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Those responsible for the introduction of the literacy hour to primary schools stated very clearly that speaking and listening was to be at the heart of literacy. Easily said, but is it so easily done? In an attempt to reaffirm the importance of speaking and listening the QCA produced *Teaching Speaking and Listening in Key Stages 1 and 2* in 1999 (Ref QCA/99/391).

The 'Framework for planning' in this document, while quite prescriptive, is not overly descriptive and leaves much to the imagination. In principle that is an excellent thing, but in practice finding time to flesh out the bare bones of someone else's plans can simply become another burden.

The three books in this series offer practical examples of the fleshed out framework. Organising and managing speaking and listening in the classroom calls for careful planning, which takes time. We hope that the series of lessons in these books will provide ideas for such planning.

The importance of drama

Drama is one of the first art forms that children experiment with. From the earliest age they act out imagined situations and put themselves, sometimes literally, in other people's shoes. By the time they come to school they are often very good at it.



Speaking and listening, reading and writing, studying almost any area of the curriculum, can be enhanced by setting the work within a fictional or dramatic context. Meeting a bear in its cave can add to the fun of reading about it. Playing Red Riding Hood's mother may help a child understand something of a mother's viewpoint and concerns.

And classroom drama does not have to be high drama. Many of the drama elements in these lessons are low key affairs. What children find intriguing is working in role and, sometimes at least, working with their teacher in role.

None of this calls for highly trained acting skills. In role you are simply representing someone in an imagined situation. You can make mistakes, plead ignorance, be quite incompetent, because you are not being you. You are representing someone else. It is acceptable, indeed it is good, to ask the children what you should say and do in role. You are giving them responsibility and making things easier for yourself.

Using themes

The National Curriculum has, in some cases, tended to reduce teaching to a set of unconnected activities. What these books attempt to do is to recover the connections. There is a thematic core to each of the sets of lessons and, while focusing on the objectives for speaking and listening as outlined in the QCA framework, we try to link them to reading and writing and to other areas of the curriculum, not as disparate exercises but within a unified context.

We have called each set of objectives as laid out in the framework Lessons One, Two, Three and Four but each lesson may take more than one period of a school day.

Finally, it is worth saying that these lessons have been tried and tested in various classrooms and children do seem to enjoy them.

About this book

This book is organised into six chapters, one each for each term of Years One and Two. Each chapter is on a theme, such as 'Keeping safe', so that the children can be working on the same topic throughout the term while addressing different aspects of the Speaking, Listening and Drama curriculum in each lesson.

The chapters

Within each chapter there are four lesson plans. These address the following aspects of the subject (although not always in the same order):

- Speaking for different audiences
- Listening and responding
- Discussion and group interaction
- Drama activities



The lesson plans

The majority of lesson plans are organised into the familiar literacy hour format of:

- Whole-class activity
- Group activities
- Plenary session

There may be one or two occasions where the nature of the activities has dictated that the lesson plan move away from this rigid format, but it has been planned in such a way that the lesson can still be completed in the time allocated for the lesson.

Each chapter has the following guidance:

Overall Aims

This itemises the aims of all four lessons and relates more to the topic being addressed than the Speaking, listening and drama objectives.

Resources

This is a list of the resources that teachers might need to help them deliver the objectives of the

lessons in that chapter. These include the photocopiable sheets, which are optional, as teachers may wish to supply their own resources.

Each lesson plan has the following guidance:

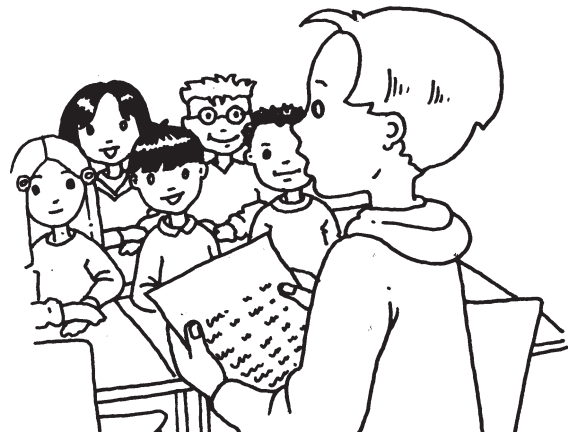
Intended learning

These are taken directly from the QCA's guide, *Teaching speaking and listening in Key stages 1 and 2*. For the most part the lesson plan includes all of the objectives from the guide but where it was felt the lesson would become too unwieldy not all of them are addressed.

Some lesson plans have the following guidance:

Notes for the teacher

This might be background information to the topic being addressed or suggestions for extension activities.



