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# The Magpie Girl

Narrative

## Inferential

### Warm up Questions:

- Which bird is the main character of this story associated with? (magpie)
- What is this bird well known for? (attracted to bright, shiny objects) How might this knowledge inform you about the girl's character? (she liked bright, shiny things too)

### Main Questions:

1. How does the writer describe the apples? (they shone like rubies) Why? (the juicy apples look precious in the girl's eyes)
2. Underline the line the magpie girl speaks. (It's only one apple. It's only one apple.) Do you think she says these words out loud or in her head? (in her head) Why do you think she repeats this sentence? (she is trying to convince herself that stealing one apple isn't so bad)
3. Do you think the woman buying the apples is rich or poor? (rich)
4. Why do you think the writer includes this character? (to emphasise the difference between her and the magpie girl)
5. There are seven apples in the story. Who owns them? (the lady had six, the magpie girl had one) Why do you think the writer gave the seventh apple to the magpie girl? (the seventh magpie in the poem had a secret, as was her stealing)
6. How do we know how she feels about stealing? (she knew that the apple would not taste as sweet as the stallholder had promised)
7. Why does the magpie girl think a stolen apple will taste differently from one bought? (she will feel guilty eating it)

### Essential Vocabulary:

- What word does the writer use to describe the magpie girl's eyes? (heavy) Does this suggest she is tired or wide-awake, happy or sad? (tired and sad)
- Which words does the writer use to describe how her dreams disappeared? (floated away) Does this suggest they disappeared quickly or slowly? (slowly)
- Highlight the word 'blur'. Write it on your wipe board and blur it. Why do you think the writer likens this word to fog? (it becomes indistinct like things do in fog)
- Which words are written in italics? (only one) Why do you think they are written in this way? (to stress repetition)
- Circle the word 'nudged'. Show your teacher how you might 'nudge' someone.
- Do you think the woman was nudged by accident or on purpose?
- Highlight the word 'bustled'. What do you think this word means? (was busy, crowded)

### Evaluative Questions:

- Was it right for the magpie girl to steal the apple?
- Why do you think the writer included the poem at the start of this story?
- Why do you think the writer set this scene on a cold, wet December evening?
- Highlight the most important line in this part of the story. (the final sentence) What do you think the writer is trying to say? Do you agree or disagree? Why?

# The Magpie Girl

One for sorrow, two for joy,  
Three for a girl and four for a boy.  
Five for silver, six for gold,  
Seven for a secret never to be told.

Her heavy eyes fixed themselves on the apples across the cobbled street, as they shone like rubies in the setting December sun.

The cold air nipped at her fingers and bit at her toes and her frosted breath drifted away in much the same way her dreams had done many moons before.

'Come on ladies. Get your apples. Get your juicy apples'.

The winter rain made her hair cling to her face and her rags cling to her body.

'Come on now, tuppence ha'penny for four. A bargain I tell you'.

The cries of the stallholder started to blur, as though a fog was wrapping itself around his words. And all she could think about was that for the first time that day she was going to have something to eat.

*'It's only one apple. It's only one apple.'*

The street bustled with people heading home to a dry set of clothes and a hot meal.

