

The Crow and The Pitcher

It had been a long, hot summer and the sun had scorched the earth so that the rivers and streams had run dry. The animals were desperately parched and longed for the rain to fall so that they could have something to drink.

A thirsty crow was circling the sky, looking for a puddle or a bird bath to sip from, when it spotted a small table with a glass pitcher on it, hidden in the shady corner of a cottage garden. It flew down and landed on the table. When it peered down the long neck of the pitcher, the crow's beady eye saw that there was still some water at the bottom – enough to provide a thirst-quenching drink. →







“At last!”
thought
the crow.

“At last!” thought the crow, its mouth so dry it struggled to even squawk with excitement.

Standing on the tips of its claws, the crow stuck its long beak down the neck of the pitcher, and tried to reach the water, but it was no good – the water was too low down. It tiptoed even higher and craned its neck as much as it could, but it still didn't work. The neck of the pitcher was far too narrow for the crow to take a sip.

The poor crow despaired. “I'll surely die of thirst if I don't drink this water,” it thought. “But if I knock the pitcher over, it will all pour away.”

The crow hopped around the table and flapped around the garden, looking for something that might help. Then it spotted a pebbly path and had a clever idea. It picked up some pebbles in its beak, then flew back to the table and dropped them into the pitcher, one by one.

With each pebble the crow dropped into the pitcher, the water level rose a tiny bit. The crow flew around the garden grabbing more and more pebbles and dropped them in so that the water level rose higher and higher until, at last, it was high enough for the crow to have a long, refreshing drink. Its life was saved!

Thanks to its clever thinking and determination, the crow was able to survive the harsh drought that summer – and he visited the garden every day. The lady who owned the cottage, however, never did work out how her water pitcher kept getting filled to the brim with pebbles! 🌀



IN BRIEF

The Crow and the Pitcher is a fable about how a thirsty crow solves the problem of being thirsty – and saves his own life – by being patient, determined and clever.



LITERACY LESSON IDEAS

- **TALK ABOUT THE STORY.** Can you recognise the problem and the solution in the story? Write down one sentence to describe each one. Can you draw a picture of the problem and solution too?
- **DISCUSS WHAT LESSON OR MORAL THIS FABLE TEACHES YOU.** There could be more than one answer to this, e.g. never give up; always think things through; any problem can be solved with patience; little by little does the trick. Can you think of some new ones?
- **DID YOU DISCOVER NEW WORDS IN THIS STORY?** Do you know what they mean? What do the describing words tell you in the first paragraph? Download our **The Crow and the Pitcher Word Wise Sheet**.
- **ACT OUT THE STORY WITH A SOCK PUPPET, BEAKER, WATER AND PEBBLES.** Download our **The Crow and the Pitcher Sock Puppet Kit** with a beak, eyes and wings, and stick them to a black sock to make your own sock puppet.
- **WORK IN PAIRS OR GROUPS TO MAKE UP ANOTHER STORY ABOUT AN ANIMAL WITH A PROBLEM THAT NEEDS TO BE SOLVED.** First think of the animal, then the problem, and then a solution. Does the animal have anything special that could help solve the problem, like a long trunk, a tall neck or a loud roar? Download our **Animal Adjectives Sheet** to help.



GEOGRAPHY LESSON IDEAS

- **TALK ABOUT THE WEATHER.** Why did the sun dry up the rivers? Why do we need rain? What happens if there is too much sun or rain? What is a drought?
- **WATCH THIS BBC KS1 BITESIZE FILM** about what it's like to live in a drought in the Sahara Desert, then discuss: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/zs6fgk7>

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SCIENCE & MATHS LESSON IDEAS

● **WAS THE CROW CLEVER?** Do you think a crow could do what the crow in our story did in real life? Find out more about crows in our **Clever Crow Fact Sheet**.

● **DO A MINI SCIENCE AND MATHS EXPERIMENT IN YOUR CLASS:**

- Fill a tall beaker or jug with water until it is one-third full.
- Mark this level with a pen or coloured tape.
- Mark another level two thirds of the way up the beaker or jug.
- Ask everyone to estimate how many pebbles or marbles you'll need to make the water rise to the second level. Print out and fill in our **Pebble Pitcher Experiment Sheet**.
- Were you right? How many pebble or marbles did you need to add or subtract from your estimate to get the answer right?
- Do the experiment again with less water in the beaker or jug – and then with more water in it – does it change how many pebbles or marbles you need? Why do you think that is?
- Talk about water displacement.

