

Up and Away

A resource book for English language support in primary schools



Integrate Ireland Language and Training received the European Award for Languages 2006 for the in-service programme on which this book is based.



Up and Away

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Foreword

In 2000 the Department of Education and Science invited Integrate Ireland Language and Training to support the teaching of English as a second language in primary and post-primary schools by (i) devising curricula, (ii) developing teaching and learning materials, and (iii) organizing twice-yearly in-service seminars for language support teachers.

In the autumn of 2000 we introduced the first draft of the primary language support curriculum, the English Language Proficiency Benchmarks for non-English-speaking pupils at primary level, and a version of the *European Language Portfolio* designed to mediate the curriculum to pupils and make them aware of their linguistic identity and their growing proficiency in English. Over the next five years we developed a wide range of learning materials and other supports on the basis of the benchmarks and the ELP.

From the beginning we were committed to working interactively with teachers. We used the in-service seminars to find out as much as we could about their concerns and needs, and many of the learning materials we devised were inspired by their rich and varied classroom experience. In the summer of 2003 the English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and the *European Language Portfolio* underwent substantial revision and we embarked on a process of consolidation that has culminated, at least for the time being, in the production of this book.

Up and Away has been compiled by Barbara Simpson with the assistance of Martin Berridge who reformatted many classroom activities so that they would provide the greatest possible support for teachers. In one form or another it brings together everything that has been presented at in-service seminars over the past six years: general information for schools; information for language support teachers; general guidance on organizing a language support programme; the English Language Proficiency Benchmarks; ideas on how to use the *European Language Portfolio*; and a varied collection of classroom activities and resources, including many photocopiable pages and detailed suggestions for developing the literacy skills of older pupils. *Up and Away* also contains approximately 100 pages of new material specially developed by Martin Berridge, who also coordinated the editing and design of the book.

ILLT's first in-service seminar, held in June 2000, was attended by 37 primary and post-primary language support teachers from around the country. Five years later, in the autumn of 2005, 548 teachers from 411 schools attended the seven in-service seminars we gave for primary language support teachers. By any standards that is a remarkable rate of growth, and it has meant that from the spring of 2006 we can provide in-service seminars only for newly appointed language support teachers.

Accordingly the publication of *Up and Away* is not only the culmination of a three-year process of consolidation; it also marks the beginning of a new phase in ILLT's work with language support teachers in primary schools. The book will serve as the basis for induction seminars for newly appointed language support teachers. In time our ongoing interaction with teachers will no doubt generate new ideas and new perspectives that will necessitate a revised edition. Meanwhile, we gratefully acknowledge the enthusiasm, commitment and expertise of the hundreds of language support teachers we have met over the past six years. Without their stimulus, input and critical feedback it would have been impossible to produce *Up and Away* in anything like its present form. In 2006 the in-service programme on which it is largely based received the European Award for Languages. The award was earned as much by the language support teachers we have worked with as by ourselves.

David Little and Barbara Lazenby Simpson

December 2006

Using this book

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Terminology

The term **SECOND LANGUAGE** refers to the language which becomes critical for a child or adult for significant day-to-day purposes such as education or work. In effect it replaces the mother tongue, or first language, for these purposes. It does not suggest that the speaker knows only two languages. As this term is used internationally, it is a useful search term for internet purposes.

The term **NEWCOMER** has been used to refer to those parents and children whose mother tongue is not English. It is acknowledged that, increasingly, non-English speaking children entering primary school may be Irish nationals. Nonetheless, the term newcomer reflects the challenge facing parents and children from different language and cultural backgrounds in accessing and entering formal education in a new country.

Photocopying

Those pages that a principal or teacher may wish to photocopy have been presented in black and white for ease of reproduction.

Website

The English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and other teaching materials are available for download on the IILT website.

Section 1

General information for schools

Notes

Frequently asked questions

Does the legal status of the pupil have any relevance?

No. Not to the pupil's entitlement to education. However, the following issues may have some bearing on a child's progress in formal education:

The **living conditions of children** may impact on their ability to do homework properly or to socialise with other children outside school.

Children whose parents are on a work permit or work visa typically **spend a limited period of time in Ireland**. The children of medical personnel often spend a five-year period in Ireland. For these children it is critical that their access to education in Ireland is successful in this short period as they will experience interruption and the continuation of education elsewhere.

How do we deal with different school starting ages?

It is important to remember that children who arrive in Irish schools at 6 years of age may not have attended school previously. Therefore, the **induction period** must be particularly sensitive as the child is suddenly immersed in 1) a new environment and 2) an unfamiliar language and, in addition, may be out of step with peers in relation to literacy development.

What should we deal with in the induction process?

We cannot assume that the child's parents have been able to provide any information about school in Ireland. It is essential to make sure the child understands the basics:

- That there are **rules**. It may be necessary to mime these.
- That there is a **routine** to the day – breaks, etc.
- The procedure for asking **permission** and going to the toilet.
- Where the **important parts** of the school are located – playground, toilets, etc.

What do we do if the child doesn't talk?

The child may be going through the **Silent Period** – see pages 24 and 25 for details, and also how to monitor a child's progress during this phase.

How can the class teacher and language support teacher work together?

Newcomer children often develop confidence first in the secure environment of the language support class. Therefore, the **language support teacher** will have many insights into a child's progress, interests, concerns, etc.

The **class teacher** will face the challenge of involving the child in mainstream learning. Therefore he/she can communicate information about how the child is reacting in class, what the class is doing, where the child appears to encounter difficulties, etc.

By working together, teachers can ensure that the child is helped to integrate into the learning environment and the social life of the school.

The joint objective is to:

- Ensure that the newly arrived pupil can **understand and use the basic language of the classroom** (e.g. toilet, be quiet, copy from board, etc.).
- Equip the pupil with **knowledge of the rules and procedures** of the school so that he or she does not unwittingly infringe them.
- Help the pupil to **understand different norms of behaviour** that may exist in the new culture/society (in classroom, school, playground, etc.).
- Help to **build the confidence and self-esteem** of the pupil who may feel different, excluded and less able than those around him or her.

For details of the type of information that is valuable for language support teachers **see pages 22 and 23**.

How can we assess a pupil's English language proficiency on arrival in the school?

Accurate assessment of a pupil's proficiency is unlikely to be successful in the early days following arrival for the following reasons:

- The pupil may be **suffering from 'shock'** and may be unable to communicate.
- The pupil's **previous formal education may have been interrupted**, minimal or non-existent.
- The pupil may have been told by parents **'not to give information'** about anything.
- **Concepts**, for example in mathematics, are not necessarily taught in the same order in different educational systems and the pupil may not recognize what is being taught in the class.

Assessment tasks are available which test a pupil's proficiency across the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and allow for a profile of the child's initial proficiency and progress to be developed. It is recommended that a number of weeks should elapse before initial testing is carried out. After that, it is appropriate to assess progress at intervals.

The performance of newcomer children in class should be viewed in relation to the peer group. It is important to identify what skills, other than language proficiency, the child may need to learn or, conversely, the child may have gained ahead of the peer group.

What is the role of the language support teacher?

The primary responsibility of the language support teacher is to promote the pupil's development of **English language proficiency** so that he or she can gradually **gain access to the curriculum**, ultimately achieving the same educational opportunities as English-speaking peers. This is achieved by:

- Working in collaboration with the mainstream class teacher to set **relevant and achievable learning targets** for each pupil.
- Preparing the pupil, on an on-going basis, to **access mainstream learning**, initially in part and later more fully.
- Helping the pupil to develop **appropriate strategies and skills** to support future formal education in general.

The responsibility of the language support teacher is to deliver a programme of English language tuition which is **based exclusively on the primary curriculum** (see the **English Language Proficiency Benchmarks on pages 41–54**) and which prepares and supports the child in:

- **Accessing classroom learning.**
- **Socializing with peers.**

The language support teacher, however, **cannot teach the curriculum** and this remains the role and responsibility of the mainstream teacher. Pupils spend the greater part of their time in the mainstream classroom and attend language support for a small proportion of specialized class time. The benefit of this time, which is focused on English language learning, can be maximized through **liaison and a flow of information** between the mainstream teacher and the language support teacher.

What are the basic resources and facilities needed for effective language support?

Because effective language learning requires constant reinforcement and the revisiting of previously learnt information, it is important that **a room is dedicated** to language support. This allows for posters to be kept on the walls to support on-going learning and for the collection of a wide range of suitable resources such as books, posters, pupils' work, real-life objects, tape recorder, computer, etc.

Liaison between the **language support and learning support teachers** has proved to be very valuable as much material used for learning support is suitable for different stages of language learning. Learning support teachers have been very helpful in providing this support in schools throughout the country.

What are the challenges facing the mainstream teacher?

For the mainstream class teacher, the introduction of non-English-speaking pupils into the class is a challenge. Drawing the newcomer pupil into classroom activities can require time, planning and thought, all of which are difficult to allocate in a busy classroom. However, close **cooperation with the language support teacher** can result in the child being prepared for classroom activities so that he or she is able to work on the same things as peers, perhaps in a reduced or slower way.

If the class teacher informs the language support teacher about **forthcoming themes, units**, etc. then it will be possible for the child to gain some access, even in part, to what is planned for the class. If the class teacher can also **keep the language support teacher informed** about how the pupil is reacting in class, coping with classroom language, interaction, etc. then these matters can also be addressed in language support sessions.

Pupils in the mainstream classroom with low levels of English language proficiency

When a pupil's level of proficiency in English is extremely low, for example in the early weeks after arrival, access to mainstream class learning may be virtually impossible. During this time it makes sense for the pupil to continue, in the mainstream classroom, **work that has been started in language support sessions**. This makes valuable use of class time, keeps the pupil focused, and supports English language development.

This is particularly important for older pupils (Senior Primary, for example) who, if not able to engage with the mainstream class, may become disruptive and generally de-motivated. **Liaison with the language support teacher** allows for language learning activities to be provided for use in the mainstream classroom. This provides relevant work for the pupil, allows him or her to have a sense of purpose while in class, and supports progress in language learning.

As English language proficiency develops, it is appropriate for the pupil to engage more with mainstream learning activities, even if this engagement is partial.

How can a pupil be supported in engaging with the curriculum in general?

The sole purpose of language support is to help a child to gain access to mainstream learning and to socialize within the community of the school.

Language proficiency in other areas will develop naturally as the child interacts with peers.

The language support programme, based on the **English Language Proficiency Benchmarks for primary learners**, reflects the thematic demands of the primary curriculum. The development and revision of the Benchmarks was informed by primary teachers working with pupils whose mother tongue is not English.

Young children

Children entering primary school at the level of Junior or Senior Infants will usually develop literacy, classroom language, vocabulary and so on at the same rate as their peers. The 'difference' between the young child and the English-speaking peer group is small.

Older pupils

Older children entering Senior Primary classes can experience a greater challenge. They have a more developed sense of 'difference', which can create a barrier to settling down, integrating, and engaging with learning. The problem is magnified if the child:

- Has not attended school regularly in the past.
- Is not literate in the Roman alphabet.
- Has never gained literacy in any language.

Pupils up to the age of twelve have presented with these additional needs. In such cases the language support teacher will first have to address the question of literacy. It is entirely appropriate, therefore, that the pupil should be assigned **exercises to do in the mainstream classroom** to support language and literacy development. These activities may not relate directly to what is happening otherwise in the classroom.

How can we establish successful communication with parents?

Achieving satisfactory communication with parents can present some difficulty, particularly if parents have little English themselves. It is frequently the case that the language support teacher becomes the first main point of contact for new parents. However, it is also important that parents meet class teachers and get an overall view of their children's progress.

Different approaches have been developed in schools around the country. These approaches include:

- Language support teacher having a regular time each week to meet parents.
- Ensuring that the time allocated to meeting parents is longer than is necessary for English-speaking parents (to deal with communication difficulties).
- Meetings with parents to encourage them to become involved in their children's work.
- Invitations to parents to work in the language support classroom.
- Organising meetings between individual parents, class teacher and language support teacher.
- Language support teacher being present at all school events.
- Monthly open afternoons when parents visit school and view their children's work.

Other ideas provided by teachers are listed on **pages 13 and 14**. See also **Parent-Teacher report forms on pages 30–33**.

How can we deal with problems of poor attendance?

In general, issues that arise which are common to all pupils, for example poor attendance, should be addressed through the normal procedures.

However, a particular issue arises with children from the Roma community (families of ethnic gypsy origin, typically from Central or Eastern Europe). Roma culture requires that families should be highly mobile. As a result, children may attend school sporadically and may disappear from one school only to appear in another in a different part of the country.

It is important to make contact with parents, where possible, to inform them about their legal obligations with regard to the education of their children and to encourage them to support the on-going education of their families.

What can the school do if there is evidence of corporal punishment in the home?

In some cultures the use of corporal punishment is considered to be an entirely acceptable means of giving care, reinforcing learning and 'forming the character' of children and adolescents. Children may be beaten, or punished in ways that would be unacceptable in Ireland.

Parents may also expect that teachers will use this means to discipline, punish, and reinforce school learning with their children.

There is also evidence of children receiving punishment in their homes for activities, mistakes, bad marks, etc. that occurred in school. Teachers' concerns about the physical/mental abuse of their pupils outside school should be followed up through implementation of the **usual procedures**.

The difficulty can also arise that pupils, on realizing that they will not be beaten or slapped in school, take advantage of the situation by behaving in an unacceptable way. Again the usual procedures for bad behaviour must be applied.

What about suspected psychological problems?

It is important not to assume that **language learning difficulties** are manifestations of psychological or learning problems. The Silent Period is a particular example of how low levels of language proficiency can affect the participation of the child in all school activities.

If there is evidence of **real psychological or behavioural problems**, the same procedures should be followed as for any other child.

In any event, parental permission must be sought in the first instance and seeking parental permission for assessment can be problematic. Some parents are unwilling to allow their child to be 'questioned' and in some societies there is a considerable stigma attached to such matters.

Are standardized tests reliable indicators?

Evidence shows clearly that standardized tests **do not reliably reflect** the abilities of newcomer children and are an inappropriate basis on which to make decisions about a child's educational progress.

What about exemption from Irish?

Pupils may be exempted from Irish in special circumstances. Parents must apply to the principal of the school for exemption, specifying the grounds on which exemption is being sought. The school authorities must then prepare a report, and file any documentary evidence that is provided in support of this application (e.g. reports from a psychologist, medical specialist, teacher, etc.). All relevant documents must be retained by the school for inspection by the Department of Education and Science. In addition, a copy of the exemption certificate must be sent to the DES, within one week of the granting of exemption. This information and the certificate are available from the Department of Education and Science's website at www.education.ie.

While there is no evidence that younger children have any problem with learning Irish with their peer group, for those entering primary education in the senior years with little English language proficiency, this may become an additional learning burden.

It is worth noting that newcomer children do not have pre-formed attitudes to learning Irish and, as a result, can be a very positive influence in the Irish language class. It is unwise, therefore, to assume that an exemption from Irish is essential for every non-English speaking child.

How can the school create an intercultural and inclusive community?

With the introduction of pupils from different cultural backgrounds to the community of the school, issues can arise that were not evident before. Difficulties experienced by newcomer pupils in integrating into the school may be due to ethnic or religious constraints that preclude involvement in certain activities, or may be due to negative attitudes on the part of other pupils.

In recent years material has been developed to support the integration of pupils from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Some materials and activities are intended for use in particular classes, such as SPHE, while other approaches are intended to span the curriculum.

The publication *Intercultural Education in the Primary School* (NCCA, 2005), which has been distributed to every school, provides cross-curricular guidelines.

A set of simple **checklists on pages 15 and 16** allows a principal to assess what actions are already being taken in the school and to explore other possibilities for making the school more interculturally aware.

In addition, principals and teachers working throughout Ireland have provided examples of the activities that have taken place in their schools. **These may be found on pages 11 and 12.**

The role of the language support teacher in intercultural learning

The language support teacher is an invaluable resource for mediating activities to contribute to intercultural understanding. He or she gains many insights into the lives, traditions, beliefs and values of newcomer children through close contact in small language support groups.

Regular or sporadic involvement of the language support teacher in mainstream classes has proved to be very effective in many schools. In some schools the language support teacher has a regular timetable for attending mainstream classes to carry out intercultural learning activities, in particular under the SPHE curriculum strand.

The involvement of newcomer parents in school activities also contributes to the understanding of both similarity and difference. There have been many examples of parents taking part in 'intercultural festivals', 'international days', 'food festivals', and days which 'celebrate our school'.

Meeting the intercultural challenge

The following activities have all been carried out successfully in schools throughout Ireland. They have been categorised into:

1. **Creating an inclusive environment.**
2. **Integrating pupils.**
3. **Involving the parents.**
4. **School – home communication.**

1. Creating an inclusive environment

Display:

- Maps or posters showing the countries or flags represented by the school population. Hang a large map in the entrance area with ribbons/threads connecting the countries of pupils' origin to the location of the school.
- A 'welcome' poster in the school entrance area. The poster contains the word 'welcome' in the languages known by pupils in the school (including English and Irish) and a suggested title is 'We speak many languages here'.
- Wall charts showing the numbers of pupils of different nationalities in the school.
- A collection of postcards and photographs from the different countries of origin of the school population.
- Flags of different countries, each flag containing, if possible, photos of the pupils from that country.

Put up:

- School notices representing the languages spoken in the school.
- Notices about school events, festivals and events for parents which incorporate visuals so that they can be understood by everyone.

In class:

- Pupils make posters about national days, holy days and festivals – e.g. Chinese New Year, Ramadan, Hallowe'en, etc.
- Pupils make a map of their own countries for display and use the map to talk about their countries.
- Make a poster featuring photos of pupils surrounded by their handprints.
- Make a food poster featuring pictures, the names of traditional food and recipes from different countries.
- Display the names of all the children in the class and do a class project on 'Me'.
- Read storybooks about children in different countries.
- Read books on different cultural festivals, celebrations, etc.

Organise:

- Intercultural days with displays of project work about different countries.
- Displays of art and crafts from different countries.

In general the posters, displays, artwork, books, etc. are used to show **the richness of difference but the basic 'sameness' of children** from different cultures.

2. Integrating pupils

The following activities, many of which are a **natural part of the school day**, are used to foster integration in the school.

In class:

- Introduce newcomer pupils with a discussion about their countries.
- Seat newcomer pupils with native pupils.
- Study different cultural festivals.
- Do a class project on 'Countries of the world' (including Ireland).
- Hold story telling sessions about schools in different countries.
- Introduce a buddy system for reading.
- Do creative movement sessions dealing with issues like exclusion, integration, assimilation, etc.
- Encourage pupils to play together in class groups or with board games during indoor breaks.
- Invite pupils to bring in party food on their birthdays.
- Language support teacher takes mainstream class on a regular basis and works on materials that will be followed up in language support classes.
- Language support teacher takes SPHE sessions in the mainstream class dealing with issues of culture, difference, what it is to feel different, etc.
- Language support teacher joins in art or IT classes to look at art and websites from around the world.

Classroom activities:

Activities based on cooperation and teamwork are also an excellent way to develop a fully-integrated group. These include familiar activities, such as:

- Circle time.
- Story time.
- Story writing.
- Drama for older pupils and plays for smaller children using class readers.

- Book making.
- Class projects on mainstream topics.
- Group art sessions.
- Cooking.
- Games and PE.

Organise:

- 'International language day' with word games, songs, poems, etc.
- 'World dance day'.
- 'Day of world culture'. Involve all pupils in the preparations.
- Speakers from different countries to come in and talk about relevant topics.
- Ecumenical prayer week for children from all religious backgrounds.
- School tours.
- Sponsored walks.

Also:

- Involve pupils in sports and other activities such as Community Games, swimming, Irish dancing, majorettes, the school choir and singing, the school band, concerts, etc.
- Encourage all pupils to participate in local festivals, parades, etc.
- Use school assembly for the presentation of songs, drama, costumes and stories from different countries.
- Invite newcomer pupils to bring an English-speaking friend to language support class. Use the buddy system.
- Ensure that parents of newcomer pupils understand invitations to birthday parties.
- Use games (e.g. during break) that bring children together.

3. Involving the parents

Don't forget to make invitations and notices of informal events as clear as possible to those parents who have little English. If parents expect that they will not be able to understand, then they are unlikely to make the effort to attend.

Possible means of making invitations to informal occasions understandable are:

- **'Visual' invitations.**
- **Getting another parent who speaks the language to explain.**
- **Getting an older child to explain. (This is not appropriate for formal communication between school and parents.)**

When parents have 'broken the ice' they are more willing to involve themselves in school events.

Invite newcomer parents to:

- School concerts and plays.
- Coffee mornings.
- Give talks to different classes in the school.
- Help supervise class activities and outings.
- The school open day.
- Meetings of the Parents' Association.
- The Christmas party and other festival days/celebrations.
- Graduation day for 6th class.
- Attend existing parent/toddler groups.
- Pre-Confirmation classes.

Work with the home-school liaison teacher to:

- Set up language classes for newcomer parents.
- Run short courses for all parents on various themes through the school year.
- Organise a project for newcomer pupils and parents which focuses on their own countries. The finished work can be presented in school at the end of the year.
- Organise guest speakers to talk to all parents – e.g. speech therapists, child development officers.
- Organise parent-children swimming lessons.

Organise:

- Weekly meetings between all the parents, language support teacher and home school liaison teacher in the language support room.
- Meetings of individual parents, language support teacher, principal and classroom teacher.
- An Ethos Committee made up of parents from different cultures/nationalities.
- Night courses for all parents, such as IT, cookery, yoga, art and craft, languages, etc.
- Cookery classes. Ask them to give demonstrations of how to make typical food from their countries.
- A cake sale.
- A 'flavours of the world' event for all parents who cook traditional dishes for an evening for everyone.
- 'One world day'.
- 'World book day'.
- A parents' room which can be used as a meeting place.
- A breakfast club.

Encourage:

- Interaction between parents waiting to collect their children.
- Newcomer parents to organise social events in their dispersal centres.

4. School – home communication

It is important to make invitations, letters, notices of events, forms, procedures, etc. as clear as possible for parents who have little English. **Time and thought** should be given to find the best means of communicating with consideration given to the effective use of **visuals** through pictures, clipart, and website images. Invitations, letters, forms and so on can also be made understandable by **getting another parent who speaks the language to explain**.

Improving school – home communication can be achieved in a number of ways.

Use visuals:

- For clear enrolment procedures and forms.
- For clear invitations to parent teacher meetings.
- For reports.
- For clear invitations to school events – plays, Christmas party, school open day, carol service, etc.
- In a picture-based booklet about the school giving information about times, routines, schedules, etc.
- For regular bulletins on all aspects of school life.
- School letters and notes, including notes about the work being done with the pupil in class.

The language support teacher can help communication by:

- Attending school occasions and events.
- Meeting newcomer parents on an informal, open-door basis.
- Greeting newcomer parents as they drop and collect their children.
- Encouraging newcomer parents to use the language support room as a meeting place.
- Explaining school letters and notes.
- Using the school newsletter as a resource in class so that pupils can tell their parents.

Organise:

- Regular meetings between individual parents, the language support teacher and the class teacher.
- Informal meetings, or coffee mornings, with all newcomer parents. These are invaluable for gradually informing parents about education in Ireland, their child's progress and the expectations of the school.
- Monthly open afternoons for parents to view their child's work (using the *European Language Portfolio*) and to discuss progress with the language support teacher.
- Meetings between representatives of, for example, the local Muslim community and new Muslim parents.
- A visit to the local mosque followed by lunch there.
- A session with a local librarian on how to use the library.

Also:

- If possible, translate information booklets into the languages of the newcomer parents.
- When necessary use informal interpreters to support communication.
- Access newspapers and books in different languages to be made available to newcomer parents.
- Remind mainstream teachers to make extra time for parents who have difficulty communicating fluently.
- Communicate regularly with the home-school liaison teacher.

Checklist 1: Intercultural environment at whole-school level

		YES	NOT YET	NOT APPLICABLE
1	Notices, display materials, etc. acknowledge and provide positive images of different ethnic groups.			
2	The reception area has multilingual welcome notices, a world map indicating where pupils come from (including different parts of Ireland), photographs showing the diversity of the school population, a list or graph indicating the range of mother tongues represented in the school, etc.			
3	There is a clear and sympathetic reception process in place.			
4	New pupils receive a 'starter kit'.			
5	Classroom and library material reflects positive images of ethnic and cultural diversity.			
6	Artwork reflects the cultural profile of the school.			
7	Games and hobby activities in the school can adjust flexibly to support inclusion.			
8	Funds can be accessed to support extra activities (trips, equipment, etc.).			
9	Special events are scheduled throughout the year to mark all cultures and heritages represented in the school.			
10	Pupils who are already bilingual are given training to act as assistants.			
11	Anti-racism education is included as part of the curriculum.			

Checklist 2: Provision of language support

		YES	NOT YET	NOT APPLICABLE
1	Language support is provided in relation to the English Language Proficiency Benchmarks for primary schools.			
2	The amount of support to be provided is calculated with reference to the guidelines in this resource book.			
3	The development of English language proficiency is monitored in relation to performance in curriculum themes.			
4	Liaison between class teachers and language support teachers is used to focus the programme of support.			
5	Feedback on progress is provided to class teachers.			

Checklist 3: Assessment and placement

		YES	NOT YET	NOT APPLICABLE
1	There is a planned procedure for assessment of each new pupil over an initial period of several weeks.			
2	The pupil's English language proficiency is assessed on an on-going basis in relation to the English Language Proficiency Benchmarks.			
3	On-going observational assessment in the mainstream class is used to determine educational background (when this is unclear).			
4	Opportunity to learn is considered when planning mainstream classes (e.g. group work, peer support, etc.).			
5	An assessment portfolio is maintained for each pupil from the day of arrival which focuses on: Psychosocial adjustment. Language learning. Continuity of academic learning.			

Checklist 4: Inclusivity in the mainstream classroom

		YES	NOT YET	NOT APPLICABLE
1	There is a protocol for introduction of new pupils into the classroom.			
2	All pupils and teachers are aware of the importance of pronouncing the names of new pupils correctly.			
3	Where possible, newcomers are introduced to other pupils who speak their language.			
4	The teacher makes personal contact with a newcomer at least once during each class session.			
5	Teachers use team-building activities as a natural part of the class programme.			
6	Pupils often work in collaborative groups.			
7	Classroom routines are predictable and explicit.			
8	Classroom displays are inclusive.			

Section 2

The language support programme

Learning English as a second language

Acquiring a FIRST LANGUAGE (mother tongue)

1. Children first produce single words.
2. Then they learn to combine words into phrases.
3. In due course they learn to combine phrases into sentences.

This process is driven by the urge to communicate, which is part of each child's biological inheritance.

Developmental orders in acquiring a FIRST LANGUAGE

The acquisition of a first language is marked by regular developmental orders. These are familiar to parents and teachers. In the case of English, for example, the following stages may be observed as pupils learn to form *wh*-questions correctly:

What Mama singing?

wh-WORD + NOUN (PHRASE) + MAIN VERB

What Mama is singing?

wh-WORD + NOUN (PHRASE) + AUXILIARY + MAIN VERB

What is Mama singing?

wh-WORD + AUXILIARY + NOUN (PHRASE) + MAIN VERB

Success and failure in FIRST LANGUAGE acquisition

- **All** normally endowed children learn to speak the language of their environment.
- Depending on the environment in which they live, **children will differ** in their early experience, and this will be reflected, in particular, in the words they know.
- There are **no failures** in first language acquisition as the acquisition of speech. All normally endowed children become native **speakers** of their first language.
- Learning to **read and write** is a conscious and intentional process. For most children it is part of schooling, and is subject to all the factors that determine success or failure in education generally.

What about a SECOND LANGUAGE?

There are many differences between second and first language acquisition, including the following:

- Unless it begins in early childhood, second language acquisition is **not part of the learner's primary cognitive development**.
- The later second language acquisition begins, the more it is influenced by **motivational factors**.

The developmental orders that we see in a child's acquisition of the mother tongue also occur in second language acquisition.

The errors to which they give rise should be handled carefully. It is important not to interfere constantly with a child's efforts to communicate.

All normally endowed children learn their mother tongue successfully.

Motivation can affect second language learning. This is not generally an issue with very young children but could be a problem for children in the senior primary school.

Some important facts about acquiring a SECOND LANGUAGE

- All learners of second languages unconsciously transfer grammatical properties of their first language to the second language.
- Second language acquisition proceeds by stages just like first language acquisition.
- The learner's knowledge of the second language develops systematically, which means that errors are not random.

The challenge facing language support teachers

- On its own, language support can never be enough because teachers, inevitably, have **limited time** with their language support pupils.
- On the other hand, the children are integrated into mainstream classrooms and have **constant exposure** there to the target language.
- For this reason, language support must **focus principally on the language required by the curriculum** and on the language necessary for a child's socialization in the school.
- We can **maximize the effectiveness of language support** by always giving priority to language that will allow pupils to participate as much as possible in mainstream classes – **see the English Language Proficiency Benchmarks on pages 37–54 and the European Language Portfolio on pages 95–113.**
- **Collaboration with mainstream class teachers** will allow the language support teacher to devise activities that create a positive bridge into the mainstream class.
- A positive **whole-school policy** will also ensure the social integration of pupils whose home language is not English.



Points to remember!

- ✓ Young children are extremely sensitive to the sounds of language. It is important to think about the way you use language in the classroom.
- ✓ Slowing down speech, using fewer and simpler words, repeating key words, using mime, gesture and visual supports, and restating with gesture all help children to match words to meaning.
- ✓ Provide contextual clues – always work from the concrete.
- ✓ Involve other children in the group in helping a newly-arrived child to understand what is happening. Children understand children!

It can be helpful to have some knowledge about a child's first language but it is not essential for effective teaching.

It is, however, very good for a child's self-esteem if the teacher learns a few words or phrases in his/her language.

Language support should encourage a cyclical process so that what happens in the language support class facilitates the acquisition of more language in mainstream classes and this, in turn, helps pupils to become fully integrated members of the school community.

At the beginning

What is the objective of language support?

The principal objective of the language support programme is **to integrate the pupil as quickly as possible into all mainstream learning and activities of the school.**

At the beginning

Newcomer pupils can be assigned to classes at any stage of the school year. Take time to:

1. Find out which classes the pupils are in.
2. If possible get feedback from the class teacher with his/her first impressions – **see page 22** for the type of initial information that is useful. Further information (**see page 23**) is useful at intervals during the year, for example every six weeks or half term.
3. Carry out an initial basic assessment – see next page.
4. Identify the most appropriate period for the child's class each day, taking the age, class and English language proficiency of the pupil into account.
5. Wait a period of weeks before carrying out a more formal assessment.



Points to remember!

- ✓ Achieving an accurate assessment of a pupil shortly after arrival is unusual. It is important to allow a 'settling down' period before attempting this.
- ✓ Language proficiency is rarely consistent at the same level across all skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and across different units of work. Some pupils may appear very fluent orally but have difficulty with reading and writing (if appropriate to the age of the pupil). On occasion this situation may be reversed.
- ✓ The ability of any pupil to perform in the classroom must always be viewed in relation to the performance of the native-speaking peer group. For example, children in the infant classes are not expected to have developed literacy.

Equally, for a child in Senior Primary who is not yet literate, it is a matter of some urgency that literacy development should begin.

A regular flow of communication between the class teacher and the language support teacher is vital not only to help the child to develop in language learning, but also to access curriculum learning and to socialize in the school.

Taking time to observe how a child is performing in different situations in the school (mainstream class, playground, etc.) will help the language support teacher to identify an individual child's particular learning needs.

Initial interview assessment for new pupils

✓ appropriate box as interview proceeds

* response may not be accurate but indicates a reasonable level of comprehension

		No response	Some comprehension but unsure response	Response indicating comprehension*
1	What is your name?			
2	What is your age?			
3	What language do you speak at home?			
4	Where do you live?			
5	Have you got brothers and sisters?			
6	What games do you like to play?			
Only proceed to 7 if the pupil has answered some or all of questions 1-6				
7	How did you come to school today?			
8	Did you go to school in another place? (if applicable)			
9	Tell me about your last school.			
10	What was your best subject?			
11	What did you not like in school?			
12	What will you do today after school?			
13	What would you like to be when you finish school?			

Performance	Interpretation	Action
Questions 1-6 No real response.	Has little or no English language proficiency.	First learning target is A1 in the English Language Proficiency Benchmarks.
	May be passing through a Silent Period.	Apply the Observation checklist for the Silent Period (see page 25) over the following weeks.
Questions 1-6 Responds to some or all questions.	Some level of proficiency at least to A1 level . More rigorous assessment after 'settling down' will clarify this.	Work at A1 level and observe the pupil's performance in different skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing.
Questions 7-13 Pupil understands the questions but responds inaccurately.	Some level of proficiency at A2 level . More rigorous assessment later.	Work at A1/A2 level and observe the pupil's performance in different skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing.
Questions 7-13 Pupil understands the questions and responds with general accuracy.	Proficiency in spoken interaction in the A2/B1 range . Further assessment required later.	Work at A2/B1 level and observe the pupil's performance in different skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing.

It is important to remember that language proficiency will generally not be consistent at the same level across all skills areas and units of work. Learning objectives should be set in accordance with observed individual strengths and weaknesses.

First feedback from class teacher shortly after arrival of new language support pupil

Name of teacher: _____

Class: _____

Name of pupil: _____

Date: _____

	YES	NO	SOMETIMES
Is there evidence of this pupil mixing with other pupils?			
Has this pupil volunteered information in class?			
Has this pupil asked for clarification or help in class?			
Can you see evidence of this pupil making progress in general?			
Can you provide any insights into what this pupil already knows in different subjects?			
What subject areas does this pupil seem most comfortable with?			
What subject areas are creating the most difficulty for this pupil?			
Please indicate any particular areas that would benefit from language support in the next 6-8 weeks. If appropriate, name of textbook and chapter would be helpful.			

The answers to the questions in this form will help the language support teacher to identify on-going areas of priority for this pupil. This information would be useful at intervals throughout the school year.

It is **not necessary** to complete the form as the information may easily be exchanged informally. The form is merely to provide guidance.

Feedback from class teacher on progress of language support pupil

Name of teacher: _____

Class: _____

Name of pupil: _____

Date: _____

	YES	NO	SOMETIMES
Is there increased evidence of this pupil mixing with other pupils?			
Is this pupil responding appropriately in class?			
Does this pupil ask for explanation or clarification either in class or individually after class?			
Can you see evidence of this pupil making progress in general?			
Is this pupil doing homework and any other work that is assigned?			
In which subject areas is this pupil performing well or at a satisfactory level?			
What subject areas are creating the most difficulty for this pupil?			
Please indicate any particular areas that would benefit from language support in the next 6-8 weeks. If appropriate, name of textbook and chapter would be helpful.			

The answers to the questions in this form will help the language support teacher to identify on-going areas of priority for this pupil. This information would be useful at intervals throughout the school year.

It is **not necessary** to complete the form as the information may easily be exchanged informally. The form is merely to provide guidance.

The Silent (or non-verbal) Period

Children who find themselves immersed in a new world of meaningless words will often take time to regain a sense of control over social interactions.

The typical stages are:

1. **Continuing to use the mother tongue.**
2. **Not talking at all.**

If they try 1 and it fails to bring results, they may then lapse into 2.

