



Oxford  
Reading  
Tree

# The Willow Pattern Plot



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### **What's this story about?**

Nadim buys a willow pattern plate. The key takes them to the land of the willow pattern where they meet Kim Shee. She is sad because her father wants her to marry a rich man but she wants to marry Chang. The children help her.

### **Talk together**

Talk about the willow pattern on page 2. Explain how it is a popular design on plates and teacups, and that it tells the Willow Pattern story.

### **Read the story**

**W** = Word recognition   **G** = Language comprehension

- G** Look through the pictures. Ask, "Why are the illustrations in blue and white?"
- W** Page 1, some children might misread 'bought' and 'brought'. Talk about their different meanings.
- G** Page 11, ask, "Why was the girl crying?"
- G** Page 15, ask, "Why do they need to run away?"
- G** Page 20, ask, "What do you think Nadim's idea might be?"
- G** Page 22, ask, "What do you think the sash will be used for?"
- G** Page 30, ask, "How will the children get away?"



Biff and Chip were at a car boot sale.  
They saw Nadim.

“Nadim! Over here!” called Biff.  
Nadim ran to see them. He had bought  
something at the sale.





It was a blue and white plate. He showed it to Biff and Chip.

“It’s a present for my mum,” said Nadim. “It’s a willow pattern plate. My mum collects them.”



“Why is it called a willow pattern plate?” asked Chip.

“I don’t know,” said Nadim, “but I think the pattern tells a story.”

“I wonder what the story is,” said Biff.



Mum and Dad looked at Nadim's plate.  
"It's a present for my mum," said Nadim.  
Biff asked if Nadim could come and play.  
So Nadim went to play with Biff and Chip.





They went up to Biff's bedroom.  
"What shall we play?" asked Nadim.  
"I don't know," said Biff.  
Suddenly, the key began to glow.



The magic took the children into a new adventure.

“What’s happening?” called Nadim.

“Help!” said Biff. “Everything is going blue!”





“What a strange place!” said Chip.  
“What strange trees!”

“Everything looks blue and white,”  
said Nadim. “We’re in the land of the  
willow pattern.”



They were in a big garden. It had a high wall all round it and green trees grew everywhere.

"I can see water," said Biff. "Is the garden next to the sea?"



“No, it’s next to a lake,” said Nadim.

“There’s a bridge,” said Biff. “It’s like the one on the plate.”

“I can see a little house down by the water,” said Chip.





Down by the lake they saw a girl. She was all alone.

“She looks unhappy,” said Biff. “Why is she all alone and why is she crying?”



The girl was called Kim Shee. She lived in the little house by the lake. She had a cruel father. He would not let her go out of the garden.



Kim loved a boy called Chang. She wanted to marry him. But Chang was too poor. Kim's father wanted her to marry a rich man, but Kim loved Chang.





Kim Shee heard Chang calling.

"Kim Shee," he called. "Are you alone?"

"Chang!" said Kim. "How did you get here?"

"I swam across the lake," said Chang.  
"Nobody saw me."



“Oh!” said Kim. “You are cold and wet.”

“It does not matter,” said Chang. But Kim Shee was afraid.

“You must go away,” she said. “My father must not see you here.”



“This garden is like a prison,” said Chang. “Your father never lets you go out.”

“But what can we do?” asked Kim.

“We must run away,” said Chang.  
“Then I can marry you.”





“But how can I leave the garden?” asked Kim. “There are guards everywhere.”

