

**Kate Chopin Thomas Hardy
Washington Irving D.H. Lawrence
Bram Stoker**

FREEDOM IS MY DREAM



Downloadable
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Files**

Readers



Young Adult

Classic

Book brief

- 1 Five stories by five different authors, one Irish, two British and two American, all from different backgrounds, but with one thing in common, the theme of freedom.
- 2 Each story is set in a different period and place, in which the protagonists find themselves in situations that stop them from being free to live their life as they wish.
- 3 Each author deals with the theme of freedom in a different way. Some of the stories are funny and full of irony, some tragic, while others include magical, fantastic elements.
- 4 The protagonists are often unable to live the life they want because they must do what society or others expect of them.
- 5 Apart from freedom, other themes in these stories include moving forward, beauty, class background, tyranny, love, marriage and relationships.

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Main Characters

Rip Van Winkle

Rip

*All Rip wants
is a quiet life.*

The Son's Veto

Sophy

*Sophy is a prisoner of a social class
that she doesn't belong to.*

The Crystal Cup

The Artist

*A young artist held prisoner
by a king obsessed with beauty.*

The Story of an Hour

Louise Mallard

*Louise imagines a life of freedom
without her husband.*

Things

Erasmus and Valerie

*Erasmus and Valerie
are in love with everything
that is beautiful.*

Focus on...

Washington Irving

Washington Irving was an American short story writer, historian and diplomat. He is considered by many as the 'first American Man of Letters', and is best known for his short stories, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, and *Rip Van Winkle*, which is included in this anthology. These are often referred to as the first American short stories.

Early life and family

1783

Washington Irving was born on April 3, 1783 in New York, USA, the same week that people in New York found out that the American Revolution had ended, so his mother named him after George Washington. Washington's father William was

originally from the Scottish Orkney Islands, while his mother Sarah was from Cornwall in England. The couple settled in Manhattan with their family. Washington was the youngest of their eleven children and everyone's favourite.

1789

He actually met George Washington when he was six years old in New York. This meeting can be seen in a small painting that still hangs in what was once Washington Irving's home called Sunnyside.

1798

When New York was hit by yellow fever in 1798, Washington's parents sent him to stay with a friend in Tarrytown, about 40km away. It was here that he got to know the village of Sleepy Hollow, which became the setting of one of his most famous stories, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.



Education and First Writings

1802

Washington was given a private education, but he wasn't particularly interested in studying and didn't go to college like his brothers. When he was nineteen, he started writing essays for a newspaper called the *Morning Chronicle*, where one of his brothers worked. These essays commented on Manhattan society, and were quite a success.

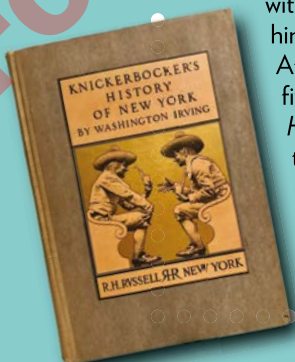
His One and Only Love

1806

Josiah Ogden Hoffman, a famous judge and lawyer in Manhattan, as well as a family friend, offered Washington the chance to study law with him. Washington just managed to pass his law exams in 1806, but he was still more interested in earning a living as a writer.

1808

Hoffman had a daughter, Matilda, who was eight years younger than Washington. At first, they were just friends, but by the autumn of 1808, everyone realised that Washington had fallen in love with Matilda. Judge Hoffmann agreed to them getting married, as long as Washington had a good job that would give his daughter a comfortable life. Washington tried to work hard as a lawyer, now that he was engaged to Matilda, but his heart wasn't in it. He started a magazine, *Salmagundi*, with some friends, but it didn't sell enough for him to be able to support a family. At the same time Washington, now twenty-five years old, was writing his first book, *A History of New York from the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty*. He hoped that this book would earn him enough money to be able to marry his sweet Matilda.



