

# RABUNZEL

## Build a story tower

What happens in this story?

Answer the questions with a picture or written note to build a tower from the ground up.

Write the title of this story

7. What do the characters learn?

6. How does the story end?

5. What happens next?

4. How do they solve this problem?

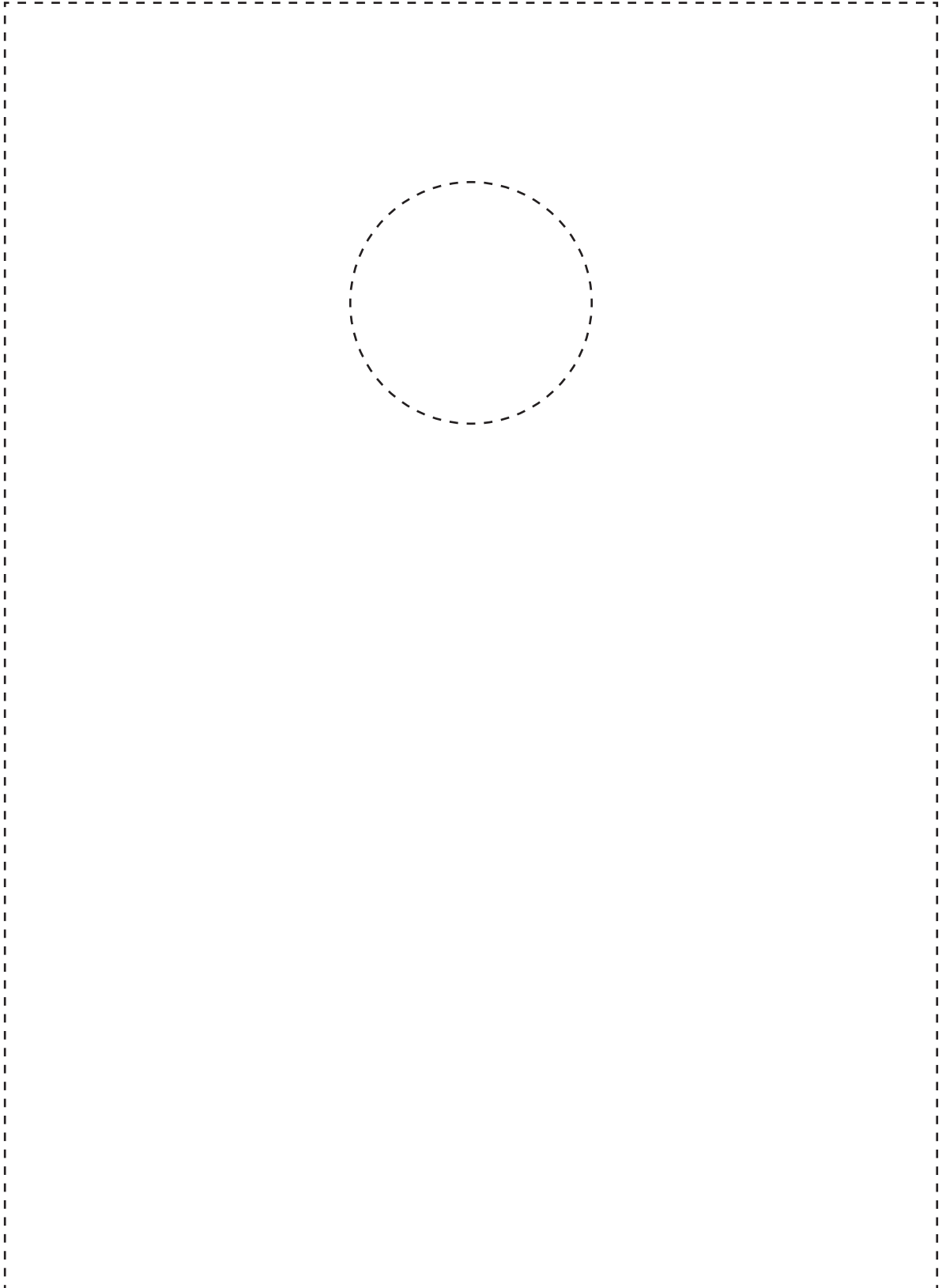
3. What is the first problem your characters face?