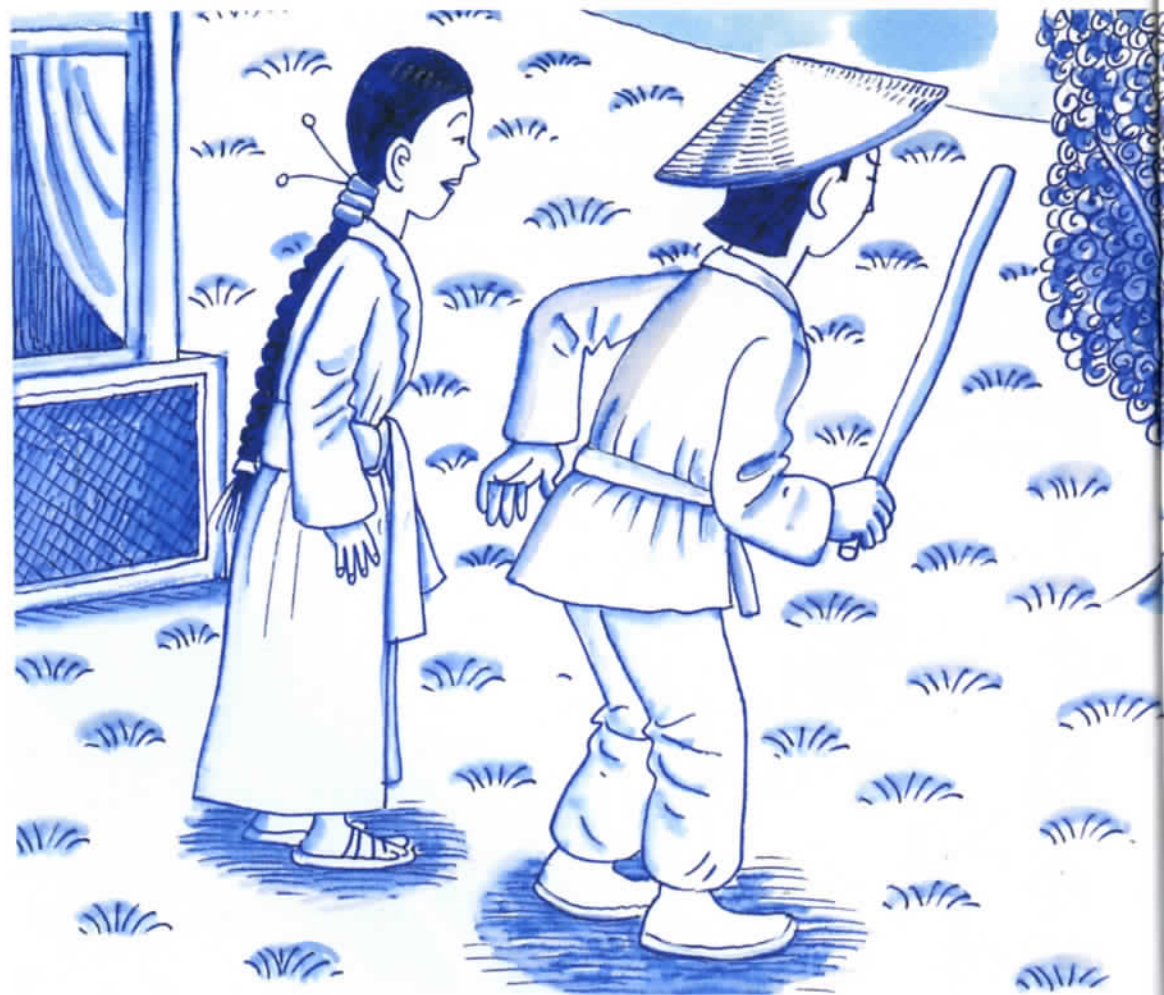
“Don’t worry,” said Chang. “I will think of something.”



Kim heard the sound of a twig snapping.

“Someone is watching us!” she gasped. Chang jumped to his feet. He held up a stick.

“Who is there?” he called.



Then they saw Biff, Chip and Nadim.  
“Don’t be afraid,” said Biff. “We are friends.”

“We have never seen children like you before,” gasped Chang. “How did you get into this garden?”





“We didn’t mean to listen,” said Chip,  
“but we heard what you were saying.”

“We know you want to run away,”  
said Biff.

“But how can we?” asked Kim. “There  
are guards all round the garden.”



Nadim had a good idea. He told them what it was.

“It’s a brilliant idea!” said Chip.

“I’m sure it will work,” said Biff.

“But what if we are caught?” asked Chang.



“Do you have a better idea?” asked Biff.

“No,” said Chang. “It is our only chance.”

“First, you must hide,” said Nadim.

“Then, be ready to run over the bridge,” said Chip.





“Now we must get ready,” said Nadim.

Kim had a long sash round her waist.

“Give me your sash, Kim,” said Biff. Kim gave Biff her sash. Biff tied Kim’s sash to the bridge.



There were lemon trees in the garden. Nadim and Chip climbed into one. They picked as many lemons as they could. Then they waited.



Kim and Chang hid by the bridge.  
Biff held on to the end of the sash.

"I hope Nadim's idea works," she  
thought. Nadim called from the tree.

"Willow Pattern Plot – begin!" he  
said.





Chip and Nadim began to shout at the guards.

“Come and get us!” they yelled.  
“We’re over here.”

The guards ran into the garden. They ran towards Kim Shee’s little house.



Now that the guards were in the garden, Kim Shee and Chang could escape. Someone else ran into the garden.

“My father is coming!” gasped Kim Shee.