1809

However, in February 1809, Matilda caught a very bad cold that quickly got worse. Washington was at her bedside when she died just two months

later on April 26, 1809 at the age of seventeen. That same year in December, Washington published his first book, and it was an immediate success.

Writing for a Living

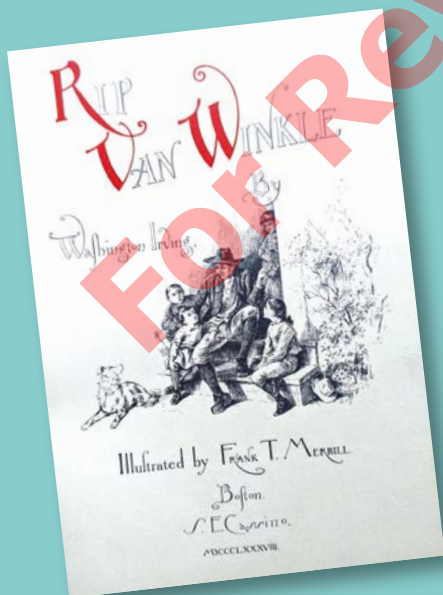
1818

With the success of his first book and money from his father, Washington was able to live a comfortable life. However, in 1818, the family business had to close, and suddenly he had to support himself. He started to work on what would be his most famous book, a collection of short stories and essays called *The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon*.



1819

The book was published in June 1819. Most of the pieces in it were descriptions of England, where he'd spent some time after Matilda's death. It also included his two most famous stories, *Rip Van Winkle* and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.



Later Life

Washington never married and hardly ever spoke of Matilda, except in a letter to a friend, in which he wrote:

"I could not even mention her name; but her image was continually before me, and I dreamt of her incessantly."

1835

He spent the last twenty-four years of his life in Tarrytown, New York, where he bought his famous home, known as Sunnyside, in 1835. He continued to write, even if he wasn't as popular as before.



1859

He died of a heart attack at Sunnyside in 1859 and was buried in Sleepy Hollow.

Many people still visit Sunnyside to learn about Washington Irving and how he became America's first internationally famous author.

Pre-Reading Activities

Reading Comprehension

B1 PRELIMINARY

- 1 Read about the story of *Rip Van Winkle*. Choose the best answer, A, B, C or D to complete the text.

The story opens with a note telling us that what we are about to read (1) written by a historian called Diedrich Knickerbocker, who got his information from Dutch families who (2) to live in a village at the foot of the Kaatskill Mountains near the Hudson River. This immediately introduces questions (3) the difference between history and storytelling.



Then Knickerbocker's story starts with a poem by Cartwright about truth, (4) the story that follows seems more like something magical and definitely unreal. During the story, the main character, Rip Van Winkle, meets a group of strangers in the mountains (5) in old-fashioned clothes, which immediately gives us the idea that they might be ghosts. After being with them, Rip falls asleep and wakes up twenty years (6) to find that a lot has changed in his village, and that he has missed the American Revolution. At (7) nobody believes Rip's story, then Knickerbocker explains in a note at the end, that even after many years, Rip still remembered (8) detail of his story, which, he says, shows it must be true.

- | | | | |
|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1 A has | B was | C is | D have |
| 2 A could | B must | C used | D did |
| 3 A about | B for | C to | D from |
| 4 A so | B while | C even | D and |
| 5 A worn | B put | C got | D dressed |
| 6 A ago | B before | C later | D away |
| 7 A last | B once | C length | D first |
| 8 A every | B many | C few | D some |

2 How much do you know about the American Revolution? Work with a partner and answer the following questions. Use the Internet to help you.

- 1 When did the American War of Independence start?
- 2 How many colonies took part in the revolution?
- 3 Which country controlled these colonies before the war?
- 4 Who was the leader of the revolution?
- 5 Who did the Americans get help from?
- 6 When did the American War of Independence end?