2. Who are the characters in your story?

1. Where does your story happen?

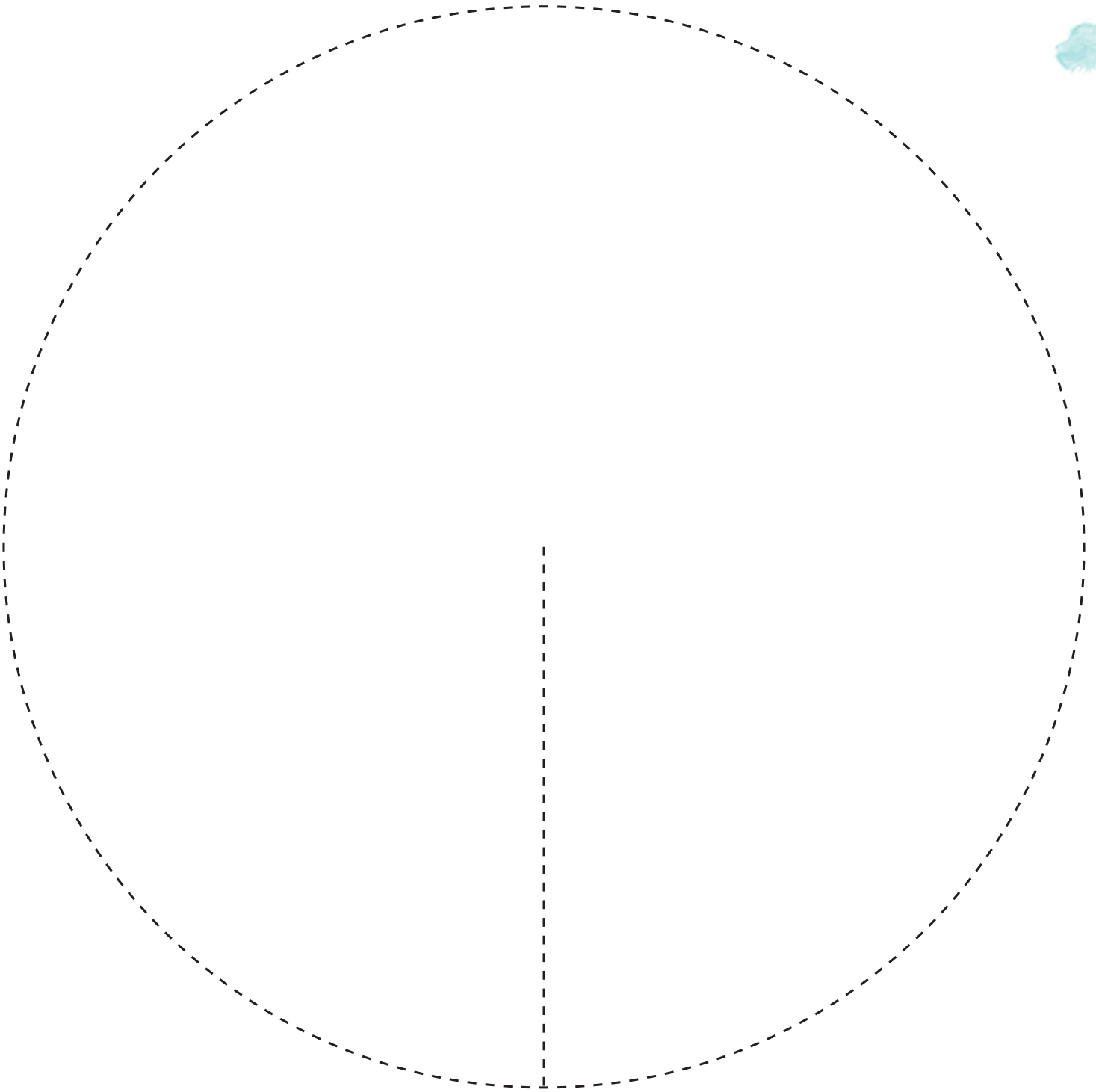
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Make your own Rabunzel tower and puppets