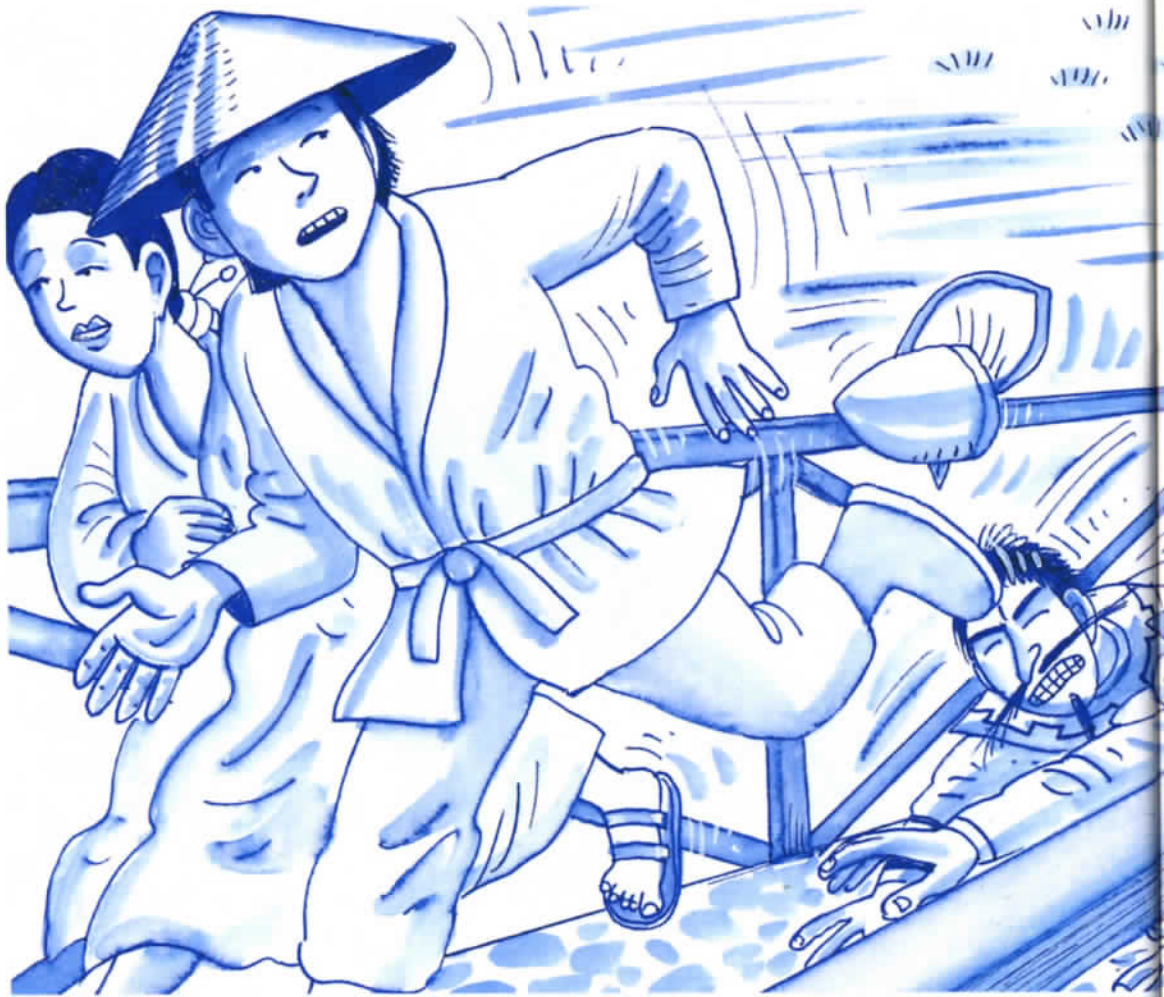


Kim and Chang began to run, but the guards saw them.

“Stop them!” shouted Kim Shee’s father.

Nadim and Chip threw the lemons at the guards.