Photocopiable sheets

Speaking, listening and drama are not activities that normally lend themselves to the use of photocopiable activity sheets. However, there are some sheets included for some of the lessons. These aim to help the teacher explain the content of the lessons or aid with recording and other aspects of the lessons.

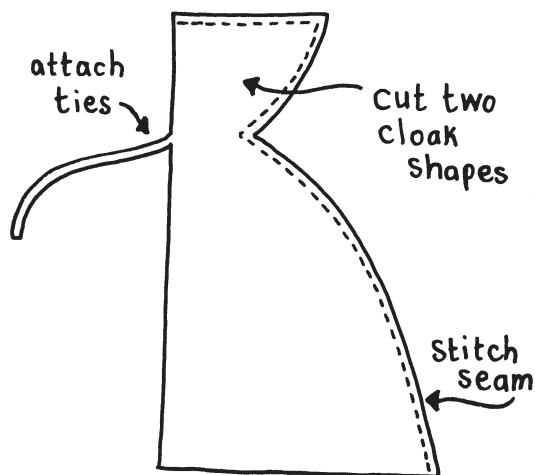
Keeping safe

Overall aims

- To identify and reflect on issues of safety as understood by this age group.
- To explore these issues as advisers to Little Red Riding Hood, a notable risk taker.
- To practise and reflect on elements of dramatic storytelling.

Resources

- A piece of red cloth, the size of a child's coat, to be used as a cloak.



- Five or six sticky notes with a sketch of a red cloak.
- Photocopiable Sheets One and Two (pages 40 and 41).

In this first lesson the children are introduced to safety situations involving the well-known character, Little Red Riding Hood. They consider ways in which she puts herself in danger, then discuss a plan to help her be safe.

Lesson One

Discussion and group interaction

(planning, predicting, exploring)

Intended learning

- To take turns to speak.
- To listen to others' suggestions.
- To talk about what they are going to do.
- To recall what is already known about keeping safe.
- To discover the essentials of safety at this age.

Whole class

- * Remind the children of the story of Little Red Riding Hood and how, in spite of being warned not to, she left the path through the woods to pick some flowers and was seen by a wolf who would not have seen her if she had stayed on the path. Ask the children what happened to Little Red Riding Hood after that.

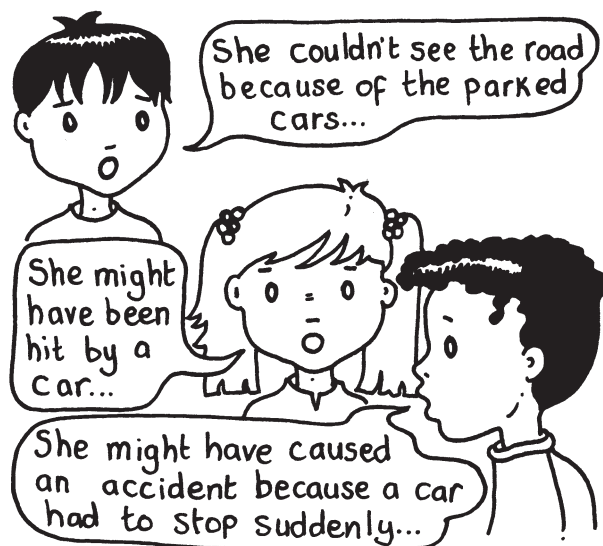


- * Say to the children, 'Well, I've been talking to Little Red Riding Hood's mummy and she says she is getting quite worried about her. She says she's a good girl but sometimes she just doesn't think carefully enough about keeping safe. The other day she went for a walk in the park with her mummy and little brother. She had an argument with her brother and she ran away and hid from them both. They searched everywhere for her – calling "Little Red Riding Hood, Little Red Riding Hood!" – but all they could find was her red cloak dangling from the branch of a tree.'
- * Here, hold up the cloak and mime unhooking it from an imaginary branch. Call out Little Red Riding Hood's name as if you are looking for her. Tell the children that they searched everywhere for her and it was getting dark when at last they found her, curled up asleep under a big thick bush.

- ❖ Ask the children if they can understand why Little Red Riding Hood's mummy was worried about her. What might have happened to her?



- ❖ Then tell the children another tale of woe. 'The other day Little Red Riding Hood saw an ice cream van outside school. She rushed away from her mummy and ran right between two parked cars and across the road. "Little Red Riding Hood! Stop! Stop!" Her mummy grabbed after her but all she was left with was her coat.'
- ❖ At this point, produce the red 'cloak' again and mime snatching it in mid-air as if you were the mother grabbing at Little Red Riding Hood.
- ❖ Tell the children that luckily there was nothing coming so Little Red Riding Hood was alright, but her mummy was very upset.
- ❖ Discuss why her mummy was upset – what might have happened to Little Red Riding Hood?