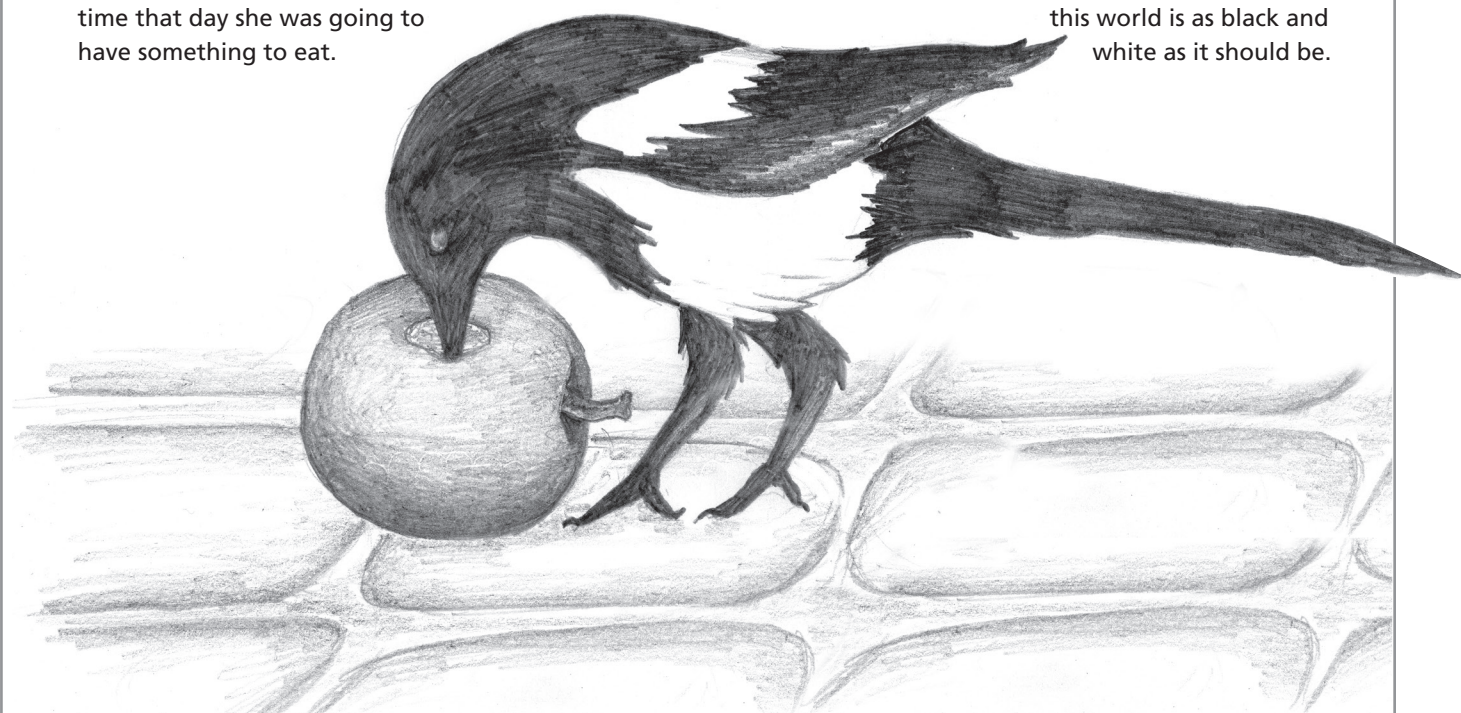
*'God bless you ma'am. Six apples it is'.*

The apples rustled in the brown paper bag as the lady, dressed in pale blue, hid beneath her umbrella.

A passer-by nudged her arm and two shillings fell to the floor.

*'Not to worry ma'am, allow me'.*

The magpie girl reached for the nearest apple and hid it under her shawl. She knew that the apple would no longer taste as sweet as the stallholder had promised, but at least she would eat. Life was starting to teach her the hard way that not everything in this world is as black and white as it should be.



# The Magpie Girl

One for sorrow, two for joy,  
Three for a girl and four for a boy.  
Five for silver, six for gold,  
Seven for a secret never to be told.

Her heavy eyes stared at the apples across the street as they shone like rubies in the setting December sun.

The cold air nipped at her fingers and bit at her toes and her frosted breath floated away just as her dreams had done many moons ago.

'Come on ladies. Get your apples. Get your lovely apples'.

The winter rain made her hair cling to her face and her rags cling to her body.

'Come on now, tuppence ha'penny for four juicy apples'.

The cries of the stallholder started to blur, as if a fog was wrapping itself around his words. And all she could think about was that for the first time that day she was going to eat.

'It's *only one* apple. It's *only one* apple.'

The street bustled with people running home to put on dry clothes and have a hot meal.

'God bless you madam. Six apples it is'.

The apples rustled in the brown paper bag as the lady, dressed in pale blue, hid under her umbrella.

Somebody nudged her arm and two shillings fell to the floor.

'Not to worry madam, allow me'.

The magpie girl reached for the nearest apple and hid it under her shawl. She knew that the apple would not taste as sweet as the stallholder had promised, but at least she would eat. Life was starting to teach her the hard way that not everything in this world is as black and white as it should be.





# The Magpie Girl

One for sorrow, two for joy,  
Three for a girl and four for a boy.  
Five for silver, six for gold,  
Seven for a secret never to be told.

Her heavy eyes fixed themselves on the apples across the cobbled street and, though a crowd of people stood between her and the market stall, she could still glimpse them shining like rubies in the setting December sun.

The cold air nipped at her fingers and bit at her toes and her frosted breath drifted away in much the same way her dreams had done many moons before.

'Come on ladies. Get your apples. Get your juicy apples'.

The winter rain made her hair cling to her face and her rags cling to her body.

'Come on now, tuppence ha'penny for four. A bargain if ever I heard one'.

The cries of the stallholder became blurry, as though a fog had wrapped itself around his words. And all she could think about was that for the first time that day she was going to have something to eat.

'It's *only one* apple. It's *only one* apple.'

The street bustled with people heading home to a dry set of clothes and a piping hot meal.

'God bless you ma'am. Six apples it is'.

The apples rustled in the brown paper bag as the lady, dressed in pale blue, sheltered underneath her umbrella.

A passer-by nudged her arm and two shillings fell to the floor.

'Not to worry ma'am, allow me'.

The magpie girl reached for the nearest apple and hid it under her shawl. She knew that by doing so the apple would no longer taste as sweet as the stallholder had promised, but at least she would eat. Life was beginning to teach her the hard way that not everything in this world is as black and white as it should be.