Younger children tend to maintain their silence for longer periods than older children.

Children find alternative means of communicating during their silence by:

- **Physically turning to teacher to attract attention.**
- **Bringing/holding up objects to show comprehension.**
- **Using facial expressions to indicate feelings.**
- **Bringing objects to seek help.**
- **Looking upset or whimpering when unhappy.**
- **Joining in fun by imitating other children.**
- **Actively observing the activities of other children.**



Points to remember!

- Children in the Silent Period stop **TALKING** but do not stop **COMMUNICATING**.
- Watch 'silent' children and you will quickly learn to understand their non-verbal communication.
- Watch out for other children imitating the 'silence'.

The **observation checklist** on the next page allows the teacher to monitor a child's responses and reactions in the absence of verbal communication.

If the teacher identifies that the child is carrying out any of the behaviours listed in the checklist and that there is steady development in the child's engagement in the classroom, then he/she may assume that this period will come to an end when the child is ready to communicate orally.

A Silent Period is common in language learning and does not necessarily indicate a learning problem.

Emphasising the situation by referring the child for psychological assessment can make the matter worse.

When children emerge from the Silent Period they demonstrate the learning that has taken place.

Be careful about assuming that there is a learning problem.

Several OECD studies in European countries reported that:

'There is an overrepresentation of foreign children in special needs education'.

Checklist for observing progress during the Silent Period

Name of pupil: _____ Age: _____

The pupil is:

(Write the date of observation in the relevant column)

	NOT AT ALL	OCCASIONALLY	REGULARLY
Using his/her mother tongue with teacher/peers despite their inability to understand.			
Making eye contact with the teacher.			
Watching other pupils closely.			
Imitating other pupils' actions.			
Using facial expressions to communicate feelings.			
Bringing particular objects, books, etc. to teacher.			
Responding to communication through gesture/mime by teacher or other pupils.			
Attention-seeking by interacting with other pupils or teacher (e.g. handing them objects).			
Requesting help by making signs, pointing, etc.			
Indicating dislike of an object or activity.			
Protesting by making sounds or appearing aggressive.			
Imitating non-verbal behaviour of other pupils.			
Experimenting with sounds of English.			
Repeating and rehearsing words or phrases.			
Following verbal instructions.			

Organising the timetable for language support

Language support is best delivered

1. **In groups** – small groups of 3-5 pupils, or a larger class which can be divided into pairs or small groups.
2. **On a daily basis** – little and often is much more effective than a longer session less frequently.

Example of a timetable based on 1 teacher and 26 pupils

JNR. INFANTS	SNR. INFANTS	1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH	5TH	6TH
7	5	4	3	2	2	2	1
8.50 – 9.30		Junior Infants				7	
9.30 – 10.10		Senior Infants				5	
10.10 – 10.30		Break					
10.30 – 11.10		1st				4	
11.10 – 11.50		2nd				3	
11.50 – 12.30		3rd + 4th				4	
12.30 – 13. 10		5th + 6th				3	
13.10 – 13.30		Break					
13.30 – 14.30		Open period to be used flexibly*					

*It is useful to keep one session per day for particular purposes such as:

- Focused work on **pronunciation** for children who need it.
- Additional session for older children whose **literacy** level is low.
- Referrals from teachers to help children with work for their **mainstream classes**.
- Extra contact with pupils who arrive **during the school year**.
- Extra help for children approaching **transition to post-primary**.



Points to remember!

- ✓ Avoid one-to-one teaching unless this is absolutely essential for a particular reason.
- ✓ Generally form groups on the basis of age and/or class in the school.
- ✓ Organising children in pairs or small groups within a larger group allows for differences in language proficiency to be accommodated.
- ✓ Use the 'open period' each day to focus exclusively on a particular problem area. This session should not be treated in the same way as the regular language support classes.

Creating an effective learning environment

When children cannot understand the language that surrounds them it is necessary to create an environment in which their confidence may grow. As confidence and security develop, the child begins to engage fully with the new situation.

There are four essentials for successfully learning a language in an immersion situation:

1. **An 'acquisition rich' physical environment – a room in which visual and other supports are immediately available and familiar to the child, for example:**
 - Relevant **word lists** on posters.
 - **Pictorial representations** of themes (weather, food, travel, etc.).
 - Pictures representing typical **classroom instructions** (sit down, listen carefully, etc.).
 - Availability of a **picture dictionary** to help a child make him/herself understood.
 - A selection of **books for borrowing**.

2. **Familiar patterns of activity**
 - Start each session with an **oral activity** – reviewing previous learning, brainstorming new theme, talking about 'news', etc.
 - Organise children to work in **pairs or small groups**.
 - Do an activity based on **writing, reading, drawing**, etc.
 - Finish on a whole group basis giving general feedback on problems or errors that have arisen.

3. **Always give plenty of encouraging feedback both to class and individuals**

4. **Make activities obviously relevant to the children's needs in the school environment** – in the mainstream class, the playground, and on school outings, and talking to other teachers, classmates, the lollipop lady/man, etc.

Materials for language support

The principal purpose of language support is to help children engage with mainstream curriculum learning. Therefore, the best materials for language support are those that are in general use in the school already.

Some examples include:

Posters	Reading schemes, nature, food pyramid, etc.
Activity books/sheets	Developing writing skills, structuring sentences, text, etc. Identifying and collecting vocabulary (word walls, etc.). Activity sheets may be done in the mainstream class when a child is newly arrived and cannot yet understand classroom learning.
Storybooks	Particularly those with a high level of repetition and/or a focus on the vocabulary being learnt in language support.
Games	Encourage interaction while focusing on theme-based vocabulary, question forms, word recognition, etc.
Picture/photo dictionaries	A few of these in the classroom will help both teacher and pupils to overcome difficulties in making themselves understood.
Sets of cards	Learning vocabulary, sequencing, sentence building, telling a story, prompting discussion.
Phonics series (often with CD)	Pronunciation, spelling, reading.
Projects	Picture resources for classroom, classroom 'Big Book' or scrapbook, poster displays on different themes created by pupils, audio recordings, etc.
Computer software	Vocabulary development, creating text, identifying sounds.

It should be noted that much material used in **learning support** is very suitable for **language support**.

Working with parents of newcomer pupils

For teachers:

- It is most important to achieve a means of communicating with parents whose mother tongue is not English. Parents may, because of inadequate proficiency in English, feel excluded from their children's education.

Points to remember!

- ✓ **Newcomer parents may not be familiar with the routines of parent-teacher meetings – where to go, where to wait, etc. Make sure that you have a helper to smooth the way.**
- ✓ **Create a welcoming environment in the classroom or meeting room, and remember that the parent will be depending on visual clues.**
- ✓ **Set aside additional time to speak to a parent so that you do not feel under pressure.**
- ✓ **Prepare for the meeting by having examples to hand of the child's work (particularly the *European Language Portfolio*), the books/resources that you are using, and the pictorial report forms on the next pages.**
- ✓ **Do not use another child to interpret.**
- ✓ **Remember that a parent coming from a different educational culture may not be aware of some of the most basic routines and procedures in Irish education – see if there is anything you think could/should be explained.**

For parents:

- Encourage parents **to speak to their children in the mother tongue**, and to do all the things they would normally do – reading stories, talking about the day, telling the children about the home country, etc.
- Encourage parents to **ask their children about what they are learning** – in doing so, parents learn the words that are important in their children's lives.
- If possible, provide **dual-language books** for pupils to take home so that parents can read stories to their children in the mother tongue and children can read the story back to their parents in English.
- Involve parents in projects which **celebrate multiculturalism** in the school.
- Involve parents in **school activities** which do not require a high level of English language proficiency – book-covering sessions, tidy-up projects, preparing celebrations, etc.

It is most important that parents continue to speak to children in the mother tongue. Children need to develop their L1 in order to maintain contact with the extended family and home culture.

In addition, children need this level of interaction in their mother tongue in order to develop cognitively during these critical years.

Parental involvement is critical for school success. It is necessary to:

- Find appropriate ways of involving parents in school matters.
- Provide support to parents who may feel intimidated or inadequate in the educational context.

Parent-Teacher Meeting Report

Name of teacher: _____

Class: _____

Name of pupil: _____

Date: _____

Punctuality and attendance:



Time school starts:



Interaction with other pupils:



Interaction/answering in classroom activities:



Reading:



Writing:



Speaking:



Listening:



Mathematics
(colours, shapes and opposites):



Physical education:



Geography
(local and wider community):



Science (nature study):



Information technology:



Art:



Music:



Homework:



Parent-Teacher Meeting Report

Name of teacher: _____

Class: _____

Name of pupil: _____

Date: _____

Punctuality and attendance:



Time school starts:



Interaction with other pupils:



Interaction/answering in classroom activities:



Reading:



Writing:



Speaking:



Listening:



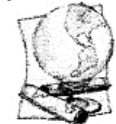
Mathematics
(colours, shapes and opposites):



Physical education:



Geography
(local and wider community):



Science (nature study):



Information technology:



Art:



Music:



Homework:



Notes

Section 3

The curriculum for language support

The curriculum framework for language support

The curriculum framework for language support is based entirely on the language needs of the primary curriculum. These are specified as the **English Language Proficiency Benchmarks for non-English speaking pupils at primary level**.

They consist of thirteen **Units of Work** which represent the strands of the primary curriculum.

1. **Myself**
2. **Our school**
3. **Food and clothes**
4. **Colours, shapes and opposites**
5. **People who help us**
6. **Weather**
7. **Transport and travel**
8. **Seasons, holidays and festivals**
9. **The local and wider community**
10. **Time**
11. **People and places in other areas**
12. **Animals and plants**
13. **Caring for my locality**

Each unit is described at **three levels**:

A1 Lowest level	A2	B1 Also known as 'Threshold Level'
For pupils entering with no English, this represents the first learning targets.	Pupils progress into this level.	When pupils are able to carry out the activities described in this level, without any help, they should be capable of full integration into the mainstream classroom.

The levels correspond to the first three of the six proficiency levels defined in the Council of Europe's **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)**.

For each level, a pupil's expected learning is divided into the **five skills** used by the CEFR:

The RECEPTIVE skills	The PRODUCTIVE skills
Listening	Spoken interaction (communicating with one or more other people).
Reading	Spoken production (speaking on your own, e.g. giving a talk, telling a story, describing what you did at the weekend, etc.).
	Writing

The English Language Proficiency Benchmarks

Part 1

Global benchmarks of communicative proficiency (pages 38 and 39)

The global benchmarks provide a general definition of proficiency in relation to:

LISTENING
READING
SPOKEN INTERACTION
SPOKEN PRODUCTION
WRITING

These benchmarks are not associated with any particular curriculum theme. They provide a useful means of identifying and describing a pupil's proficiency in English:

Before language support begins.
At any stage during language support.
At the end of language support.

For planning and delivering language support it is appropriate to use Part 2 in which the benchmarks define curriculum-based language learning.

Global scales of underlying linguistic competence (page 40)

These benchmarks define what a pupil should be capable of doing in English in relation to:

VOCABULARY CONTROL
GRAMMATICAL ACCURACY
PHONOLOGICAL CONTROL
ORTHOGRAPHIC CONTROL (for pupils who are writing)

These benchmarks are important when **testing** a pupil's proficiency and they provide the basis for the English language tests for pupils receiving language support.

Global benchmarks of communicative proficiency

	A1 BREAKTHROUGH	A2 WAYSTAGE	B1 THRESHOLD
UNDERSTANDING	Listening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can recognize and understand basic words and phrases concerning him/herself, family and school. • Can understand simple questions and instructions when teachers and other pupils speak very slowly and clearly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can recognize and understand frequently used words relating to him/herself and family, classroom activities and routines, school instructions and procedures, friends and play. • Can understand a routine instruction given outside school (e.g. by a traffic warden). • Can understand what is said in a familiar context such as buying something in a shop (e.g. price). • Can follow at a general level topics covered in the mainstream class provided key concepts and vocabulary have been studied in advance and there is appropriate visual support. • Can follow and understand a story if it is read slowly and clearly with visual support such as facial expression, gesture and pictures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand the main points of topics that are presented clearly in the mainstream classroom. • Can understand the main points of stories that are read aloud in the mainstream classroom. • Can understand a large part of a short film on a familiar topic provided that it is age-appropriate. • Can understand detailed instructions given in all school contexts (classroom, gym, playground, etc.). • Can follow classroom talk between two or more native speakers, only occasionally needing to request clarification.
	Reading (if appropriate to the age of the pupil) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can recognize the letters of the alphabet. • Can recognize and understand basic signs and simple notices in the school and on the way to school. • Can recognize and understand basic words on labels or posters in the classroom. • Can identify basic words and phrases in a new piece of text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read and understand very short and simple texts that contain a high proportion of previously learnt vocabulary on familiar subjects (e.g. class texts, familiar stories). • Can use the alphabet to find particular items in lists (e.g. a name in a telephone book). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read and understand the main points in texts encountered in the mainstream class, provided the thematic area and key vocabulary are already familiar. • Can read and understand descriptions of events, feelings and wishes. • Can use comprehension questions to find specific answers in a piece of text. • Can use key words, diagrams and illustrations to support reading comprehension. • Can follow clearly written instructions (for carrying out a classroom task, assembling or using an object, following directions, etc.).

(continued)

	A1 BREAKTHROUGH	A2 WAYSTAGE	B1 THRESHOLD
SPEAKING	Spoken Interaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can greet, say 'Please' and 'Thank you', and ask for directions to another place in the school. • Can respond non-verbally to basic directions to a place in the school when the other person supplements speech with signs or gestures. • Can give simple answers to basic questions when given time to reply and the other person is prepared to help. • Can make basic requests in the classroom or playground (e.g. for the loan of a pencil) and respond appropriately to the basic requests of others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can ask for attention in class. • Can greet, take leave, request and thank appropriately. • Can respond with confidence to familiar questions clearly expressed about family, friends, school work, hobbies, holidays, etc., but is not always able to keep the conversation going. • Can generally sustain a conversational exchange with a peer in the classroom when carrying out a collaborative learning activity (making or drawing something, preparing a role-play, presenting a puppet show, etc.). • Can express personal feelings in a simple way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can speak with fluency about familiar topics such as school, family, daily routine, likes and dislikes. • Can engage with other pupils in discussing a topic of common interest (songs, football, pop stars, etc.) or in preparing a collaborative classroom activity. • Can keep a conversation going, though he/she may have some difficulty making him/herself understood from time to time. • Can repeat what has been said and convey the information to another person.
	Spoken Production <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where he/she lives and people he/she knows, especially family members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms his/her family, daily routines and activities, and plans for the immediate or more distant future (e.g. out-of-school activities, holiday plans). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can retell a story that has been read in class. • Can retell the plot of a film (or book) he/she has seen (or read) and describe his/her reactions. • Can describe a special event /celebration in the family (religious festival, birthday, new baby, etc.). • Can give an account of an experience or event (travel, an accident, an incident that occurred, etc.). • Can briefly give explanations and reasons for opinions and plans.
WRITING	Writing (if appropriate to the age of the pupil) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can copy or write his/her name. • Can copy or write words and short phrases that are being learnt in class. • Can copy or write labels on a picture. • Can copy short sentences from the board. • Can spell his/her name and address, and the name of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can enter newly-learnt terms in a personal or topic-based dictionary, possibly including sample sentences. • Can write short texts on specific or familiar topics (e.g. what I like to do when I'm at home). • Can write a short message (e.g. a postcard) to a friend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write a diary or news account with accuracy and coherence. • Can write a short letter describing an event or a situation. • Can write a brief summary of a book or film. • Can write an account of his/her feelings or reactions to an event or situation. • Can write a short dialogue to be performed by puppets.

Global scales of underlying linguistic competence

	A1 BREAKTHROUGH	A2 WAYSTAGE	B1 THRESHOLD
Vocabulary control	Can recognize, understand and use a limited range of basic vocabulary which has been used repeatedly in class or has been specifically taught.	Can recognize, understand and use a range of vocabulary associated with concrete everyday needs or learning experiences (e.g. topics or routines that have been introduced and practised in class).	Can recognize, understand and use a range of vocabulary related to familiar classroom themes, school routines and activities. Errors still occur when the pupil attempts to express more complex ideas or handle unfamiliar topics.
Grammatical accuracy	Can use a very limited number of grammatical structures and simple sentence patterns that he/she has learnt by repeated use (e.g. 'My name is...').	Can use simple grammatical structures that have been learnt and practised in class. Makes frequent basic mistakes with tenses, prepositions and personal pronouns, though when he/she is speaking or writing about a familiar topic the meaning is generally clear.	Can communicate with reasonable accuracy on familiar topics (those being studied or occurring frequently during the school day). Meaning is clear despite errors. Unfamiliar situations or topics present a challenge, however, particularly when the connection to familiar patterns is not obvious.
Phonological control	Can pronounce a very limited repertoire of learnt and familiar words and phrases. Native speakers who are aware of what the pupil has been learning and familiar with the pronunciation patterns of pupils from different language backgrounds can understand his/her pronunciation, but sometimes with difficulty.	Can pronounce familiar words (those being learnt in class or used in the school generally) in a reasonably clear manner, though with a noticeable foreign accent. It is sometimes necessary to ask the pupil to repeat what he/she has said.	Can pronounce words with confidence in a clearly intelligible way. Some mispronunciations still occur, but in general he/she is closely familiar with the sounds of English.
Orthographic control (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	Can copy key words from the board, flash cards or posters. Can copy or write his/her name, address and the name of the school.	Can copy or write short sentences or phrases related to what is being studied in class. Sentence breaks are generally accurate. Words that he/she uses orally may be written with phonetic accuracy but inaccurate spelling.	Can produce short pieces of continuous writing that are generally intelligible throughout. Spelling, punctuation and layout are accurate enough to be followed most of the time.

The English Language Proficiency Benchmarks

Part 2



Points to remember!

- ✓ The lowest level in the Benchmarks is A1. For children entering school with no English language proficiency, these descriptors represent the early learning targets.
- ✓ The level at which a pupil can engage successfully with mainstream class learning is on completion of the activities described in B1.
- ✓ During language support it is most important that pupils develop *all* the language skills appropriate to their age.
- ✓ The first two themes, 'Myself' and 'Our school', support the pupil's integration into the social and educational activities of the school.
- ✓ There are many interconnections between themes – [see examples on page 107](#).
- ✓ The descriptions in the Benchmarks all suggest classroom tasks or activities and should be used to plan the language support programme.

The English Language Proficiency Benchmarks are derived from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe) which is a six-point scale describing language proficiency, A1 – C2.

Only the first three levels of the Framework are used for language support.

Level B1 is also known as Threshold Level. On achieving proficiency at this level, a learner has gained the necessary language skills and knowledge to engage with activities in the target language and to use existing language knowledge to develop further skills and proficiency.

Unit 1: Myself

		A1 BREAKTHROUGH	A2 WAYSTAGE	B1 THRESHOLD
UNDERSTANDING	Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can recognize his/her name when it is spoken by another person. • Can understand basic questions asked by the teacher or another pupil (e.g. 'What is your name?', 'How old are you?'). • Can understand simple instructions when they are spoken slowly and accompanied by appropriate gestures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can follow conversations between peers during play. • Can follow the important points in instructions or advice (e.g. 'Stay Safe'). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand what is said by teachers and peers without the need for frequent repetition or supporting gestures.
	Reading (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can find his/her name on a list. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read very short and simple texts with a high frequency of familiar words on topics such as children, families and school. • Can use the alphabet to find his/her name in a list. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read and understand age-appropriate stories about children and their lives, including life in different environments (e.g. country, city, abroad).
SPEAKING	Spoken Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can answer basic questions about his/her name, age, family when supported by prompts. • Can respond non-verbally (e.g. with a nod or shake of the head) or with single-word or very brief answers to basic questions about his/her likes or dislikes (e.g. 'Do you like ice-cream?'). • Can greet the teacher and other pupils and say goodbye. • Can indicate personal needs (e.g. to go to the toilet). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can reply with confidence to familiar questions about his/her name, age, number of brothers and sisters, etc. • Can initiate conversation on a familiar topic (e.g. why he/she was late for school). • Can use greetings naturally and appropriately. • Can say how he/she feels (tired, upset, ill, etc.). • Can tell parents about what he/she did in school. • Can ask for clarification when necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can ask and respond to questions on a wide range of familiar topics (family, home, interests, etc.). • Can express worries or concerns to the teacher or some other responsible person. • Can give parents a detailed account of what has taken place in school and describe his/her successes and achievements.
	Spoken Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can make a short, incomplete statement about him/herself (e.g. 'Name is...'). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can describe his/her own appearance, including eye and hair colour, size, height. • Can describe his/her family, daily routines, plans (e.g. for holidays), likes and dislikes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can explain his/her attitudes in an age-appropriate way (e.g. family values, ethnic or religious difference). • Can relate an event in sequence, using descriptive language (especially appropriate adjectives).
WRITING	Writing (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can copy or write his/her name, address, name of school. • Can copy words about him/herself from the board (e.g. 'My name is...', 'I live in...'). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write short texts describing his/her family, daily routines, etc. • Can write short texts describing personal interests, likes and dislikes (food, TV programmes, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write age-appropriate descriptions of important events or personal experiences (a new baby in the family, travelling to Ireland, etc.). • Can write a brief comparison of his/her life now and in the past (e.g. before attending school, in another country). • Can write about personal likes and dislikes, hobbies, interests, etc.

Unit 2: Our School

	A1 BREAKTHROUGH	A2 WAYSTAGE	B1 THRESHOLD
UNDERSTANDING	Listening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand basic school and classroom rules when they are explained very simply and with appropriate gestures. • Can recognize and understand the names of school equipment, resources, etc., when they occur in instructions. • Can understand and follow basic instructions from peers for playing games in the playground. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand instructions given in the classroom, gym, playground, etc. • Can understand basic information about half days, school closures, doctor's visits, etc. • Can understand at a general level topics dealt with in the mainstream class when they are introduced and explained clearly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand detailed instructions in the classroom, gym, etc. • Can understand a presentation given by another pupil on a familiar topic (e.g. 'My interests', 'My family', etc.).
	Reading (if appropriate to the age of the pupil) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can recognize and understand labels on doors in different parts of the school (e.g. 'Hall', 'Secretary', 'Staff Room', etc.). • Can recognize and understand signs in the school (e.g. 'Fire Exit', 'No running', etc.). • Can recognize and understand words and numbers on posters and drawings in the classroom (days of the week, days of the month, etc.). • Can find his/her name on a list. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read and understand texts about school that use a high frequency of words already familiar or recently learnt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read and understand texts on school subjects provided that difficult key words and/or concepts are introduced beforehand.
SPEAKING	Spoken Interaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can ask permission to go to the toilet. • Can respond non-verbally (e.g. with a nod or shake of the head) or with single-word or very brief answers to basic questions on classroom topics. • Can use 'Please' and 'Thank you' appropriately. • Can ask for familiar classroom objects and materials (book, crayons, paper, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can ask for attention in class. • Can pass on a simple message from one teacher to another. • Can generally sustain a conversation with another pupil when working collaboratively in the classroom (painting a picture, making a model, playing with puppets, etc.). • With appropriate support from the teacher, can explain a situation that has arisen (e.g. a dispute with another pupil). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can interact spontaneously in the playground, engaging with other pupils in games and activities. • Can give parents a detailed account of what happens at school. • Can ask and answer questions about specific classroom topics or in general discussion.
	Spoken Production <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use key words and simple phrases/sentences to describe a playground game. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe what he/she watches on television, how he/she likes to do homework after school, and what he/she does at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can give a simple talk about the school. • Can explain to other pupils about going to school in another country.
WRITING	Writing (if appropriate to the age of the pupil) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can copy letters and key words from the board, including phrases or simple sentences related to a classroom topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write short texts describing the classroom or other pupils in the class. • Can write short texts based on a topic recently studied in class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write an account of the daily routine in the school. • Can write about his/her friends in school and what they like to do together.

Unit 3: Food and Clothes

		A1 BREAKTHROUGH	A2 WAYSTAGE	B1 THRESHOLD
UNDERSTANDING	Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can recognize and understand the words for key items of clothing (coat, shoes, etc.). • Can recognize and understand the words for the key items of a school uniform. • Can recognize and understand the words for key items of food typically brought to school by pupils (e.g. sandwich, apple, biscuit, etc.). • Can understand routine classroom instructions about food or clothing (e.g. 'Put on your apron for painting'). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand instructions given about clothing for a particular purpose (e.g. going on a school trip). • Can understand rules about bringing particular foods to school (e.g. chewing gum, crisps, etc.) and the reason for the rules. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand classroom talk, including stories, containing a wide range of vocabulary related to food/clothing.
	Reading (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can recognize and understand the names of basic foods. • Can recognize and understand the names of the principal items of clothing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read and understand the menu from a café or fast-food outlet. • Can read and understand the names of foods typically seen in the supermarket. • Can read and understand simple descriptions of food or clothing that occur in a story. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read and understand texts about healthy eating, using the food pyramid for illustration.
SPEAKING	Spoken Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can request basic items of food/drink in a shop. • Can ask how much an item costs. • Can respond non-verbally (e.g. with a nod or shake of the head) or with single-word or very brief answers to questions about the food/drink and clothes he/she likes or dislikes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can ask and answer basic questions about the food/drink he/she likes or dislikes and briefly report the likes and dislikes of others. • Can discuss a menu and select what he/she would like. • Can answer questions about items and types of clothing (e.g. what is suitable for different kinds of weather). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can repeat an instruction given by the teacher regarding food or clothing. • Can engage in discussion about clothing/ fashion and food/drink, expressing personal preferences.
	Spoken Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use key words and simple phrases/sentences to describe likes and dislikes (e.g. 'I do not like oranges', 'I like my new coat'). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe the type of meal that he/she likes best. • Can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe the events surrounding a meal of particular importance in the family (e.g. a religious festival, New Year, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can describe his/her favourite items of clothing and explain why he/she likes them. • Can explain the importance of particular foods in his/her family or culture. • Can explain the importance of particular items of clothing in his/her family or culture.
WRITING	Writing (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can copy or write lists of different foods (fruits, vegetables, meats, etc.). • Can copy or write lists of clothing according to contexts of use (e.g. outdoor, indoor, school, sports). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write a short text describing an event in which food plays a central role (e.g. a family celebration). • Can write short texts describing his/her favourite items of clothing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write in an age-appropriate way about clothes/fashion and food/drink. • Can write instructions for making a dish/meal that he/she likes.

Unit 4: Colours, shapes and opposites

		A1 BREAKTHROUGH	A2 WAYSTAGE	B1 THRESHOLD
UNDERSTANDING	Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can identify basic colours, shapes and opposites when they are called out by the teacher. • Can find basic colours, shapes and opposites when they are called out by the teacher (e.g. in a classroom game). • Can point to objects in the room on the basis of description by colour or shape. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can follow instructions that are based on or include reference to the colour, shape or size of objects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand with ease references to colours, shapes and sizes that occur in classroom talk, including stories read aloud by the teacher, and in instructions given in the classroom or playground.
	Reading (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can recognize and understand the words for basic colours. • Can recognize and understand the words for basic shapes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read and understand references to colour, shape or size in a simple text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can identify differences between objects, animals or people when they are described in terms of their colour, shape or size.
SPEAKING	Spoken Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can answer basic questions about the colours he/she likes best. • Can answer basic questions about the colours of the clothes he/she is wearing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can ask and answer questions related to colours, shapes, size and opposites in discussion of familiar items such as clothing, food, classroom objects, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can discuss items of clothing, food or locations in the school with reference to colour, size or shape.
	Spoken Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can name basic colours and shapes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use a series of phrases and sentences to explain what colours he/she likes and why. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can explain in an age-appropriate way the importance we attach to colours and the effect they have on us (a grey day, red for danger, etc.).
WRITING	Writing (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can copy or write the words for basic colours and shapes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write a short description that includes reference to colours, size, shapes and opposites (e.g. 'On the beach'). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write a postcard or short letter describing an object or a place with detailed reference to colour, size and shape. • Can include reference to colour, size or shape in a written dialogue (e.g. for a puppet show). • Can write a description of his/her favourite clothing, food, place, etc. with detailed reference to colours, sizes and shapes.

Unit 5: People who help us

		A1 BREAKTHROUGH	A2 WAYSTAGE	B1 THRESHOLD
UNDERSTANDING	Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can recognize and understand basic words for people who help (e.g. teacher, guard, doctor, nurse) when they are spoken or read aloud. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can understand the main points of classroom talk, including stories, about people with particular responsibilities in the community, provided the vocabulary used is familiar. Can understand what is said by people who help in familiar situations (the school traffic warden, shop assistants, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can listen to a talk given by a person from the community and understand most of what is said. Can watch a video (e.g. news or documentary) about a typical incident in the community and understand most of the commentary.
	Reading (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can recognize and understand the words for people who help (e.g. teacher, guard, doctor, nurse) when they appear on flash cards and posters or in simple text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can read and understand short texts describing the work done by people who help (doctor, dentist, shop assistant, fireman, bus driver, etc.), provided the texts contain a high frequency of familiar words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can read and understand a variety of texts about different jobs and responsibilities.
SPEAKING	Spoken Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can use gestures, key words and simple phrases/sentences to ask for help (e.g. in <i>Stay Safe</i> role plays). Can reply using key words and simple phrases/sentences to basic questions about the jobs of people who can help (e.g. 'Where do we find a...?', 'What does he/she do?'). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can ask and answer questions about what people in familiar roles do in their jobs. Can talk with the teacher or another pupil about personal experiences with people in roles of responsibility (e.g. visit to doctor, parent is a nurse/doctor, school traffic warden, postman). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can ask and answer questions about different jobs and responsibilities. Can ask questions of a speaker who has been invited to the school to talk about his/her job. Can answer typical questions that may be asked by a person in responsibility (e.g. in role plays involving emergencies, danger, etc.).
	Spoken Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can give his/her name, address and school to a person in authority. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can use a series of phrases and sentences to give a brief oral description of a visit to a particular place and the people who work there (e.g. hospital, library, fire station). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can talk about the responsibilities of people who help, using an age-appropriate range of descriptive vocabulary.
WRITING	Writing (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can copy or write the words for people in roles of responsibility. Can label pictures of people in roles of responsibility and performing familiar jobs in the community. Can copy short sentences describing the jobs that people do. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can write short texts using familiar vocabulary to describe what people (e.g. shop assistant, postman, park attendant) do during their working day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can write briefly about a day in the life of a person with responsibility in the community, organising the text in a logical sequence and using an age-appropriate range of vocabulary. Can write a brief letter of thanks to someone who has given help (e.g. in the library, at the swimming pool).

Unit 6: Weather

		A1 BREAKTHROUGH	A2 WAYSTAGE	B1 THRESHOLD
UNDERSTANDING	Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can recognize and understand basic words related to weather (e.g. sun, rain, snow, hot, cold) when they are spoken or read aloud. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can follow at a general level weather-related topics covered in the mainstream class provided key vocabulary and concepts have been studied in advance and there is appropriate visual support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can watch a weather forecast on television and understand the main points. Can understand the key vocabulary used by the teacher to explain a unit in the textbook relating to weather.
	Reading (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can recognize and understand basic words related to weather when they appear on a weather chart or flash cards or in a simple text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can use the pictures in a textbook to identify and understand key information about weather (rain, wind, temperature, etc.). Can identify and understand words to do with weather in stories and other texts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can identify and understand the key words in texts relating to weather and can use them to categorize further information in the text (e.g. the effects of wind).
SPEAKING	Spoken Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can respond non-verbally (e.g. with a nod or shake of the head) or with single-word or very brief answers to basic questions about the weather (e.g. 'Is it cold outside?') and the kind of weather he/she likes and dislikes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can respond to questions about the weather he/she likes. Can take part in discussions about the weather in Ireland and about the clothing necessary for different types of weather. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can ask and answer questions about types of weather and the effects of weather on lifestyle.
	Spoken Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can use simple phrases and sentences to make a short, possibly incomplete, statement about the weather. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can use a series of phrases and sentences, with appropriate adjectives, to describe in simple terms the weather outside the classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can compare the weather in Ireland with weather in other parts of the world.
WRITING	Writing (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can copy or write basic words to do with the weather. Can copy from the board short sentences about the weather (e.g. when writing 'news'). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can write sentences about the clothes that are necessary for different types of weather. Can write a short text using familiar vocabulary to describe 'A perfect day'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can write a short letter describing the weather in Ireland and the types of clothing and other items that are necessary for different kinds of weather. Can write a short text describing the influence of weather on people in different parts of the world.

Unit 7: Transport and travel

		A1 BREAKTHROUGH	A2 WAYSTAGE	B1 THRESHOLD
UNDERSTANDING	Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can recognize and understand basic words that refer to different modes of transport (e.g. train, car, plane, etc.) when they are spoken or read aloud. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can understand references to different modes of transport that occur in classroom talk and in stories and other texts read aloud in class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can understand the main points in an oral account of a journey. Can understand the main points of topics related to travel and transport presented in the mainstream classroom. Can recognize and understand all frequently occurring words to do with travel and transport.
	Reading (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can recognize and understand labels on pictures and posters depicting modes of transport. Can identify and understand basic words to do with transport in a simple text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can read and understand the key points in a short text about travelling or transport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can use key words and pictures/diagrams to access texts about travelling and transport. Can use key words to categorise information contained in a text (e.g. 'Where did it happen?', 'Who was there?').
SPEAKING	Spoken Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can respond briefly, using gesture if necessary, when asked 'How did you come to school today?' When prompted by the teacher and supported by pictures, can use basic words (including the vocabulary of colour, size and shape) and simple phrases to describe different forms of transport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can respond with confidence to questions about how he/she likes to travel. Can discuss experiences he/she has had in travelling. Can ask other pupils about their experiences of travel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can participate in discussions of different modes of travel and express personal preferences. Can use illustrations in a textbook to discuss, for example, similarities and differences between travelling now and travelling in the past. Can find out what other pupils think about different modes of transport.
	Spoken Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can use key words and simple phrases to name different modes of transport depicted in posters and pictures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe how he/she comes to school every day. Can name and describe briefly the different types of transport that can be seen outside the school (cars, lorries, buses, bicycles, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can give a short talk about the types of transport seen outside the school. Can talk in an age-appropriate way about his/her experiences when travelling a long distance.
WRITING	Writing (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can copy or write key words relating to transport. Can label a picture or poster that depicts different modes of transport. Can copy from the board short sentences to do with transport (e.g. 'I come to school each day by bus'). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can write short texts about different forms of transport, using a textbook for support if necessary. Can write sentences that describe a familiar journey (e.g. from home to school). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can write a short letter describing to another person how he/she travels to school. Can write 'news' about an incident that occurred when travelling to school.