Groups

- ❖ Tell the children that, in order to keep Little Red Riding Hood safe, they are going to help her by planning her route to school. Arrange the class into mixed working groups and give the children copies of the picture of the road outside Little Red Riding Hood's school (Sheet One page 40). Point to the house where she lives (with the arrow) and then tell them that they must discuss together, listen to each other and then agree the route from her house to school.
- ❖ Also give each group sticky notes, each with a red cloak drawn on it. Encourage the groups to discuss safe ways of crossing a road like the one in the picture and to decide where Little Red Riding Hood should cross. Ask them to place the sticky notes in places that are suitable for crossing the road.



Plenary

- ❖ Invite each group to share their plans for Little Red Riding Hood's route to school. Enlarge the picture on an OHP or whiteboard and agree a good route. Use sticky notes to mark the place where the children agreed it would be safe to cross.
- ❖ Talk about how the children come to school. What routes do they take? Do they have to cross any roads? Are they aware of how dangerous it can be?

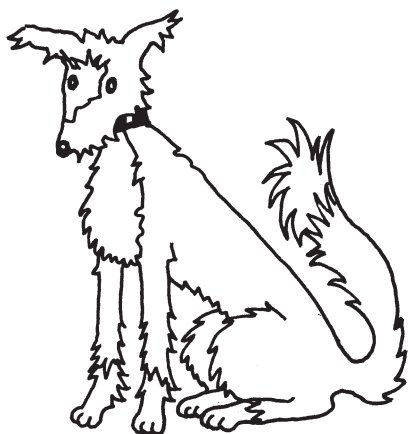
Looking after pets

Overall aims

- To study the responsibilities involved in keeping pets.
- To identify and ask relevant questions and research answers.
- To prepare and organise the researched material for presentation to others.

Resources

- RSPCA or PDSA spokesperson or vet.
- A1 paper for display purposes.
- An empty water bottle for a rabbit.
- Books and Internet articles on keeping pets.



In this lesson the children will discuss different types of pets and their needs, then work in groups to draw up questions to put to an expert in relation to those pets and needs.

Lesson One

Listening and responding

(to a talk by an adult)

Intended learning

- To remember specific points.
- To respond to others' reactions.
- To identify what they learned.

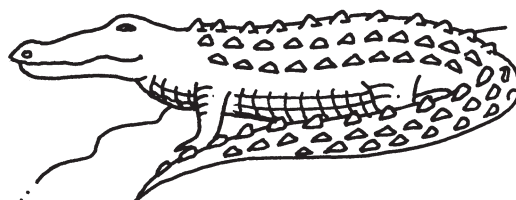
Notes for the teacher

Studying how to behave responsibly towards other creatures, and knowledge of the organisations and services that support this undertaking are elements of PSHE/citizenship. The science curriculum at Key Stage 1 also includes the study of animals and their needs.

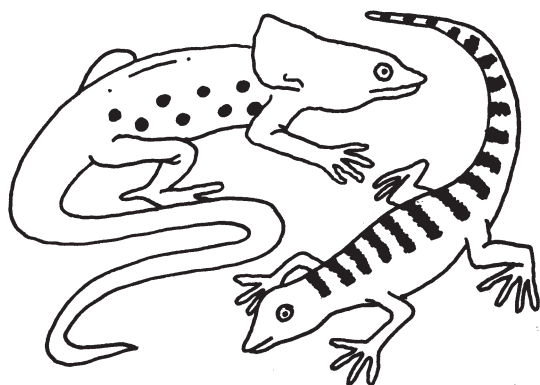
Invite a guest speaker from the RSPCA or PDSA, or a vet, to attend this lesson and deliver a question and answer session at the end of it. It is important that it is agreed by everyone, including the class, that the guest is there to observe and listen at first rather than lead or even take part in the preliminary discussion. The guest's expertise will be called on when the children have identified the questions they want answered.

Whole class

- ✧ To establish what the children already know about caring for pet animals, start by asking who in the class keeps any pets – animals, birds, fish. Record on the board a list of the species the children own. If this produces a sufficiently varied sample (more than simply dogs and cats), it may not be necessary to ask for more. If yours is not a pet-owning class, however, expand the list a little by including the pets of people the children know – friends, neighbours or relatives. The object is to keep within a range of pets that reflects the children's experience and knowledge and to include some diversity. (It is hoped, however, that none of the children own anything as unusual as a crocodile!)