Listening

3 Listen to the start of *Rip Van Winkle* and decide if the following sentences are true (T) or false (F).

- 1 The Kaatskill Mountains are the same colour all year round.
- 2 People from Holland came to live in this area many years ago.
- 3 Nobody in the village really liked Rip Van Winkle.
- 4 He had the best farm in the area.
- 5 His wife was often very angry with him.
- 6 Rip's dog was called 'Wolf'.
- 7 The dog wasn't afraid of Rip's wife.

T	F
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐

Washington Irving

Rip Van Winkle

This quotation is called an epigraph. It is used by Irving to introduce the reader to the story and set the tone. It is taken from William Cartwright's comedy, *The Ordinary* (1651).

Knickerbocker is the fictional historian who tells the story.

With this introduction, the author wants the reader to believe that Rip Van Winkle is a true story.

*By Woden, God of Saxons,
From whence comes Wednesday, that is Wodensday.
Truth is a thing that ever I will keep
Unto thylke day in which I creep into
My sepulchre—*

Cartwright.

INTRODUCTION

This story about Rip Van Winkle was found among the papers of the late* Diedrich Knickerbocker, an old gentleman from New York who loved the history of the first Dutch settlers* in this area. Rather than studying books on the subject, he preferred to talk to the settlers, who knew all the legends*, which were an important part of the true history of the place. His complete work was published some years ago, and is considered as accurate* as any history book on the subject.

* * *

late (here) already dead

settler a person who moves with a group to live in a new country or area

legend a traditional story about the past that nobody knows if it's true or not

accurate exact, correct

Rip Van Winkle

▶ 2 The Kaatskill Mountains rise high above the Hudson River and the countryside around it. They seem magical, changing color and shape according to the seasons. Many years ago, when this area was under British Rule, a simple, friendly man called Rip Van Winkle lived in a village dating back to the first Dutch settlers, at the foot of these fairy mountains.

The Kaatskill Mountains are called the Catskills nowadays.

The British controlled parts of America from 1607 to 1783.

The word 'fairy' tells the reader that there will be something magical about the story.

Unlike his ancestors*, who in the past had fought hard for their land, Rip had a much gentler character. He was always ready to lend a helping hand, which made him one of the most popular men in the village. His only problem was his wife, who was a real tyrant*. This earned him the sympathy* of all the villagers for being a hen-pecked* husband. He was also a favorite among the village children, who loved it when he made them things to play with. Even the dogs in the village never growled* at him.

Everyone seems to adore Rip Van Winkle including the writer, except of course, his wife. The fact that she is described as a tyrant shows that the writer is on Rip's side.

However, instead of doing any kind of real work to earn a living, Rip would disappear for hours hunting in the woods. The result was that his children were always dressed in rags*, and his farm was the worst kept in the area. This might make some think that Rip was lazy, but he never refused to help his neighbors, even with hard jobs, and he also did lots of little jobs for the village women, the kind that their own husbands refused to do. In other words, Rip was willing to do anything for anybody except look after his own farm and family, which obviously didn't please his wife much. She would shout and scream at the poor man from morning to night, but Rip never argued back. He would simply shrug* his shoulders and go outside – the outside of the house being the only part that belonged to a hen-pecked husband like him.

ancestor a family member from a long time ago
tyrant a person who uses cruel power to control others
sympathy feeling sorry for someone
hen-pecked (husband) a man who's bullied by his wife

growl (dog) make a low, angry sound in the throat
rags (here) dirty, old, torn clothes
shrug lift your shoulders for a moment to show you don't care



The only one in the family on Rip's side was his dog Wolf. Wolf was as hen-pecked as his master*, because Dame Van Winkle often blamed the dog for leading Rip astray*. Wolf was full of courage in the woods, but back home he was terrified of Dame Van Winkle. 