Unit 8: Seasons, holidays and festivals

		A1 BREAKTHROUGH	A2 WAYSTAGE	B1 THRESHOLD
UNDERSTANDING	Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can recognize and understand the words for seasons, holidays and festivals when they are spoken or read aloud. Can follow spoken instructions to find pictures or objects in the classroom that are related to different seasons or festivals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can recognize and understand common words related to seasons and festivals when the teacher introduces the topic in class. Can follow at a general level stories and classroom talk about seasons or festivals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can understand the main points of classroom talk about seasons and festivals, using visual supports (e.g. illustrations in text books) to check the teacher's explanation. Can understand the main points of a video that shows typical activities during a festival.
	Reading (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can recognize and understand the words for seasons, holidays and festivals on posters or flash cards and in very simple texts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can read and understand a simple description of a season or the events surrounding a festival, using pictures for support. Can read and understand simple stories that contain a high proportion of familiar vocabulary about typical seasonal or festival activities (e.g. the countryside in spring, going to the beach in summer, preparing for a religious festival). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can read and understand the main points of texts about seasons, holidays and festivals encountered in the mainstream class. Can use key words and pictures/diagrams to access texts about seasons and festivals (e.g. in a geography textbook) and to categorise the information they contain.
SPEAKING	Spoken Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can respond with key words or simple phrases/sentences to questions about when the different seasons fall, what weather is typical of the different seasons, and when the major festivals occur. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can respond in simple terms to questions about a festival or occasion that is important to his/her family or community. Can ask simple questions about seasonal matters or festivals that are unfamiliar. Can talk with other pupils about how particular festivals are celebrated in their homes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can describe and respond to questions about what takes place during a festival or celebration in his/her family or community. Can discuss and compare family/religious celebrations with other pupils. Can talk and ask questions about typical Irish festivals.
	Spoken Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can name the seasons and the principal festivals of the year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can use a series of phrases and sentences to give a simple description of the school holidays or a holiday taken abroad with the family. Can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe a special celebration at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can describe to the rest of the class a special event/celebration in the family (religious festival, birthday, new baby, etc.).
WRITING	Writing (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can copy or write the names of the seasons and principal festivals. Can copy from the board short sentences about the seasons and festivals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can write simple sentences describing an event in the family (e.g. in 'news'). Can write simple sentences describing a party held to celebrate a festival (e.g. Hallowe'en – games, food, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can write a short text describing a festival or celebration, with comments about his/her reaction (e.g. excited, nervous, happy, tired).

Unit 9: The local and wider community

		A1 BREAKTHROUGH	A2 WAYSTAGE	B1 THRESHOLD
UNDERSTANDING	Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can recognize and understand the names for people who live and work in the local community when they are spoken or read aloud. • Can listen and point to pictures or a map showing where different people work (e.g. library, chemist, supermarket, police station, swimming pool). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand the main points of classroom talk, including stories read aloud by the teacher, about persons working in a particular situation (e.g. station master). • Can use familiar words to understand the teacher's introduction to a theme based on the local environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use familiar vocabulary and concepts to understand the teacher's introductions to themes related to the local community. • Can use familiar vocabulary and concepts to understand a video about local history, typical occupations, etc.
	Reading (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can recognize and understand the names on important buildings, signs, or shops in the area. • Can recognize and understand the names of buildings/places on a map of the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read and understand simple texts about public places and services (e.g. the swimming pool), identifying essential information – what place is referred to, what happens there, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use familiar vocabulary to understand a local information leaflet (e.g. outlining the history of a place).
SPEAKING	Spoken Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can respond to simple questions by giving the names of buildings and places where people live and work in the area. • Can use key words and simple phrases/ sentences to answer basic questions about places he/she has visited in the area. • Can participate in classroom discussions by naming his/her favourite place in the area (e.g. football field, park, shop). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can ask and answer simple questions about what happens in the main public buildings in the area. • Can ask and answer simple questions about what people do in those buildings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can discuss places that he/she has visited in the area and explain why he/she would/would not like to visit them again. • Can ask and answer questions about the activities that take place in different buildings. • Can ask and answer questions about the importance to the community of different buildings and activities.
	Spoken Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use key words and simple phrases/ sentences to describe his/her favourite place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use a series of phrases and sentences to explain why he/she likes or dislikes a particular place or area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can talk about a place that he/she has visited. • Can talk about what people do in particular places in the area (e.g. people working in library, shops, health centre, bank).
WRITING	Writing (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can copy or write the names of places in the area. • Can copy from the board short sentences describing the activities associated with different places in the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write simple sentences describing his/her favourite place in the area and explaining why he/she likes it. • Can write 'news' about a place in the area he/she has visited. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write a short description of a favourite place and what takes place there. • Can write a short text describing where a particular building is located and why it is important. • Can write a postcard briefly describing a place in the area.

Unit 10: Time

		A1 BREAKTHROUGH	A2 WAYSTAGE	B1 THRESHOLD
UNDERSTANDING	Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can recognize and understand days of the week and clock times when they are spoken or read aloud (e.g. in information given by the teacher – ‘There will be a half day next Wednesday’). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can understand at a general level information about the recent past or near future presented in school announcements, TV news or a documentary. Can understand the general context (past time) when the teacher introduces a historical theme in class. Can recognize the connections between past and present in stories told or read aloud in class (e.g. <i>Cinderella</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can understand the main points when the teacher introduces a historical topic in the mainstream classroom. Can understand the main points of a video film on a historical topic, using visual support. Can understand the concept of the future in fantasy stories (e.g. space and time travel).
	Reading (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can recognize and understand the day and month when they are written on the board. Can recognize and understand a timetable organised according to the days of the week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can recognize and understand references to days, months and years in written text. Can understand a simple school notice about a forthcoming event (e.g. when it will occur, how long it will last). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can recognize when a text refers to the past (e.g. through use of past tenses, the information provided, pictures depicting the past). Can read and understand texts that refer to a time in the past (e.g. in the history textbook), using pictures/diagrams for support.
SPEAKING	Spoken Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can use single words and simple phrases to answer basic questions about what he/she does every day, or what he/she did yesterday or last week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can discuss with other pupils how he/she knows that time has passed (e.g. children grow bigger, hair grows longer, plants grow and change, seasons follow one another). Can ask and answer simple questions about his/her recent past, previous school, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can answer questions about what he/she hopes to do in the future (e.g. after school, at the weekend, during school holidays). Can ask other pupils about their past experiences and future plans. Can explain to a new pupil about the school week/year.
	Spoken Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can name the days of the week and months of the year. Can name the days when school takes place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe what happens in the course of a typical day in school. Can use a series of phrases and sentences to explain simply but clearly how the school year matches the calendar year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can talk about the changes in his/her life from past to present. Can talk about the changes in a plant/animal, etc. over time.
WRITING	Writing (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can copy or write the days of the week and months of the year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can write sentences about his/her favourite day of the week or time of the year. Can write sentences comparing last year, last birthday, etc. with this year, this birthday, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can write a short text for a historical project describing past situations or events or comparing past and present. Can write a short imaginative text about the future.

Unit 11: People and places in other areas

		A1 BREAKTHROUGH	A2 WAYSTAGE	B1 THRESHOLD
UNDERSTANDING	Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can recognize and understand the names of countries and nationalities represented in the school when they are spoken or read aloud. • Can recognize when a simple story is located in another country. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand at a general level classroom talk, including stories read aloud, about another country. • Can understand the main points when the teacher introduces a topic about another country (e.g. in Geography). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand a video about life in another country, using visual support to aid comprehension. • Can understand the main points in an oral account of an event in another country/society.
	Reading (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use pictures to identify references to different parts of the world in stories and textbooks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read short simple texts, with a high proportion of familiar words, which describe features of life in other countries, using pictures for support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read and understand texts about other countries, using familiar words and key concepts to aid comprehension and organise information.
SPEAKING	Spoken Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use key words and simple phrases/sentences to answer basic questions about where his/her family comes from. • Can ask other pupils basic questions about their nationality and where they come from. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can talk with other pupils about people in other countries in order to prepare poster projects, role plays, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can discuss how children live in different parts of the world. • Can talk with other pupils about the countries that they go to for holidays. • Can talk about where he/she would like to live in the future.
	Spoken Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can say which country he/she comes from and his/her nationality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe his/her parents' country of origin. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can compare the principal features of life in another country with the principal features of life in Ireland. • Can describe the particular features of life in his/her parents' country of origin.
WRITING	Writing (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can copy from a poster or map the names of countries and other places relevant to the class (e.g. countries of origin of other pupils). • Can copy or write the name of his/her country of origin. • Can draw a map of another country and copy or write the names of the country and its principal cities, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write brief notes about life in another country after reading or hearing about that country in class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can draw and label maps of other countries. • Can write a short 'news' account of daily life in another country. • Can write a letter describing the main features of daily life in Ireland. • Can write a brief summary of a story about another country.

Unit 12: Animals and plants

		A1 BREAKTHROUGH	A2 WAYSTAGE	B1 THRESHOLD
UNDERSTANDING	Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can recognize and understand basic words relating to animals and plants when they are spoken or read aloud, especially when supported by pictures, mime, etc. • Can recognize and understand the names of familiar animals and plants when they are read aloud in stories and other texts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand the main points in classroom talk about animals or plants, including stories and other texts read aloud by the teacher. • Can understand at a general level when the teacher introduces a topic that includes references to animals or plants (e.g. Environmental Studies), provided key vocabulary has been prepared in advance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand the main points in a video about the natural world. • Can understand the main points when the teacher introduces a topic about the natural world.
	Reading (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use pictorial support to recognize and understand the names of animals and plants when they are written down (e.g. in a picture dictionary). • Can recognize and understand the names of animals on flash cards or posters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read and understand very short and simple texts about animals, provided they contain a high proportion of familiar words and use appropriate visual support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand the main points in a text about the natural world, using familiar key words and pictures/diagrams to support comprehension and organise information.
SPEAKING	Spoken Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use key words and simple phrases/ sentences to answer basic questions about keeping a pet, liking animals, etc. • Can use key words and simple phrases/ sentences to answer basic questions about changes in plants that are kept in the classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can answer questions about which animals or plants he/she likes and dislikes. • Can ask and answer questions about keeping a pet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can discuss with other pupils how to include animals/plants in a project, role play, poster project, etc. • Can pass on information about taking care of animals or plants.
	Spoken Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can name the animals that he/she is familiar with. • Can say the names of the objects on the nature table. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use a series of phrases and sentences to talk about keeping a pet. • Can use a series of phrases and sentences to talk about wild animals and where they may be found. • Can use a series of phrases and sentences to explain the purpose of the objects on the nature table. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can explain in some detail how to look after a pet. • Can retell a story about animals.
WRITING	Writing (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can draw animal outlines, copying or writing appropriate labels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write simple sentences about a pet or wild animal, using familiar vocabulary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write an account of an incident involving an animal (e.g. a dog saves a child from drowning, a wild animal survives against the odds). • Can write a summary of a story involving animals.

Unit 13: Caring for my locality

		A1 BREAKTHROUGH	A2 WAYSTAGE	B1 THRESHOLD
UNDERSTANDING	Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can recognize and understand basic words for the main places in the area and for what happens there (e.g. shops – buy food, park – play football) when they are spoken or read aloud. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can understand the main points in classroom talk about environmental topics, including texts read aloud by the teacher. Can understand the main points when the teacher introduces an environmental theme, provided key vocabulary has been prepared in advance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can understand the main points in a talk or presentation about the local environment (e.g. given by a visiting speaker from the local library). Can understand the main points when the teacher introduces an environmental topic or one related to local activities (beach clean-up, collecting litter in the park, etc.).
	Reading (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can recognize basic words for buildings or places in the area (e.g. bank, shop, park, playground) on labels, maps, flash cards, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can read and understand a leaflet about a place in the locality (e.g. the local park and its wildlife), identifying key words/information, using a dictionary if necessary. Can read and understand the main points of public information leaflets about litter and other environmental dangers, using pictorial support and a dictionary if necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can read and understand a text (e.g. ENFO information sheet) about the natural world, local geographical features, care for the environment, etc., using familiar words and accompanying pictures/diagrams to aid comprehension.
SPEAKING	Spoken Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can use key words and simple phrases/ sentences to answer basic questions about where he/she has been in the area. Can use key words and simple phrases/ sentences to answer basic questions about where he/she likes to go in the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can ask and answer basic questions about activities that take place in different places in the locality, including whether and for whom these activities are important. Can ask other pupils where they have been in the locality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can exchange ideas with other pupils on local environmental matters (e.g. when designing a project to care for a local feature).
	Spoken Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can say the names of the principal places in the area, using a map for support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can use a series of phrases and sentences to talk about a favourite place in the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can give a short age-appropriate talk on a project about local community or environmental matters.
WRITING	Writing (if appropriate to the age of the pupil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can copy or write onto a local map the names of buildings and locations in the area. Can copy or write basic words related to different buildings and locations ('swimming', 'books', 'money', 'stamps', etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can write sentences about important places in the area, including information about the responsibilities of people living in the locality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can write a brief account of a local project, activity day or festival. Can write notes following a talk given by a visiting speaker on some aspect of the local environment or community.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages® Self-assessment grid

	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
UNDERSTANDING						
Listening	I can understand familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.	I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.	I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.	I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.	I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.	I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.
Reading	I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.	I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters.	I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.	I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.	I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.	I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works.
Spoken Interaction	I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.	I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.
Spoken Production	I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.	I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.	I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.
Writing	I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.	I can write short, simple notes and messages. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.	I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.	I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.	I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can select a style appropriate to the reader in mind.	I can write clear, smoothly-flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.
WRITING						

Notes

Section 4

Resources for pupils

My First English Book

Very young learners

My First English Book is specifically intended for children entering Junior or Senior Infants. However, teachers have used it selectively for pupils entering higher classes in primary school with zero English.

The content and format of the book was informed by many teachers working in schools throughout Ireland. The principles underlying the approach are those of the New Primary Curriculum particularly in involving pupils in the learning process and developing awareness of self-assessment and self-monitoring.

Features of the book

- All vocabulary is based on eight thematic areas of the primary curriculum.
- The activities are intended to support the development of oracy through **point and say, talking about different topics, talking and colouring, drawing pictures and explaining**, and **basic numeracy**.
- A few activities may be used for early writing.
- All instructions and prompts are intended to provide teacher support as there is no expectation that children will be able to read them.
- Ladders, which summarize and illustrate a pupil's early progress, should be mediated by the teacher. The ladders are intended to motivate pupils but also provide a means of showing colleagues and parents how the child's English language proficiency is developing.



Points to remember!

- ✓ The printed prompts show how a theme may be developed by the use of games, nursery rhymes, familiar stories, etc.
- ✓ Rhythmic and clapping rhymes are an excellent way for children to develop the pace and rhythm of language.
- ✓ Repetition and familiarity help to build confidence.

The themes of *My First English Book*:

Myself
My family
Colours and shapes
Our school
Clothes
Food
Seasons and festivals
Animals

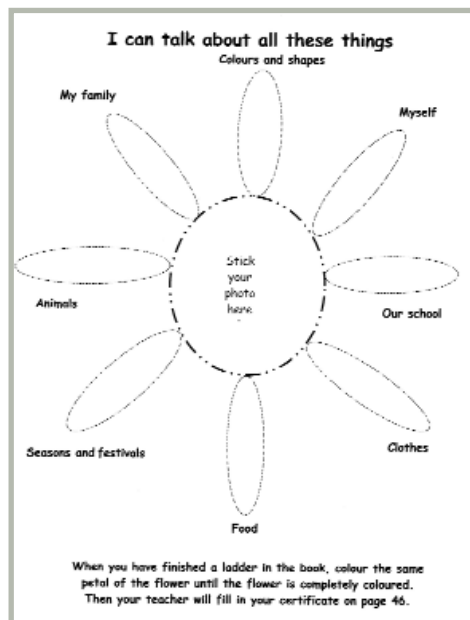
How to use *My First English Book*

1

The book begins with a 'flower' which presents each theme as a petal.

Pupils colour the relevant petal when they have completed the activities related to that theme.

When they have completed the book, all the petals will be coloured.



2

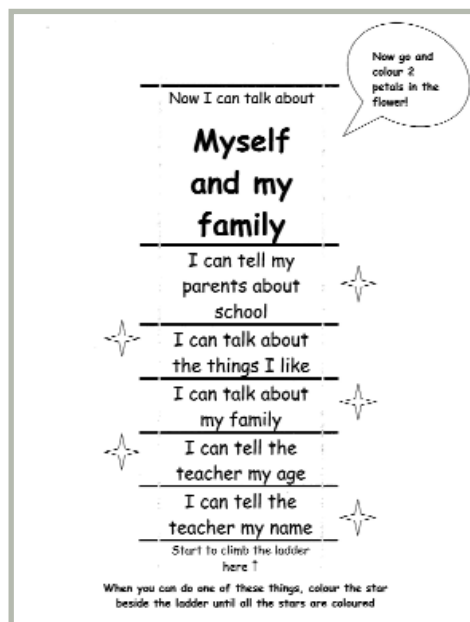
Each theme is followed by a 'ladder'.

When the pupil is able to do one of the things described on the ladder, the teacher should direct him/her to the relevant statement. The star beside that statement is either coloured, or a sticker put on the ladder.

A pupil will not necessarily achieve the statements in the same order as they are presented.

On completion of a ladder, the pupil returns to the flower and colours the relevant petal.

This process builds a visual record of progress and creates opportunities to give individual praise.



3

When all petals have been coloured and the book has been completed, the teacher fills in the certificate at the end and the pupil's work is shown to the parents.



Classroom activities using flash cards

The illustrations used in *My First English Book* are presented here on **pages 67-88** as flash cards. There are 84 key items in pictorial and word form. It is recommended that these should be photocopied, enlarged if necessary, and laminated as a permanent resource.

Teachers working with these flash cards have made many suggestions about how they may be used. Here is a selection.

Matching

The sequence for matching in general is:

1. **Picture to picture**
2. **Picture to word**
3. **Word to word**

Bingo game (listening, word recognition, revising vocabulary)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources A bingo card for each child made up of pictures. Use word cards with older pupils.

Method

- Teacher calls out an object.
- Pupils put a counter on the correct picture/word.
- The first one to complete his/her card wins.

Snap (picture/word recognition, learning vocabulary – matching)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Two sets of cards.

Method

- Pupils use the cards to play snap.
- Use pictures with infants or older pupils with little English.
- Use words with older pupils.
- After saying 'snap', the caller must name the object on the card or read the word.

Spelling

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Set of picture cards that are familiar to pupils.

Method

- In turn pupils pick or choose a card.
- They spell the word using magnetic letters.

Sight vocabulary (listening, speaking, reading)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Set of both picture and word cards.

Method

- Show the pictures first.
- Introduce the words.
- Mix all the cards in a box or bag.
- In turn pupils pick two cards and put them on the table. When they notice matching words and pictures, they put the two together.

Making connections (speaking or writing)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Selection of picture or word cards familiar to pupils.

Method

- Each pupil picks three cards and explains how the pictures are connected.

Note! Use word cards with older children. Ask them to write three sentences connecting the words.

Memory game (picture/word recognition, learning vocabulary – matching)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Two sets of cards (pictures, words or mixed).

Method

- Place all the cards face down.
- Pupils turn two cards over in turn.
- Pupils say the words as they are turned over. The aim is to find matching pairs.

Note! Extend the activity by asking pupils to say something about each picture/word.

Action words (listening, speaking, learning vocabulary – word association)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Picture or word cards associated with actions (eyes, bus, animals, boat, etc.).

Method

- Each pupil picks a card in turn.
- Teacher asks questions, for example, "We travel in a bus, what other ways do we travel?"
- All pupils contribute the words they know (e.g. walk, cycle, fly, etc.).

Pronunciation and rhythm (speaking)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Selection of picture or word cards familiar to pupils.

Method

- Each pupil picks a card in turn.
- He/she sounds out the different parts of the word.
- He/she claps the beats in the word.

Categories (picture/word recognition, speaking, learning vocabulary – categorising)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Sets of cards (either pictures or words) belonging to a particular category. Each set contains an 'odd one out'.

Method

- Place one set of cards face down.
- Pupils work in teams of two or three. Taking turns the teams turn over a card.
- As each team turns over a card they say what it is and what category it belongs to (food, clothing, school, animals, etc.).
- The aim is to be the first to identify the 'odd one out' and say why it is different.

Note! Use food cards to talk about healthy and unhealthy foods.

I spy (listening, picture/word recognition)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Any selection of picture or word cards familiar to pupils.

Method

- Pupils work in pairs or small groups.
- Each pair/group has a selection of cards on the table, face up.
- Teacher says "I spy ... something beginning with ...".
- Pupils find a picture/word that begins with that letter.

Favourites (picture/word recognition, speaking, learning vocabulary)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Sets of cards (either pictures or words) belonging to a particular category.

Method

- Place one set of cards face down.
- Taking turns pupils turn over a card.
- As each pupil turns a card he/she says what it is, whether he/she likes or doesn't like it and why.
- Repeat with another set of cards.

Note! Ask older pupils to write about 'My favourite meal' or 'My favourite clothes', etc.

Learning colours (learning vocabulary, speaking, writing)

Suitable for Young pupils.

Resources Any relevant picture cards for colouring.

Method

- Pupils choose pictures and colour them in.
- They name the object on the card and name the colours used.
- Label the picture by copying or writing the word.
- Copy or write the words for the colours used.

Find the real thing (speaking)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Pictures of classroom objects.

Method

- Make sure that the real objects are somewhere in the classroom (there may be several objects related to a particular picture).
- Each pupil picks a card.
- Pupils search the room for 'their' objects.
- Pupils explain the use of 'their' objects.

Note! Use word cards instead of picture cards.

Shapes (speaking, learning vocabulary – categorising)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Large selection of picture cards. The pictures should contain easily identifiable shapes.

Method

- Pupils look through the picture cards and find the shapes in each one.
- Pupils organise the picture cards according to categories (squares, triangles, etc).

Describing with shapes (speaking, writing)

Suitable for Older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Large selection of picture cards. The pictures should contain easily identifiable shapes.

Method

- Pupils choose a picture card and give descriptions (spoken or written) of the object, naming the shapes.

Happy families (speaking – asking questions)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Five picture cards per pupil. Each card from a different category.

Method

- Put the class into small groups. Assign a category to each pupil (food, clothes, animals, etc.).
- The first pupil (category, food) chooses someone in the group and asks, for example, “Do you have bread?”
- If the answer is ‘Yes’, he/she takes the card. If ‘No’, the turn passes to the next pupil.
- The first to collect five cards in his/her category is the winner.

I went to the shop ... (speaking – chain game, learning vocabulary)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Selection of picture or word cards.

Method

- Start the chain by picking a card and saying “I went to the shop and I bought a ...”.
- The first pupil picks a card, repeats what was said and adds what is on his/her card.
- The next pupil does the same and so on. When a pupil gets confused or can’t remember the chain, start again.

Magic box (speaking, revising vocabulary)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Selection of picture cards – a mix of mostly familiar together with some newly learnt.

Method

- Put the picture cards in a ‘magic box’.
- Pupils pick one out. If they name the object on the card, they keep it.

Line up (speaking – asking questions, revising vocabulary)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Selection of picture or word cards familiar to pupils.

Method

- Pupils line up.
- Each pupil comes to the teacher in turn.
- The pupil must guess what card the teacher is holding by asking questions, “Is it food?”, “Is it big?”, “What colour is it?”, etc.
- If pupil guesses after questions, he/she keeps the card and returns to the line.
- At the end of the game, all pupils count their cards.

Opposites (speaking, learning vocabulary)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Picture cards that show opposites (big/small, long/short, etc.).

Method

- Place the cards on the table, face up.
- Prompt the pupils to identify opposites by saying, for example, "Find something clean", "Find something dirty or not clean", etc.
- Point to two pictures containing clear opposites. Pupils name the objects and explain the opposites.

What am I? (speaking – asking questions, revising vocabulary)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Picture or word cards familiar to pupils. Head bands for each pupil.

Method

- Fix one card to the forehead of every pupil without them seeing the picture/word.
- The pupils ask questions to find out 'What am I?'

Note! Older pupils can work in smaller groups at the same time. Encourage pupils with higher proficiency and more vocabulary to ask a variety of questions.

Make a sentence (speaking)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Any relevant picture cards for colouring.

Method

- Pupils choose pictures and colour them in.
- Laminate the cards.
- Place the cards face down.
- Pupils take turns to pick a card and make a sentence about the picture.

Twenty questions (speaking – asking questions and responding, revising vocabulary)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Selection of picture or word cards.

Method

- Choose one card and show it to one pupil.
- Check that he/she understands.
- Hide the card in a box.
- The other pupils ask questions in turn. Encourage them to use all the vocabulary that they know – e.g. 'Is it an animal?', 'Is it big?', 'Does it have four legs?', etc.
- The first child can only reply 'Yes' or 'No'.
- Pupils get a point if they are the first to identify the word. If nobody guesses after twenty questions, the pupil who picked the word gets a point.

Take it away (speaking – descriptions, introducing or revising vocabulary)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Picture or word cards from a particular category.

Method

- Display four cards on the board.
- Discuss the pictures.
- Remove the pictures, shuffle them and put three back in a different order.
- Pupils identify which one has been taken away.

Passwords (introducing vocabulary)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Picture or word cards, or other prompts.

Method

- Each day a 'special' word is introduced relevant to the unit of work being studied.
- Pupils must remember this 'password' to enter the language support classroom the following day.

Sorting and making a chart (speaking, learning vocabulary – categorising)

Suitable for Young pupils and older pupils with low proficiency level.

Resources Large selection of picture or word cards.

Method

- The pupils work to categorise the cards according to themes (food, clothes, animals, etc.).
- They then arrange the cards in the form of a bar chart using the categories as column headings.
- Display the bar chart and use it to reinforce vocabulary.

Note! Blank charts made up of plastic pockets can be used for a variety of themes. Pupils put the relevant cards into the pockets during activities.

Flash cards for *My First English Book*



ear



nose



eye



mouth



book



bag



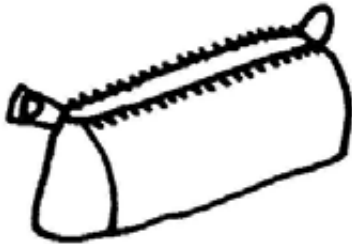
clock



pencil



pen



pencil
case



copy
book



waste
paper bin



map



hat



trousers



jeans



shorts



short-sleeved
shirt



long-sleeved
shirt



tee-shirt



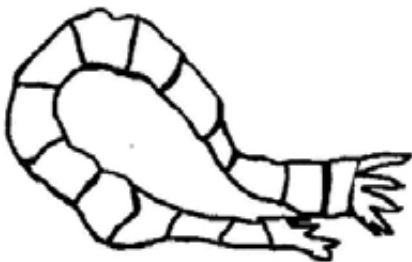
coat



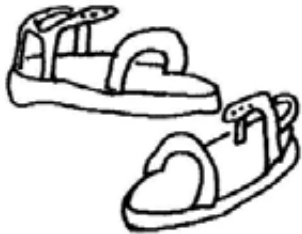
boots



gloves



scarf



sandals



cap



socks



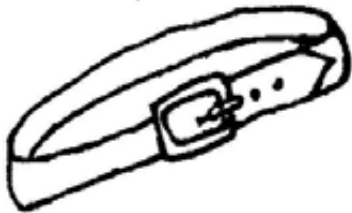
skirt



jumper



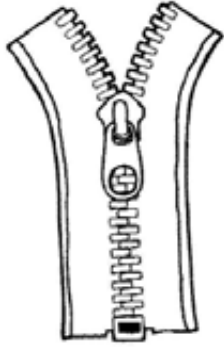
dress



belt



tie



zip



apple



banana



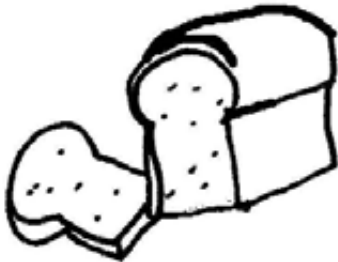
carrots



chips



honey



bread



cheese



ice cream



burger



cake



fish



lettuce



grapes



onions



pizza



fish and chips



lemon



cornflakes



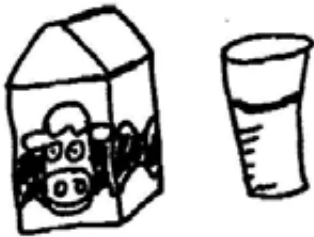
pears



orange juice



milk shake



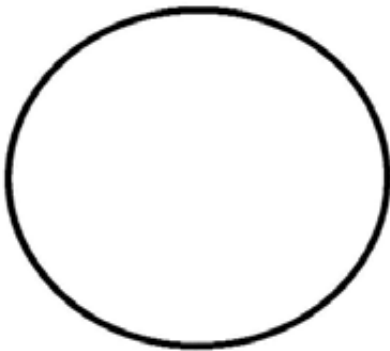
milk



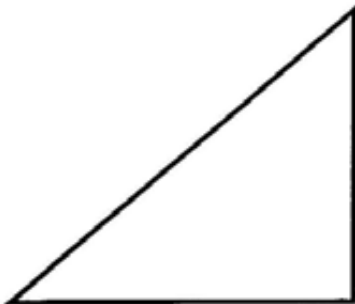
coke



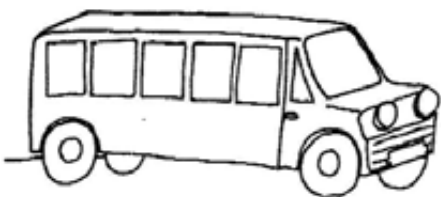
square



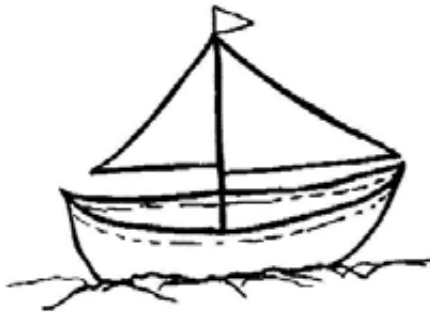
circle



triangle



bus



boat



star



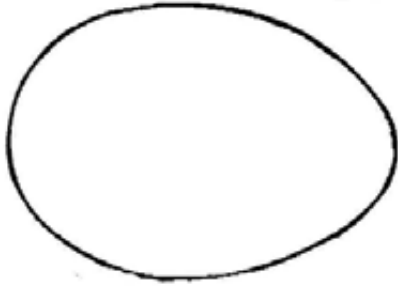
sticks



hen



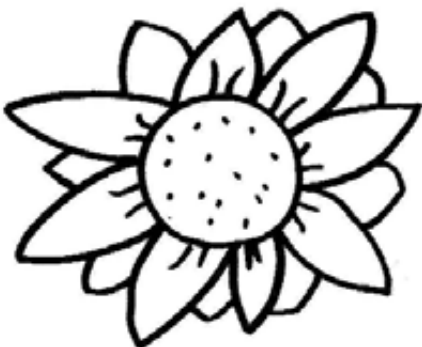
snowman



egg



nest



flower



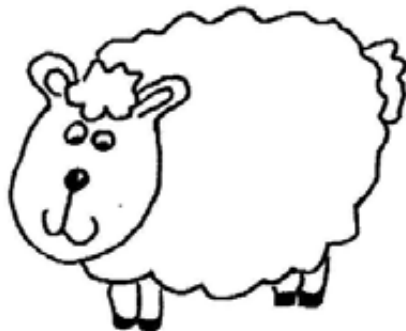
bucket and
spade



pumpkin



Christmas
tree



sheep



pig



rabbit



lion



frog



ladybird



snail



mouse



spider



bird



cat



dog



COW

Developing pronunciation skills

The following activities develop pupils' awareness of:

- **Word stress**
- **Sound and spelling connections**
- **Pronunciation of particular sounds**
- **Intonation**

For pupils who haven't developed literacy skills:

Using stories 1	see page 91
Rhymes and songs	see page 92
Chants	see pages 92-93

In addition to the above, for pupils who can read and write:

Word stress 1	see page 90
Word stress 2	see page 90
Sound and spelling connections	see page 91
Using stories 2	see page 92
Using stories 3*	see page 92
Chain games	see page 93
Making tongue twisters*	see page 93

*These activities involve free writing and are suitable for pupils at A2 level in writing.

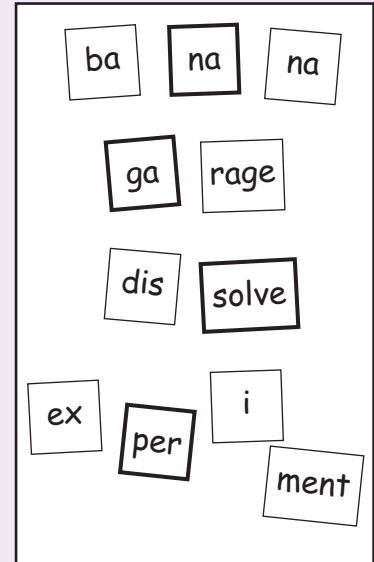
Word stress 1

Resources

Laminate **Worksheet A on page 94** before cutting out the boxes. Use a marker to write on the cut-up boxes.

Method

1. Select a group of words, either theme-based, vocabulary items from the previous class or words which pupils are finding difficult to pronounce.
2. Write the syllables of the words in the boxes, using those boxes with a thicker border for syllables which are stressed.
3. Show the separate syllables to the class and practise pronunciation. Put the syllables side by side to construct the word.
4. Point out the stressed syllable and contrast with the unstressed syllables.
5. Say the word in full, syllable by syllable, tapping out the rhythm on the table as you do so. Involve the whole class before asking individual pupils to say the word.



Word stress 2

Resources

Laminate **Worksheet A on page 94** before cutting out the boxes. Discard the boxes with the thicker border. Use a marker to write on the cut-up boxes.

Method

1. Select a group of words, either theme-based, vocabulary items from the previous class or words which pupils are finding difficult to pronounce.
2. Write the syllables of the words in the boxes.
3. Pupils practise pronouncing first the syllables of each word and then the words.
4. Say the word three or four times. Pupils listen and draw a line under the syllable which they think is stressed.
5. Repeat the word three or four more times. Pupils tap out the rhythm on the table, say the word as a group and then individually.

Note! This activity assumes that pupils are familiar with the idea of word stress. Use this activity as a logical follow-on from 'Word stress 1' above.

When pupils are familiar with the activity, ask them to work in pairs rather than a whole group.



Pupils usually respond well to the element of fun provided by these two activities.

Sound and spelling connections

Resources

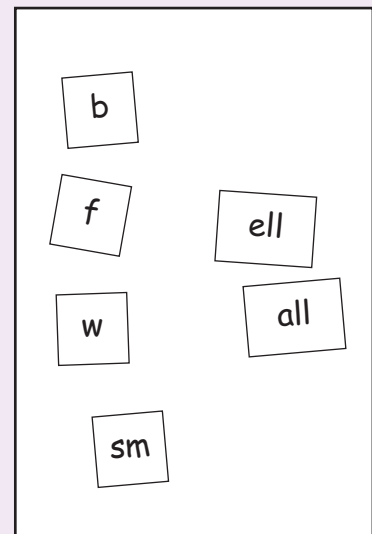
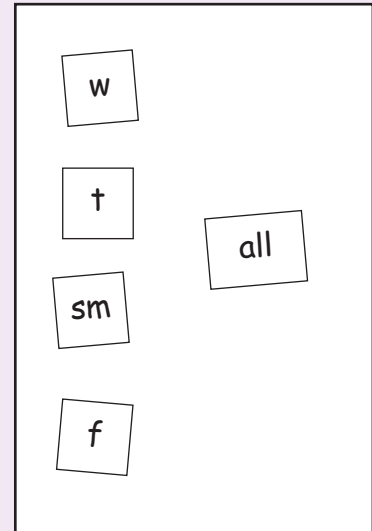
Blank flash cards – see page 191.