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1. Cut out the rectangle. Roll it into a cylinder shape and stick it together. This is your tower.
2. Cut out the circle, then cut very carefully along the marked line. Curve your circle to form a cone. This is your roof. Fix it on top of your tower with sticky tape.
3. Cut out the characters. Add holders from tightly rolled paper to make stick-puppets.

**Now you're ready to tell Rabunzel's story!**



FAIRY TALES FOR THE FEARLESS

# RABUNZEL

EYF5 TEACHING PACK

ENJOY THIS FAIRY TALE WITH A  
TWIST AND SEE HOW INVENTIVE  
CHILDREN CAN BECOME WITH THEIR  
OWN STORYTELLING



## WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

By reading *Rabunzel* and taking part in the cross-curricular activities in this pack, children will:

- enjoy a shared reading experience and build on it with creative learning activities.
- express/respond to opinions and insights about this book (*as a story, as an artwork, as an invitation to consider deeper themes*).
- connect this story to their own experiences (*being afraid, being bored, remembering Lockdown*).
- explore this story and its themes via a puppet craft activity, roleplay and creative writing.
- discover the building blocks of this story and make connections with traditional fairy tales.
- explore ideas around staying safe and taking charge through drama, movement and creative writing.
- develop strength and fitness by taking part in a Rabunzel and Flash Harry Fitness Challenge.
- build on what they've learned by making changes to another fairy tale.

Extension activities include two STEM challenges, and ideas for creating a roleplay set.



## WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

***Rabunzel* is a fun-filled retelling of a traditional fairy tale that makes a great starting point for investigating story structure. Alongside the zany humour serious themes are explored, including staying safe and girls in charge.**

To begin, find a comfortable spot where you won't be disturbed and share *Rabunzel* with children all the way through as a reading-for-pleasure experience.

**Talk about your reactions to this book, revisiting spreads to gather information from the words and pictures. Prompts could include:**