As his wife's tongue got sharper and sharper over years of marriage, Rip spent more and more time at the small inn in the village that belonged to Nicholas Vedder. Here he found a group of wise men, who sat chatting about nothing all day long under a picture of His Majesty George the Third. Then his wife would spoil everything by suddenly appearing and angrily telling the other men that they were encouraging her husband to be lazy. At this point, all Rip could do was to follow her home like a dog following its master.

His Majesty George the Third was king of Britain between 1760 and 1820.

Poor Rip began to go more often to the woods with Wolf, as it was the only way to avoid the work to be done on the farm and his wife's tongue. On these trips, he shared the little food he had with his faithful* friend. "Poor Wolf," he said one day, "your mistress makes you lead a dog's life, but as long as I live, you'll always have me as a friend." Wolf couldn't speak, but from his eyes you could tell that he was thinking the exact same thing.

The expression 'lead a dog's life' is usually used to describe someone who has a very unhappy, unpleasant life. Here it's funny because Rip is actually talking to his dog.

One autumn day in the woods, Rip reached one of the highest parts of the Kaatskill Mountains. He put down his rifle and sat on a rock to rest, looking at the Hudson River far away below him. Then, just as it was starting to get dark, Rip heard a voice in the distance shouting, "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" Looking down at the narrow valley, Rip could see a man climbing slowly up towards him. The stranger was carrying something heavy on his back, so

master (here) a dog's owner
astray (here) away from the correct behaviour

faithful always ready to defend you



Washington Irving

Rip hurried down to help him. As he got nearer, Rip was even more surprised by the man's appearance. He was a short, stout* old man with thick, bushy* hair and an untidy gray beard. He was wearing old-fashioned Dutch clothes, like the ones worn by the first Dutch settlers to the area.

The old man had a keg* full of liquor* on his shoulder, which he immediately gave to Rip to carry. Although Rip didn't know quite what to make of this stranger, he did as he was told and followed him up the narrow path. As they were climbing, Rip heard a noise like thunder several times, which seemed to come from a deep hollow* between the high rocks.

The narrow path suddenly opened out to a small semi-circular space like an amphitheater, surrounded by tall, steep rocks. Here, Rip was amazed to see a group of strangely dressed men playing ninepins. They wore short doublets with long knives in their belts, enormous breeches*, and unusual hats. Each one had small eyes, a big nose and a long beard. They reminded Rip of the figures in an old Flemish painting he'd once seen. Everyone was serious and silent. The only sound was the noise of the balls echoing* in the mountains, that same sound like thunder that Rip had heard before.

When this strange group noticed Rip, they looked hard at him, and he felt quite terrified. Then they gestured* to him to serve them the drink in the keg. Rip was so scared that his hands shook, but the men said nothing, drank quickly, and got back to their game.

After some time, Rip slowly began to relax, and while nobody was looking, he too drank some of the liquor from the keg. It tasted so

Rip is helpful as usual even if he doesn't really know what to think of this stranger, and if he can trust him or not.

In modern English, ninepins is called bowling.

A doublet is a man's short jacket, commonly worn from the 14th to the 17th century. The whole description of these strange people gives us the idea of something magical like you find in a fairy tale.

stout of heavy build
bushy (here) untidy, out of control



keg
liquor strong drink
hollow (here) space

breeches short trousers tied just below the knee

echo a sound that comes back to you
gesture make a movement to show what you want

good that he went back to it several times until his head began to swim. Then he fell into a deep sleep.

When he woke up in the bright morning sun, Rip found himself in the exact same place where he'd first looked down the valley at the man with the keg. He remembered everything that had happened the previous night, especially the keg. He trembled* at the thought of how he'd explain about being out all night to his tyrant wife. He looked around for his rifle, and was surprised to see that there was an old broken one in its place. He thought the strange group from the night before were to blame. Wolf had disappeared too, so he decided to go back to the amphitheater to look for his dog and rifle.