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ART LESSON IDEAS

● **USE A MASK TO ACT OUT THE STORY.**

Print out our **The Crow and the Pitcher Colouring Sheet** and **Crow Mask** and colour them in. Use black craft feathers to decorate your mask – or make black feathers from paper or card.

● **PAINT PEBBLES IN DIFFERENT COLOURS**, then go on a pebble hunt, just like the crow. How many blue pebbles can you find? How many red, yellow or green ones? Download our **The Crow and the Pitcher Pebble Maze**.



WORD WISE SHEET

Pick five words from our Word Watch list and, in the space below, write one sentence for each word.

1

2

3

4

5

WORD WATCH

These words are used in *The Crow and the Pitcher* story in Storytime magazine, Issue 19.

- ▷ **Scorched** – burnt
- ▷ **Drought** – a time with no rain and not enough water
- ▷ **Craned** – stretched
- ▷ **Pitcher** – large jug
- ▷ **Parched** – very thirsty
- ▷ **Thirsty** – feel like you need a drink
- ▷ **Refreshing** – making you feel better and with more energy
- ▷ **Clever** – intelligent
- ▷ **Determination** – not giving up

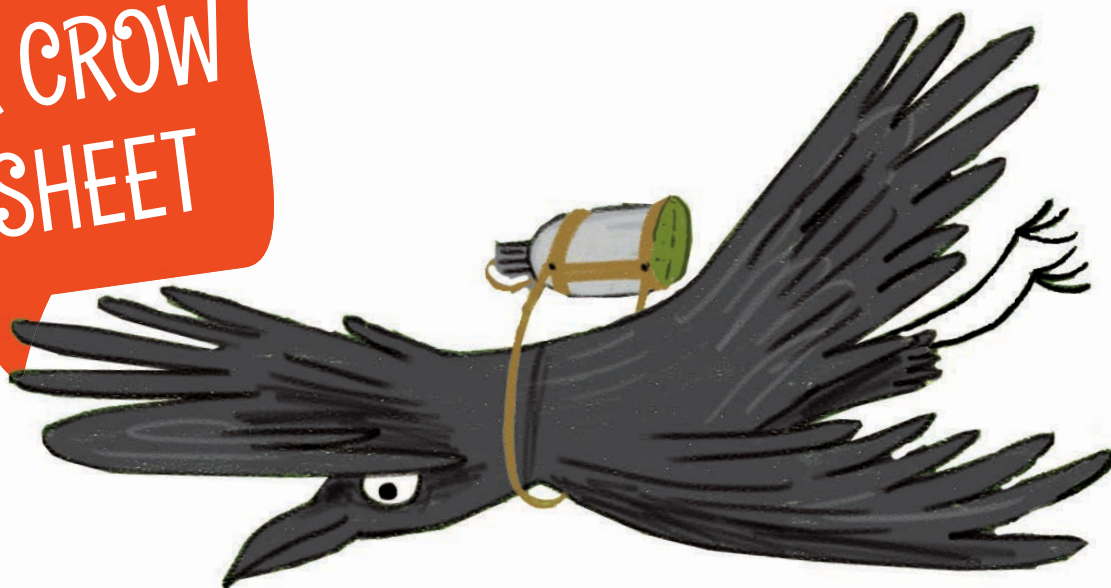
SUPER SYNONYMS

Can you think of any more synonyms for the word: **CLEVER**? Write them here.

WRITE IT!

Write the first paragraph of a story about a garden on a hot, sunny day. Can you describe it? How does it look and feel?

CLEVER CROW FACT SHEET



- Crows are **one of the cleverest birds of all!**
- **You can find them everywhere** – at the seaside, in forests, in cities and in your garden.
- They eat **many different types of food**, including leftover scraps, insects, fruit, seeds and worms.
- Can you squawk like a crow?
Listen to this RSPB sound clip:
<http://www.rspb.org.uk/discoverandenjoynature/discoverandlearn/birdguide/name/c/carrioncrow/index.aspx>
- In America, one group of crows liked the little girl who fed them so much, **they brought her gifts**. Read the story here: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-31604026>
- Scientists have set lots of tests for crows and found that **crows really are as smart** as the one in *The Crow and the Pitcher* story. Here are some amazing things that crows can do:
 - ▷ They can drop pebbles into beakers to get a drink of water.
 - ▷ Some crows in Japan found that if they drop walnuts on the road, cars drive over them and crack the hard shells. The same crows then stood at the traffic lights, waited for them to turn red, then hopped onto the crossing to get a nut feast!
 - ▷ Crows can bend wires to make hooks. They use them as tools to get at food they can't reach with their beaks!

