

## LCM Speech Festival Hong Kong 2023

Prose • 6 years

An extract from

# The Princess and the Pea

by Hans Christian Andersen

Once upon a time there was a prince who wanted to marry a princess; but she would have to be a real princess. He travelled all over the world to find one, but nowhere could he find a real one. So he came home again and was sad, for he would have liked very much to meet a real princess.

One evening there was a terrible storm; there was thunder and lightning, and the rain poured down. Suddenly a knocking was heard at the castle gate, and the king went to open it.

It was a princess standing out there. But what a sight the rain and the wind had made her look! The water ran down from her hair and clothes; it ran down into the toes of her shoes and out again at the heels. And yet she said that she was a real princess.



Well, we'll soon find out, thought the queen. She went into the bedroom, took all the bedding off the bed, and laid a pea on the bottom; then she took twenty mattresses and laid them on the pea.

On this the princess had to lie all night. In the morning, the queen asked her how she had slept.

"Oh, very badly!" she said. "I have hardly closed my eyes all night. I was lying on something so hard that I am black and blue all over my body!"

Now they knew that she was a real princess because she had felt the pea right through the twenty mattresses.