

# story time

with Jill Haywood

## Vocabulary

tip - punta  
however - però  
wings - ales  
everything - tot  
hare - llibre  
fairy - fada  
outskirts - les afores  
nudge - petita empenta



### Oberon the owl

It was a dark night in the forest. All the humans had gone home to sleep. The humans made a lot of noise in the forest during the day but Oberon the owl slept high up in his tree and heard nothing. At night, however, Oberon heard everything!

There was a new moon tonight, not giving enough light for humans to see but Oberon's beautiful orange eyes with their large black pupils could see lots of things happening in his forest.

Oberon opened his eyes wide and stretched his wings. He shook his feathers. Oberon's wings were very long and powerful. When he flew, his wings measured 180cms from **tip** to tip.

He listened to the sounds from the forest. He could hear the water in the river to the east, he could hear a fox walking near his tree. He could hear some **hares** playing near the edge of the forest. He could hear a family of badgers near their den, looking for insects to eat.

During the day the forest was a different place. There were humans having picnics, enjoying walks among the trees, picking mushrooms etc. but at night

the forest was enchanted. It was a magical place, home to animals, birds and even **fairies**. Some of the trees in the oldest part of the forest had tiny doors near the roots. These trees were hundreds of years old and very special. The doors led into the fairy world. Oberon **hardly ever** saw the fairies but sometimes he heard them singing.



Oberon jumped from his tree and flew in circles over his forest. He flew to the north, the south, the east and the west. It was a quiet peaceful night.

Oberon saw something blue on the forest floor. He flew closer to investigate. He landed on a branch just above. He looked down. It was a young human child. Far too young to be in the enchanted forest at night. Oberon hooted softly, “Hooo hooo!” but the little boy was fast asleep. “Hooo Hoooo!” repeated Oberon, but the boy did not move.

Oberon went to find the hares and called to them, “**Come and watch the human child.**”

The hares came quickly and sat near the child.

Oberon returned to his branch and sat to think. Oberon was king of the forest and knew everything and everyone in the forest but he knew nothing of the nearby village. Who could help the child? “**Ah!**” he thought, “**Fox will know where the child is from. He often goes into the village at night.**”

Oberon flew to find Fox and called to him, “**Fox there is a young human who needs your help. You must help him to find the way home to his house.**”

Oberon returned to the child and Fox followed him back to the young boy.

The young boy in the blue coat was still sleeping. Fox smiled.

“**I know where this boy lives. It’s a farm to the west of the forest on the outskirts.**”

“**Take him home!**” ordered Oberon. “**It is not safe for the young child in the forest.**”

Fox nudged the child’s arm with his nose. The child woke up and began to cry. Fox bit the child’s jacket and pulled. The young boy followed. A few minutes later Fox and the boy had reached the boy’s garden. When the boy recognised his house, he ran to the door and disappeared inside. His parents were sleeping and knew nothing of their son’s adventures.

Fox returned to the forest, happy that the young human was safe.

Oberon watched from above.

All was well in the enchanted forest.

“Goodnight!” hooted Oberon softly. “Hoooh hoooo!”

#### Owl fact file

Eagle Owls will eat almost anything they move - from beetles to roe deer fawns, mammals (Voles, rats, mice, foxes, hares etc...), but birds of all kinds are also taken, including crows, ducks, grouse, seabirds, and even other birds of prey (including other owls). Other prey taken include snakes, lizards, frogs, fish, and crabs.

Females can grow to a total length of 56 to 75 cm, with a wingspan of 131–188 cm, weighing from 1550–4200g males being slightly smaller.

Owls can live around 20 years in the wild and around 60 in captivity