DO A CROW WATCH THROUGH YOUR CLASSROOM WINDOW. HOW MANY CAN YOU COUNT THIS WEEK?

PEBBLE PITCHER EXPERIMENT SHEET

NAME _____

CLASS _____

1 Write your estimate here...

3 How many pebbles do you need to add to or subtract from your estimate to get the right answer? Work it out here.

2 Write how many pebbles you used here...

COLOURING SHEET

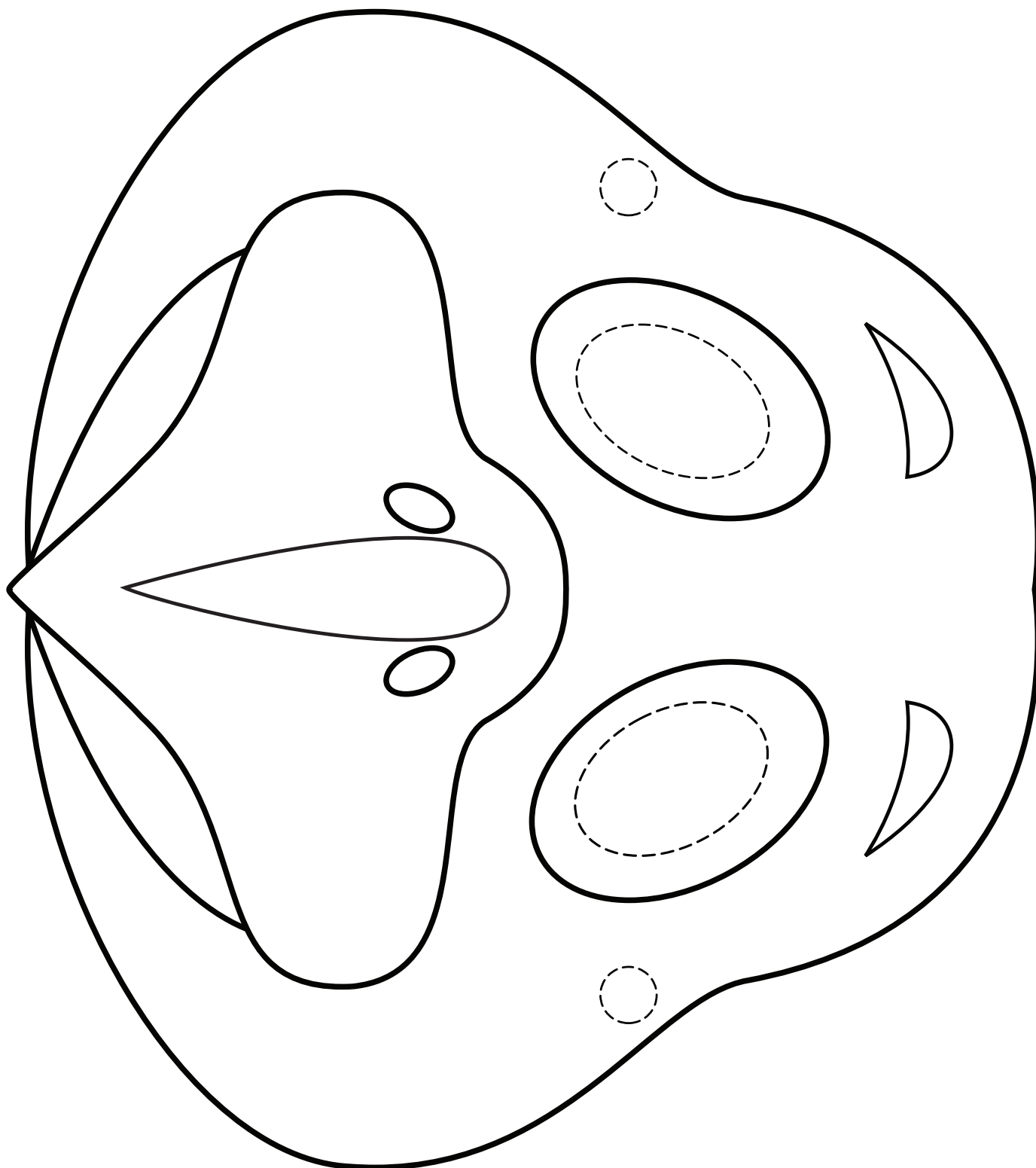
TIP!

Colour the leaves
in different colours
of the rainbow.