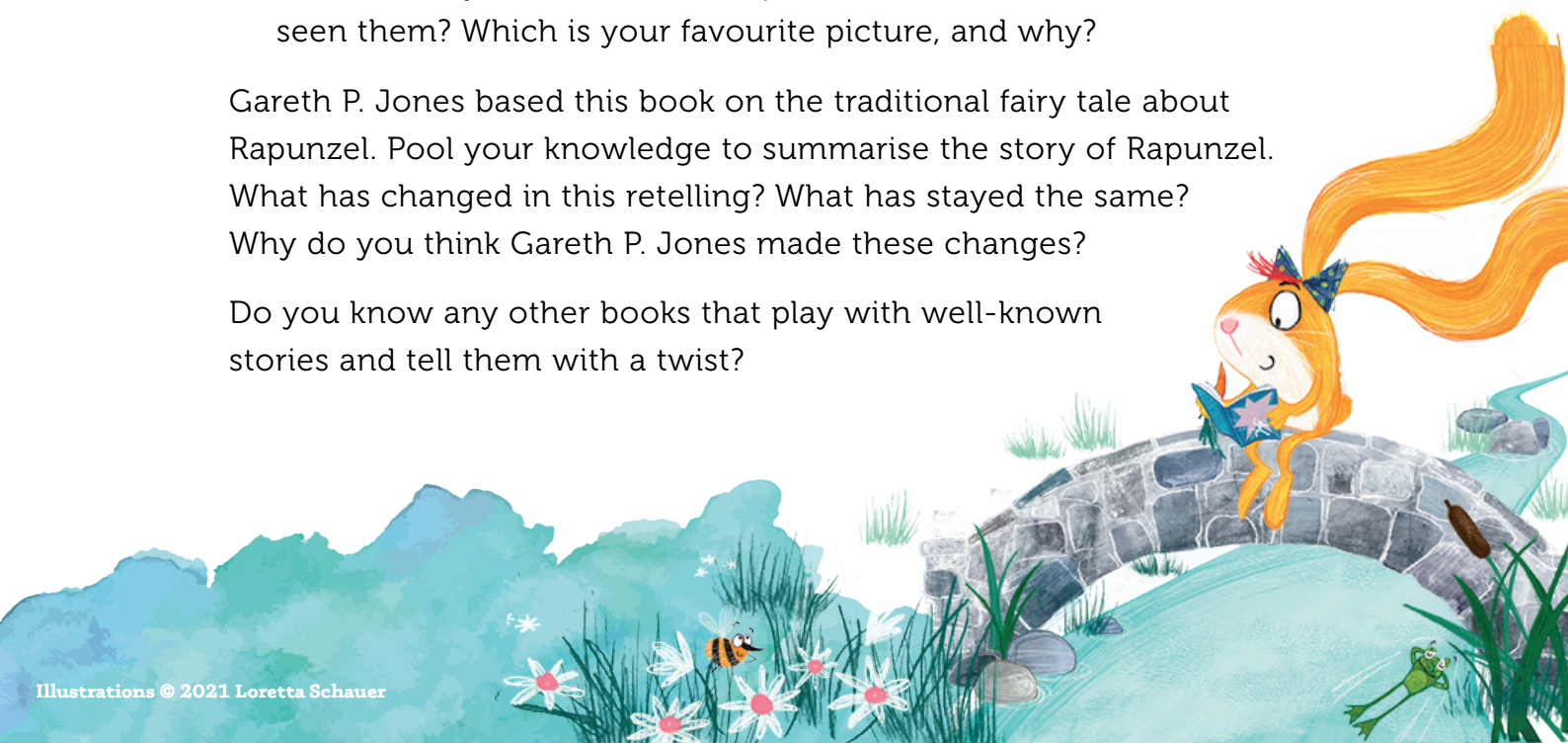
- What did you like best about this book, and why?
- Does it remind you of anything else?
- Which is your favourite picture, and why?
- If you could ask one character a question, what would you ask?
- Whom would you recommend this book to, and what would you tell them about it?
- Is there anything that would make this book even better, do you think?

**Talk about 'reading' the pictures as well as the words. Prompts could include:**

- What do the pictures tell us that the words don't?
- Do we learn more from the words or the pictures about the events and characters in this story?
- How would you describe these pictures to someone who hadn't seen them? Which is your favourite picture, and why?

Gareth P. Jones based this book on the traditional fairy tale about Rapunzel. Pool your knowledge to summarise the story of Rapunzel. What has changed in this retelling? What has stayed the same? Why do you think Gareth P. Jones made these changes?

Do you know any other books that play with well-known stories and tell them with a twist?





## PART 1: BUILDING THE TOWER

**Explore the story with roleplay and a craft activity.**

Ask children to construct their own Rabunzel tower and set of stick puppets using [Downloadable Sheet 1](#), or work in groups with an adult helper to construct one set per group.

Tightly rolled paper can be taped into place and used to make safe holders for your puppets - you could also use thick card or clean lolly sticks. Outline versions of the tower and roof templates are included, which children could decorate themselves before cutting out.

Use your puppets as a focus for roleplay/speaking and listening activities that will reinforce the story and help you to dive more deeply into the themes.

### Interview Rabunzel

Roleplay a TV presenter interviewing Rabunzel in her tower. Here are some questions to get you started: 'How did you come to be in this tower?' 'Why did your mum put you there?' 'What can you see when you look out of the window?' 'How are you feeling?' 'What would you rather be doing right now?' 'How do you think you'll get down?'