Method

1. Choose a word that pupils are familiar with, both in terms of meaning and word recognition – e.g. the word 'ball'.
2. Using blank flash cards, write down other familiar words that share the same sound and spelling pattern – e.g. 'tall', 'small', 'wall', 'fall'.
3. Practise saying the words, pointing out the correspondence between the group of letters and the sound.
4. Cut up the flash cards so that the first part of the words and the target group of letters (in this case 'all') are separate.
5. Put one flash card with 'all' on one side of the table. Call out words one at a time. Pupils identify the first part of the word that goes with 'all'.

Note! This approach can be used in successive lessons. For example, in the following class use the same approach to introduce the sound made by the letters 'ell'.

Then put 'all' in one area of the table and 'ell' in another. Call out words (e.g. 'bell', 'wall', 'tell', 'small') and pupils make the correct word by moving the relevant first part of the word next to one of the groups of letters.



Using stories 1 – for pupils not yet reading

Resources

Choose a story which is familiar and which contains repeated words or phrases.

Method

1. Read the story twice. Tell pupils that you want them to say some of the words.
2. Read the story, stopping at a repeated word or phrase which pupils say together or individually. Encourage correct intonation.

Using stories 2 – for pupils learning to read

Resources

None.

Method

1. Pupils choose a story which they know and like.
2. Pupils take turns to read aloud. Encourage correct intonation and pronunciation.
3. If some words are difficult for the group to pronounce, use the approach in 'Word stress 1' above.

Using stories 3 – for pupils who can read well

Resources

None.

Method

1. In pairs or small groups pupils choose a story that is familiar.
2. Each pair/group works on retelling (or changing) the story in their own words. Encourage pupils to make notes.
3. Each pair/group tells the story to the class, taking turns to be the narrator or adopting different roles.

Using chants, rhymes, poems and songs

1. For pupils not yet reading

Rhymes and songs

1. Use the approach outlined in 'Using stories 1'.
2. On finishing the activity ask pupils to think of more words that rhyme.

Chants

Create chants that are based on themes and have simple rhythms.

E.g. To the rhythm of an accelerating train:

Apple	Apple
— —	— —
Bread and butter	Bread and butter
— — — —	— — — —
Fish and chips	and fish and chips
— — —	— — —
Tea and toast	and tea and toast and tea and toast
— — —	— — — — — — —

Repeat very quickly ending with a train whistle.

Playground chants provide language use that is often accompanied by clapping, turning around or other actions.

E.g. A sailor went to sea sea sea,
 To see what he could see see see.
 But all that he could see see see,
 Was the bottom of the deep blue sea sea sea.

2. For pupils learning to read and write

Focus pronunciation work on language which is familiar to the class both in terms of meaning and word recognition.

Chain games

These are very effective for practising the pronunciation of particular sounds.

E.g. Silly sandwiches

1. On the board write 'Yesterday I made a silly sandwich with'. Tell the class that you made a sandwich with ingredients which had the first letter 'f' and give an example.
2. Pupils work in pairs/small groups to write down a silly sandwich containing ingredients that include the chosen sound. Encourage pupils to reference words in their notes, on wall charts and so on*.
3. In turn the pairs/small groups read out, "We made a silly sandwich with..."

For the chosen sound 'f', the result may be as follows:

'We made a silly sandwich with four fat frogs, fresh fruit and fried fish'.

*This ensures that all pupils are familiar with the language used in the activity.

3. For pupils who can read well

Making tongue twisters

Creating tongue twisters is an excellent and enjoyable way for pupils to practise the pronunciation of particular sounds.

1. Write words on the board that contain the same sound.
2. Pupils add more words to the list, referencing their own work or wall charts*.
3. Pupils work in pairs/small groups to write a tongue twister.
4. The pairs/groups exchange their work and try to say the tongue twisters.

*This is excellent scan reading practice and reinforces pronunciation of known words.

Note! This is also an excellent activity for pupils to make connections between sound and spelling patterns. For example, looking at the /aik/ sound might start with the words 'cake', 'make' and 'take' on the board. Pupils might then come up with 'break' or 'ache'. The focused practice which follows is, therefore, very effective for both pronunciation and spelling.



The *European Language Portfolio* from first to sixth class



This version of the *European Language Portfolio* (ELP) was designed by Integrate Ireland Language and Training for use in English language support in primary schools throughout Ireland. The original ELP version was validated by the Council of Europe in 2001. Following a revision of the **English Language Proficiency Benchmarks** on which this ELP is based, and the collection of feedback from language support teachers throughout Ireland, the ELP was revised and re-validated in 2004.

The purpose of this version of the *European Language Portfolio* is to support children whose mother tongue is not English as they meet the challenge of learning English in order to participate fully in mainstream education. The ELP demonstrates and highlights individual achievement and success and, as a result, helps promote self-confident and self-directed learners.

The *European Language Portfolio* is intended for pupils from **first class upwards** as it involves the use of basic literacy skills. Using this ELP with pupils in primary education provides a positive and fun-based means of ensuring that the child learns the language that is critical for integration into the mainstream classroom. At the same time, use of the ELP promotes the growth of self-confidence and self-esteem as the child's active participation in learning provides constant confirmation of the realities of success.

The **English Language Proficiency Benchmarks** provide the basis for the content and delivery of English language support for pupils whose mother tongue is neither English nor Irish. The Benchmarks specify the minimum proficiency required for full participation in mainstream primary schooling.

Children do not learn in the same way and at the same rate. The *European Language Portfolio* is designed to provide a means for the teacher and individual pupil together to identify an appropriate pathway for learning. In this way, the apparently less able pupil may be helped to progress along a path and in a way that meets his/her particular language learning needs. The progress through the Benchmarks by any individual pupil will rarely be entirely predictable and consistent; some skills may develop more quickly than others, and at any particular level some of the tasks described in the 'Units of Work' may prove to be more difficult than others.

What is the *European Language Portfolio*?

Every *European Language Portfolio* has three parts:

A Language Passport

A Language Biography

A Dossier

Language Passport

The Language Passport is where the child expresses his or her linguistic identity. This process is most important for children using this particular ELP. While the English language will dominate in the context of their education, it is important to acknowledge the identity that language support pupils express through their mother tongues.

For sample activities leading to the Language Passport see page 100.

Language Biography

The Language Biography is the focus for all the learning that takes place in language support classes. Much of this section contains **themed checklists** (pages 10–22). These checklists are simplified versions of the descriptors in the English Language Proficiency Benchmarks. Each checklist statement suggests a **task or activity** that the child should master so that he or she, with the support of the teacher, can then colour the relevant symbol to indicate that this has been achieved. This helps the child to take responsibility for his or her learning and also to record progress.

For examples of relevant classroom activities see pages 102–112.

Dossier

The Dossier is an open part of the ELP in which children can file and keep their work. Some activity pages are provided, but the main contents of the Dossier are developed throughout language support so that each child has a substantial file of his or her work.

For more information about possible Dossier content see page 113.

Validation

When a *European Language Portfolio* contains all the above elements and complies with the Principles and Guidelines set down by the Council of Europe, it may be validated. The validation number for this ELP is 11.2001 (rev. 2004).

Using the *European Language Portfolio*

Using the ELP in general

Every statement in the ELP suggests a **learning activity**. It is not a book of forms to be filled in and should not be used in this way.

For the teacher, the topics or activities suggested in the ELP checklists can be used to help **plan lessons**.

All of the themes in the ELP are strands of the **primary curriculum**. There is a wealth of existing published material available for primary curriculum learning.

When pupils can carry out the activities suggested at B1 level, they are capable of integrating into mainstream learning. The time necessary for a child to achieve this level will differ considerably. The ELP is designed to support learning over a two-year period of language support, so there is **no need to hurry**.

The order of use

The ELP is typically used at the **end of a cycle of learning**. Cycles are usually theme-based and may take one class session or several weeks to complete. In general, teachers recommend that the ELP should be revisited every two to four weeks.

The ELP is never used page by page. The teacher has complete **freedom** to move backwards and forwards through the pages to use the themes, statements and activities that fit in best with the rhythm and focus of teaching.

Language learning is **cyclical**. Pupils revisit the same theme several times as language proficiency develops and learning tasks become more challenging.

The content

The ELP does not restrict the **scope** of teaching. Teachers are free to add new activities, worksheets or other learning or published resources to the Dossier as appropriate.

The ELP can be integrated with any **classroom activities**, topics or teaching objectives.

There are many interconnections between units of work so that pupils may be able to **colour several icons** at the same time.

For example, following an activity which explores the functions of different places in the locality (e.g. bank, garda station, library, clinic, etc.), it may be appropriate to colour the following icons:

A1 (People who help us ELP page14)

I can understand the words for people who help us

A1 (The local and wider community ELP page 18)

I can understand the names for people who work and live in my town or area

A1 (The local and wider community ELP page18)

I can point out on a map where different people work

Using the ELP with individual pupils

Because each pupil individually owns his/her ELP, it is possible to include a child's **home culture** in activities – for example by drawing pictures, writing descriptions, etc.

'Portfolio Day', or an ELP session, is a good opportunity to **praise pupils** individually. Sample procedure:

1. Teacher directs pupil to relevant page for the theme that has been covered in recent classroom activities.
2. Pupil reads the statement indicated by the teacher.
3. Pupil and teacher discuss the statement and confirm that the pupil can perform the task in question – pupil may demonstrate or answer questions to provide evidence of ability.
4. Pupil colours icon and teacher praises pupil for the achievement.

The **particular needs** of an individual child may be the focus of his/her portfolio.

For example:

If a child has already developed proficiency to B1 level in the skills of listening and speaking, but needs to develop more proficiency in reading and writing, then the focus in the portfolio should be on all the statements that suggest reading or writing activities.

A1 (Time)

I can read the day and month and the timetable for school

I can copy the days of the week and the months of the year from the board

A2 (Time)

I can read a notice about something that will happen at a particular time and on a particular day

I can write about my favourite time

B1 (Time)

I can read about the past in my reader or textbook

I can write about something that happened in history or might happen in the future

Developing the learning skills of pupils

Pupils, particularly those in senior primary classes, can take part in **making decisions** about what needs to be learnt or reviewed. This is done by looking through the themed checklists and identifying new learning targets.

Pages and statements in the ELP support teachers in exploring with their pupils **how language learning happens** and how it can be improved (see pages 8-9 of the ELP).

The checklists (pages 10-22 of the ELP) contribute to a process of combined teacher/pupil assessment in which the pupil 'proves' his/her achievement. This process develops pupils' awareness of their own abilities and teaches them how to **assess themselves**.

ELP page 3

- This page may take **several weeks** or a term to complete.
- The **dotted red line** is for the child, or his/her parents, to write the labels in the child's mother tongue.
- 'Hair' and 'eyes' could be entered when learning **colours** or basic parts of the body.
- The concept of '**birthday**' may be used for celebration, counting and numeracy, days of the week, months, seasons, favourite foods, etc.
- See **introductory activity** on next page.

My Language Passport

Stick your photo
or draw your
picture here

My name is: _____

I live at: _____

My birthday is: _____

My school is: _____

My hair is: _____

My eyes are: _____

ELP page 4

- This page acknowledges **all the languages** used by the child.
- Filling in the details can result from activities such as '**My daily routine**' and '**Where I use and learn language**' (page 8 of the ELP).
- See next page for a **classroom activity**.


Languages I know

These are the languages I know:


I speak _____ with my family

I speak _____ in school

I also know _____



I can read in _____

I can write in _____ 

Sample activities for *European Language Portfolio* (ELP)

ELP page 3 At the beginning

Resources

One soft ball. One copy of the ELP per child.

Method

1. At first language support class, arrange pupils in a small circle and throw ball to each child in turn. As each child catches the ball, he/she says "My name is ...". Teacher may have to model this.
2. Distribute ELPs to all pupils from 1st class up and open at page 3. Pupils write in their names (with help as necessary) and the name of the school.
3. The other details will come later as pupils learn colours, where they live, etc.

ELP page 4 Languages I know

Making a class poster to supplement individual work in the ELP

On page 4 the pupil records the languages known to him or her. As a means of including these in the classroom display, make a class poster to illustrate the range of languages represented by all language support pupils, with photos or names of the children. Add new photos/names and languages as children join the group during the year.



Resources

Poster-sized paper, markers, photos of pupils.

Method

1. Add the child's name or photo to the wall chart.
2. Pupil opens ELP at page 4.
3. Ask "What language do you speak at home?" and then "What language do you speak at school?"
4. If appropriate, stop at this point. Return to the other questions at a later stage when the subject is revisited.
5. Help the child to fill in the answers.

ELP page 8

- This page may take **one or two years** to complete fully.
- It raises the **pupil's awareness** of language and supports English language learning in the mainstream classroom as well as in other situations outside school.
- See next page for **activities**.

WHERE I use and learn languages

When I get up in the morning I speak _____

On my way to school I hear _____

With my friends I speak _____

In my class I hear _____

At home I see _____
these things written: _____ in these languages: _____

On the street I see _____
these things written: _____ in these languages: _____

At home I hear _____
these things: _____ in these languages: _____

I speak _____
these languages: _____ in these places: _____

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ELP page 8 WHERE I use and learn languages

The purpose of the activities on this page is to develop children's awareness of languages in general and where and how they can use and learn different languages.

Completion of this page could take the entire two years of language support.

Different statements on the page can be connected to other themes and should be revisited in context.

Examples:

When I get up in the morning I speak

This statement is intended to prompt pupils to talk about the **language of their homes**. It can be extended into the pupil giving a little 'lesson' in his/her mother tongue – for example teaching a greeting.

It is most important that the home languages of pupils are respected and acknowledged whenever appropriate. These languages constitute a major part of the personal identity of language support pupils. This activity is part of the theme **'Myself'**.

On my way to school I hear

This statement can be connected to the themes **'People who help us'** and **'Transport and travel'**.

Method

1. Brainstorm the different people we see as we travel to school (e.g. garda, lollipop lady/man, bus driver, shopkeeper, etc.).
2. Pupils suggest what the people might typically say.
3. Role play conversations with the different people.
4. Extend to other people, such as doctor, nurse, dentist, etc.

At home I hear these things

This statement is connected to **'Myself'** but can be extended to a range of different themes. For example, children may hear stories read by their parents.

Method

1. Pupils draw a picture which illustrates a story that they have heard.
2. They then tell the story of the picture to the teacher.
3. Teacher writes the story, correcting as appropriate, beside the picture.

ELP page 9 HOW I learn

This page is particularly important for children in **senior primary classes** approaching the transition to post-primary education.

The statements provide a focus for the pupils to explore how they learn best. It is likely that the completion of this page will take **at least one school year**.

Method

When pupils have carried out a learning activity, the teacher helps them to think about their own learning.

For example, after introducing a new topic and working on key vocabulary, the teacher prompts reflection by asking questions such as:


- **How are you going to remember the new words?**
- **Do you think it's a good idea to write them down?**
- **Is it a good idea to have a little quiz tomorrow to help you remember?**
- **What about the spelling – how can you remember the spelling?**
- **Do you do that each time we have new vocabulary in class?**

Individually, pupils note their learning strategies in the box **'When I want to learn and remember new words I...'**.


HOW I learn


WORDS	When I want to learn and remember new words I ...	<input type="text"/>	Write the date!
READING	When I want to read something I ...	<input type="text"/>	
LISTENING	When I want to understand what I am hearing I ...	<input type="text"/>	
SPEAKING	When I want to speak I ...	<input type="text"/>	
WRITING	When I want to write something I ...	<input type="text"/>	


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Myself 


A1


I can understand questions about myself 

I can understand when the teacher tells me to do something that I already know 


I can find my name on a list or on the classroom wall 


I can answer some questions about myself and my family and say if I like something 


I can tell the teacher if I need something 


I can copy words from the board 


A2


I can understand what my friends are saying 


I can read words that I already know 

I can answer lots of questions about myself and my family 


I can tell my parents about what I did in school 


I can tell my teacher if I have a problem 


I can talk about the colour of my hair and eyes and how tall I am 


I can write a little about myself and my family and about things I like doing 


B1

I can easily understand my teachers and my friends 

I can read stories about children in other places 

I can answer questions about my life and what I like doing 

I can tell other people about something nice that happened to me 

I can write about things that happen and the things I like and don't like 

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ELP page 10 Myself

Draw a picture

Resources

One sheet for each pupil containing only an outline of a child.

Method

Pupils colour in the eyes and hair, and draw ears, nose, hands and feet.

Talk about different hair and eye colours, and count one and two.

Song

A good activity song for learning about the body is 'Head and shoulders knees and toes, knees and toes'.

Booklet about myself

Resources

Photograph of the pupil (a digital camera is an excellent resource).

A sheet containing an outline of a child.

Method

1. Pupil sticks his/her **photograph** into folded 'booklet'.
2. Writes, or copies, **name, age, school, address** or **area**, etc.
3. **Labels** blank outline of child and writes, or copies, sentences about colour of hair and eyes.
4. Writes, or copies, simple sentences about, for example, **likes or dislikes, family, how he/she came to school today**, etc.
5. Put the booklet into **Dossier** of ELP - punch the pages or use a plastic sleeve.

ELP page 11 Our school

Learning about the school

Resources

Photographs of important places and particular areas/rooms in the school.

Method

1. Bring the pupils on a **walking tour** of the school. Point out the **particular areas**, rooms, etc. for which you have photographs (e.g. computer room, library, toilets, teachers' room, etc.).
2. Practise the **vocabulary** and explain the use of the different rooms.
3. Back in the classroom, **label each photograph**.
4. Review the vocabulary and **make a vocabulary chart** for the wall.
5. Pupils select one photograph each and **write some sentences** about that part of the school (the length and complexity of the text will depend on the age and English language proficiency of the pupil).


Becoming familiar with P.E.

Resources

Some of the P.E. games suggested in the curriculum (suitable for classroom).

Method

1. Pre-teach the **key vocabulary** and check pupils' **comprehension**.
2. Pupils take turns to **'be teacher'** and to give instructions.
3. The rest of the pupils listen to the instructions and **play** the game.



Our school

A1

I can understand some of the things that the teacher says in class and the names for things in the school

I can understand when my friends tell me how to play a game

I can read the names and notices on the doors in my school and on the board

I can ask permission to go to the toilet

I can ask for things in the classroom

A2

I understand what the teacher says in P.E.

I can understand things that I must tell my parents

I can read words that I know in a book

I can give a message to the teacher or tell a teacher about a problem

I can tell the story of what I saw on television

I can write a little about my school and my friends

I can write a little about what we are doing in class

B1

I can understand exactly what the teacher says to me

I can understand the other pupils in my class

I can read my textbooks in the class



I can ask the teacher questions in class

I can tell my class about things we are learning


I can write about my day at home or in school


I can write about my friends and what we do together


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Food and clothes  


A1

I can understand the names of the clothes I wear to school and the food that I eat in school. 


I can read the words for the clothes that I know and the food that I like and don't like. 


I can ask for things in shops and ask how much they cost. 


I can say what food and clothes I like and don't like. 


I can write words for different foods and for the clothes we wear. 


A2


I can understand when we need special clothes for school. 


I can understand what foods we are allowed to bring to school. 

I can read the names of foods in the supermarket or in a café. 


I can understand about clothes when I read a story. 


I can ask and answer questions about drinks and foods. 


I can describe a meal in my home. 


I can write a little about a special occasion in my home and the food that I like and don't like. 

B1

I can understand talk about food or clothes. 

I can read about food that is good or bad for me. 

I can talk with my friends about the clothes I like. 

I can write about making food. 

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ELP page 12 Food and clothes

Using concrete examples to learn vocabulary for food or clothes.

Playing shop

Resources

Shopping bags, food packets collected from home, play foods, or items of clothing.

Method

1. Set up a **play shop** with the pupils taking **different roles**.
2. The **'customer'** enquires about the price ('How much is/are ...?'), makes requests ('May I have ...?'), and uses 'Please' and 'Thank you'.
3. The **'shopkeeper'** serves the customers ('Here you are', 'Anything else?', 'I don't have any ...', 'There is only one left', 'It costs ...', etc.), **adds up** and asks for the amount owed – see note below.

Note! Introduce the concept of **money** as appropriate to the age and language proficiency of the pupils.

Categorising

Resources


Food packets collected from home, play foods, items of clothing and pictures of clothes.

Method

1. Pupils **categorise food or clothes** according to groups suggested by the teacher – e.g. 'Healthy foods' and 'Unhealthy foods', 'Foods that we must put in the fridge', 'Winter clothes' and 'Summer clothes', etc.
2. Brainstorm ideas with pupils taking turns to **write names of food or clothes on the board in the appropriate lists**.
3. Use the lists to make **wall charts**.
4. End with a **writing activity** on 'My favourite food' or 'My favourite clothes'.

ELP page 13 Colours, shapes and opposites

This theme is automatically included in many other themes in the curriculum. As a result, pupils will often be able to prove ability and mark off statements in this checklist in addition to the checklist for the main theme being studied.



Colours, shapes and opposites

A1

I can understand the words for colours and shapes

I can find colours, shapes and opposites in the classroom

I can read the words for different colours and shapes

I can answer questions about the colours I am wearing

I can give the names for colours and shapes that I know

I can copy words for colours and shapes from the board

A2

I can understand instructions that include colours, shapes or opposites

I can read the words for colours, shapes and opposites in a story

I can ask questions about colours, shapes, size and opposites

I can describe things by colour, size and shape

I can write about something using words for colour, size, shapes and opposites

B1

I can understand colours and shapes when the teacher reads a story

I can understand the difference between colours, shapes and opposites when I read a story or textbook


I can talk about the importance of colours

I can write news or a postcard using colours, size or shapes to describe something

I can write a description of my favourite things using words for colours and shapes

Examples

- **Myself** → I can answer questions about the colours I am wearing (A1)
- **Food and clothes** → I can give the names for colours and shapes that I know (A1)
- **Transport and travel** → I can ask questions about colours, shapes, size and opposites (A2)
- **Seasons, holidays and festivals** → I can describe things by colour, size and shape (A2)
- **Time** → etc.
- **Animals and plants** →

Weather 

A1

I can understand the words for different types of weather _____

I can read the words on a poster or picture about weather _____

I can answer simple questions about the weather _____

I can write words about weather _____

A2

I can understand the main points when other people talk about weather _____

I can read about weather when there are pictures or diagrams to help me _____

I can talk about the weather that I like _____

I can talk about the different clothes we wear for different kinds of weather _____

I can tell my teacher about the weather outside _____

I can write sentences about weather, the days I like and the clothes we need _____

B1

I can watch the weather forecast on TV and understand the main points _____

I can understand when the teacher tells us about weather _____


I can read about weather in my textbook _____

I can answer questions about weather _____

I can talk about weather in Ireland and in other countries _____

I can write a short letter describing the weather in Ireland and how we dress in different types of weather _____

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Time 

A1

I can understand the days of the week _____

I can understand when I am told the time _____

I can read the day and month and the timetable for school _____

I can answer simple questions about what I do on different days _____

I can name the days of the week and the months of the year _____

I can copy the days of the week and the months of the year from the board _____

A2

I can understand announcements in school _____

I can understand when the teacher is talking about something that happened in the past _____

I can read a notice about something that will happen at a particular time and on a particular day _____

I can ask and answer questions about time and change _____

I can describe what happens at different times in school _____

I can write about my favourite time _____

B1

I can understand the main points in a history lesson or video _____

I can read about the past in my reader or textbook _____

I can answer questions about what I would like to do in the future _____

I can talk about the difference between the present and the past in my life _____

I can write about something that happened in history or might happen in the future _____

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ELP page 15 Weather + ELP page 19 Time

Using a classroom chart to learn the days and months and to describe weather.

Resources

Blank chart, on card or laminated, with space for three columns – see below.

Two sets of laminated cards. One set for days of the week, the other for months.

Collection of weather symbols (use clipart online) on laminated card.

Method


1. Pupils find the **cards with the correct day and month**.
2. They put the cards on the chart then **look outside**, talk about the weather and find a symbol that describes it.
3. **Put this symbol** on the chart.

A different language support group can take responsibility for developing the chart every week.

Other groups look at the chart and read the information.

Example:

day	month	weather

Seasons, holidays and festivals 

A1

I can understand the words for the holidays and festivals during the school year

I can read the words for festivals and seasons

I can say the words for the seasons and for the weather in different seasons

I can say when the main festivals are in the year

I can copy sentences about seasons and festivals from the board

A2

I can understand the main words about seasons and festivals when the teacher talks about them in class

I can read about a season or festival and use pictures to help me understand

I can answer some questions about the important celebrations in my home

I can talk to my friends about festivals and celebrations

I can describe special celebrations to my teacher or class

I can write news about a special event in school or in my home

B1

I can understand lessons about seasons and festivals


I can read about seasons, holidays and festivals in my reader or textbook

I can answer questions about the celebrations in my home

I can describe an important event in my family

I can write about a festival or celebration

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Time 

A1

I can understand the days of the week

I can understand when I am told the time

I can read the day and month and the timetable for school

I can answer simple questions about what I do on different days

I can name the days of the week and the months of the year

I can copy the days of the week and the months of the year from the board

A2

I can understand announcements in school

I can understand when the teacher is talking about something that happened in the past

I can read a notice about something that will happen at a particular time and on a particular day

I can ask and answer questions about time and change

I can describe what happens at different times in school

I can write about my favourite time

B1

I can understand the main points in a history lesson or video

I can read about the past in my reader or textbook

I can answer questions about what I would like to do in the future

I can talk about the difference between the present and the past in my life

I can write about something that happened in history or might happen in the future

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ELP page 17 Seasons, holidays and festivals + ELP page 19 Time

Making a class poster to supplement individual work in ELP.

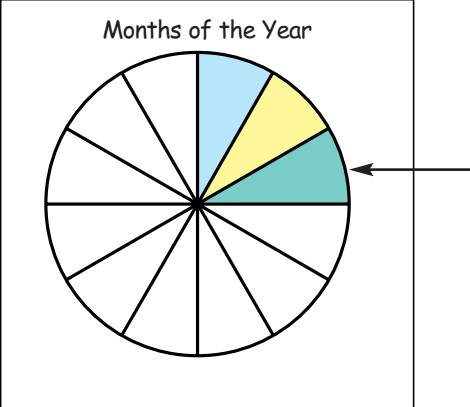
Resources

Poster-sized paper, markers, photos or pictures.

Method

Make a large blank poster divided into months and seasons.

Examples



Months of the Year

Each segment represents a month

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	
Spring				

1. **Write** in the months and seasons.
2. **Colour** or mark the times of the year when children attend school.
3. The pupils put in **pictures and/or key words** to represent the main festivals (e.g. pumpkin for Hallowe'en).
4. They write their **names** in the months of their birthdays.
5. The **children talk** about particular events that they celebrate and write/stick pictures in the relevant months.

ELP page 18 The local and wider community

This theme may also include 'People who help us' (page 14) and 'Caring for my locality' (page 22).

Resources

Map of the locality containing numbers which indicate particular buildings and places.


Photographs of buildings and places in the area (shops, doctor's clinic, library, gym, park, playground, etc.).

Flash cards containing key words.

Method

1. **Introduce the photos** one at a time, working on the key vocabulary.
2. **Mix up the photos** with the flash cards and put them face up on the table. Pupils match each photo with the key word(s).
3. **Pupils talk** about who uses the different places and what happens there.
4. Take the pupils on a short **walking tour** to see the places nearest the school.
5. Stop and let children **look at the photographs** as they look at each place.
6. Back in the classroom, pupils **look at the map** and decide which building or place relates to each number.

Note! Flash cards can be made into sets of 'Snap' cards. Snap is an excellent game for consolidating word recognition.



The local and wider community

A1

- I can understand the names for people who work and live in my town or area.
- I can point out on a map where different people work.
- I can read the names of buildings and places in my area.
- I can answer some questions about where I live.
- I can name the places I have been to in the area.
- I can write or copy words about the important places where I live.

A2

- I can understand talk or stories about different people's jobs.
- I can read important information about places where I live.
- I can ask about the buildings and activities in my area.
- I can explain why I like particular places or activities.
- I can write sentences or news about places and events in my area.

B1

- I can understand talks or videos about local places and events.
- I can read about things in my town or area.
- I can answer questions about places I have visited and what I did there.
- I can talk about a particular place that I visited.
- I can write about something I did in the area where I live.

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People who help us*

A1

- I can understand the words for people who help us.
- I can read the words for people who help us.
- I can ask somebody for help if I am worried or lost.
- I can give my name and address and the name of my school to a person who is helping me.
- I can copy some sentences about people who help.

A2

- I can understand when I am told about people who can help me.
- I can understand when somebody who is helping me tells me what to do.
- I can read a short story about a person who helps others.
- I can ask questions about the jobs that people do to help us.
- I can talk to my teacher about people who have helped me.
- I can write a short story about what people do to help.

B1

- I can understand most of a talk or video about a person who helps us.
- I can read about different jobs.
- I can ask questions about people's jobs.
- I can talk about people who help us in the area where I live.
- I can write about the daily life of a person who helps us.

*Introduction to City Skills Programme

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ELP page 20

People and places in other countries

This theme offers many possibilities for bringing the pupils' cultural backgrounds into classroom activities.

General Resources

Map of world; national flags; pictures, photographs, etc. of the countries of origin of the pupils' families; coins or notes; other objects from home.

What is it?

Method

1. Each child brings **an object** from home that is not typically seen in Ireland.
2. The pupils **describe the object** – what it is made of, size, shape, texture, etc.
3. Children **guess** what it is used for by:
Suggesting **where it is used** (kitchen, car, garden, etc.).
Describing how they think it is used.
4. Finally, the child who brought in the object **tells the class** all about it.

Learn about me

Each child teaches some language, a song or a dance to the other pupils. It may be possible to involve some mothers of the pupils in this type of activity.



People and places in other countries

A1

I can recognise the names of other countries in the world 

I can use pictures in a reader or textbook to identify different peoples and parts of the world 


I can answer some questions about where my family came from 

I can copy words about different places from a map, poster or book 


I can draw a map of another country and copy or write the names of the places 


A2

I can understand the main words in stories or classes about another country 


I can read about another country using pictures to help me 


I can talk to my friends about different countries 

I can tell the teacher or class about the country my family came from 

I can write some sentences about life in another country 

B1

I can understand a lesson or video about another country 


I can read in my textbook about another country and understand the main information 

I can talk about the difference between countries in the world 

I can answer questions about my holidays in different places 

I can write about living in Ireland or in another country in the world 

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Animals and plants 

A1

I can understand the names of some animals and plants

I can use pictures and posters to understand words about animals and plants

I can answer questions about keeping a pet

I can tell the names of all the animals I know

I can copy words to label pictures of animals

A2

I can understand when the teacher is talking about animals or plants in the class

I can read about animals when there are pictures to help me

I can answer questions about animals and talk about the ones I like and don't like

I can tell my teacher and class about animals I have seen or kept as pets

I can write some sentences about an animal or pet

B1

I can understand a lesson or video about nature

I can read about nature and use pictures to help me organise new words

I can talk about a poster or video about the natural world

I can tell a story about animals

I can write a short story about an animal

Caring for my locality 

A1

I can understand the words for the main places in the town or village where I live

I can read the words for the main places in my area

I can answer questions about where I have been in my area

I can give the names of the buildings in my area

I can copy the names of the buildings in my area and write what happens in them

A2

I can understand when the teacher talks about our area and the important things that are in it

I can understand when a book is about history, sport or wildlife

I can read about how we keep our area clean

I can answer questions about what we can do or find in different places

I can talk about my favourite place or activity

I can write news about what is happening in our area

B1


I can understand a talk or film about the area where I live

I can read information about wildlife, looking after our area and what we find there

I can talk to my friends about things in the area outside school

I can talk about what we can do or see in our area

I can write about wildlife or the activities that happen in our local area

Seasons, holidays and festivals 

A1

I can understand the words for the holidays and festivals during the school year

I can read the words for festivals and seasons

I can say the words for the seasons and for the weather in different seasons

I can say when the main festivals are in the year

I can copy sentences about seasons and festivals from the board

A2

I can understand the main words about seasons and festivals when the teacher talks about them in class

I can read about a season or festival and use pictures to help me understand

I can answer some questions about the important celebrations in my home

I can talk to my friends about festivals and celebrations

I can describe special celebrations to my teacher or class

I can write news about a special event in school or in my home

B1


I can understand lessons about seasons and festivals

I can read about seasons, holidays and festivals in my reader or textbook

I can answer questions about the celebrations in my home

I can describe an important event in my family

I can write about a festival or celebration

Colours, shapes and opposites 

A1

I can understand the words for colours and shapes

I can find colours, shapes and opposites in the classroom

I can read the words for different colours and shapes

I can answer questions about the colours I am wearing

I can give the names for colours and shapes that I know

I can copy words for colours and shapes from the board

A2

I can understand instructions that include colours, shapes or opposites

I can read the words for colours, shapes and opposites in a story

I can ask questions about colours, shapes, size and opposites

I can describe things by colour, size and shape

I can write about something using words for colour, size, shape and opposites

B1

I can understand colours and shapes when the teacher reads a story

I can understand the difference between colours, shapes and opposites when I read a story or textbook

I can talk about the importance of colours

I can write news or a postcard using colours, size or shapes to describe something

I can write a description of my favourite things using words for colours and shapes

ELP page 21 Animals and plants

This theme is closely connected to 'Seasons, holidays and festivals', 'The local and wider community' (beach, park, bog, etc.), 'Caring for my locality', 'Time', 'Colours, shapes and opposites'.

General Resources

Pictures, nature posters, stories, rhymes, songs.

Examples of methods

- Each pupil draws a **picture of a story** that focuses on a season. They retell the story to the teacher.
- Use **pictures of animals and birds** as prompts for descriptions – colour, size, where they live, the sound made by the animals, birds, etc.
- Draw pictures to show **how a flower grows** from a seed. If possible, grow something in the classroom.
- A **nature walk/trip** looking at flowers, trees, animals, etc. that have been studied in the classroom.

ELP page 23 Dossier

The Dossier already contains a small number of activity sheets to help begin the process of building a personal collection of work.

As learning proceeds, the Dossier will typically contain:

- Drawings with labels
- Word lists
- Poems and stories written by the pupil
- News
- Projects
- Information charts for particular subjects (History, Geography, etc.)

and any other work generated in the language support class.

Examples from Dossiers



Notes

Section 5

Examples of classroom activities

Useful classroom resources

- Drawing materials – e.g. crayons, colouring pencils, paper, etc.
- Age-appropriate storybooks.
- Dressing-up box.
- Finger or glove puppets.
- Camera (digital if possible, but disposable cameras are fine).
- Picture dictionary for children.
- Real objects or toy objects such as doll's tea set, model cars, plastic fruits, vegetables, etc.
- Soft ball.
- Food packets.
- Visually-based classroom games that focus on areas of the curriculum for language support such as food, the home, parts of the body, etc.
- Tape recorder.
- Songs and rhymes.
- Charts of nature, the seasons, etc. Use charts associated with English and Irish reading schemes.
- Sets of picture cards for sequencing and matching, describing emotions, etc.
- Phonics schemes as used in infant classes.
- Flash cards – use pictures and/or words. Make a double set for snap.
- Collection of pictures from magazines, catalogues, etc.
- Big scrapbooks for making class storybooks, class diary, weather journal, etc.
- A 'feely bag' containing, for example, fur, sandpaper, glass (very small bottle only), sponge, plastic, elastic band, piece of lego™, feather, lead weight (use a fishing weight), cotton wool, piece of candle, blu-tack™, etc. The bag will grow over time.
- Objects for 'play shop'. Use those seen in the home and in the shops as well as classroom objects.