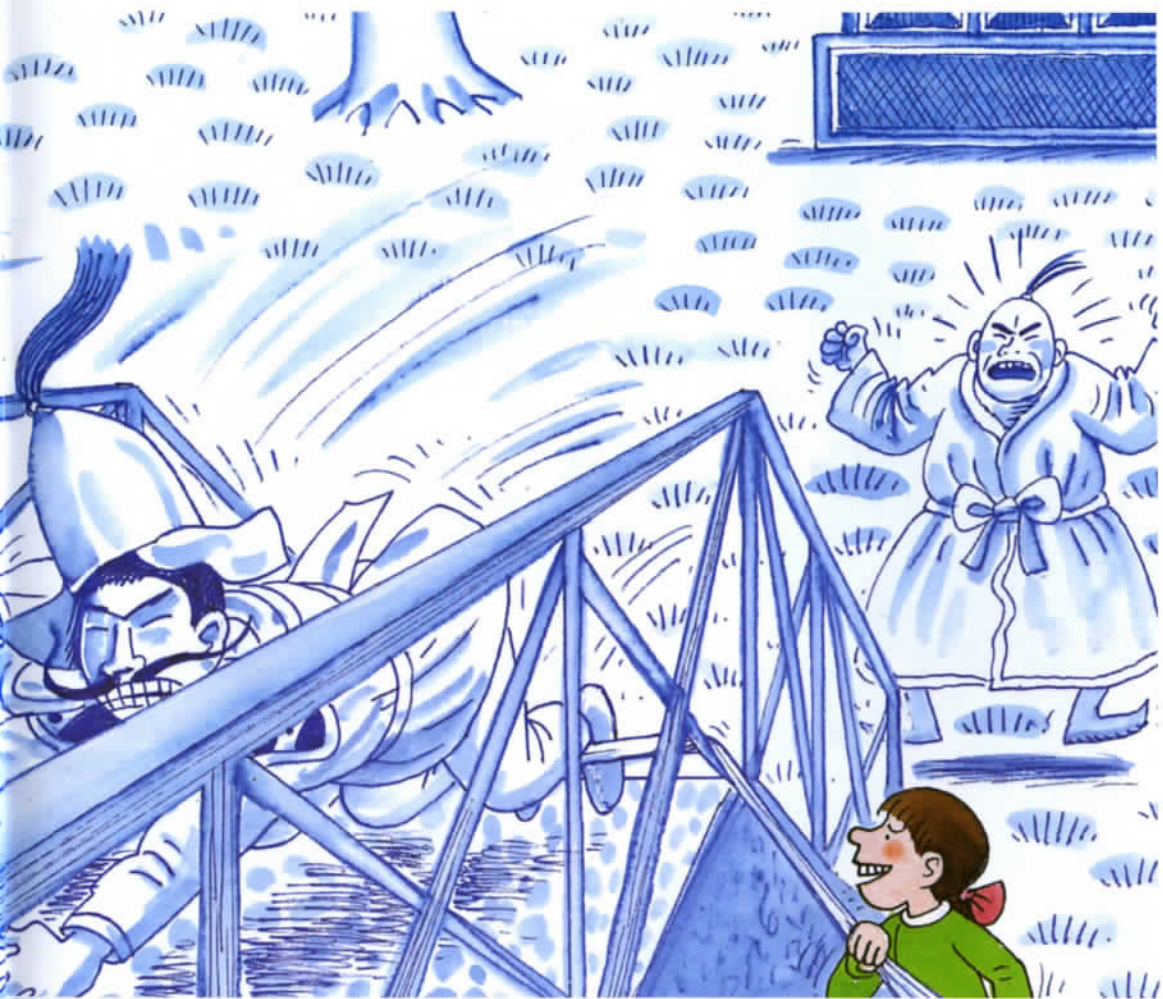




Chang and Kim Shee ran over the bridge. The guards chased after them. Biff got ready.

"I hope Kim's sash is strong!" she said.

The guards ran onto the bridge.



Biff pulled the sash tight. The guards tripped over it. They fell over with a crash.

“You fools!” shouted Kim Shee’s father.





Chip and Nadim climbed down from the lemon tree. They ran across to find Biff. Kim Shee's father saw them.

"Catch those children," he yelled.





“Well done, Biff!” said Chip. “Kim and Chang have got away!”

“I hope we get away, too,” said Biff. The magic key was glowing.

“Hooray! It’s time to go!” she said.



“What an adventure!” said Chip.  
Nadim picked up his plate and looked  
at it.

“I wonder what happened in the real  
willow pattern story,” he said.

## ***Play a game***

### ***Find a double***

***To help notice spelling patterns.***

- Choose a word with a double consonant, e.g. 'tt' in 'pattern' on pages 2–3. Say, "Find a word with double 't' on this page."
- Once they have found it, ask them to spell it.
- Have two or three turns each at choosing and finding.

### ***Other ideas***

***You can use these ideas straight away, or on another day.***

- Look for china with the willow pattern in books or on the Internet, or look at a real willow pattern plate. Find the bridge.
- Find out what happened in the original Willow Pattern story.



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into the willow pattern.



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