Callum:  Hello and welcome to 6 Minute English, I'm Callum Robertson and with me today is Kate, hello Kate.

Kate: Hello Callum.

Callum: Today we're going to be talking about an English legend. A man who, according to the legend, stole from the rich and gave to the poor. Who am I talking about?

Kate: That's got to be Robin Hood.

Callum: Yes, it is, Robin Hood. What do you know about Robin Hood, or the legend of Robin Hood?

Kate: Well I know that he lived in Sherwood Forest and he was the enemy of the Sheriff of Nottingham. He was an outlaw, or a bandit, and a great archer. He was also a good swordsman and was the leader of a gang of forest people otherwise known as his 'band of Merry Men'. And there have been lots and lots of films and television series about him.

Callum: Yes, that's right. In fact from what I can tell there have been over 100 different film and television versions of his story. And that's the topic of today's question. When was the first film version of the Robin Hood story? Was it:

a: 1908
b: 1918
c: 1928

Kate: Oh, that's a difficult one. I've got no idea so I'm going to guess at b: 1918

Callum: We'll find out if you're right at the end of the programme.

If you were to describe Robin Hood, what would you say?

Kate: Well what springs to mind is that he was always dressed in green and that he wore tights which are close-fitting clothes for the legs. At least that's how he was often seen in films.

Callum: The latest film version has just been released. It stars Russell Crowe as Robin Hood and he wasn't happy with this image of Robin Hood dressed in green tights. He joked that it would be difficult to fight a battle wearing tights in an English forest because you'd be worried about tearing your tights. He doesn't use the word 'tearing'. What word is used for when tights get torn?

Kate: Well we often use the expression 'getting a ladder in your tights', 'a ladder'.

Callum: Let's listen now to Russell Crowe talking about fighting in the forest in tights. What is it that he says he wanted to give the character of Robin Hood?

Russell Crowe
You've got to ask yourself the practicality of romping through the English forest wearing a pair of green tights. The proximity and number of gorse bushes and brambles and everything. Tights just don't seem to be a practical thing to wear. Hold on, stop the battle. Got a ladder, I've got a ladder again – and I just wanted to give the guy some dignity.

Callum: So Kate, what did he want to give the character?
Kate: He said he wanted "to give the guy some dignity" – "to give the guy some dignity." 'Guy' is another word for 'man'. And I think we can hear just that part again.

Russell Crowe:
… and I just wanted to give the guy some dignity.

Callum: And could you explain a little about what he means by giving him some dignity?

Kate: Well, I think he sees Robin Hood as a warrior, a fighter. And the image of him in other movies, in coloured tights doesn't really fit in with that. The image from other movies doesn't seem to take the character seriously, it doesn't give him enough respect. So I think Crowe wanted to play him in a more gritty, realistic way.

Callum: Let's listen in more detail to what he was saying. He isn't being completely serious here so some of the language he uses is interesting to look at. Here's the first part:

Russell Crowe
You've got to ask yourself the practicality of romping through the English forest wearing a pair of green tights.

Callum: So he questions the practicality of "romping through the English forest wearing a pair of green tights."

Kate: Yes, it's almost a comedy scene he describes. Romping is a word not normally used for brave and dramatic actions. And the verb 'to romp' describes playing or moving in a lively and energetic way and is more often used for animals or children rather than warriors.
Callum: He goes on to talk about some of the dangers of the English forest. Well dangers to your tights, anyway. He mentions gorse bushes and brambles. What are they?

Kate: Yes, these are kinds of plants that are common in English forests and they have small, sharp bits that can easily cut you, not a big cut, more of a scratch really.

Callum: So they could certainly do some damage to a pair of tights! Here's Russell Crowe

Russell Crowe
The proximity and number of gorse bushes and brambles and everything. Tights just don't seem to be a practical thing to wear. Hold on, stop the battle. Got a ladder, I've got a ladder again.

Callum: Kate, what's he saying here?

Kate: He's joking about the 'proximity and number' of gorse and brambles, which means that there are lots of these plants and you are always close to them so that would be a problem if you have tights. You might get a ladder and have to stop the battle to fix your tights.

Callum: Well I think that would be an important thing to think about. But I don't imagine that we will be seeing Russell Crowe wearing tights anytime soon.

Kate: No, I doubt it very much.

Callum: Let's listen again to the whole comment from Russell Crowe:

Russell Crowe
You've got to ask yourself the practicality of romping through the English forest wearing a pair of green tights. The proximity and number of gorse bushes and brambles and everything.
Tights just don't seem to be a practical thing to wear. Hold on, stop the battle. got a ladder, I've got a ladder got a ladder again – and I just wanted to give the guy some dignity.

**Callum:** That's about all we have time for in this week's programme. Before we go, the answer to this week's question which was – when was the first film about the Robin Hood story?

a: 1908  
b: 1918  
c: 1928

Kate you said:

**Kate:** I said b: 1918

**Callum:** And you were absolutely wrong. It was 1908, Robin Hood and his Merry Men.

Well that's all from today's programme, but do join us next time for another 6 Minute English. Goodbye.

**Kate:** Goodbye.