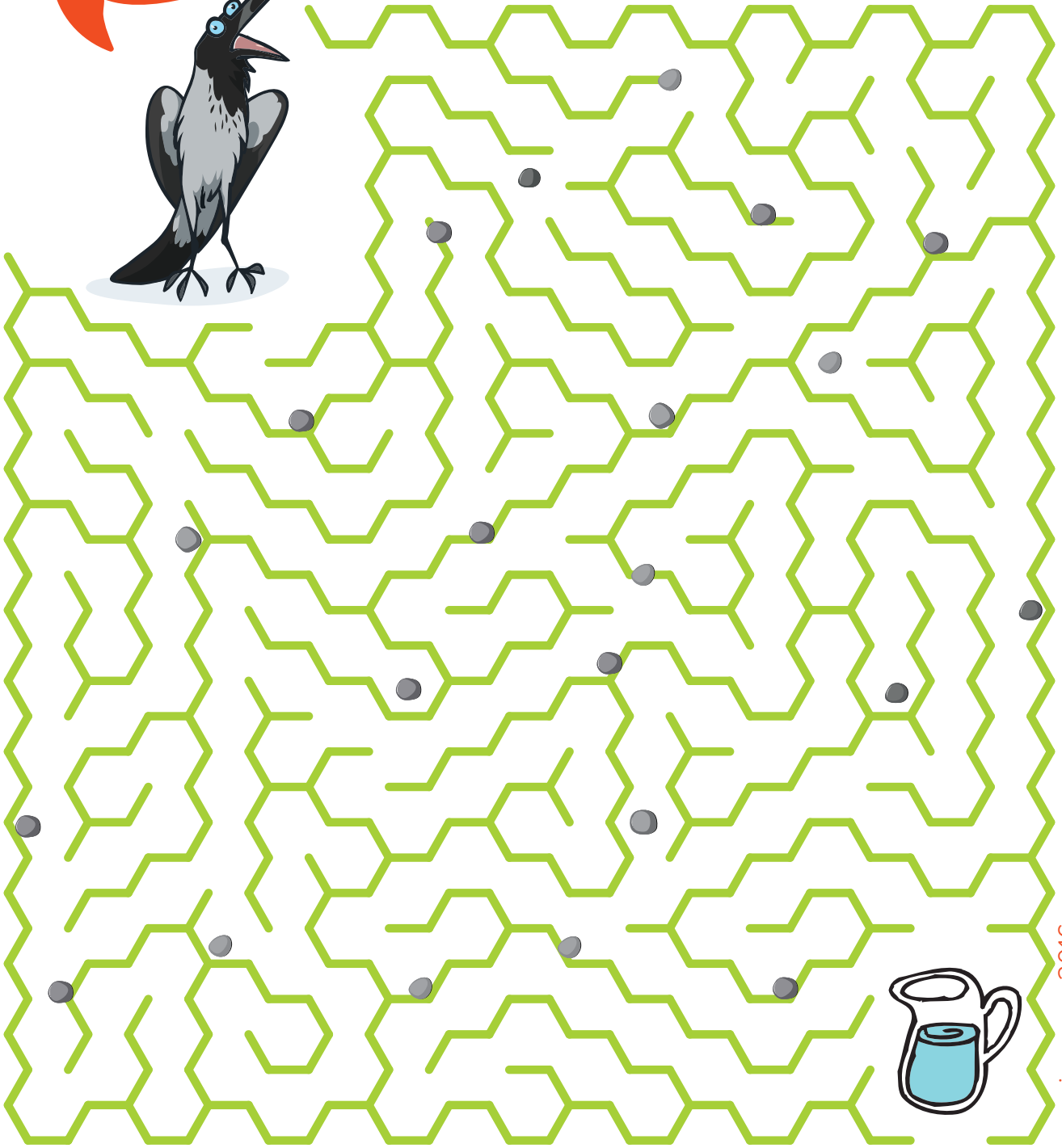
CROW MASK ACTIVITY

Cut out, colour in and decorate this mask so you can act out *The Crow and the Pitcher* story in Storytime magazine, Issue 19.

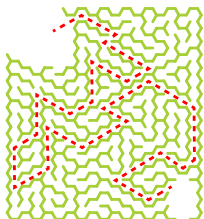


PEBBLE MAZE

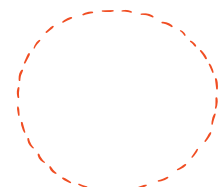
Help the crow find its way through the maze to the pitcher. Pick up as many pebbles as you can on the way there.



ANSWER:



→ How many pebbles did you collect? Write it here.



SOCK PUPPET KIT

Print out and cut out the eyes, beak and wings on this sheet, then use sticky tape, PVA glue or fabric glue to stick them to a black sock to make a Crow Puppet!