### Roleplay a conversation

Maybe Rabunzel's mother arrives with a basket of carrots, calling "Rabunzel, Rabunzel, let down your ears!" Or Flash Harry waves and introduces himself. What will happen next? Retell the story in the book, or invent a new episode.

### Invite one character to retell the story from their point of view

Imagine Flash Harry or Mum is visiting your school to talk about what happened. Maybe they'll tell the truth, or maybe they'll invent a few details, just for fun!

### Roleplay a persuasive discussion

Rabunzel wants to leave the tower, but Mum doesn't think it's safe. What will Rabunzel say to persuade Mum? How and why will Mum refuse? Ask everyone to join in with (and learn) Mum's rhyme from the book: "We must keep you up high, you'll be safe in the sky. Out of harm's way, that's where you must stay!"



Follow up by drawing pictures and adding labels showing what you have learnt about the story by taking part. Alternatively, use the photos taken and ask pupils to label these. For more construct-a-tower-themed fun and challenge, check out the activities at the end of this pack.



## PART 2: BORED TO BITS

There isn't much for Rabunzel to do inside the tower. Examine the double-page spread showing Rabunzel talking on the phone. What do the pictures tell us about her days in the tower? What do the words tell us?

How would you describe Rabunzel in this picture? For example, *sad, lonely, thoughtful, isolated, wistful...* Can the children sit like Rabunzel, and copy her expression? What does her body language tell us about how she feels?

How would the children feel if they were locked in a high tower and couldn't get out? What would they do to keep themselves occupied? What would they miss? (*Children may bring up memories of Lockdown, or you could highlight the connection.*)

What does Rabunzel do with her time? Which activity was most useful?

She didn't enjoy being bored, but it didn't stop her learning something new! What are the children's top ten tips for getting rid of boredom, or managing it? Pool your ideas.

Ask the children to draw images showing what they would do if they were **BORED TO BITS**, and add labels to their work. They could work in-role as Rabunzel, or write a sentence to describe how it feels when they are bored.





## PART 3: CONSTRUCTING YOUR STORY TOWER

Like many traditional fairy tales, the story of Rabunzel is created from building blocks that you can investigate and use to create a shared understanding of how this and similar stories work. And once you're familiar with them, you can have fun with the genre – just like the creators of *Rabunzel*.

Working as a class, talk about Rabunzel's story. Use the following questions to structure your discussion:

- Who are the main characters?
- What's the setting?
- What's this story about? Can you summarise it in one sentence?
- What happens in this story? Can you agree on the main events?
- How does it end?
- What do the characters learn from it?

Work together to list the story events in note form. For example:

- Mum is worried about Rabunzel
- She shuts Rabunzel in a tower to keep her safe...

Agree on a best sentence for each event, then write your sentences on large pieces of card (one statement per card). Working as a class, put these events in order and display them where everyone can see.

As an additional activity, you can shuffle the cards, then challenge players to order them as quickly and accurately as they can. Players can work individually or in pairs.

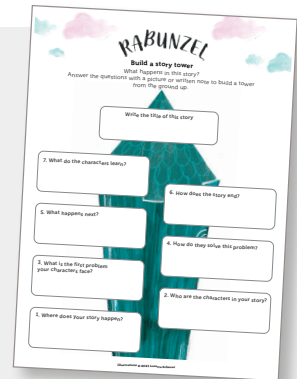
Stories happen when characters try to solve problems. Once you have the main events firmly in mind, consider the following questions. Talking about the events you've been exploring with your 'problem-solving hats' on will help you understand how stories are constructed, and how to build better stories of your own.



- Can you identify the first **PROBLEM** in this story? (*The creatures in the wood may eat Rabunzel.*)
- How is that problem **RESOLVED**? (*Mum puts Rabunzel in the tower.*)
- Did resolving the first problem create another problem? (*Rabunzel is lonely and bored.*)
- How is the second problem resolved? (*Flash Harry rescues her.*)
- Are there more problems and solutions in this story? Can you identify them all?