As he stood up, his legs felt stiff*, as if he hadn't walked for a long time. He slowly made his way towards the path he'd climbed up the day before. What a surprise he got when he saw that the path was now a stream! He managed somehow to climb up it, holding onto the rocks on either side. At the top, instead of the opening that had led into the amphitheater, there was now a high wall of rock! Water came rushing* over it, forming a deep, wide pool in the dark shadows of the surrounding trees. Poor Rip couldn't believe his eyes! He called Wolf again and again, but his once faithful friend had deserted* him. All he could do now was go home, face his angry wife, and have his breakfast.

On his way to the village, he met a few people, but he didn't recognize any of them. Wondering why they were staring* at him in such a strange way, Rip touched his face and discovered that his beard had grown a foot long! Then, when he finally arrived at the

1 foot is about 30.48 cm.
The fact that his beard has grown so long tells us that a long time has passed since he fell asleep after being with the strange people in the amphitheater.

tremble shake
stiff (here) difficult to move
rush (here) move quickly

desert leave someone all alone
stare look at someone/thing for a long time



The fact that Rip's clothes are old-fashioned and torn, also tells us that he has slept a lot longer than he thinks.

While Rip was sleeping, America fought Britain for its independence from British Rule. (1775-1783). The flag is the US flag with the first stars and stripes. On the original flag, there were 13 stripes and 13 stars.

General Washington refers to George Washington, the first president of the United States from 1789 to 1797.

Here Rip is referring to King George of Britain which makes the crowd angry.

village, a crowd of children, he'd never seen before, ran behind him shouting at him and pulling at his old-fashioned, torn clothes. Even the dogs growled angrily at him!

The village had changed too! There were rows of houses he'd never seen before, with strange names on the doors and strange faces at the windows. Rip began to think that he might be in the wrong place, but looking around him, he saw the Hudson River and the Kaatskill Mountains where they'd always been, so this had to be the village he'd left just the day before! "That drink last night must have been really strong," he thought.

On arriving at his home, he expected to hear his wife shouting, but the house was in ruins, and there was nobody there except a half-starved* dog that looked like Wolf. Rip called him by name, but the dog showed its teeth and ran away. "My very dog has forgotten me!" said Rip sadly. Feeling more and more desperate, Rip hurried to the village inn, but it too was gone, and in its place was a large wooden building with a sign saying, "The Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle", and a flag with stars and stripes on it. Instead of the picture of King George, there was one of someone called General Washington!

A crowd had gathered*, all curious* to know who this strange old man was. Rip looked around at this sea of faces. There wasn't one that he recognized. When asked who he was, Rip replied, "I'm a poor quiet man of this village and a loyal subject of the King, God bless him!" The crowd started shouting until an elderly, important-looking man managed to calm them down, and asked Rip what he wanted. Poor Rip asked him where his old friends like Nicholas Vedder were.

half-starved not having had enough food
gather (here) come together

curious wanting to know more



Stop & Check

1 Choose the best answer, A, B or C, about the story of Rip Van Winkle.

- 1 Rip used to spend a lot of his time chatting at the village
A church **B** school **C** inn
- 2 Rip met a stranger in the woods in
A spring **B** autumn **C** winter
- 3 The stranger was short and stout with
A bushy hair **B** blue eyes **C** a red beard
- 4 Some men were playing in a hollow between the rocks.
A cards **B** ninepins **C** chess
- 5 These men all had
A big eyes **B** a gun **C** a long knife
- 6 Rip fell asleep after too much.
A eating **B** drinking **C** climbing
- 7 When Rip woke up, it was
A sunny **B** foggy **C** snowing

Speaking

2 Discuss the following questions with a partner and write your answers.

- 1 What had happened to his dog, his rifle and the path while Rip was sleeping?
.....
- 2 Why did the people he met stare at him in a strange way?
.....
- 3 How had his village changed since he'd been asleep?
.....
- 4 What did he find when he reached his home?
.....
- 5 What did he find instead of the inn?
.....
- 6 Who was the young woman with a baby?
.....
- 7 Who did Peter Vanderdonk think Rip had met in the mountains?
.....

