Traditional Tales (3)

Once upon a time, there was a beautiful garden in the surroundings of Tatton Park…It was the most wonderful garden that went on as far as the eye could see. Filled with colourful flowers and singing birds, but the Tatton Park Garden was no ordinary garden. You see, Tatton Park's Garden was the most magical of all; it holds many tales and stories within its leafy walls.

Maybe you have visited Tatton Park Gardens with your friends or family? Or maybe you have heard some of the magical tales about them? Why not have ago at the activities below and see what magical tales you can create at home or in the classroom.

Activity 1: The Gingerbread Man

Once upon a time, there lived a little old woman and a little old man, who lived in a cottage in Tatton Park. One morning, the little old man and the little old woman were so hungry that they decided to bake a gingerbread man. They made a big batch of gingerbread dough, then rolled it flat and cut out the shape of a man. He had chocolate drops for eyes and smarties as buttons. The old lady put the gingerbread man into the oven to bake. When he was done, she opened the oven door, but to her surprise the Gingerbread Man jumped up and ran through the kitchen and out of the cottage. She chased after the Gingerbread Man, all the way down the lane, but the Gingerbread Man was a very fast runner and started chanting "Run, run as fast as you can, you can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread Man!"

He ran all the way to the Tatton Park's Farm, where he met a very hungry pig. "Stop!" snorted the pig, "I want to eat you." But the Gingerbread Man was a very fast runner and ran away, chanting "I've run from a little old woman and I can run away from you. Run, run as fast as you can, you can't catch me I'm the Gingerbread Man." The Gingerbread Man ran all the way into the Tatton Park fields where he passed a cow. "Stop!" mooed the cow, "I want to eat you." But the Gingerbread Man ran even faster, chanting "I've run from a little old woman and a pig and I can run away from you. Run, run as fast as you can, you can't catch me I'm the Gingerbread Man." The Gingerbread Man had run so far he reached the Tatton Park Mere, but he didn't know how to swim. A sly and hungry fox saw the Gingerbread Man and said, "Jump on my tail, and I'll take you across the mere!" The Gingerbread Man thought it would be safe on the fox's tail, so he jumped on and they started to cross the mere. Halfway across the fox barked, "You're too heavy for my tail, jump on my back." So the Gingerbread Man did. Soon after the fox said, "You're too heavy for my back, jump on my nose." So he did, but as soon as they reached the edge of the mere, the sly fox flipped the Gingerbread Man into the air and ate him up!

With some help from your grown ups, why not create your own gingerbread men? Follow the simple recipe below and don't forget to decorate your gingerbread men once cooked and cooled.

Preparation: 20 minutes

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Ingredients

125g butter, 110g soft brown sugar, 1 egg, 260g plain flour, 1/2 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda, 2 teaspoons ground ginger.

Method

Cream butter and sugar until well combined, then mix in the egg. Sift in flour, bicarbonate of soda and ginger. Mix well

Knead dough on a lightly floured surface adding more flour if necessary. Roll out the dough thinly and then use a shaped cutter to create your gingerbread men. This recipe should make approximately 8 gingerbread men

Place the gingerbread men on a lightly greased tray and bake in a preheated 180 C / Gas 4 oven for 15 minutes. Cool on a wire rack before decorating

TIP: Biscuit and cookie dough that is chilled before baking will hold its shape better. If you chill this gingerbread dough before rolling and cutting, the biscuits will have sharper, cleaner edges.

Activity 2: The Ugly Duckling

Tatton Park's Farm is home to many animals, big and small. Once upon a time, there was a little duckling, who lived with all 12 of his brothers and sisters on the Farm. However, this little duckling was very sad because he thought he was the ugliest duckling amongst all of his brothers and sisters. They would not play with him and teased the poor ugly duckling. One day, he saw his own reflection in a pond and cried, "Nobody likes me because I am so ugly." He was so sad the little duckling decided to leave the Farm and travel far away into the winding woods. Deep in the woods, he found a cottage. In the cottage lived an old lady with her hen and cat. The ugly duckling stayed with them for some time but he didn't feel quite at home, so after a while he left and headed back into the woods. Winter arrived and the ugly duckling was so cold! Luckily, a peasant took him home to his wife and children. The ugly duckling stayed with them for a while, but didn't feel at home with them either, so he left and headed back into the woods where he was all alone again. Then, Spring arrived. One beautiful day, the duckling saw a beautiful swan swimming in a nearby pond and fell in love with her. But when he remembered how his brothers and sisters made fun of him, he bent his head in shame. When he saw his own reflection in the water he could not believe his eyes. He was not an ugly duckling anymore, but a handsome, young swan! Now he understood why he had looked so different from his brothers and sisters. "They were ducklings, but I was a baby swan!" He married the beautiful swan and they lived happy ever after.

This is a fun game that you can play with your family or friends. Place one egg per player on the ground. You could use hard boiled eggs, plastic eggs or another small round object (for example, a ball of tin foil). Players have to squat down, tucking their hands under armpits, so they look like a duck! Decide where the nest is going to be – this will be the place you need to get the egg back to, to win the game. You must play this game as a duck, so you cannot use your hands to pick up the egg, but will need to find other ways to get the egg back to the nest. You could kick it with your foot, without standing up, or butting it with your head or elbow. The first player to get an egg back to the nest is the winner!