Give everyone a copy of **Downloadable Sheet 2**. Read it together and discuss. Complete the story tower for Rabunzel together as a class as an example.

Then, working together or in pairs, answer each question by drawing a picture or making a note in the box. This could be completed for the story of *Rabunzel*, or with the children's own ideas for a story. *Remind everyone that stories must have firm foundations, so build your tower from the ground up!*



## PART 4: BEING AFRAID

**Talk about being afraid. Prompts could include 'How does it feel to be afraid?' 'What are you afraid of?' 'What makes you feel better when you're afraid?'**

In *Rabunzel*, Mum is afraid of the "hungry-eyed creatures that lurked in the deep, dark forest".

Examine the picture of Rabunzel and Mum walking through the forest. Many eyes are peeping out from between the trees, and the text tells us that all the animals on Furry Tail Hill live in fear of these creatures.

Copy Mum's expression and posture, then do the same for Rabunzel. Ask questions such as 'How does Mum feel in this picture?' 'Is Rabunzel afraid?' 'Why/why not?' 'How can we tell?'



Discuss Mum's fear, and how she responds to it. Prompts could include 'How does Mum know the creatures will attack?' 'Can she be certain?' 'Is she right to deal with the problem by putting Rabunzel in the tower?' 'Does putting Rabunzel in the tower keep her completely safe?'

Putting Rabunzel in the tower solves Mum's problem, but creates new problems for Rabunzel. Remind yourselves of those problems: being bored, feeling lonely, becoming physically unfit....

Rabunzel doesn't want to hide in the tower, she wants to live in the forest with everyone else. But that means dealing with the hungry-eyed creatures!

Think about what Rabunzel does about this new problem? Do the children think the other animals expected her to have these skills? How and when did she develop them?

Use a role on the wall activity to help you bring these ideas together. This activity helps children gain insights into the characters, and will develop their understanding of other points of view.

Hang two large sheets of paper on the wall. Draw two Rabunzel outlines using a thick marker, one outline on each sheet. Write *In The Tower* on the first sheet, and *On The Ground* on the second.

### **Sheet 1: In The Tower**

Work together to decide what Rabunzel thinks about being in the tower, and how she's feeling. Record your ideas inside your Rabunzel-shape.

What do Rabunzel's Mum, Flash Harry and the other animals think about Rabunzel being in the tower, and how do they feel? Record these ideas outside of your Rabunzel-shape.

### **Sheet 2: On The Ground**

Repeat the activities above, imagining this time that Rabunzel has been freed.





## PART 5: THE DEEP, DARK FOREST

Look at pictures of the forest. How is it described in this book? How would the children describe it?

Imagine you're in the middle of this forest. What can you hear and smell? If you touch things around you, what do they feel like? Can you taste anything? What can you see? **DON'T FORGET TO LOOK UP!**

Use your voices to make the sounds of the forest. You could make swishing noises, *like branches swaying in the wind*, or tweeting noises, *like the calls of distant birds*...

What happens if you add percussion instruments or found objects? Do they create interesting forest sounds?

When you've explored possibilities, choose your favourites and add them to a whole-class soundscape. Conduct your sound orchestra with agreed hand signals, so that everyone knows when to get louder or softer - and when to stop!

Forests appear in many fairy tales and folk stories. Can you think of examples? *Hansel and Gretel, Snow White*... It's one of the elements that characterise traditional stories of this type.

Can you think of other things - characters, settings, objects, events - that you often find in fairytales? For example, *magical objects, talking animals, castles, difficult tasks*.

### Engineering Challenge

Can the children plan and construct something that will help Rabunzel escape the tower without Flash Harry's help? Maybe it's a structure, maybe it's a machine or a device - be creative, and consider lots of possibilities!

Children could draw their ideas (making them as imaginative and impossible as they like) or design something they can actually build, using craft supplies, found materials and construction kits.

