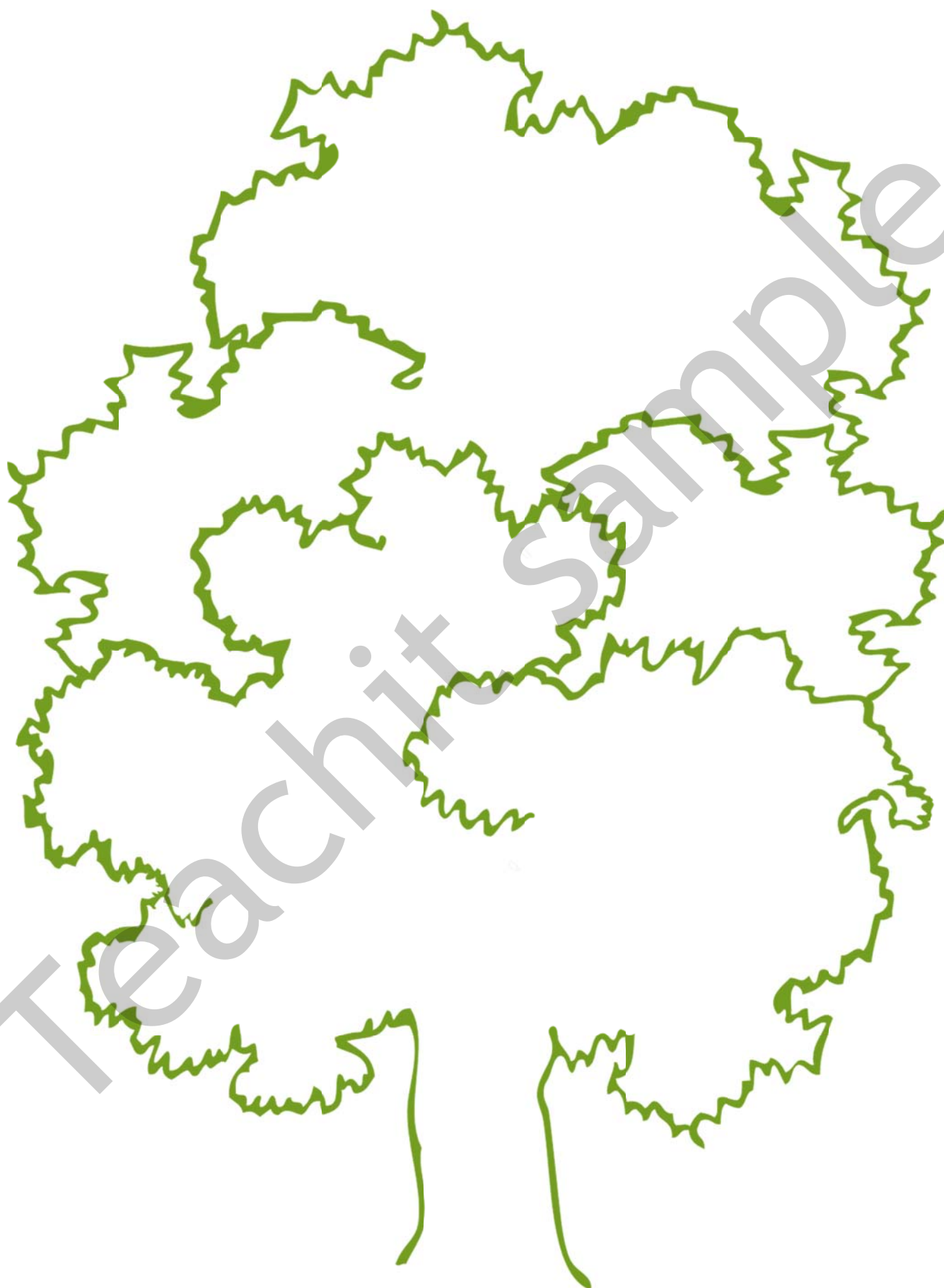
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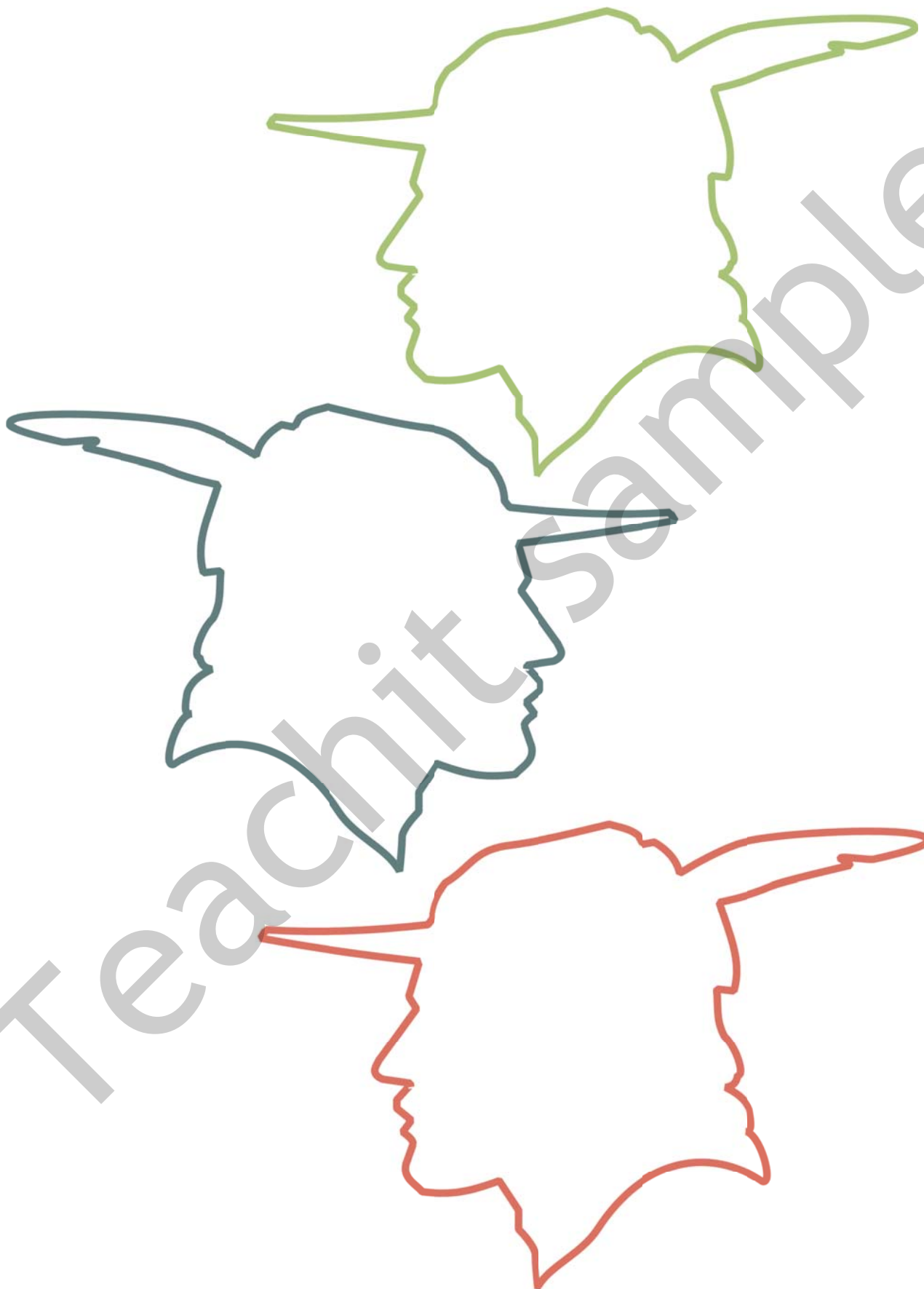
Write a brief summary of the events from the story in the boxes below:

Five empty rectangular boxes for writing a summary, arranged in a staggered grid. Each box is framed with a brown border and has four small blue pins at the corners. Arrows point from the top-left box to the middle-left box, from the middle-left box to the middle-right box, from the middle-right box to the bottom-left box, and from the bottom-left box to the bottom-right box.

Fill the tree with exciting vocabulary to use in your retelling.



Make notes on the faces to show which member of your group is responsible for which part of the retelling.



Resource 2 – Robin Hood's arrows

Name:

Date:.....

Read through the extract to find words or phrases that describe how Robin Hood **feels** or **behaves**.

Write them onto the dotted lines of the arrow shafts below.

How many arrows can you complete?

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 