3 Complete the text from the story with one word for each space.

To cut a long story short, the crowd seemed satisfied (1) this explanation, and Rip's daughter took him home to live with her and her family in their cozy little house. His daughter's husband was a strong, hard-working farmer, so this left Rip free to go (2) walks and chat to his new friends at the inn. Here, they told (3) about everything that had happened while he'd slept for twenty years, especially that he was now a free citizen of the United States. To be honest, the (4) important thing for Rip was that he was now free from his wife's tyranny and could do whatever he wanted.

He used to tell his story to every stranger that arrived at Mr. Doolittle's hotel, and everyone in the village knew it by heart. Even (5) this day, when they hear a thunderstorm, they say it's Hendrick Hudson playing ninepins with his men in the Kaatskill mountains, and many hen-pecked husbands wish they could have a drink out (6) Rip Van Winkle's keg.

Writing

21st Century Skills

4 Read the notice below and write your article (about 100 words). Answer all the questions.

ARTICLES WANTED

BOOKS

What kind of books do you like to read? Why?
What kind of stories did you use to like as a child? Why?
How often do you go to the library? Why?



.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Vocabulary

5 Use the photos to write sentences about the story.

1



.....

.....

2



.....

.....

3



.....

.....

4



.....

.....

5



.....

.....

6



.....

.....

Definitions

6 Match each word to the correct definition.

1 ☐ settler

2 ☐ legend

3 ☐ ancestor

4 ☐ tyrant

5 ☐ shrug

6 ☐ gesture

7 ☐ crew

8 ☐ embrace

a a person who uses cruel power to control others

b make a movement to show what you want

c lift your shoulders for a moment to show you don't care

d a group of people who work on a ship or plane

e a person who moves with a group to live in a new country or area

f a family member from a long time ago

g hold someone close in your arms

h a traditional story about the past that nobody knows if it's true or not

Speaking – Pair Work

21st Century Skills

- 7 A** Choose one of the pictures and describe it to your partner.
Answer these questions to help you.

- Who can you see in the picture?
- Where are they?
- What are they doing?
- What's the weather like?
- How do you think Rip is feeling?

- 7 B** Now compare the pictures.
Discuss what's the same and what's different about the two pictures.



Writing

- 8** Write a paragraph (about 100 words) about what you think your life will be like in twenty years' time.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Class Discussion

21st Century Skills

- 9** What changes do you think you will find in the world around you in twenty years' time? You may like to talk about the following:

- developments in AI
- space travel
- climate in your country
- your city / town

Test Yourself

Reading

1 Match the following stories you've read in this anthology to the correct titles in the table below. This story...

- 1** has historical ghosts.
- 2** describes the main characters in an ironic way.
- 3** describes the protagonist's unexpected reaction.
- 4** has a happy ending with the protagonist freed from tyranny.
- 5** takes place in different countries.
- 6** talks about the power of art and beauty.
- 7** describes problems to do with social class.
- 8** refers to an important event in American history.
- 9** is entirely set inside the protagonist's home.
- 10** is about a love story with an unhappy ending.

Title	Descriptions
Rip Van Winkle	
The Crystal Cup	
The Son's Veto	
Things	
The Story of an Hour	

Writing – Analytical Thinking

2 Write a short analysis about the theme of freedom in each of the stories.

1 *Rip Van Winkle*

.....
.....

2 *The Crystal Cup*

.....
.....

3 *The Son's Veto*

.....
.....

4 Things

5 The Story of an Hour

Speaking – Pair Work

3 Look at the pictures from the 5 stories and take turns at describing them with your partner. Answer these questions about each picture to help you.

- Which story is the picture from?
- What can you see in the picture?
- Is the scene inside or outside?
- Which part of the story does the picture describe?
- What can you see in the background?
- How does the picture make you feel? Why?
- How important is this picture to the story?