Developing the language skills – some approaches

To develop listening skills

Simon says.

Use storytelling for:

- Listening and drawing.
- Listening and finding key words on flash cards.
- Listening and mime.
- Listening and practising words, phrases or rhymes that are repeated in the story.
- Listening and predicting what will happen next.

To develop reading skills

Flash cards with key vocabulary or phrases.

Match pictures to words.

Sequencing activities using cut up words and sentences.

Build a 'vocabulary wall' – pupils find relevant words when needed.

Use labels – match them to objects, pieces of text, posters, pictures, etc.

Picture dictionary.

Make and do word searches.

To develop speaking skills

Puppets, masks.

Themed role plays (e.g. play shop, playing teacher).

Rhymes and songs for rhythm and pronunciation.

Chain games – pupils take turns to add a word, sound, etc.

Pupils dictate news, story or poem to teacher who writes it down.

Picture dictionary to help with unknown words.

Regular 'tell us about ...' sessions.

To develop writing skills

Write the day and date every day.

Make word searches and simple crosswords.

Class 'Big Book' and themed scrapbooks.

Draw a picture and write 'news'.

Write and reply to notes from other pupils.

Class newspaper made by the class.

Making permanent resources

It is important to develop resources for language support which reflect the themes of the English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and which also facilitate extension of learning and teaching.

This section contains pictorial resources which may be used for a wide variety of activities. In addition, much published material designed for primary learning is appropriate and effective. Experience tells us that books and materials used in learning support can also be particularly effective for pupils who enter school in the higher years of primary education.

It is very useful to develop resources which reflect the school, the local town and environment, and the activities of both school and community.

For example:

Laminated photographs

Particular parts of the school.

Local places – buildings, shops, park, etc.

Sports played in school and locally.

Other local interest – farm animals, transport, etc.

Maps or diagrams

School.

Local town.

Streets around school.

Labels

For objects in the classroom, rooms in the school, etc.

'Big books'

Showing work done by other language support pupils.

Puppet theatre

Made from cardboard box.

Puppets

Glove puppets.

Sponge puppets.

Charts

Weather.

Months, seasons.

Birthdays, celebrations.

Visual resources

The following pages contain a wide selection of visually-based resources which are organised in accordance with the themes of the English Language Proficiency Benchmarks.

These resources do not make up a 'course' but will supplement many other thematically-based classroom activities.

Suggested activities

Use the visuals for:

- Exploring a specific area of vocabulary through 'point and name'.
- Expanding vocabulary – move from the pictures to familiar objects.
- Describing – include prepositions for location (over, beside, next to, etc.).
- Colouring (larger pictures) and naming colours.
- Counting the number of objects, people, animals, etc.
- Time – put hands on the blank clocks.
- Telling the story of the picture.
- Expressing personal likes and dislikes.
- Picture bingo.
- Spot the difference – see below.

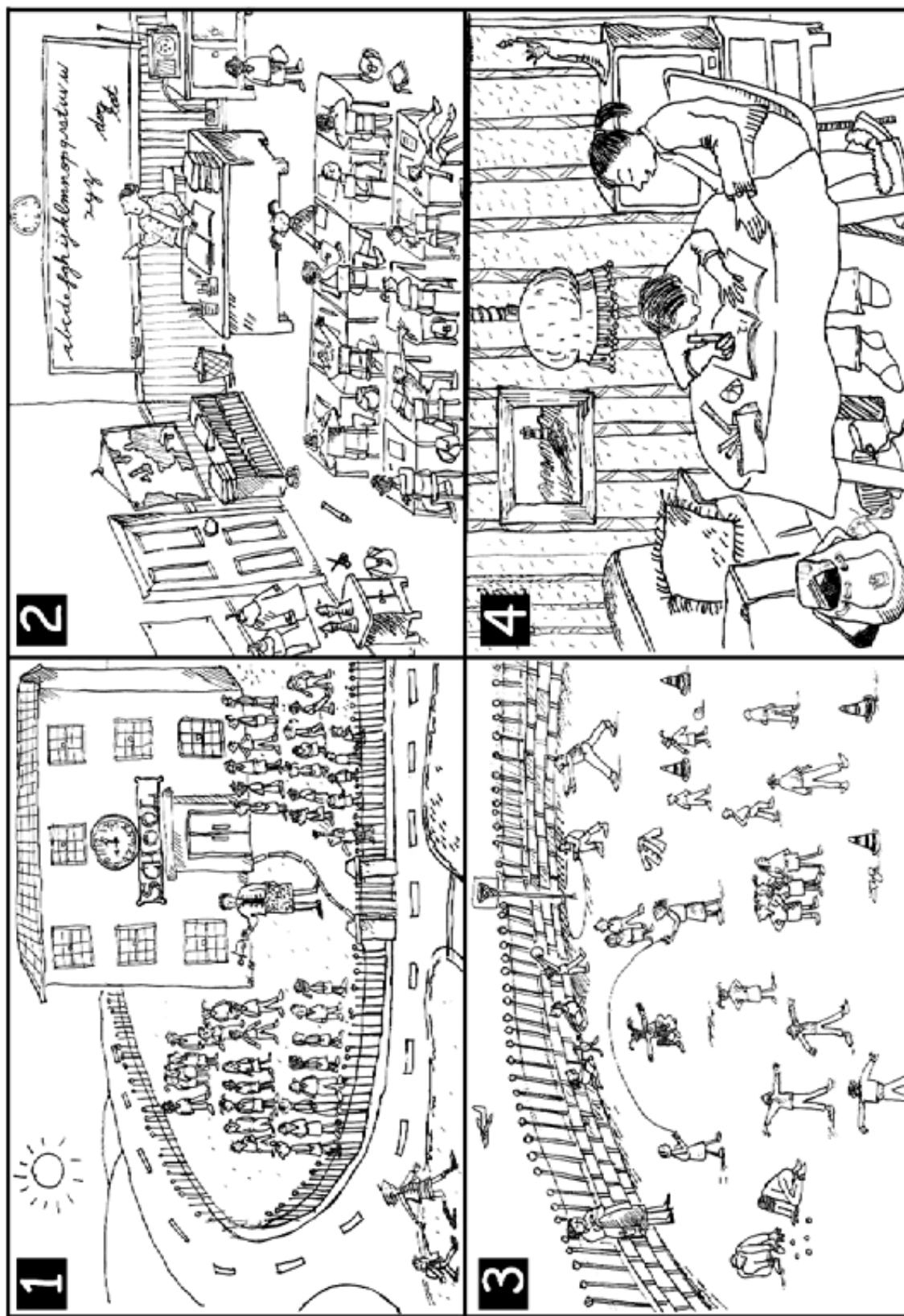
Note!

The pictures on pages 137-140 can be used for 'spot the difference', an information gap activity which is excellent for speaking and describing in pairs.

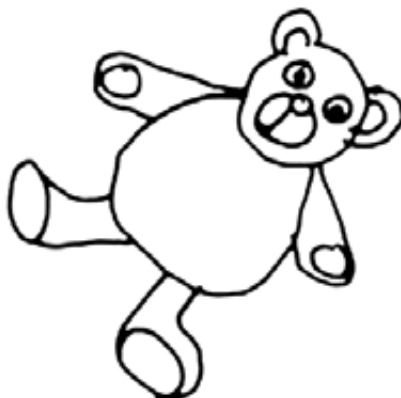
Method

1. Photocopy the pictures.
2. One pupil has one picture only.
3. The second pupil has two pictures.
4. By talking about and describing their pictures, the pupil with two pictures has to decide which one his/her partner has.

My day. Describe what you do every day.



1



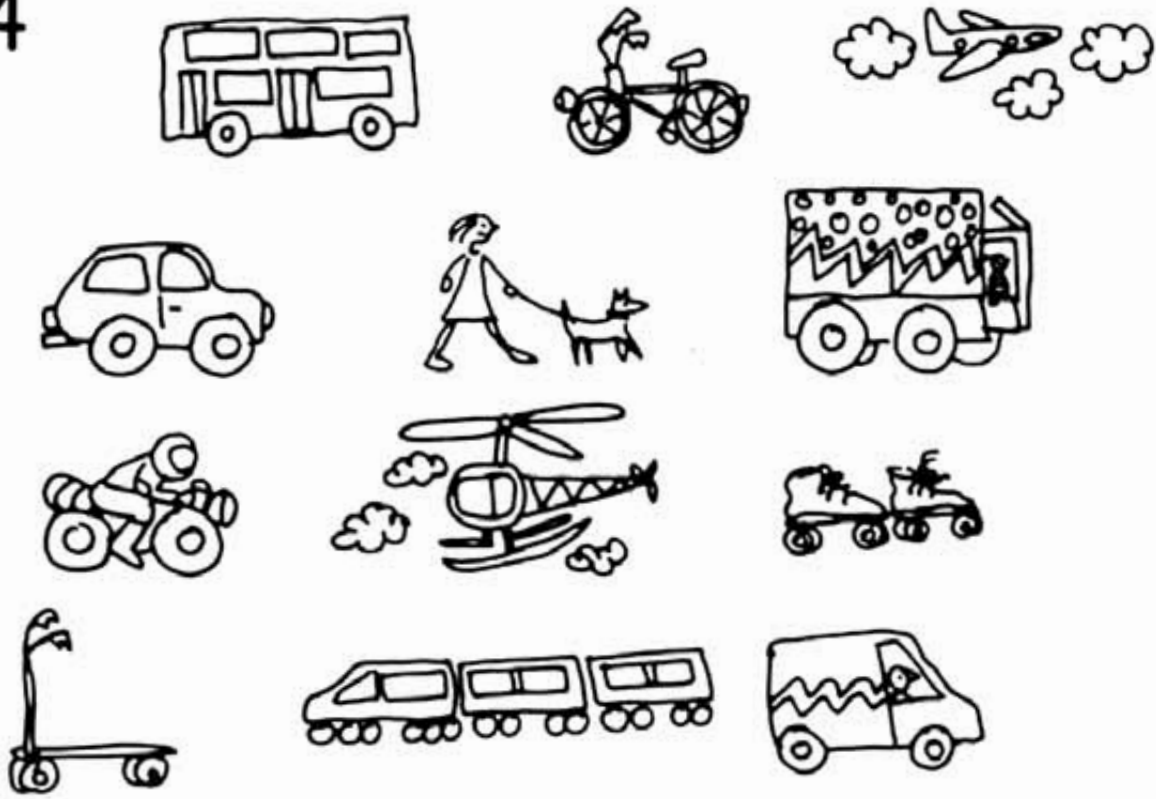
2



3



4



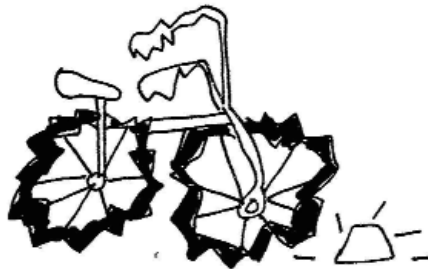
I like



Circle 4 things that you like.

Write four sentences beginning I like _____

I do not like



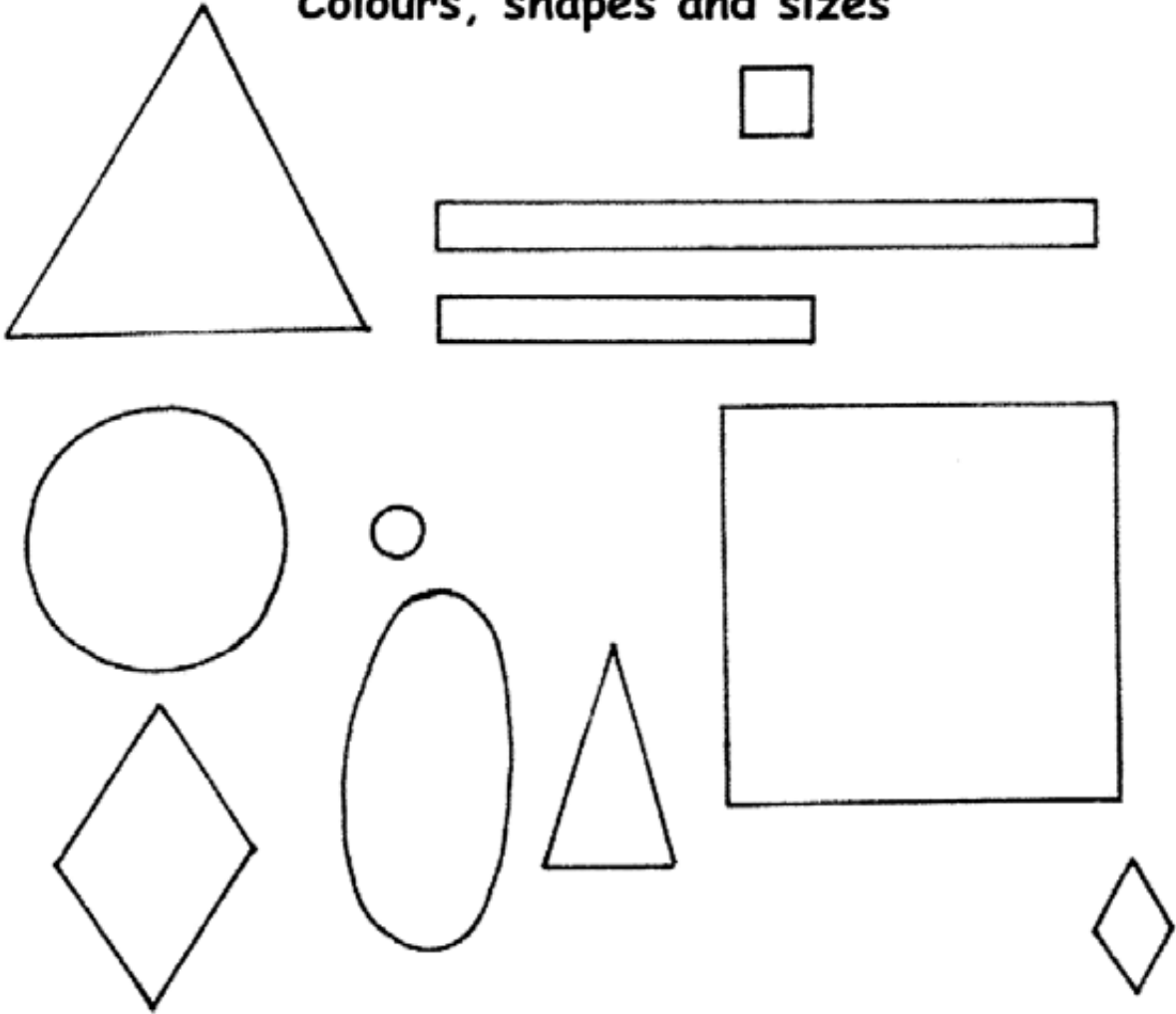
Circle 4 things that you do not like.

Write four sentences beginning I do not like _____



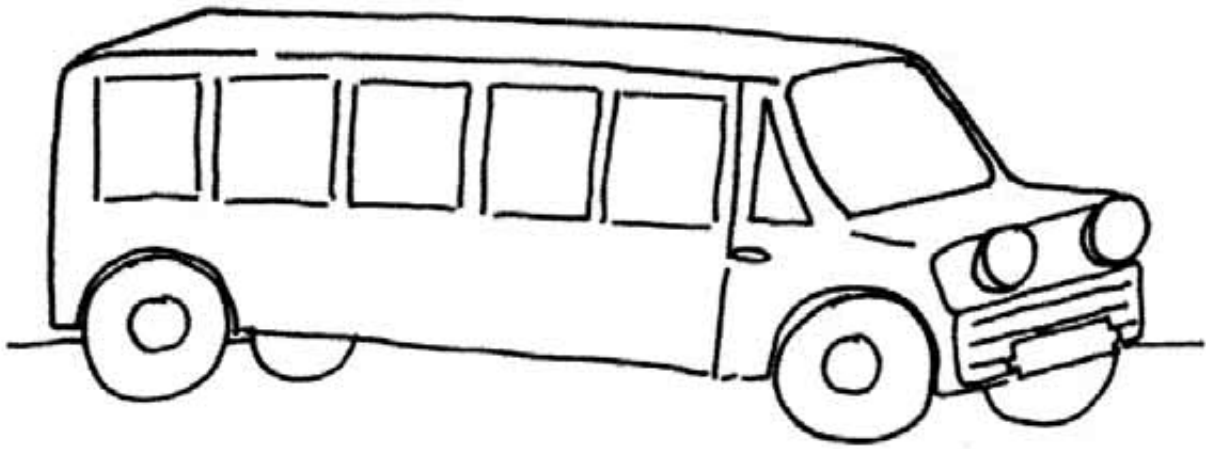
Colour all the **tall** singers blue and purple.
Colour all the **short** singers red and orange.
Circle the **tallest** singer.
Circle the **shortest** singer.

Colours, shapes and sizes



Colour in all the shapes. Each time you colour a shape tick (✓) the box to show that you have done it.

- Colour the **big triangle** blue
- Colour the **little triangle** green
- Colour the **little circle** orange
- Colour the **big circle** red
- Colour the **long rectangle** black
- Colour the **short rectangle** brown
- Colour the **oval** orange
- Colour the **big diamond** purple
- Colour the **little diamond** red
- Colour the **big square** green
- Colour the **little square** orange



Write some sentences about the bus.

Is it long? Is it short?


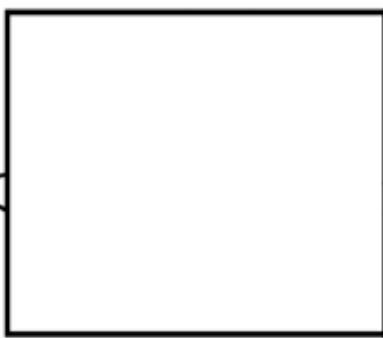


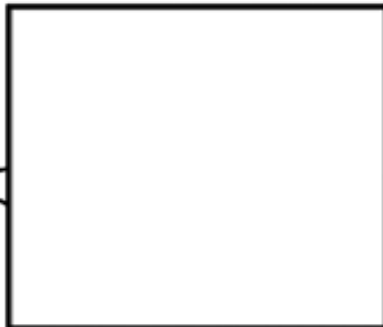


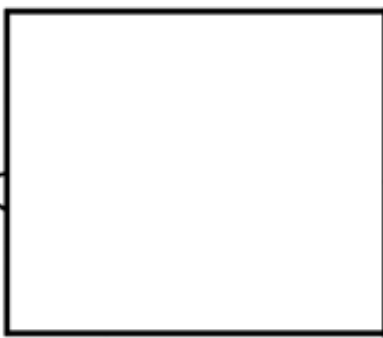


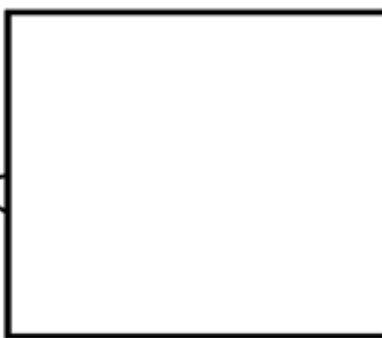





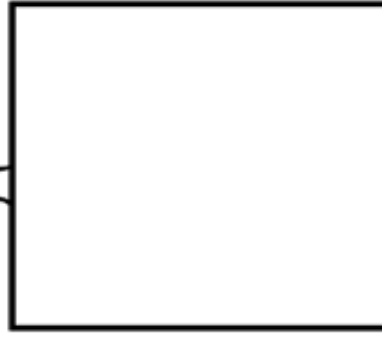

How many windows are there?

What shape are they?

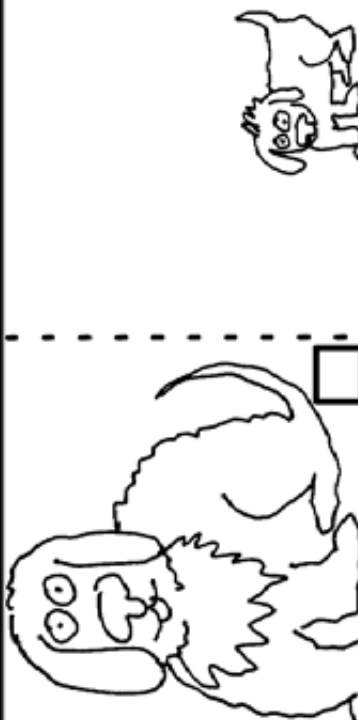
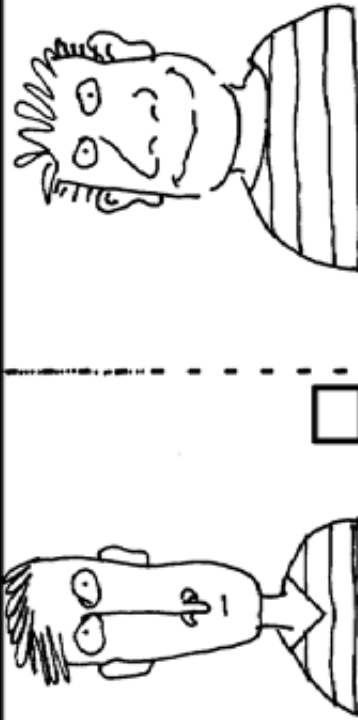
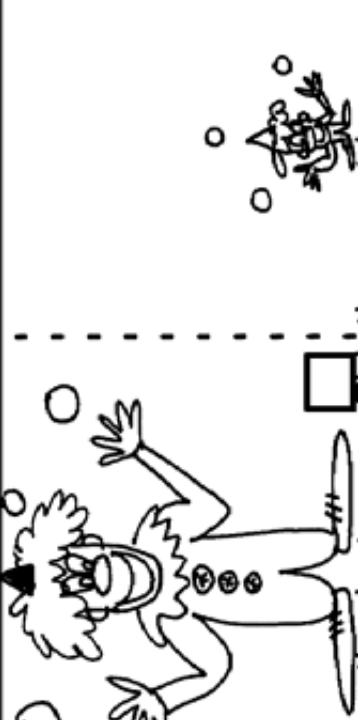
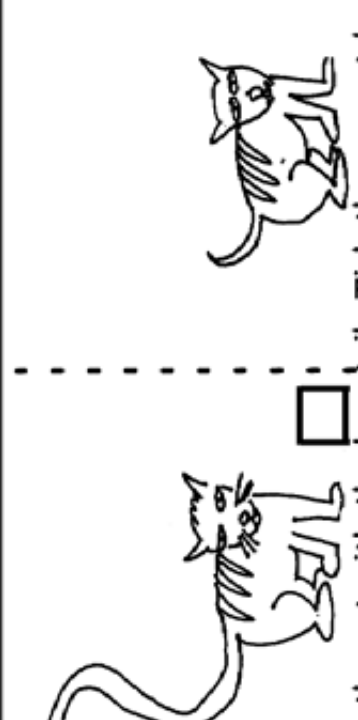
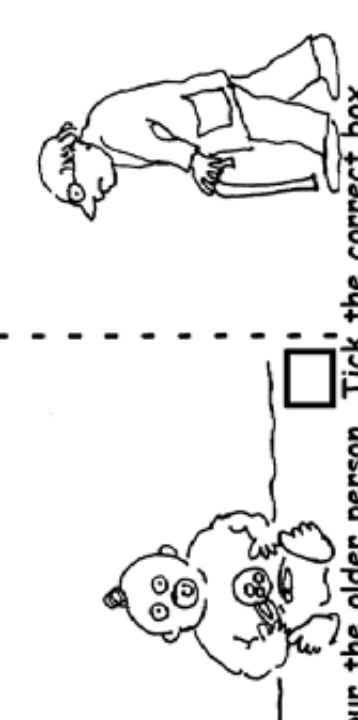
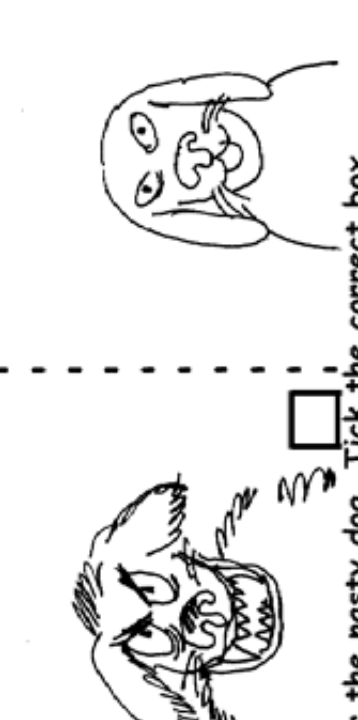
How many wheels are there? What shape are they?

Colour the bus.

What does Lee wear when ...







she goes to school   	list the clothes _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	she goes swimming   	list the clothes _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	it is raining   	list the clothes _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
she plays tennis   	list the clothes _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	when the sun is shining   	list the clothes _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	it is bedtime   	list the clothes _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Colour and match

 <p>Colour the bigger dog. Tick the correct box. This dog is bigger than the small dog.</p> <input type="checkbox"/>	 <p>Colour the man with the wide nose. Tick the correct box. This man has a narrow nose.</p> <input type="checkbox"/>
 <p>Colour the shorter man. Tick the correct box. This clown is shorter than the tall clown.</p> <input type="checkbox"/>	 <p>Colour the cat with the long tail. Tick the correct box. This cat has a shorter tail than the other.</p> <input type="checkbox"/>
 <p>Colour the older person. Tick the correct box. This person is younger than the other person.</p> <input type="checkbox"/>	 <p>Colour the nasty dog. Tick the correct box. This dog is nicer than the other dog.</p> <input type="checkbox"/>


Shapes and colours

Fill in each box with the correct colour. Then draw the shape and colour it in.

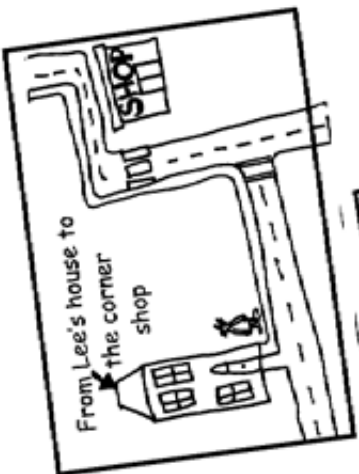
sh a p e s	 Circle	 Square	 Rectangle	 Triangle	 Oval	 Diamond					
colours	red	yellow	blue	brown	black	orange	purple	green	pink	grey	white
	A blue square	A red triangle	A yellow triangle	A black circle	A purple oval	A blue diamond					
	An orange diamond	A green square	A black circle	A brown rectangle	A grey square						

Match the journey to the transport


From Lee's house to the corner shop



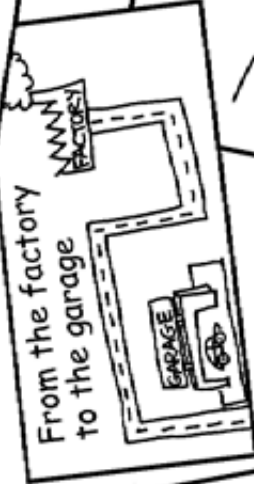
From Cookstown to Belfast



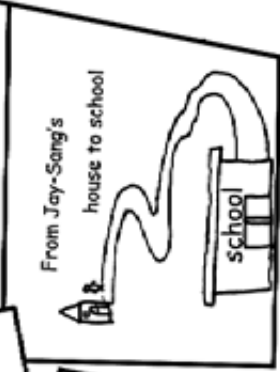
From Dublin to Madrid



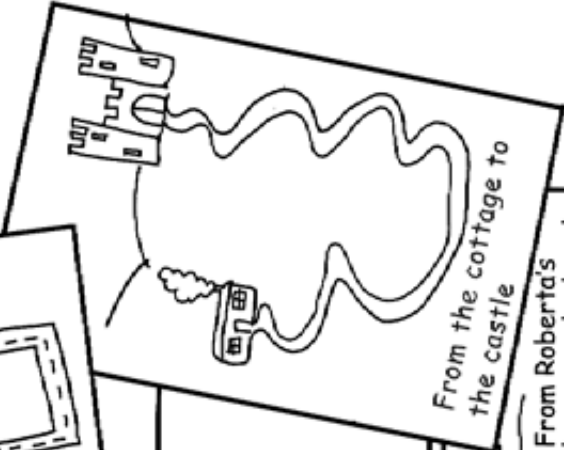
From the factory to the garage



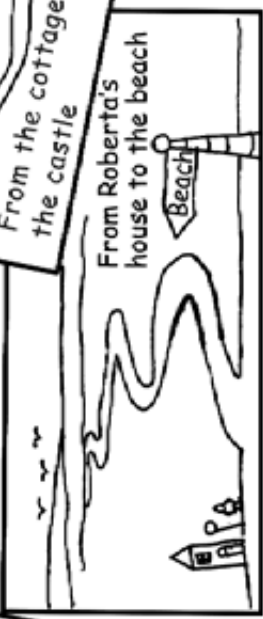
From Jay-Sang's house to school



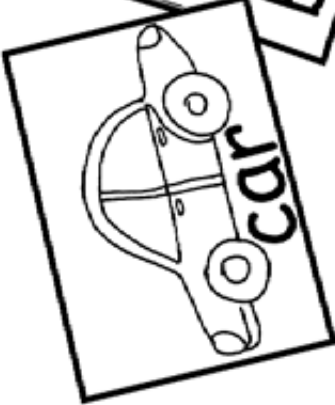
From the cottage to the castle



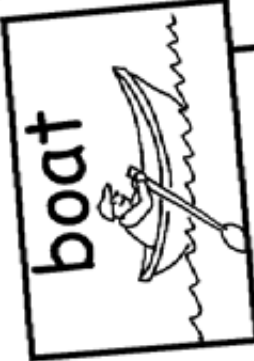
From Roberta's house to the beach




car




boat




aeroplane




on foot




train



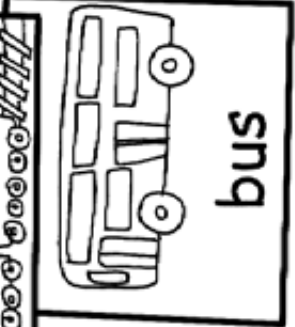
motorbike





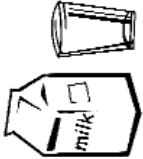
















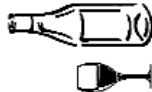








bicycle



bus



- ① Write the name of each food.
- ② Circle all the fruit in red.
- ③ Circle all the sweet things in yellow.
- ④ Circle all the drinks in blue.
- ⑤ Circle all the meat, fish and poultry in black.
- ⑥ Circle all the vegetables in green.
- ⑦ What things are left?

 a p p l e	 b	 m i l k			 m e a t
					
	 c e r e a l				
					
					

Our school

Draw a line to the day of the week to finish the sentences.



I go to school on ...
✓

I don't go to school on ...
X

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday
Saturday
Sunday

Opposites

Draw an object in each box that the word describes.
The first two are done for you.