Remind children that their first idea may not be their best. Every engineer needs to test their structure and improve it by making changes, so think about the task in stages (*Ask - Imagine - Plan - Create -*





*Improve*) and make sure children give each stage plenty of time and thought.

If children are making models, they could make them the right size to rescue their Rabunzel puppets from the towers they constructed earlier.



### **Fairytales for the Fearless**

Girls in traditional fairy tales can seem powerless, and often have to wait for boys to save them. Folktales, by comparison, are more likely to feature 'clever girls' who use their wits (and kindness) to dodge danger and outwit their enemies.

What skills and characteristics does Rabunzel have that help her take care of herself? Work together to list them.

What does Flash Harry do in this story? Does Rabunzel need saving? What effect do Flash Harry's actions have on Rabunzel? Do you think the story would have ended the same way without Flash Harry?

Sometimes we need someone (or something) to prompt us to be strong.

Flash Harry looks as though he really admires Rabunzel, doesn't he! Maybe he gets more time for skipping, now that Rabunzel is taking care of the hungry-eyed creatures?

## **PART 6: CHANNELING YOUR INNER RABUNZEL**

**Explore how it feels to be super-smart and super-strong by stepping into Rabunzel's paws.**

Make dress-up Rabunzel ears by attaching long silky ears to headbands.

Can children swing their ears with "perfect poise"? Can they wrap them and flap them? How long are their ears? Measure them.

Look at the pictures showing Rabunzel in action. Can the children stand in the same positions as Rabunzel? Try bringing each posture to life, in slow motion, to create a 'fighting the hungry-eyed creatures' movement sequence.



Learn Rabunzel's freedom rhyme (*"My ears may be long, but they're nimble and strong. I won't hide in fear, I'll live proudly down here..."*) and ask children to say it loudly and clearly as they perform their sequence.

Extend this idea by painting the hungry-eyed creatures on card and using them as props to make your movement sequence look even more exciting!

Follow up by talking about safety. We don't have Rabunzel's super-powered ears, so we really do need to think about staying safe. What are the sensible precautions for keeping ourselves (and each other) safe that we all need to follow?

## PART 7: BUILD YOUR STRENGTH

Become as strong and fit as Rabunzel and Flash Harry by planning and taking part in a fitness challenge. Put on your trainers and run as fast as Flash Harry. Skip (and do bunny hops!) to keep fit, and learn to climb a rope. You never know when you'll need to scale a tower!



## PART 8: STORIES ABOUT STRONG GIRLS

**"I DON'T REALLY NEED SAVING. THOUGH. THANKS VERY MUCH..."**

Choose another fairy tale about a girl who needs saving (*Cinderella, The Sleeping Beauty, Snow White...*) and retell it, enabling the girl to change her story and take charge.

Talk about your own strengths and skills. 'What can you do well?' 'What would you like to improve?' 'How could you use your strengths and skills to help yourself and other people?'





### Create a roleplay set

Construct a tower using cardboard boxes. Glue them one on top of another, then cut a window in the topmost box, so Rabunzel can look out. If possible, Rabunzel's window should be within reach of an adult but not children, so there is a sense of inaccessibility.

Paint your boxes to look like the wooden exterior of Rabunzel's tree tower, as shown on the cover of the book. Add a roof made from construction paper, then paint it to look like tiles.

Make some Rabunzel-style ears from furry fabric - long enough to reach the floor from the window. Stitch them to a soft-toy bunny, or attach with safety-pins.

Place the bunny so that she's looking out of the window, and use as a focus for the speaking and listening activities in part one of this project.

## A FOREST SCHOOL-STYLE TOWER CHALLENGE

If you have access to woodland, challenge your class to construct Rabunzel's tower from sticks held together with a small amount of masking tape.

Work in teams with adult leaders to build strong, stable structures. Set a time limit and measure your towers to see which is tallest, or give points for teamwork, originality and style.

Which towers are strong enough to support a toy bunny? Test them and see!