- * In order to identify the key questions that arise if one is to treat pet creatures responsibly, discuss with the children what different pets require if they are to live safely, happily and in good health. Start to identify categories of requirement, for example a suitable habitat, sustenance, hygiene, exercise, playthings and company (human and animal) – by recording the children’s responses in appropriate clusters on the board. When clear examples of these categories have emerged, help the children to identify them as categories by asking them, for example, for a word for where animals sleep and live and where they run, swim or fly.
- * At this stage, you are still trying to establish what the children already know and what it is they might need to discover rather than trying to teach them anything new, but it might be useful to introduce terms such as habitat, environment or territory, if some of the children are not yet familiar with them. However, ‘where they live’ would be a perfectly good alternative, as would ‘food and drink’, ‘keeping clean’ and ‘animal toys’.
- * Keep the list of categories (although not necessarily the items in each category) either on the board or on a display sheet on the classroom wall.



Groups

- * Ask the children to work in groups to draw up a list of questions they would like answered under the various category headings. You, your classroom assistants and your guest speaker might like to help the children with this task. The questions should be the children’s but they might include such things as:
 - Can you overfeed an animal?
 - What dangers can arise with regard to feeding (for example, chicken bones are not for dogs, nor peanuts for rabbits)? Why?

- Are some animals happier by themselves? Which different species of animal live happily together?
- Do most pets like being held and stroked? Can you train a pet to like it if it seems uneasy at first?
- What are the best ways of holding various creatures?
- Is it cruel to keep a rabbit or a hamster locked up in a hutch all the time? What are the possible alternatives?
- Do different breeds of dog need different amounts of exercise?

Plenary

- * Let the children ask their questions. After a period of questions and answers, ask the class to identify the most important things they have learned both from your guest speaker and from each other.
- * Time permitting, some whole class feedback on what they have just discussed would be appropriate. What specific points do they remember? What are their knowledge and concerns?



Lesson Two

Drama activities

(performance)

In this lesson, the children will have the opportunity to tell stories in role as pets. They are required to sustain their role and create dramatic incidents as the victims of inconsiderate human behaviour.

Intended learning

- To present their own story to peers.
- To sustain work in role.
- To create dramatic incidents.

Whole class

- ❖ Gather the class around you. Signal that you have something secret to convey but say as little as possible until the children are settled. When they are ready, brandish a rabbit's empty feeding bottle for everyone to see. You are representing a very thirsty pet rabbit and you are about to address the class as a secret, night-time gathering of pet animals.
- ❖ In as croaky a voice as you can manage, say something like:

'I'm glad you have all made it. Did any of you have difficulties escaping from your cages, kennels, hutches?' To one, whom you are now identifying as a cat, say 'It would be easy for you, of course. You just curl up at the foot of your human's bed, don't you? I hope you didn't wake him when you jumped down! We'll have to be very quiet so as not to wake any of them now. I've called this meeting because I can't stand it any longer.' Shake the empty bottle, turning it upside down to stress the point. 'Look at this. Empty. And it's been empty for two days now. I can hardly talk I'm so dry. They don't know how to look after us, do they?' Pointing to a child and pretending he or she is a pet dog, say 'I know you haven't been for a proper walk for weeks, have you? What about the rest of you? What problems are you having?'

- ❖ If the children have read your signals correctly, they will start to offer examples of how their humans have been neglecting or even ill-treating them. Let this go on until most have entered into the fiction and are playing the game of being long-suffering pets. When you feel that this fiction is well established, or if you sense it is not established at all, come out of role and ask everyone to choose what different species they would like to represent.
- ❖ Reconvene the secret meeting of animals and say something like, 'Now I know we don't all know each other so I suggest we get together in animal groups and agree what, for each of us, the main problem with our owner is. Then we'll decide what is to be done.'

Groups

- ❖ Form the children into groups of the same or similar species and ask them to identify their needs. What do the humans have to do to satisfy their needs? You may need to jog the children's memories of what they identified under the various categories, which will still be on display from the previous lesson.
- ❖ Ask each group to devise one incident where an animal, fish or bird has come up against inconsiderate human behaviour. The group may simply agree on what the incident is or they may act out the incident with members of the group adopting the roles of humans and pets.

Plenary

- ❖ Reconvene the secret meeting and invite each group to tell or demonstrate its chosen incident. Respond by saying that this situation is dreadful and something needs to be done about it. Allow the children to make suggestions. (If simply running away is proposed, remind them that they are not equipped to live in the wild. They are pets. They wouldn't survive on their own.)