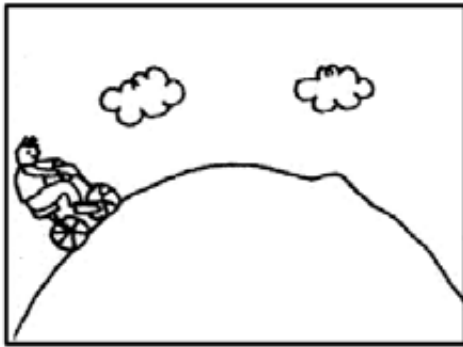
Kitten		Hammer	
	soft		hard
	hot		cold
	long		short

	full		empty
	sweet		sour
	happy		sad

	nice		nasty
	young		old
	ugly		attractive

Tell the story

1



2



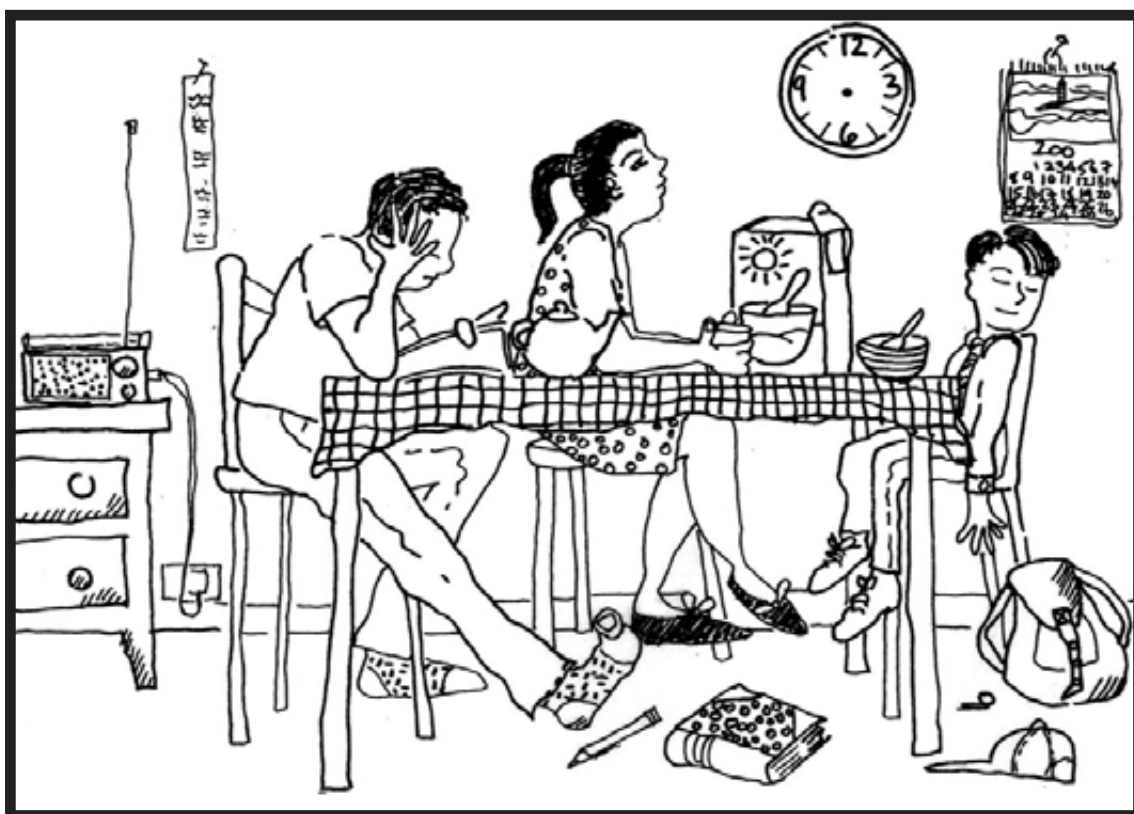
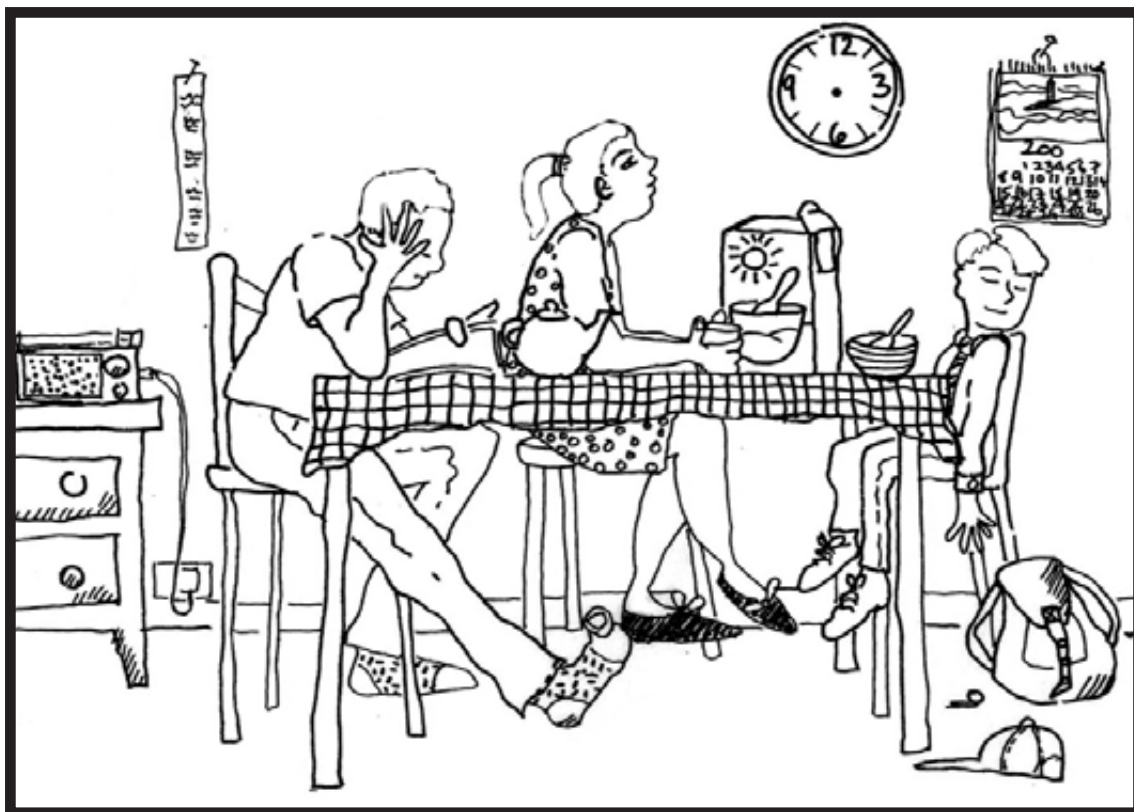
3



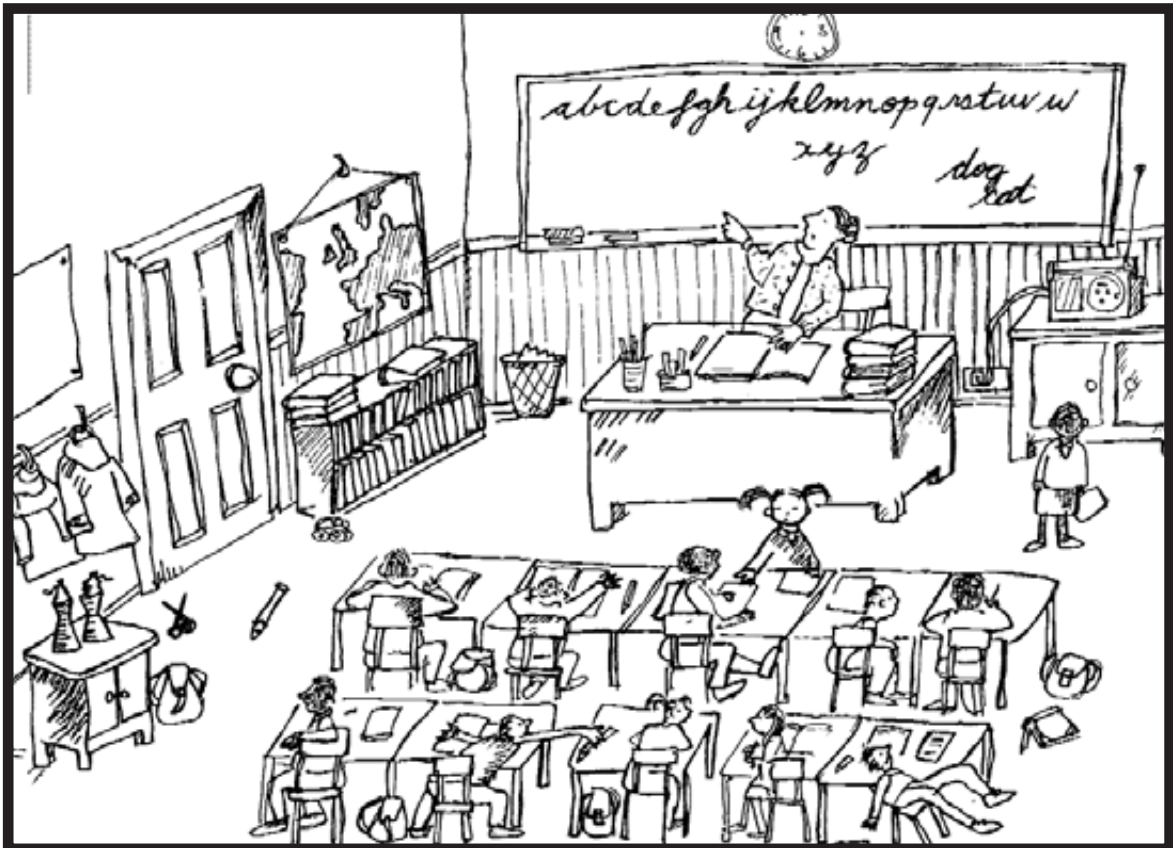
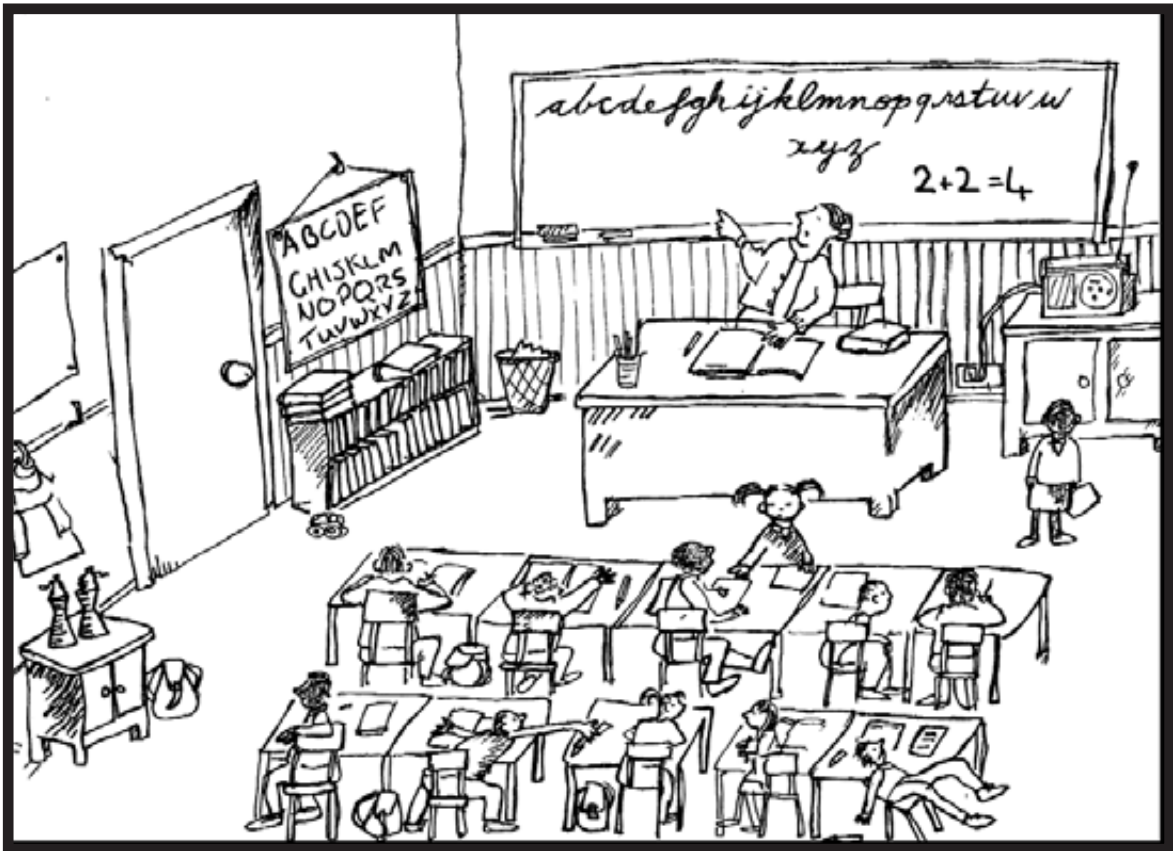
4



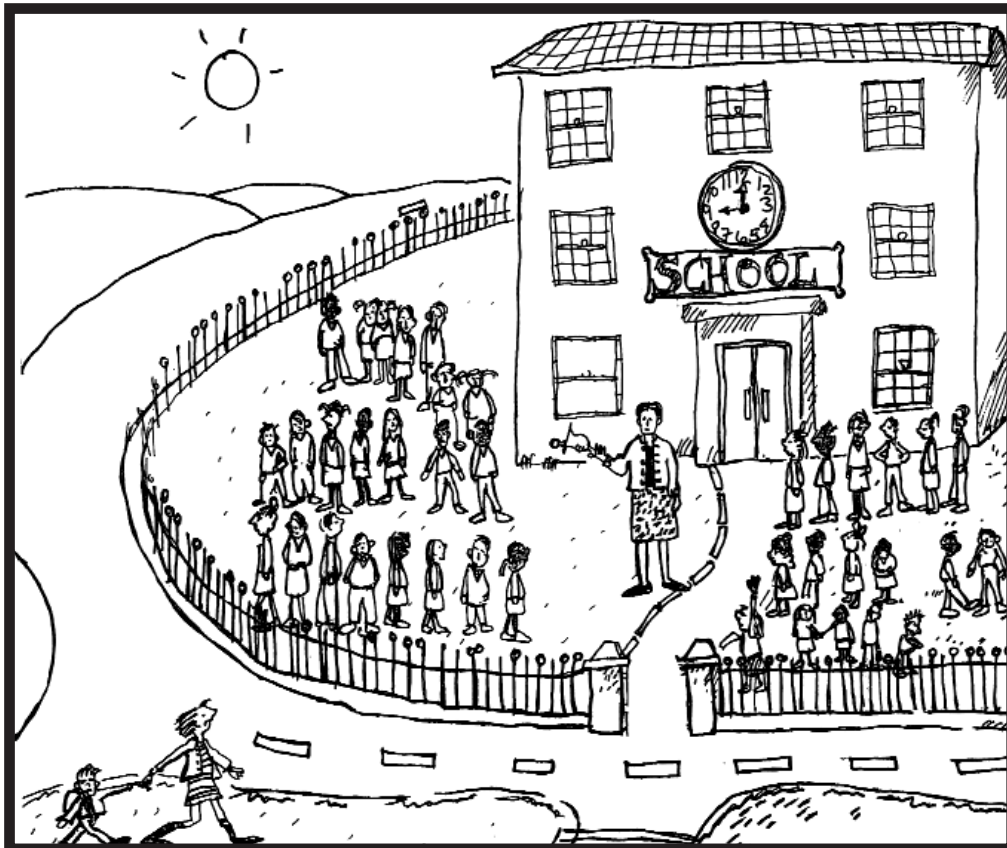
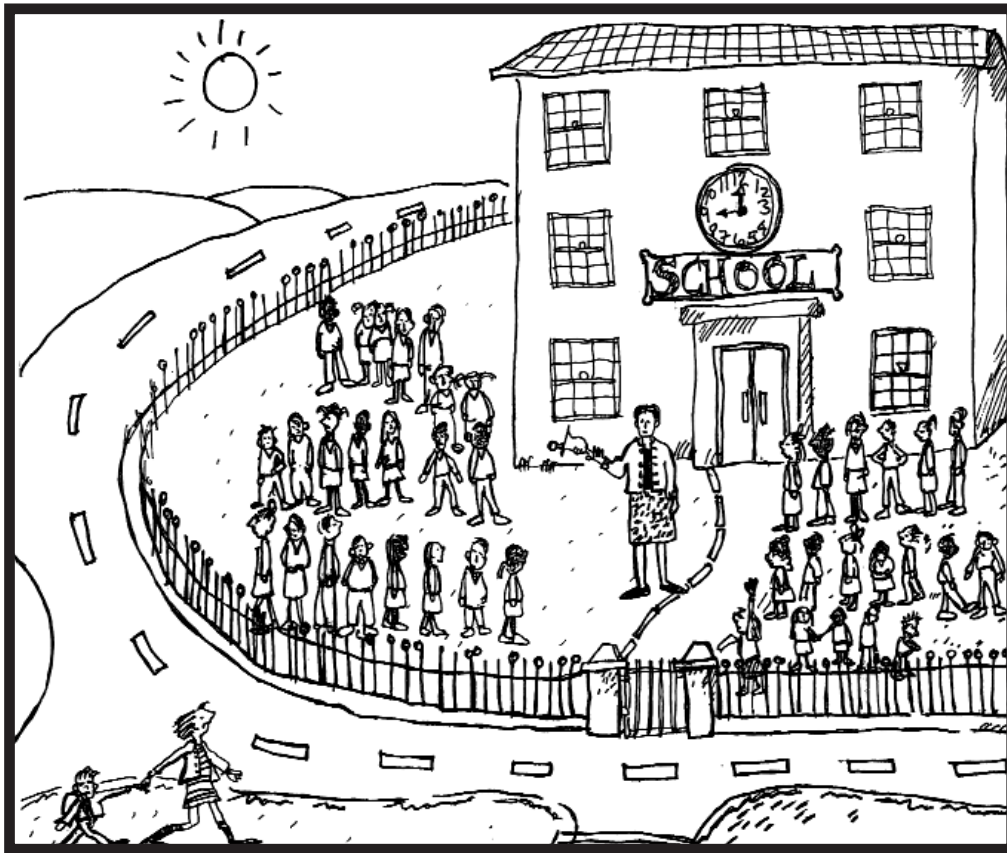
Can you spot the 5 differences?



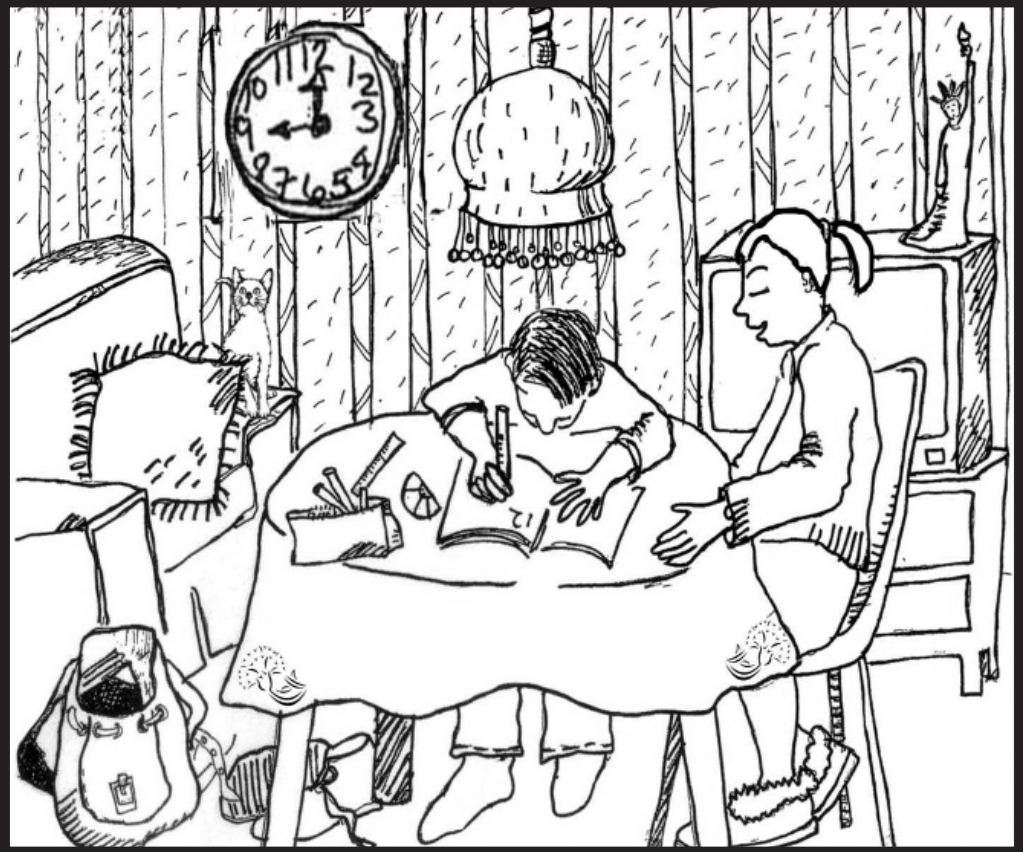
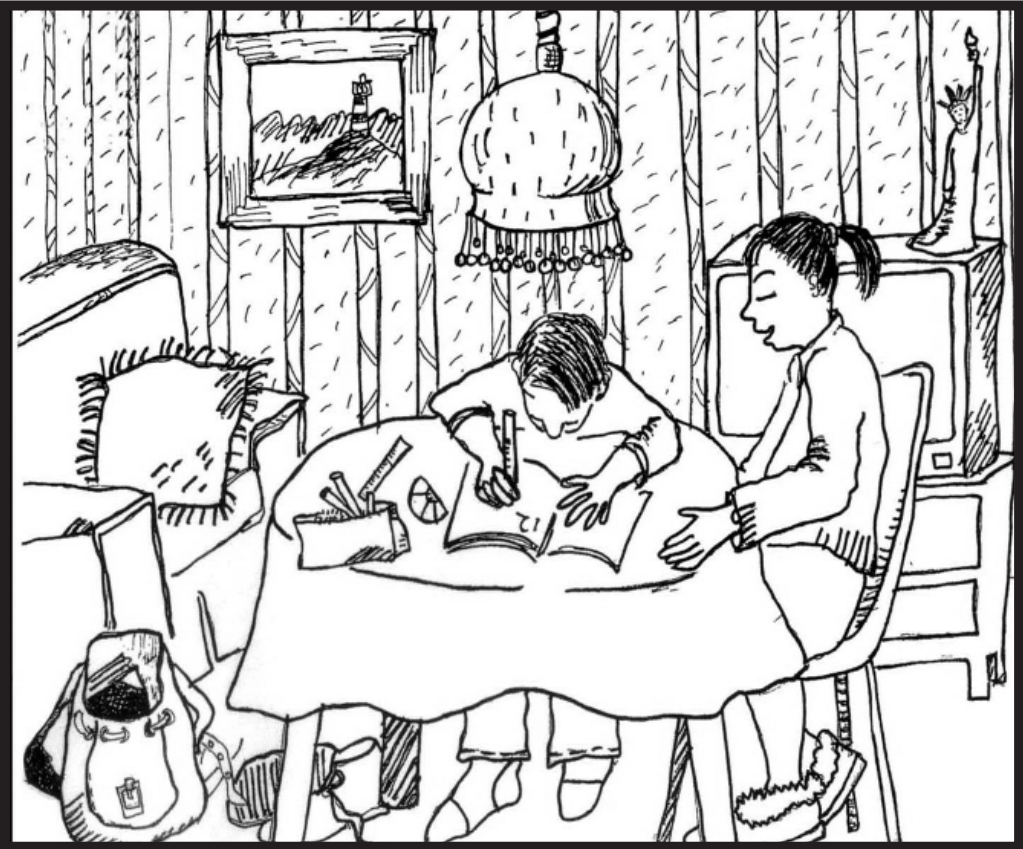
Can you spot the 5 differences?




Can you spot the 5 differences?




Can you spot the 5 differences?




What food is good for us?

	Spaghetti bolognese						


	Fish and Chips						

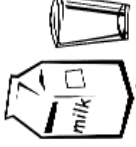
	Pizza						


	Two fried eggs, beans and sausage						


	Mashed potato, carrots and lamb chop						

	A pot of tea		

	Orange juice		

	A glass of milk		

	A can of coke		

	A milkshake		

Jay is in the cafeteria. He cannot decide which meal is good for him. Find the food and drinks that are healthy and write 'healthy' on the menu card.

Now find a healthy meal for Jay.

What is your favourite meal?



My meals

Write in the time you eat your breakfast, lunch and dinner. Then write what you eat. Draw a picture of what you eat.

I eat **breakfast** at _____ o'clock.

I eat _____

My breakfast



I eat **lunch** at _____ o'clock.

I eat _____

My lunch



I eat **dinner** at _____ o'clock.

I eat _____

My dinner



My day

On _____ I get up at _____ (time).
(day of the week)

Put the time on the clock



I leave the house at _____ to go to school.

Put the time on the clock



In school we have our break at _____ (time).

Break lasts for _____ minutes.



School finishes at _____ (time).






I have a meal with my family at _____ (time).



I go to bed at _____ (time).



Make sentences about the pictures. Use the words to help you.

boy basketball playing	 A black and white line drawing of a boy in a white shirt and dark pants, holding a basketball and looking up at a basketball hoop.
likes icecream girl eating	 A black and white line drawing of a girl with dark hair, wearing a striped shirt, holding a round ice cream cone.
Jane kite flying	 A black and white line drawing of a girl (Jane) sitting on the ground, flying a kite. The kite is in the air, and a string is attached to it.
glasses man broken	 A black and white line drawing of a man's face wearing glasses. The glasses are broken, with one lens missing and the other cracked.
woman television watching	 A black and white line drawing of a woman sitting on the floor, watching a television set.

Words I know

t	b	p	l	a	t	e	v	w	s	c	o	o	t	e	r
o	l	a	m	p	n	p	b	q	p	i	l	l	o	w	t
v	a	n	q	t	e	e	s	h	i	r	t	o	c	a	r
s	t	b	j	u	m	p	e	r	r	s	s	h	o	e	s
c	h	a	i	r	p	g	l	a	s	s	c	a	m	u	g
a	b	a	l	a	r	m	c	l	o	c	k	a	b	u	s
k	s	c	h	o	o	l	b	a	g	p	v	n	b	e	d
p	o	b	b	o	w	l	t	u	n	s	k	a	t	e	s
s	t	a	b	l	e	g	s	h	i	r	t	c	a	b	c
t	r	u	c	k	s	p	o	o	n	p	q	s	j	u	g
c	o	f	f	e	e	p	o	t	x	t	k	n	i	f	e
t	r	a	i	n	p	t	a	e	r	o	p	l	a	n	e
s	o	c	k	s	q	s	m	o	t	o	r	b	i	k	e
c	u	p	r	f	o	r	k	n	o	p	u	v	w	a	b
t	e	a	p	o	t	b	i	k	e	t	i	e	c	a	b
h	e	l	i	c	o	p	t	e	r	z	t	e	d	d	y

Find the words. All words are written left to right.

bed	pillow	lamp	teddy	van	alarm clock
jumper	shirt	tie	schoolbag	teeshirt	train
socks	shoes	bowl	spoon	fork	helicopter
knife	plate	glass	cup	teapot	scooter
coffeepot	mug	jug	table	chair	skates
bus	bike	aeroplane	car	truck	motorbike

School

p	e	n	a	h	o	m	e	w	o	r	k	e	i	o	u
w	a	s	t	e	p	a	p	e	r	b	a	s	k	e	t
u	t	v	w	p	q	r	d	e	s	k	b	d	o	l	l
t	v	c	o	p	y	b	o	o	k	p	c	o	n	e	b
m	a	p	e	s	c	i	s	s	o	r	s	o	u	e	t
c	o	a	t	h	o	o	k	n	p	q	r	a	b	c	d
v	t	b	a	s	k	e	t	b	a	l	l	x	y	z	w
p	h	i	j	k	p	e	n	c	i	l	p	b	e	l	l
c	h	a	i	r	k	f	o	o	t	b	a	l	l	v	x
t	e	a	c	h	e	r	v	c	l	o	c	k	t	u	t
b	o	o	k	s	h	e	l	f	v	w	c	o	a	t	x
n	p	q	s	t	u	b	l	a	c	k	b	o	a	r	d
m	a	r	b	l	e	s	s	t	u	d	e	n	t	y	z
a	b	d	c	a	b	p	e	n	c	i	l	c	a	s	e
s	k	i	p	p	i	n	g	r	o	p	e	c	o	a	t
s	c	h	o	o	l	b	a	g	b	t	v	b	o	o	k

Find the words. All words are written left to right.

pencil

pencil case

copybook

coathook

student

skipping rope

football

school bag

clock

blackboard

teacher

homework

marbles

bookshelf

book

chair

coat

scissors

doll

bell

waste paper

pen

desk

cone

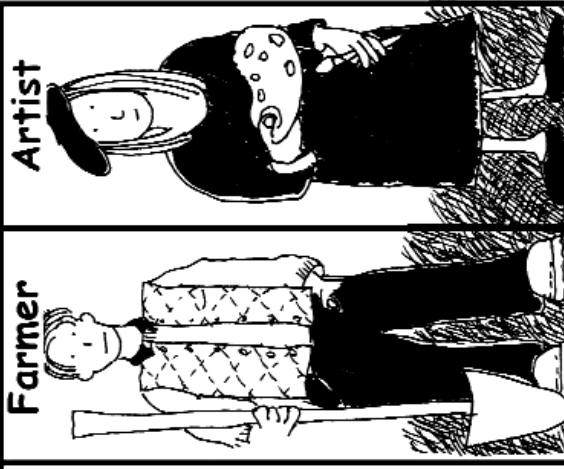
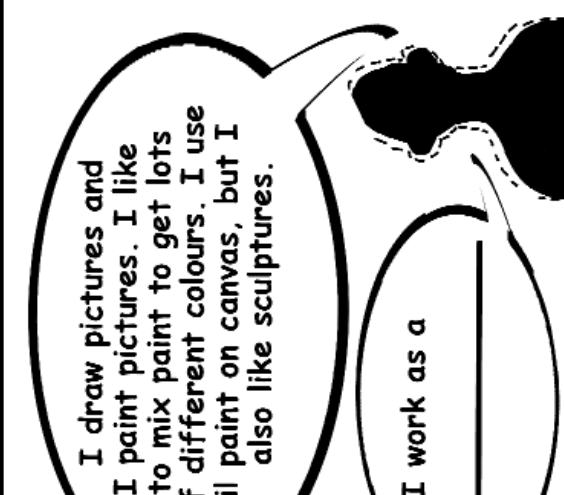
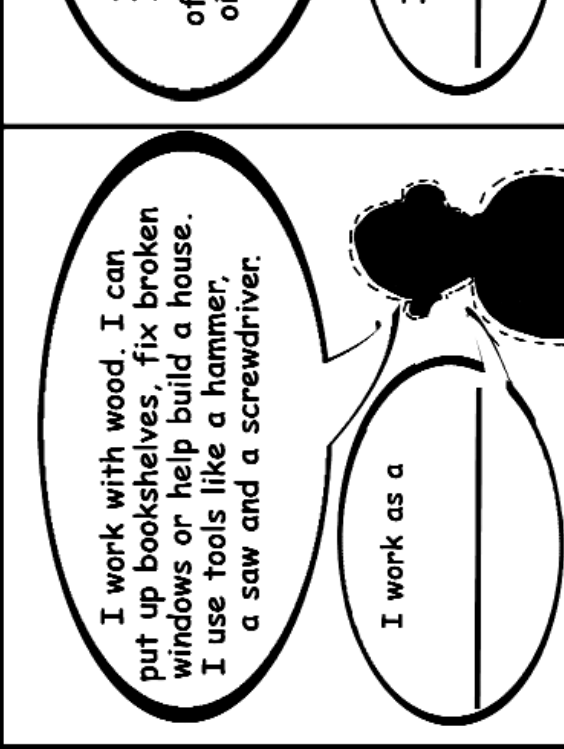
basketball

map

basket

Who am I?

Read what these four people do, then write the name of their job.

<p>I work with wood. I can put up bookshelves, fix broken windows or help build a house. I use tools like a hammer, a saw and a screwdriver.</p> <p>I work as a _____</p>	<p>I draw pictures and I paint pictures. I like to mix paint to get lots of different colours. I use oil paint on canvas, but I also like sculptures.</p> <p>I work as a _____</p>	<p>I work and live in the country. I grow some vegetables, but mostly I take care of my cattle. The cattle produce milk. I sell the milk to a creamery. They put it in cartons and sell it in the shops.</p> <p>I work as a _____</p>	<p>I help people to keep their teeth healthy. If they need a filling or if they damage a tooth I can help.</p> <p>I work as a _____</p>
 <p>Carpenter</p>	 <p>Farmer</p>	 <p>Artist</p>	<p>Dentist</p>

Notes

Making a quiz booklet

Introduction

This section contains the following activities:

- **Making word searches**
- **Words from words**
- **Making multiple-choice questions**
- **Word chains**
- **Making crosswords**

The activities in the sequence progress from those which develop skills at word level (spelling and word recognition skills) to those which focus on producing language at sentence level.

Resources needed for the following activities are:

- Rulers.
- Coloured pencils/crayons.
- Pupils' notebooks and ELPs for referencing.
- Spare sheets of A4 paper.

In each activity (except 'Making word searches'):

- Worksheet A provides an example of the activity so pupils understand the task.
- Worksheet B is for pupils to write the puzzle or quiz they have created.

Although writing is the focus of each of the activities, asking pupils to work in pairs/small groups encourages the development of essential communication and team-working skills.

In the following activities the relevant worksheets are on the pages immediately following the activity description.

Creating a quiz booklet

Each of the five activities can be used on a stand-alone basis. They can also be used to produce a quiz booklet which is then distributed to pupils in other classes/groups.

When making a quiz booklet to be done by other pupils remember that presentation is important. Allow extra time for pupils to redo work they are not happy with. This especially applies to drawings and to the design and drafting of tables – see 'Words from words' on page 153.

Involving pupils in a project with a concrete 'end product' is recommended because:

- It focuses pupils on the task.
- It fosters a positive group dynamic.
- It provides a tangible sense of achievement.

Asking pupils to put their names on work which is to be circulated adds to the sense of achievement.

The following activities are excellent for revision:

- Making word searches.
- Making multiple-choice questions.
- Making crosswords.

Making word searches

Class organisation

Pairs/small groups.

Theme

Use for any theme.

Type of activity

Pair/group writing.

Materials needed

Dictionaries.

Photocopies of worksheet.

Aims

Revise vocabulary.

Develop word recognition skills.

Reinforce spelling.

Develop speaking skills.

Focus



Time

35-40 minutes.

Suitable for

Pupils developing basic literacy skills.

Approach

1. Hand out one sheet of paper to each pair/group. Pupils list all the words connected to a given topic. Encourage them to check the words in their notes (or dictionaries) for correct spelling.
2. Each pair/group chooses ten words.
3. They then enter the words in the grid (ensure that pupils follow left to right and top to bottom directionality) and surround the words with random letters.
4. When the grid is complete, the pairs/groups write the ten words on the lines under the grid and the title (i.e. the theme) at the top of the page.
5. Photocopy and redistribute the word searches for pupils to complete. If there isn't enough time, they can be used at the start of the next class.

Variation

When the pairs/groups have selected their ten words, ask them to use the dictionary to find alternative vocabulary items (e.g. 'vacation' for 'holiday').

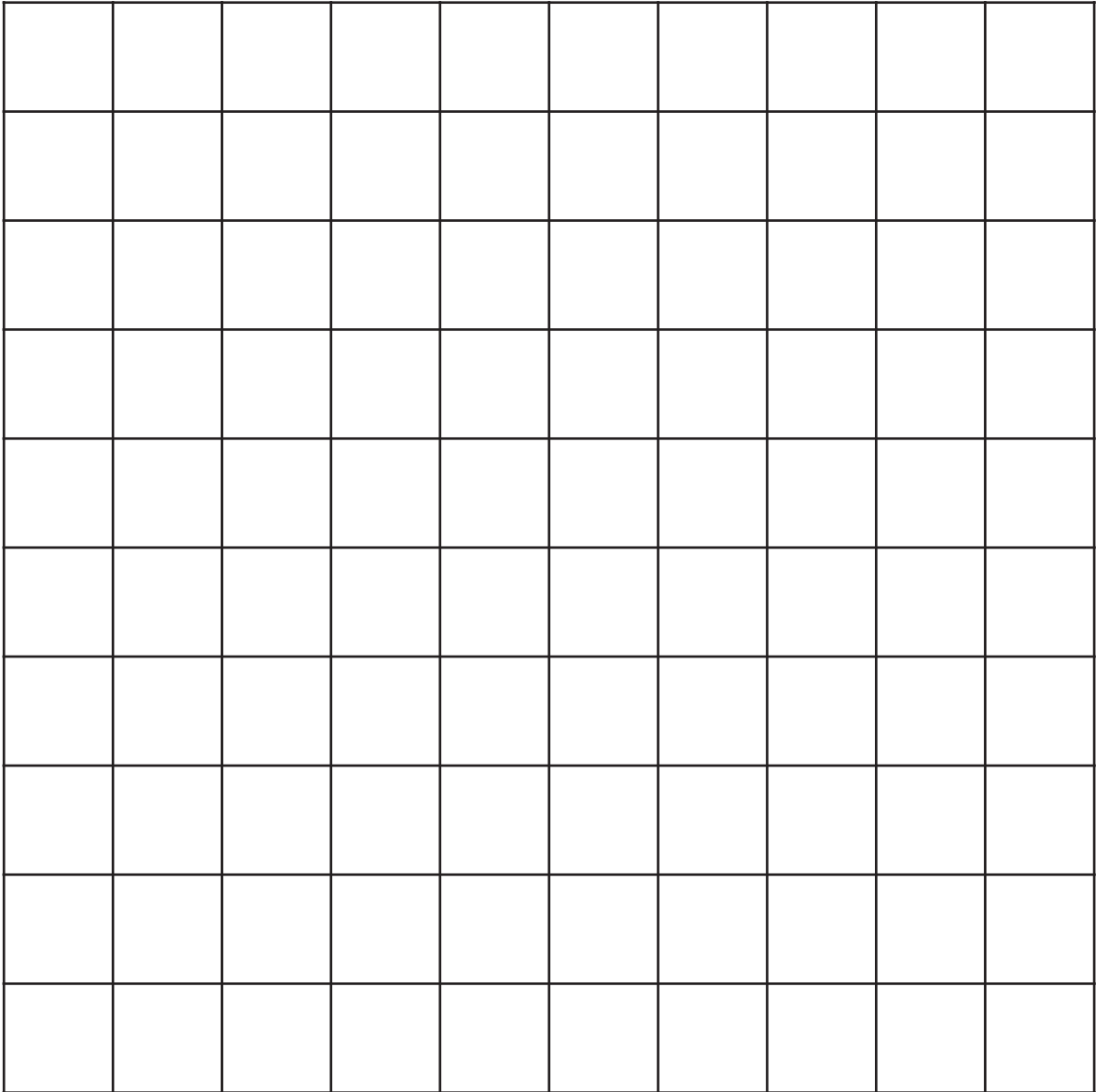
When the pairs/groups write the words under the grid, they should write the original ten words. The pupils trying to complete the word search are told that they will find either the listed word or an alternative word with the same meaning.

This gives further practice in using the dictionary and also extends vocabulary range.

Observations

If pupils are not familiar with the idea of a word search activity, prepare one before the class and ask pupils to do it. Involving the whole class in making a word search on the board will also help pupils to understand the type of puzzle they are creating.

Although the main focus is on reading and writing, the communication aspect of the activity should not be overlooked. By working together in pairs or small groups pupils are involved in the process of making group decisions, agreeing, disagreeing, asking for and giving help and so on. These are all skills which are vital to success in the mainstream classroom.



Find these words in the grid.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Words from words

Class Organisation

Pairs/small groups.

Theme

This activity is not theme-based.

Type of activity

Pair/group writing.

Materials needed

Class set of Worksheet A.
One copy of Worksheet B per pair/small group.

Aims

Develop word recognition skills.
Reinforce spelling.
Develop speaking skills.

Focus



Time

40 minutes.

Suitable for

Senior Infants and above.

Approach

1. Hand out Worksheet A and engage the class in the subject of rainbows – see observations below. Ask pupils to spell the word 'rainbow', write it in large letters on the board and ask them to write it in the spaces provided on Worksheet A.
2. Ask the class what words they can see in the word 'rainbow' and write one or two of their suggestions on the board.
3. Focus attention on the table in the lower half of Worksheet A and ask pupils to write more words in the table.
4. Put pupils into pairs/small groups. Working with one piece of paper, each pair/group chooses a word of 6-9 letters.
5. Hand out one copy of Worksheet B per pair/group. One member of each pair/group draws the word in the first box on Worksheet B while the other members work together to make a list of words from the original word.
6. Using Worksheet A as a reference, they then draw a table in the second box on Worksheet B – see observations below.

Note

This activity is similar to the game 'Boggle'™ but the advantage here is that you can choose words that pupils are currently learning.

Variation

This is a very popular activity and as pupils become more adept at creating the puzzle, the more they will enjoy doing it.

Pupils at a higher level of proficiency can choose to make their puzzles more difficult by:

- Using bigger words.
- Stating how many words they found from the original word, and asking the reader to find the same number.

Observations

Open out the activity by asking questions such as, what colours are in a rainbow? When do you see a rainbow? What do you find at the end of a rainbow? And so on.

As pupils start the process of creating their own puzzle, check the word they have chosen and ensure it is a noun.

Help the pairs/groups create their tables in the second box – ask them to think about how many columns they need, how many words are in each column and so on. They should draft the table on a piece of paper before copying to Worksheet B.

How many words can you make?

What do you see in the picture?



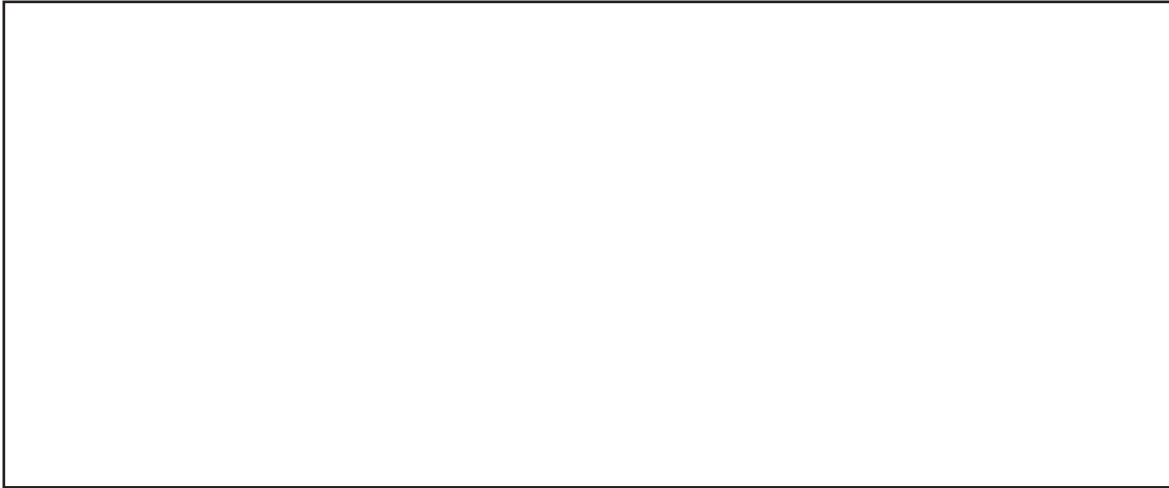
It's a r a i n b o w

How many words can you see in the word rainbow?

Two letter words	Three letter words	Four letter words	Five letter words
in	bin		
	ran		

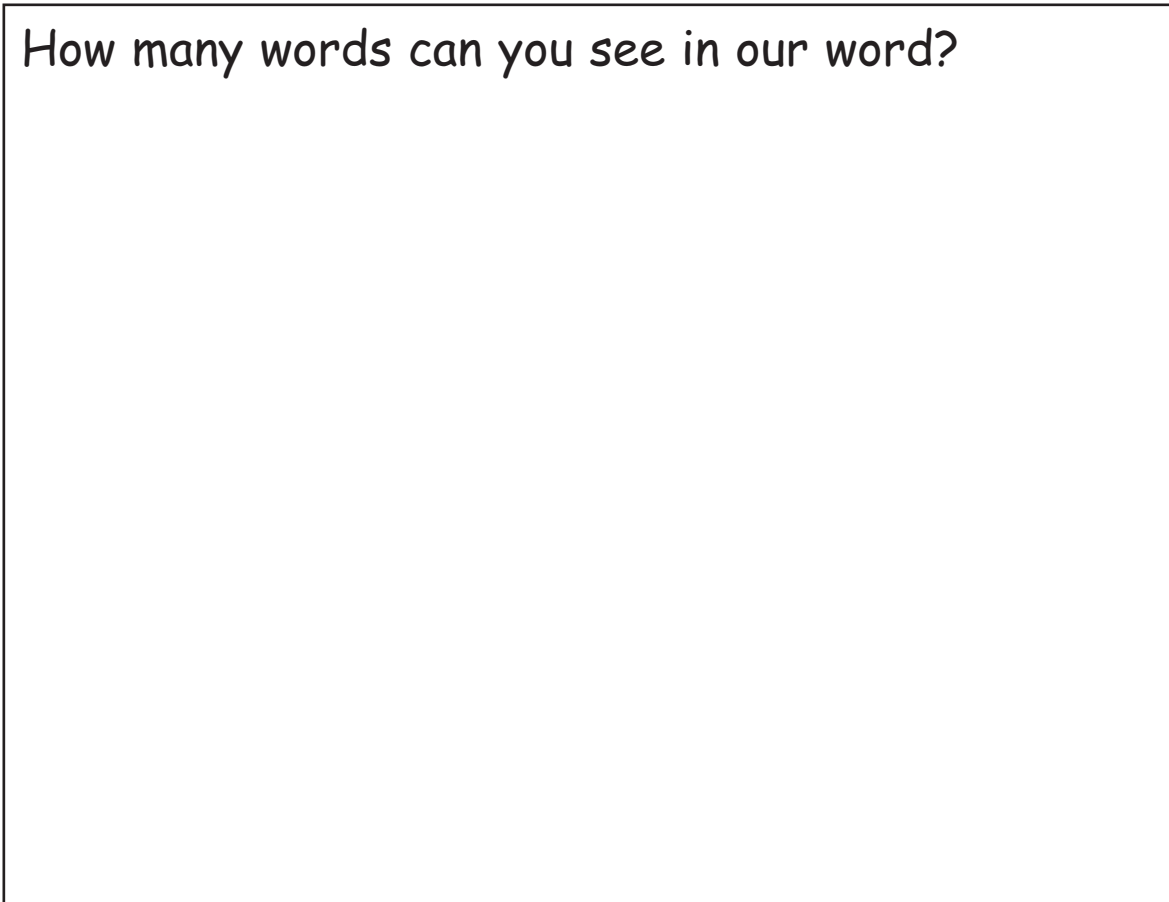
How many words can you make?

What do you see in the picture?



It's a _____

How many words can you see in our word?



Making multiple-choice questions

Class Organisation

Pairs/small groups.

Theme

Use for any theme.

Type of activity

Pair/group writing.

Materials needed

Dictionaries.
Photocopies of Worksheets A and B.

Aims

Develop dictionary skills.
Build confidence in using a dictionary.
Expand vocabulary range.
Develop writing skills.
Develop speaking skills.

Focus



Time

60 minutes over two sessions.

Suitable for

Third class and above.

Approach

1. Put pupils into pairs/small groups and distribute one dictionary and copies of Worksheet A to each pair/group.
2. Demonstrate the activity by working through number 1. Make sure each pair/group finds the word 'decorate' in the dictionary and checks it against the three possibilities on Worksheet A.
3. Ask pupils to complete the exercise. Monitor – make sure that the members of each pair/group work together and share the dictionary. Prompt ideas and help with dictionary use where necessary.
4. Explain to the class that they are going to use the dictionary to find five 'difficult' words and make the same type of activity.
5. Distribute one or two sheets of paper and encourage each pair/group to work together to find words and to write the task.
6. Monitor. When ready, hand out one copy of Worksheet B per pair/group, and ask pupils to copy their work.

Variation

The activity can be used to revise (or extend) pupils' vocabulary range relating to specific themes, as with Worksheet A which loosely focuses on the home.

Alternatively, it can be used purely as a basis for developing confidence in using a dictionary with no restrictions placed on the words pupils choose.

Pupils at a higher level of proficiency can write their own definitions for the words.

Observations

Note that the activity is based on dictionary definitions. It is not a free-writing exercise.

Encourage pupils to find 'difficult' words, especially if the finished page is to be circulated to other classes/groups.

As pupils develop their own multiple-choice questions, make sure that everyone participates in looking up and selecting the words to use, and in creating the false definitions. More involvement in the decision-making process increases the need for pupils to communicate.

What does it mean?

What do the words mean? Use a dictionary to help you. Tick the correct meaning.

- | | | |
|-------------------|--|--------------------------|
| 1. To decorate is | a. to put on your coat. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b. to make something look nice. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | c. to play with your friends. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | |
| 2. An attic is | a. a room under the house. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b. a small house in the garden where you put things. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | c. a room in the roof at the top of the house. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | |
| 3. A lawnmower is | a. a machine you use to cut the grass. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b. a machine you use to clean the house. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | c. a machine you use to wash your clothes. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | |
| 4. To bake is | a. to tidy away your toys. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b. to go to bed early. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | c. to put food in the oven and cook it. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | |
| 5. Pyjamas are | a. clothes you wear when it's very cold. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b. clothes you wear in bed. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | c. clothes you put on when you go swimming. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

What does it mean?

What do the words mean? Use a dictionary to help you. Tick the correct meaning.

1.	_____	a. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
		b. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
		c. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	_____	a. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
		b. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
		c. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	_____	a. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
		b. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
		c. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	_____	a. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
		b. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
		c. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	_____	a. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
		b. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
		c. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

Word chains

Class Organisation

Pairs/small groups.

Theme

This activity is not theme-based.

Type of activity

Pair/group writing.

Materials needed

Dictionaries.

Class set of Worksheet A.

One copy of Worksheet B per pair/small group.

Aims

Revise vocabulary.

Reinforce spelling.

Develop writing skills.

Develop speaking skills.

Focus



Time

60 minutes over two sessions.

Suitable for

Fourth class and above.

Approach

1. Prepare a word chain in advance of the class. Draw the grid on the board, read out the clues and model the activity.
2. Put pupils into pairs/small groups and distribute copies of Worksheet A. Ask the pairs/groups to complete the exercise, checking their notes or dictionaries for correct spelling.
3. Gather pupils around the board and involve them in the process of making a word chain.
 - Choose the first word.
 - Choose a second word, starting with the last letter from the first word and so on.
 - Think of clues for the words.
4. Put pupils into pairs/small groups. Working with one piece of paper, each pair/group prepares the first draft of their word chain together with the clues.
5. Monitor. When ready, hand out one copy of Worksheet B per pair/group, and ask pupils to copy their work.

Variation

If pupils' finished work is to be part of a quiz booklet for other classes/groups to complete, make the activity more challenging by leaving out the numbers on the grid.

Observations

Demonstrating the activity at the start of the class makes it clear that the last letter of one word is the first letter of the next.

When helping the groups to create their word chains, check that the grids are numbered correctly.

Thinking of the clues can be very challenging. Allow pupils time to formulate sentences and encourage peer co-operation.

If pupils devise a long word chain, instruct them to create a second grid below the one provided on Worksheet B.

Word chains

Look at the clues. Write the answers to the clues in the word chain.

The last letter of word number 1 is the first letter for word number 2.

The last letter of word number 2 is the first letter for word number 3, and so on.

Clues

1. Birds make their home in a _____.
2. People eat this for breakfast but we like chocolate ones at Easter.
3. When we play football we all want to score a _____.
4. This is a quiet place. You can read and borrow books but you mustn't talk.
5. There are 365 days in a _____.

Word chain



1	2	3	4	5															
---	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Word chains

Look at the clues. Write the answers to the clues in the word chain.

The last letter of word number 1 is the first letter for word number 2.

The last letter of word number 2 is the first letter for word number 3, and so on.

Clues

1. _____ .
2. _____ .
3. _____ .
4. _____ .
5. _____ .

Word chain



--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Making crosswords

Class Organisation

Pairs/small groups.

Theme

Use for any theme.

Type of activity

Pair/group writing.

Materials needed

One copy of Worksheets A and B per pair/group.
Dictionaries.

Aims

Revise vocabulary.
Focus on spelling.
Develop speaking skills.
Develop writing skills.

Focus



Time

60 minutes over two sessions.

Suitable for

Third class and above.

Approach

1. Hand out one copy of Worksheet A per pair/group and ask pupils to complete the crossword.
2. As the pairs/groups finish, draw attention to the vertical word.
3. Gather pupils around the board and involve them in the process of making a crossword.
 - Choose the theme.
 - Choose the 'vertical word' (comprising five or six letters).
 - Choose the words which make up the puzzle and which fit round the 'vertical word'.
 - Think of the clues for the words.
4. Put pupils into pairs/small groups. Working with one piece of paper, each pair/group prepares the first draft of their crossword.
5. Monitor. When ready, hand out one copy of Worksheet B per pair/group, and ask the pupils to neatly copy their work.

Variation

Pupils at a higher level of proficiency can make crosswords:

- With more clues.
- Containing two or three 'vertical words'.
- Which are not theme-based.

Younger pupils or those at lower levels of proficiency could do this activity without writing clues.

Observations

Although pupils may be familiar with the idea of crosswords, this may be the first occasion in which they are asked to create one. It is very important, therefore, that support is provided by working through the process on the board with the whole class.

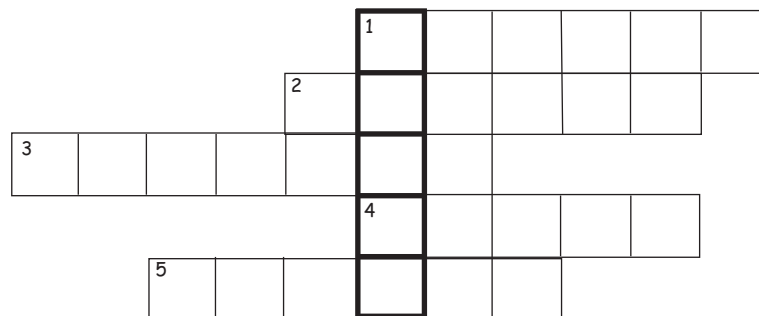
Encourage the pairs/groups to vary the kind of clues they give, as in the examples on Worksheet A. This allows for practice of different sentence structures and also question forms.

Food crossword

Look at the clues. Write the answers to the clues in the crossword.

Clues

1. This is a long yellow fruit. Monkeys love this fruit.
2. We buy this fruit in bunches. They can be green or red.
3. A bird.
4. 'An _____ a day keeps the doctor away'.
5. What do you have when you put a sausage in a bread roll?



Look again

There is a word in the vertical boxes.

What is the word?

--	--	--	--	--	--

Make a crossword for your friends in the class.



What is your crossword about (clothes, sport, colours)?

What is your vertical word?

What words do you want in your crossword?

_____ crossword

Clues

1. _____ .
2. _____ .
3. _____ .
4. _____ .
5. _____ .

Write your crossword here.

The vertical word is _____ .

Working with texts

Introduction

The purpose of the following activities is to support pupils in working with texts in the mainstream class. It is important to remember that all reading exercises share the same underlying aim of encouraging pupils to read English texts outside of class. This can be achieved if pupils experience success in the classroom. Therefore, the work of the language support teacher in preparing pupils to read texts is:

1. To raise pupils' awareness of how much vocabulary they know about the theme.

This prevents pupils from feeling intimidated by the thought of reading a text that at first sight appears impenetrable.

2. To introduce key words in context.

In the process of eliciting known vocabulary, the teacher can introduce key words in context.

3. To make the reading tasks challenging, but achievable.

Devise tasks that make it clear to pupils that they can understand the main points of a text without knowing the meaning of every word.

Strategies

This section uses texts from the primary curriculum to highlight five different strategies which can be used with regard to the above points. The strategies illustrated in this section are:

1. Using graphic organisers.
2. Keyword exercises.
3. Developing scan reading skills.
4. Predicting.
5. Grading the task.

Note

Contact at intervals with the class teachers will provide important information about the texts being studied in the mainstream.

Strategy 1 – Using graphic organisers

Introduction

Graphic organisers are an excellent means of activating knowledge (i.e. language) about a theme. They should be introduced as a group or whole class activity so that everybody becomes involved in contributing ideas.

They also provide the opportunity to introduce key words in context, and these new words will become part of a vocabulary resource which pupils can use in the mainstream class.

Making a spidergram 1

Level of text

Third class.

Level of learner

A2.

Time

20-25 minutes.

Source material: *Worldwise 1*. J. J. Hourihane & C. Ó Loingsigh (Revised edition, 1995).
The Educational Company of Ireland.

2 Our changing year

When we return to school each autumn, we notice many changes around us. The days are not as long as they were during the summer holidays. There is less time for playing outdoors in the evenings before darkness falls.

The heat of the summer sun is gone and the days are much cooler now. The countryside is ablaze with autumn colours, as the leaves wither and turn red, yellow and brown.

When the winter comes even the trees look cold and bare. Sometimes frost and snow cover the countryside in winter and make it very hard for the birds and animals to find food.

When spring comes the days get longer and warmer. The trees and flowers come back to life again. We look forward then to the warm sunshine and the long days of our summer holidays. Another year will have passed by and the cycle will start all over again.

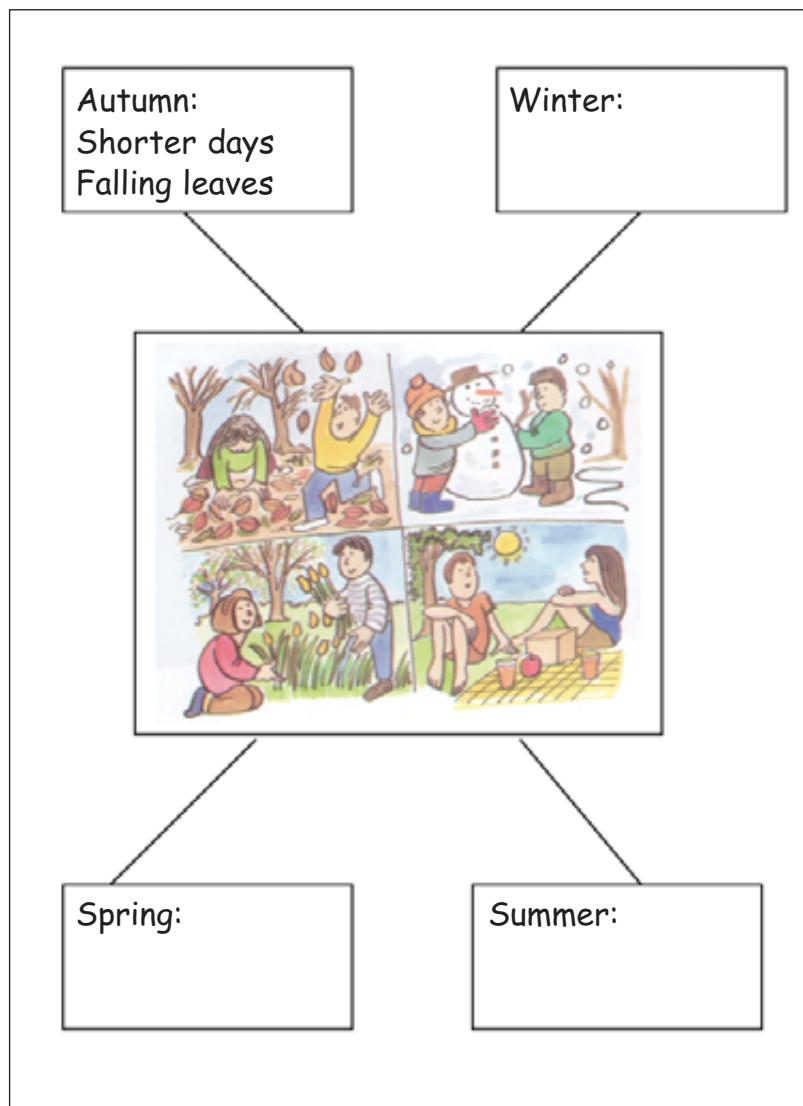
Autumn, winter, spring and summer are called the four seasons.

Each one is lovely in its own way.

Approach

1. Photocopy the relevant page, cut out the visual and create a spidergram – see next page. Make a class set of photocopies plus a few extra.
2. Use the visual to establish the theme of the text and ask pupils to name categories associated with the theme – in this case spring, summer, etc. Write them on the board.
3. Brainstorm ideas about the categories. Introduce key words which pupils will encounter in the text. In this example, the following expressions and concepts could be introduced:

before darkness falls	come back to life	bare
warm warmer	cool cooler	long longer
		cold colder
4. Practise spelling and pronunciation of vocabulary items.
5. Hand out the spidergram sheet. Pupils copy onto the sheet in neat writing.



Notes

For pupils

Spidergrams are an extremely effective learning tool as they locate words in context. The visual impact of spidergrams (especially those drawn up by the class themselves) will help pupils to learn, remember and revise vocabulary.

For teachers

Spidergrams are especially useful as they can be adapted across the different levels and for any theme. The key to creating a spidergram is to break the theme into distinct, simple categories. In this example the visual accompanying the text is ideally suited to the purpose.

In the next example, the idea for the spidergram is suggested by the visuals. It requires a little creativity.

Extension

Pupils write a short piece of text related to the theme (e.g. five sentences saying which is their favourite season and why).

Variation

For pupils at a higher level of proficiency, distribute copies of the spidergram. In pairs/groups pupils write their own ideas into the different categories.

Making a spidergram 2

Level of text

Third class.

Level of learner


A1+ and higher.

Time

20-25 minutes.

8 Looking at water

David was very thirsty. He went into the kitchen and took a glass from the shelf. Then he went to the sink and turned on the cold tap. He filled his glass with water and sat down on a chair to enjoy his drink. 'I wonder what would happen if the tap dried up?', David said to himself. He began to think of the many ways that a family uses water every day.


Look at the ten drawings and describe what is happening in each one. Remember there are six people in the Cowley family. This chart shows how much water the Cowley family uses every day.

Activity	Litres of water
DRINK	10
WASHING AND DRESSING	15
SHOWERING	25
TOILET	45
PERSONAL CARE	10
WASHING UP	35
WASHING HAIR	20

Source material: *Worldwise 1*. J. J. Hourihane & C. Ó Loingsigh (Revised edition, 1995).
The Educational Company of Ireland.

QUESTIONS


1. What activity uses most water?
2. What activity uses least water?
3. Which uses more water: laundry or dishes?
4. Is more water used in the bathroom or in the kitchen?
5. How do you think water is used outdoors?
6. Suggest two other ways that water is used at the house.
7. How many litres of water does one person use in a day?
8. How much water would a family of four use?







TO DO

Try these experiments and record your results.

1. This shows the amount of water we use when we take a shower or a bath. Work out how many people could have a shower with the same amount of water that one bath takes.
2. Get an empty litre milk carton, turn on a tap and use the carton to measure how much water flows through in one minute. Do this only once in class and do not waste the water. You can use it for watering the plants in school.

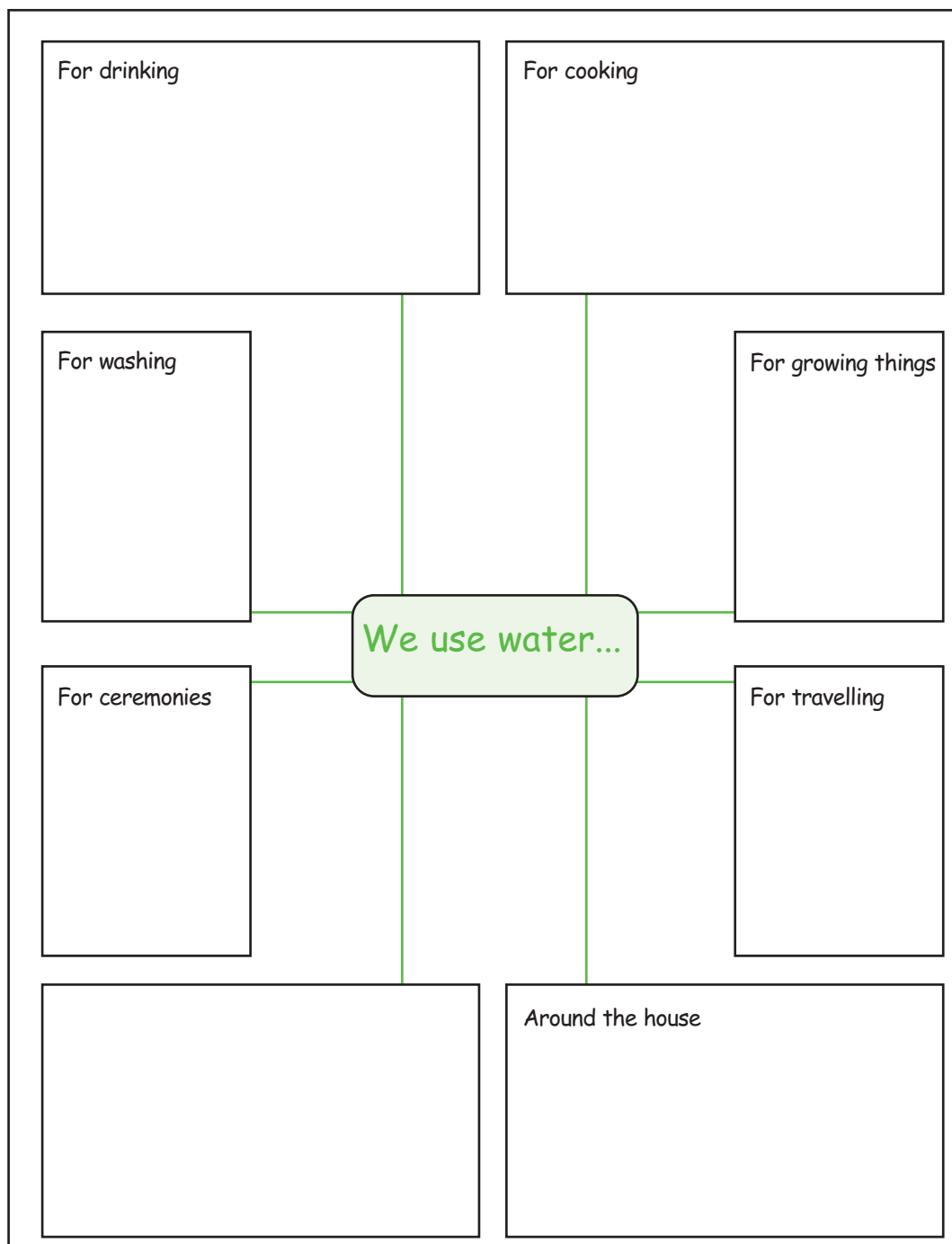


3. Instead of letting the tap run when you are washing your teeth, can you suggest a better way, so that you can save water?
4. Do this experiment to make muddy water clear. Put some clean sand into a flowerpot. Pour the muddy water into the flowerpot and collect it in a bowl as it comes out at the bottom. Notice how much cleaner it is now. Most of the mud remains trapped in the sand. This is called filtering – when water is filtered it becomes cleaner.
5. Does it float? Find out which of these objects float in water and which sink. You will notice that some of the big objects float, while some of the smaller ones sink!
6. Does it dissolve? Put a spoonful of sugar into a glass of water. Stir it well for about a minute. The sugar dissolves in the water. Try this experiment with salt, sand, bread-crumbs and flour, to see which of them dissolve in water.
7. Does it disappear? Put an equal amount of water in two saucers and two eggcups. Place one saucer and one eggcup in the sunlight and the other saucer and eggcup in the shade. Leave them there for a few days, until the water has totally disappeared. Take note of which container is first to dry. Which one is last to dry? What do we learn from this?

Approach

1. Use the idea of the visuals to create a spidergram – see next page. Make a class set of photocopies plus a few extra.
2. Write the main idea in the centre of the board and brainstorm ideas. Ask pupils to formulate their ideas in phrases and short sentences rather than isolated words.
e.g. 'We have a cold drink when we are thirsty'. 'We boil eggs'.
'We have a hot drink when it's cold'. 'My dad has a shave'.
Learning how to put words together is just as important as learning their meaning.
3. Hand out the spidergram sheet. Pupils work in groups to put the ideas on the board into the categories on the worksheet.
4. Pupils open the textbook to see if all their ideas are contained in the book.



Notes

In the first example on page x the spidergram is made up of words contained in the reading text. In this second example, the spidergram is used to stimulate interest, build confidence and bring pupils to the subject matter of the text rather than to the text itself.

N.B. Pupils should put their finished spidergrams into the Dossier section of their portfolios. It is very important that all resources relevant to mainstream learning are available for referencing and revision in class, and for homework.

The reading text in this example is quite long. [See the 'Notes' section on page 174](#) for working with long texts.

Extension

Pupils write a short piece of text related to the theme (e.g. when and how they use water every day/week).

Variation

For pupils familiar with the idea of spidergrams, give each pair/group a sheet of paper and the main idea (e.g. 'We use water...'). Pupils create their own spidergram, including the categories.

Making a grid

Level of text

Third class.

Level of learner

A1 and higher.

Time

40 minutes.

2 Our changing year

When we return to school each autumn, we notice many changes around us. The days are not as long as they were during the summer holidays. There is less time for playing outdoors in the evenings, before darkness falls.


The heat of the summer sun is gone and the days are much cooler now. The countryside is ablaze with autumn colours, as the leaves wither and turn red, yellow and brown.

When the winter comes even the trees look cold and bare. Sometimes frost and snow cover the countryside in winter and make it very hard for the birds and animals to find food.

When spring comes the days get longer and warmer. The trees and flowers come back to life again. We look forward then to the warm sunshine and the long days of our summer holidays. Another year will have passed by and the cycle will start all over again.


Autumn, winter, spring and summer are called the four seasons.

Each one is lovely in its own way.




QUESTIONS

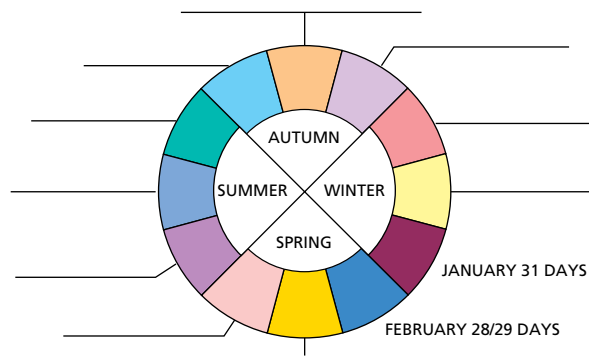
1. How many seasons are in the year?
2. How many months in each season?
3. Name the months of autumn.
4. What season is made up of November, December and January?
5. Name the months of spring.
6. What season is made up of May, June and July?
7. In which season is the shortest day of the year, 21 December?
8. The longest day of the year is 21 June. In which season is that?
9. In which season does Christmas fall?
10. What is your favourite season of the year? Why do you say so?



Source material: *Worldwise 1*. J. Hourihane & C. Ó Loingsigh (Revised edition, 1995). The Educational Company of Ireland.

Approach

1. Design a worksheet containing a grid/table with clearly defined column headings. The categories relate directly to the content of the text – see next page. Make a class set of photocopies plus a few extra.
2. Replicate the grid on the board. Brainstorm ideas to put into the different categories and write in a few suggestions.
3. Hand out one copy of the worksheet per pair/small group. Pupils work together to add further ideas to the categories.
4. Monitor – prompt ideas, and help with spelling and vocabulary.
5. Feedback. Check pronunciation and spelling, and write ideas into the grid on the board.
6. Hand out copies of the worksheet. Pupils copy from the board to the worksheet.



Months of the year

Winter	Spring	Summer	Autumn

What we know about the seasons

Winter	Spring

Summer	Autumn

Notes

Grids/tables may not be as visually striking as spidergrams but, because they ask pupils to place vocabulary into different categories, they are equally effective.

Again the key for the teacher in devising vocabulary grids is to identify distinct categories within the theme.

Using visuals

In the example, the reading text focuses on the seasons and is accompanied by a visual. The visual provides an opportunity to both introduce the theme and revise important vocabulary (months of the year). This builds pupils' confidence by showing how much they already know about the theme.

Extension

Each pair/group chooses a season and writes a short piece of text saying why it is the best part of the year.

Brainstorm important days of the year. Birthdays, religious holidays, important school days, and traditional festivals are some possible categories.

Pupils use the information to make a calendar of the important days for the class.

Strategy 2 – Keyword exercises

Introduction

Keyword exercises are an excellent way to prepare pupils for reading texts. New vocabulary is introduced in context, so making it easier to understand. The new vocabulary immediately becomes part of pupils' knowledge and supports them in the reading exercise to follow.

Level of text

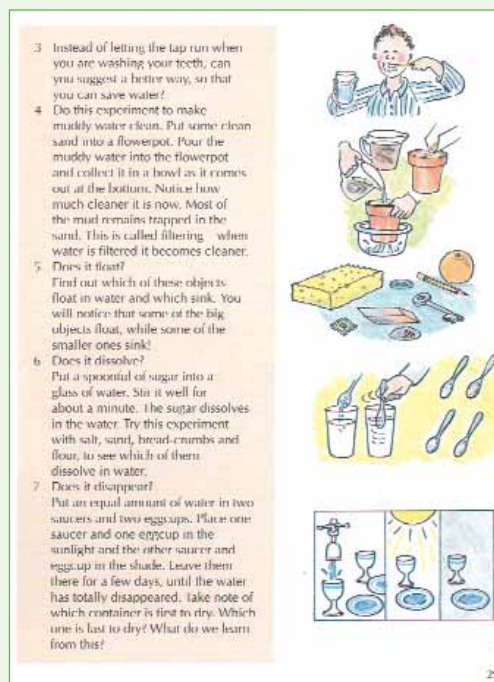
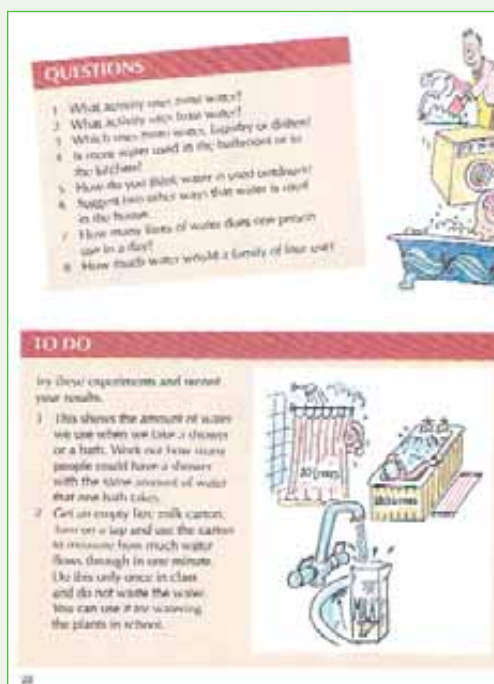
Third class.

Level of learner

A2.

Time

40 minutes.



Source material: *Worldwise 1*. J. Hourihane & C. Ó Loingsigh (Revised edition, 1995). The Educational Company of Ireland.

Approach

1. Liaise with the mainstream teacher and select a reading text. Pick out words which are important for understanding the text.
2. Design a worksheet based on the words and containing a dictionary activity which involves copying definitions from the dictionary. Example tasks are:
 - Matching the key words with pictures – see next page.
 - Pupils predicting (using visuals if possible) which words are in the text.
 Make a class set of photocopies plus a few extra.
3. Introduce the theme to generate interest and motivation – see **'Making a spidergram 2'** on page 169.
4. Hand out the worksheets and one dictionary per pair. If the worksheets contain visuals, use them to introduce vocabulary. Pupils look up the meaning of the words and complete the task.
5. Pupils read the text (or relevant parts) and see if they matched or predicted correctly.

Experiments with water

Key words

to dissolve

to dry

the shade

a container

to float

to stir

flour

to disappear

to sink

Look at the words in the box and then look at the pictures. Use a dictionary and put the words with the correct pictures.

Write the definition of the words from the dictionary.



Paragraph 5



Paragraph 6



Paragraph 7

Notes

Keyword exercises are especially useful in helping pupils to read long texts. If more than 12 words are identified, divide them up so that some pairs work with 6-8 words while other pairs work with the remainder. Put pairs together to help each other complete the task.

A further strategy for helping pupils with long texts is to use the language support class to read selected parts of a text only, as in the above example. Liaise with the mainstream teacher.

Extension

Ask the class how we can save water in our daily lives. Brainstorm ideas and language on the board and ask pupils to make a wall chart about saving water.

In the next class use the key words for a multiple-choice quiz – see [page 156](#).

Strategy 3 – Developing scan reading skills

Introduction

Texts which contain a lot of factual information are ideal for developing scan reading skills. Scan reading is a skill which allows us to locate information in a text efficiently. When we scan read we ignore large chunks of text as we search for the desired information. We don't read for full comprehension.

However, by extracting specific pieces of information pupils gain a firm idea of what the text is about. In other words, scan reading allows pupils to understand the main points of a text (i.e. achieve success) without knowing every word – a major confidence booster.

Identifying key information

Level of text

Third class.

Level of learner

A1 and higher.

Time


20-25 minutes.

WINTER

Unit 10 The Telephone

The word **telephone** comes from two Greek words, **tele** meaning "far" and **phone** meaning "sound". It was invented in 1876 by a Scotsman called **Alexander Graham Bell**. Bell was born in Edinburgh and moved to Canada with his family when he was in his early twenties. Some years later Bell moved to Boston in the United States.



Bell spent much of his time trying to send the human voice over long distances. He carried out many experiments until at last on March 10, 1876 he made the first telephone call. Bell spoke to his assistant, Thomas Watson, who was in the next room. "Mr. Watson, come here; I want you," he said.




LARRY TYPHONE

Modern Telephones in Ireland

Every telephone has its own number. When this number is **dialled**, the telephone rings. Telephone numbers are listed in a large book called a **telephone directory**.





The telephone service in Ireland is run by **Telecom Éireann**. It has divided the country into areas. Each area has what is called an **area code**. The area code for Dublin is 01 and the area code for Cork is 02. Someone making a call from Cork to Dublin must dial 01 before dialling the actual telephone number in Dublin.



When a call is made to a number within the same area, this is called a **local call**. The area code is not used and the call does not cost very much. When a call is made from one area to another, this is called a **long distance call**. This type of call can be quite expensive, especially on weekdays from 8.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.

There are over 6,000 **public telephones** in Ireland. Some public telephones are installed in special **kiosks** or they may be found in restaurants or garages. Most public telephones are **cardphones**. This means that you pay for your telephone call using a special card which is known as a **callcard**. Callcards may be bought in post offices and shops.



28

Source material: *Try This 2*. (Reprint, 2001). CJ Fallon.

Approach

1. Design a worksheet containing a grid/table which focuses on the generic main points of information – i.e. people (who), event (what), place (where), and time (when). Make a class set of photocopies.
2. Introduce the theme to generate interest and motivation. In this case ask the class what they know about telephones, and what they do with a phone (to call, to answer, to hang up, etc.).
3. Hand out the worksheets. Pupils look at the first paragraph of text and, in pairs, put information in the relevant columns. They should use pencils to start with.
4. Brief feedback. Pupils use their grids to answer questions such as, 'Who is this about?', 'Why is he important?', 'When did it happen?', 'What do you know about him?', etc.
5. Repeat the process with the next paragraph.

The telephone

Look at Unit 10 - The Telephone (page 28)

Read paragraph 1. Put the important information in the table.

Who	What	Where	When	Describing words
	Edinburgh		Greek	

Read paragraph 2. Put the important information in the table.

Who	What	Where	When	Describing words

Use the information in the table to complete these sentences.

1. Alexander Graham Bell _____ the telephone.
2. Alexander Graham bell was born in _____ .
3. He moved with his family to _____ .
4. He invented the telephone in _____ .
5. He did many _____ .
6. He made the first telephone call. He spoke to _____
_____ .
7. Thomas Watson was in _____
_____ .

Notes

The gap fill exercise, using words from the tables (i.e. text), makes it clear to pupils that they have understood the text. This builds confidence for working in the more challenging environment of the mainstream class.

The table of information is designed to reinforce one of the basic sentence constructions in English:

Subject + verb + object + place + time

The above example asks pupils to work at paragraph level. This type of exercise can also be used at sentence level.

Pages 184 and 185 are templates designed to develop the essential skill of scan reading with any text.

Extension

Pupils put away their books and worksheets and, in pairs, write sentences about the text.

Pupils find action words (verbs) in the text. Make a list of the words (e.g. was invented, was born, moved, made, spoke, said, etc.) on the board. In pairs pupils use the verbs to make sentences based on the information in the text.

Using statistics

Level of text

Third class.

Level of learner

A1+ and higher.

Time






20-25 minutes.

THE STORY OF MILK

We get milk from cows. There have been cows in Ireland for about 4,000 years. The fiery breed of cattle has been in Ireland all that time and has changed very little over the thousands of years.

The most common breed we have today is the Friesian. This breed is not native to Ireland, but was brought here from the Netherlands (Holland) about eighty years ago.

The Friesian cow gives more milk than most other breeds. To produce milk, the cow must eat good fresh grass – about 70kg each day, which is a lot of grass. She must also drink plenty of water.

Cows are milked twice a day – early in the morning and late in the evening. If there are only a few cows to be milked, the farmer does it by hand. On dairy farms with large herds of cattle, milking machines are used.


The cows are driven into the milking parlour. Each cow knows her own place in the stall. The milking parlour is clean and hygienic. The cows' udders are washed with warm water and then the milking machines are attached.

Source material: *Worldwise 1*. J. Hourihane & C. Ó Loingsigh (Revised edition, 1995). The Educational Company of Ireland.

Approach

1. Design a worksheet containing a grid/table of facts from the text (numbers are particularly useful for this exercise). Make a class set of photocopies.
2. Introduce the theme to generate interest and stimulate motivation. In this case use the visuals in the textbook and/or an activity to both activate knowledge and create anticipation – see example on next page.
3. Explain the activity and hand out the worksheets. Pupils work in pairs/small groups to find the facts (i.e. numbers and words) in the text, and to write in the relevant information. They should write in pencil.
4. Feedback. Replicate the grid/table on the board. Ask pupils what they know about the numbers and words and write correct sentences on the board. Pupils copy the sentences onto their sheets.

While the cows are being milked they are given extra food, to improve the quality of the milk. The milk is warm when it leaves the cow. It is pumped into a glass container and the amount is measured and recorded. Very good milkers can give 74 litres of milk per day. Then the milk is piped into a cooling tank. Here it stays fresh and cool until collected by the milk tanker for delivery to the dairy.




TO DO

Study the chart and answer these questions.

- 1 The tanker collects milk from several farms on each journey. Why is this?
- 2 The driver does not delay, but brings the load back to the dairy as quickly as possible. Why?
- 3 Why are the storage tanks at the dairy much bigger than those on the farm?
- 4 Milk is pasteurised by being heated and cooled rapidly. What effect does this have on the milk?

QUESTIONS

- 1 How many pupils are in the class shown here?
- 2 How many are absent today?
- 3 How many are present?
- 4 How many of those present take milk?
- 5 How many of those absent take milk?
- 6 Does Nuála take milk?
- 7 Does David take milk?
- 8 How many cartons will be left over today?



The story of milk

Look at Unit 19 - Milk's the one (page 84)

Work in pairs. Write your ideas.

What we know about cows	What we want to know about cows
They are black and white.	How much do they weigh?

Look in the text. What does it say about the words in the table?

Paragraph	Find this information	What does it say in the text?
1	4,000	
2	The Friesian cow	
3	70	
4	Twice	
5	The milking parlour	
6	24	

Notes

When we consult the telephone directory, index pages in a book, timetables, TV listings, etc., we scan text looking for information relevant to very specific needs. In this sense scanning is more than an important reading skill. It is a life skill which supports further learning.

It is vital, therefore, that pupils (especially older pupils) develop this skill as it marks a significant move away from reading on a word-by-word basis to reading for meaning.

As with the previous example, activities such as this help pupils get the main factual points from the text, thereby giving them confidence to approach reading exercises in the mainstream class.

Extension

Pupils put away their books and worksheets and, in pairs, write sentences about the text.

Pupils work in pairs/groups to answer their own questions, as listed in the column 'What we want to know about... '.

Variation

Pupils at a higher level of proficiency should use their own words to explain the significance of the facts.

Strategy 4 – Predicting

Introduction

Asking pupils to predict the contents of a text is an excellent strategy to prepare them for reading. Discussing what they think the text is about not only generates interest and existing knowledge, but also motivates pupils into wanting to read the text. Quite simply they want to know if their predictions were correct. In this sense predicting helps establish a personal connection with the text.

Level of text

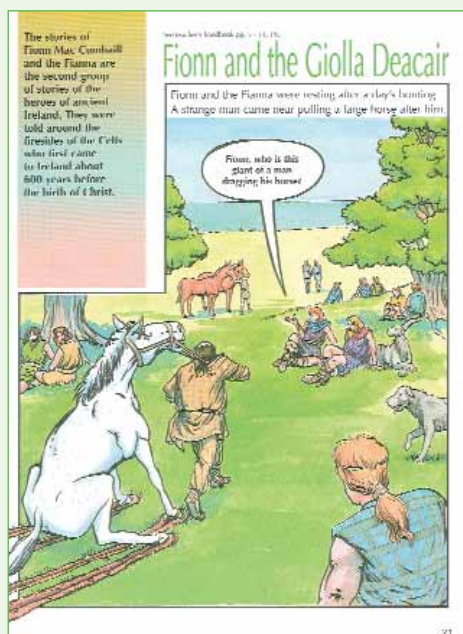
Third class.

Level of learner

A1 and higher.

Time

40 minutes.



Source material: *Time Traveller 1*. Roddy Day, Fionnuala Waldron, Tommy Maher & Pauric Travers (Reprint, 2002). CJ Fallon.

Approach

1. Design a worksheet containing a grid/table with column headings specific to the content of the text – see next page.
2. If possible use visuals, in this case the first two pages of the story (above), to introduce the theme and establish basic information – in this example the names of the people, the relationships between them, where they are, what happens, etc.
3. Replicate the grid on the board and, using the visuals, brainstorm ideas.
4. In pairs/small groups pupils predict what the next part of the text is about – in this case they discuss how the story develops. Take feedback from all the pairs/groups.
5. Pupils read the next part of the text to see if their predictions were correct – see note on next page*.
6. Hand out the worksheet. Pupils work with the text and complete the grid as required.
7. Repeat the previous three stages with the next part of the text, establishing a cycle of predicting, reading, and categorising the vocabulary.

Fionn and the Giolla Deacair

Here is the information for pages 21 and 22 of the story.

People	Feeling	Actions	Places	Animals	Objects
Fionn		rest	camp	horses	a stick
Diarmuid		talk drag		dogs	
Giolla Deacair	insulted very angry	bite shout			
Conan	angry	run wave			

Read pages 23 and 24. Write in the information.

People	Feeling	Actions	Places	Animals	Objects
Fionn			western sea	white horse	
Diarmuid		take			
Giolla Deacair					
Conan					

Read pages 25-27. Write in the information.

People	Feeling	Actions	Places	Animals	Objects
Fionn		fight			a well
Diarmuid					
Giolla Deacair					
Conan					

Notes

Discussing the contents of text prior to reading allows the group to realise how much vocabulary they know about the theme, and provides the opportunity for key words to be introduced. This ensures that pupils are fully prepared for the reading exercise which follows.

Stories are ideal for prediction activities. Picture stories are particularly good as they have a reduced language content. However, the strategy of predicting does not depend on visuals alone. A very effective prediction task is for the class to consider what they know about a theme and what they would like to know – [see page 178](#).

*Give pupils time to read the text and encourage them to deduce meaning from both the visual supports and their own predictions. This is challenging at first but is crucial in helping pupils develop the skill of reading for meaning.

Extension

Pupils put away their books. In pairs, they use the words in the grids to tell the story.

Pairs/groups write different parts of the story using the vocabulary in the grid.

Variation

At the end of each section pupils take roles and read out the story, with one narrator. Encourage pupils to express the feelings of their characters.

Strategy 5 – Grading the task

Introduction

The previous four strategies have concentrated on ways in which the teacher can introduce the theme and prepare learners for the task of reading a text. Here, the focus is on the reading exercise.

The skill of reading is developed through activities in which pupils read text then answer questions about it. A reading exercise has two components – the text and the questions. It is possible that pupils may understand the text but have difficulty in 1. understanding the language of the questions and 2. formulating answers.

It is crucial that language support teachers give careful and equal consideration to both parts of a reading exercise – the text and the questions. Questions which are considered too difficult, can be amended. 'Grading the task' is demonstrated below.

Level of text

Third class.

Level of learner

A1+ and higher.

Observations on the questions

In this case the questions can be answered in a number of ways.

Pupils can:

1. Give short spoken or written answers.
2. Give full spoken or written answers.

The second option is more challenging and has the effect of moving the focus of the exercise away from reading and towards writing or speaking. Although they may have understood the text itself, pupils are now grappling with vocabulary and sentence structure so that their success in reading may be overshadowed by difficulty in other areas of language learning.

Pupils can be supported in developing reading skills by setting tasks which require short answers. 'Yes/No', 'Tick the correct answer' and gap fill are, in this context, ideal exercises. They are also easy to devise – see the examples on the next page.

QUESTIONS

- 1 How many seasons are in the year?
- 2 How many months in each season?
- 3 Name the months of autumn.
- 4 What season is made up of November, December and January?
- 5 Name the months of spring.
- 6 What season is made up of May, June and July?
- 7 In which season is the shortest day of the year, 21 December?
- 8 The longest day of the year is 21 June. In which season is that?
- 9 In which season does Christmas fall?
- 10 What is your favourite season of the year? Why do you say so?

Source material: *Worldwise 1*. J. Hourihane & C. Ó Loingsigh (Revised edition, 1995). The Educational Company of Ireland.

Example of Yes/No exercise.

Read the information on page 7 and then read the sentences.

If the sentences are correct write 'Yes'. If the sentences are not correct write 'No'.

1. There are five seasons in a year. No
2. There are three months in each season. Yes
3. The months of autumn are July, August and September. _____
4. November, December and January are the months of spring. _____
5. The months of spring are February, March and April. _____
6. December 21st, which is the shortest day of the year, is in winter. _____
7. June 21st, which is the longest day of the year, is in autumn. _____
8. Christmas Day is in winter. _____
9. My favourite season is _____.

Example of exercise requiring pupils to tick the correct answer.

Read the information on page 7 and then read the sentences.

Tick (✓) the correct sentence

1. There are four seasons in a year.
There are five seasons in a year.
2. There are three months in each season.
There are two months in each season.
3. The months of autumn are August, September and October.
The months of autumn are July, August and September.

Example of gap fill exercise.

Read the information on page 7 and complete these sentences.

1. There are _____ seasons in a year.
2. There are _____ months in each season.
3. The months of autumn are _____
4. November, December and January are the months of _____.
5. The months of spring are _____
6. December 21st is the shortest day of the year. It is in _____.
7. June 21st is the longest day of the year. It is in _____.
8. Christmas Day is in _____.
9. My favourite season is _____.

Notes

Using such tasks allows pupils to see that they have successfully understood the reading text.

This is not to suggest that *all* reading exercises in the language support classroom should be based on the above examples. Pupils at a higher level of proficiency need more challenging exercises, such as open-ended questions. The key is to grade the task so that the level of difficulty is appropriate to the pupils' learning needs. In this way the same text can be used with a range of (graded) exercises suitable for groups at different levels of proficiency.

Points to remember!

Combining different strategies

The strategies outlined in this section can be used together or sequentially. The example on pages 167 and 168 suggests using a spidergram to introduce the theme followed by an exercise to introduce key words in context.

Similarly, an exercise to develop scan reading skills is used in the example on page 176 followed by a graded gap fill task to help pupils realise that they have understood the text.

Liaise with the class teacher

When planning to use texts in the language support class information from class teachers will help to identify the needs of the pupils. The language support teacher should, in turn, inform colleagues of the reading texts covered and the types of exercises used.

Extra photocopies

It is a good idea to make extra photocopies especially if pupils attempt an unfamiliar exercise. Not understanding the nature of the task increases the likelihood that pupils will write information in the wrong place. Giving out an extra photocopy allows the 'mistake' to be passed over quickly.

The examples used in this section

All of the example activities in this section are based on third class textbooks. It may be appropriate to use texts at this level for pupils in higher classes as an introduction to working with texts.

Reading

Read paragraph _____. Put the important information in the table.

Who	What	Where	When	Describing words

Read paragraph _____. Put the important information in the table.

Who	What	Where	When	Describing words

Read paragraph _____. Put the important information in the table.

Who	What	Where	When	Describing words

Reading

Read sentence _____. Put the important information in the table.

Who	What	Where	When	Describing words

Read sentence _____. Put the important information in the table.

Who	What	Where	When	Describing words

Read sentence _____. Put the important information in the table.

Who	What	Where	When	Describing words

Notes

Section 6

Literacy

development for older pupils

Introduction

This section is intended to provide support for pupils who must develop literacy later in the primary cycle.

For pupils who have already developed reading and writing skills in another script (e.g. Arabic, Russian, etc.) the concept of literacy is familiar. However, some pupils, due to difficult circumstances, may have experienced considerable interruptions to their education and, as a consequence, have not successfully gained literacy in any language. Clearly, the latter situation presents a greater challenge to the language support teacher.

Teachers working with pupils in this situation sometimes perceive that the teaching of basic literacy skills is based on a methodology different to their own. This is not the case. The approach for developing the basic literacy skills of newcomer pupils should, therefore, mirror that used for their classmates in the mainstream.

Speaking precedes writing

The first step is to develop pupils' oral skills. A bank of oral vocabulary is the basis for the subsequent development of word recognition skills and an understanding of sound-symbol correspondence. Therefore, you will find the phonics schemes very useful or a combination of phonics with letter recognition activities.

As literacy skills develop, pupils are able to record in writing what they are learning in class and this study skill supports further language development.

Integrating the skills

The cycle of learning in the primary classroom starts with oral communication and moves towards words on the page. This integrated approach where speaking supports reading supports writing forms the underlying dynamic in literacy learning.

Activities to develop literacy skills

The activities in this section highlight an integrated approach. The initial activities are located in two cycles of learning which contain the following stages:

Stage 1 – Speaking

Stage 2 – Speaking and reading

Stage 3 – Towards writing

These stages, although not stated explicitly, are also an identifiable feature of the 'Model activities' – see below.

The activities are for use with newcomer pupils at different points in their literacy development.

Cycle 1 (page 189) – Names and countries

For pupils with no English and very basic literacy needs. These pupils may have no previous experience of formal schooling.

Cycle 2 (page 210) – What is this?

For pupils with very little English and basic literacy needs. These pupils may have some previous experience of formal schooling and may have some existing level of literacy.

Sample activities for pupils with A1 level speaking skills (page 215)

The activities can be used to develop a range of literacy needs.

Cycle 1. Names and countries

For pupils with no English and very basic literacy needs. These pupils may have no previous experience of formal schooling.

Literacy begins with known language

For pupils who are absolute language beginners a good place to start is with their names and the names of the countries that their families come from. This allows pupils to familiarise themselves with the names of their classmates and reinforces the inclusiveness of the learning environment.

The second stage of this cycle (reading) introduces pupils to the concept of the alphabet.

Teachers' notes

The notes which accompany the activities in this first cycle are quite detailed. Working with pupils beyond Senior Infants who, in addition to learning to speak, read and write in a new language, may also be new to the learning environment is a challenging task. The detailed nature of the notes shows how the change of focus from speaking to reading to writing is facilitated by a series of carefully planned steps.

Letter flash cards (pages 193-195)

The letter flash cards are an excellent resource for developing basic literacy skills. They are extremely effective in:

- Developing sound-symbol correspondence.
- Developing and consolidating spelling skills.

The flash cards have a dot towards the top left corner to indicate which way up the letters are. Pupils often say the name of the letter correctly, but then place it upside down or on its side. With the letters placed alongside each other, the significance of the dot can be pointed out.

The dot has been placed in the top left corner as this is the point on a page where we normally start writing and to which our attention is drawn.

Stage 1 – Speaking

Names and countries

Class organisation

Whole class.

Theme

Myself.

Aims

Practise saying names.
Ascertain initial impression of pupils' word recognition and reading skills.

Materials needed

Photocopy the sheet of **blank flash cards on page 191** two times.

Preparation

Write pupils' names on one sheet of cards and their countries on the other. Include your own details. Cut out the cards.

Notes

Pupils may not know the English names of their countries. Be prepared to spend some extra time on the pronunciation of the countries at this stage of the class*.

This is an excellent activity for the first class.

In the matching activity ask pupils to try and read the names and countries of their classmates. This helps you assess their reading skills.

Remind the pupils to say 'My name is _____' and 'I am from _____' before turning over the cards, as this is the language focus of the class.

Focus



Time

40 minutes.

Type of activity

Chain activity.
Matching activity.

Approach

1. Spread out the first-name flash cards on a table, say, "My name is _____" and remove the flash card with your name on it. Invite pupils to do the same.
2. Start a chain around the class, 'My name is _____. What is your name?' As each pupil gives his/her name, he/she takes the flash card from the table. Repeat two or three times.
3. *Repeat the above process with the country flash cards, practising the language 'I am from _____. Where are you from?'
4. Shuffle the two sets of cards and spread them out. The chain is now, 'My name is _____. I am from _____' with the pupils taking their cards as they say the sentences.
5. Indicate different pupils, saying their names. If you can't remember, ask, "What is your name?" Invite pupils to do the same. Repeat this process with countries.

Matching activity

1. Spread out the first-name cards in one area of the table and the country cards in another. Both sets are face down.
2. Say, "My name is _____" and choose a card from the appropriate group on the table. If the card doesn't have your name on it, return it to the same place face down. The turn passes to the next pupil. If the card has your name, say "I am from _____" and try to find 'your' country card in the other group. The winner is the first person to find their matching information.

Extension

Pupils find this an enjoyable activity and, for language beginners, it is an ideal way to practise sentence structures such as:

'His name is _____. He is from _____'.

'My sister's name is _____. She is from _____'.

'I am from _____. I speak _____'. (language)

'My name is _____. I like _____. (food, sport, seasons, clothes, etc.)



Stage 2 – Speaking and reading

Names and letters

Class organisation

Whole class.

Theme

Myself.

Aims

Learn correspondence between letters of the alphabet and their sounds.

Become familiar with left to right directionality.

Materials needed

Blank sheets of A4 paper.

Preparation

Photocopy and cut up two sets of letter flashcards (pupils' names may contain the same letter twice).

Notes

The letter flash cards are an excellent resource ([see notes on page 189](#)) and will receive a lot of classroom use. Laminate them or glue them to card.

Asking how many letters are in the name is an important point in the activity. It changes the focus from the name (i.e. the word) to the separate letters.

Work with names that are relatively short. Working with 4-6 letters at a time facilitates the aim of the activity – learning sound-symbol correspondence.

Focus



Time

40 minutes.

Type of activity

Reading.
Matching letters.

Approach

1. Review first names from the previous class using the flash cards.
2. Write two or three names on the board. Count the number of letters in one of the names and ask the group, "How many letters?" Repeat with the other names – see 'Notes' below.
3. *Read out the first name on the board. Isolate, elicit and then practise saying the names of each letter in turn. If the pupils don't know the name of any of the letters, supply it yourself.
4. Read out all the letters two or three times and then ask the class to read them with you. Ask individual pupils to read out the letters.
5. Group the class around a table. Write the name onto a sheet of A4 and put it on the table. Spread out the letter flash cards, face up. In turn point to each letter in the name and ask pupils to find the letter amongst the cards.
6. Working with the name flash cards, point to different letters in the names and ask, "What letter is this?"

Spelling the name

1. Ask the pupil whose name is on the A4 sheet, "What is your name?" Then ask, "Can you spell it, please?" Point to the first letter on the sheet for guidance. The pupil says the letter, finds the card on the table and puts it under the letter on the sheet.
2. Do the same with the other letters in the name. When the name is complete, ask him/her to spell it.
3. Repeat the above two steps with other pupils in the class. Use another name from the board. Repeat the process from here*.

Extension

There are many ways to practise sound-symbol correspondence:

- One pupil spells out words. The rest listen and spell using the cards.
- Design a bingo activity based on letters rather than numbers.
- Write letters on board. Class calls out letters for one pupil to circle.



<p>•</p> <p>a</p>	<p>•</p> <p>b</p>
<p>•</p> <p>c</p>	<p>•</p> <p>d</p>
<p>•</p> <p>e</p>	<p>•</p> <p>f</p>
<p>•</p> <p>g</p>	<p>•</p> <p>h</p>
<p>•</p> <p>i</p>	<p>•</p> <p>j</p>



<p>•</p> <p>k</p>	<p>•</p> <p>l</p>
<p>•</p> <p>m</p>	<p>•</p> <p>n</p>
<p>•</p> <p>o</p>	<p>•</p> <p>p</p>
<p>•</p> <p>q</p>	<p>•</p> <p>r</p>
<p>•</p> <p>s</p>	<p>•</p> <p>t</p>



• u	• v
• w	• x
• y	• z

a b c d

e f g h

i j k l m

n o p q

r s t u

v w x y z

Stage 3 – Towards writing

Writing names

Class organisation

Whole class.
Individual.

Theme

Myself.

Aims

Develop reading skills – pupils identify correct form of their names.
Introduce letters.
Understand how letters are formed and how to write them.
Introduce indirectly the alphabet sequence.

Materials needed

Class sets of Worksheets A and B (back to back). Make extra copies of each.

Preparation

Write on one side of Worksheet A only. Write the name of a pupil on the top line of each sheet. Underneath write five variations of the pupil's name, only one of which is correct.

Notes

In this stage they take the initial steps in learning to produce the known (oral) sounds in the form of letters on a page.

You may choose to help pupils form letters (Worksheet B) by indicating the point at which the pen first touches the page when writing each letter. Place a dot at the relevant point – see Worksheet D.

Focus



Time

Open.

Type of activity

Read and circle.
Writing letters.

Approach

1. Review first names and countries using flash cards from the previous lesson.
2. Write your name in the top left corner of the board. Say, "My name is ____" a few times pointing to your name. Write five variations of your name below, only one of which is correct.
3. Point to your name in the top left corner and indicate the words below. Ask the class if the words are 'good'/'not good' or 'the same'/'not the same'. Circle the word the pupils agree is 'good'.
4. Hand out Worksheet A and monitor closely as pupils may not understand the task.
5. For pupils who finish quickly, turn over the page and repeat the activity with a more challenging task – see 'Variation' below.
6. Introduce Worksheet B to pupils one at a time. Write the pupil's name in the space provided. Highlight the first name and writes a different letter of the first name at the beginning of every line. The pupil writes the letters across the lines.
7. Use the reverse side of Worksheet B in the same way, but focus on the letters of the family name.

Variation

The reading task in Worksheet A can be made more difficult by:

- Inverting pairs of letters which are easily confused – e.g. if the pupil's name is Nicolae, an incorrect version could be 'Nicolea'.
- Substituting similar letters – e.g. if the pupil's name is Tetyana, an incorrect version could be 'Tetjana'.
- Increasing the number of incorrect (and correct) versions in the list. The design of Worksheet A allows extra words to be added.

Developing writing skills – Worksheets C-F

Worksheets C-F have been designed specifically to assist teachers working with pupils at different stages in the early development of their writing skills. The order in which the worksheets are presented, therefore, is not important. They are to be used according to the needs of individual pupils, and the specific writing skill which is being developed. The worksheets can be used in the following ways:

Worksheet C – writing letters

Write simple sentences on the line at the top of the page – e.g. 'I have a brother', 'I like spring', 'I speak Arabic'. The letters for writing practice are drawn from the words 'brother', 'spring' and 'Arabic'.

Words in pictures

Use pictures containing words in clear context. Pictures featuring signs (e.g. 'park', 'zoo', 'cinema') are ideal. Talk about the picture with the pupils, and ask them what they think the word is. Use letter flash cards to focus on the letters and then write the word at the top of Worksheet C for writing practice.

Worksheet D – extra practice

These pages are for additional practice, either in class or at home. Letters which pupils find difficult can be identified for extra practice. Write a letter next to the one on the page to indicate the letter(s) which pupils are to practise.

Worksheet E – forming smaller letters

These pages focus on developing pupils' ability to form smaller letters. In turn, this prepares them for reading smaller print.

Use Worksheet E to focus on, for example, writing the 'tall' letters only. These pages can also be used in the same way as Worksheets C and D.

Worksheet F – writing words and sentences

This can be used for further practice in writing letters. It can also be used in numerous ways to practice the writing of words:

- At the start of each line write the name of a different member of the class, or the country they are from. Pupils write the names across each line.
- After working with new vocabulary, write the words at the beginning of each line for pupils to practise. This also serves to reinforce the learning of the new vocabulary.

N.B. If the vocabulary is theme based, write the theme as a title at the top of the page. The page then becomes a record of new vocabulary and can be put in the Dossier section of the *European Language Portfolio* for future reference.

- Write simple sentences at the top of the page for pupils to practice – e.g. 'I am from Angola', 'I like apples'.

Note

The simple design of Worksheets D and E allows parents to become involved in the early development of their children's writing skills.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

My name is _____

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Handwriting practice lines consisting of solid top and bottom lines with a dashed middle line. There are seven sets of these lines provided for practice.

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

a

b

c

d

e

f

g

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

h

i

j

k

l

m

n

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

o

p

q

r

s

t

u

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

v

w

x

y

z

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

a

b

c

d

e

f

g

h

i

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



j

k

l

m

n

o

p

q

r

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

s

t

u

v

w

x

y

z

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 10 sets of horizontal lines. Each set includes a solid top line, a dashed midline, and a solid bottom line.

Cycle 2. What is this? – objects to words

For pupils with very little English and basic literacy needs. These pupils may have some previous experience of formal schooling and may have some existing level of literacy.

Introduction (model approach)

The activities in this cycle are aimed at pupils who have been introduced to the alphabet. The activities assume that the pupils have had practice in forming letters through writing their names, their countries of origin and so on.

In terms of the development of writing, Cycle 2 aims to build on those skills developed in Cycle 1 by guiding pupils towards writing at sentence level. This requires pupils to consider aspects of consistency in the size of their letters, and the concept of spacing both within and between words.

Introducing new vocabulary

The activities in this cycle provide a model for introducing the pupils to new language.

It is vital that new vocabulary is introduced in contexts which are clear to pupils, thereby allowing them to focus on correct pronunciation* and on remembering the new words and their written forms.

***See the activities on developing pronunciation skills on pages 89-94.**

Developing writing skills

The activity of writing only has relevance to pupils if they understand the words they are producing on the page.

The activities as examples

The activities in this cycle are examples only and are based on the theme of food. They can be adapted for use with any of the Units of Work in the primary curriculum.

Teachers' notes

The accompanying notes illustrate a general model for introducing new language in any cycle of learning.

Stage 1 – Speaking

What is this? – objects and pictures

Class organisation

Whole class.

Theme

Use with any of the Units of Work of the primary curriculum.

Aims

Learn new vocabulary.
Learn the question 'What is this?'
Associate objects with the sound of the word and also with pictures.

Materials needed

6-8 items of food/drink.
Pictures of same items.
Set of **blank flash cards** – see **page 191**.

Preparation

Cut up and number the blank flash cards.

Focus



Time

40 minutes.

Type of activity

Speaking – chain activity.

Approach

1. Hold up a carton of milk (for example) asking, "What is this?" Model the full reply 'This is milk'. Say it three or four times. Invite the class to say it with you and then ask individual pupils to say it.
2. Practise the question 'What is this?'
3. Pass the carton to a pupil who asks the question of another pupil. Repeat around the class.
4. Introduce approximately six other food/drink items for this session.
5. Use a chain activity to practise the language structures. Invite one pupil to choose a food/drink item. S/he asks, "What is this?" and a second pupil answers. The second pupil chooses another item, asks a third pupil the question and so on.

Introducing numbers

Use the **blank flash cards on page 191** to make number cards. Put the number cards on/next to the food/drink items and pupils ask each other "What is number 5?", "What is number 1?" etc.

Using pictures

1. Put the food/drink items in one area of the table and pictures of the same items in another.
2. Focus on the objects first. Ask, "What is this?" to elicit the full answer. Then do the same with the pictures.
3. Mix up and hand out the pictures. In turns pupils hold up their pictures and ask each other "What is this?"

Notes

It is important to put vocabulary in a simple language context. This gives pupils an opportunity to recognise the target word in speech; to become familiar with pronunciation; and, even at the very beginning, speak in phrases.

Extension

Put the pictures you use on to A3 or flipchart sheets for future use. The sheets can be given a title, and pictures can be added as new vocabulary is learned. Use the sheets for review sessions – put the sheets on a wall and ask pupils to find and then remove pictures that you (or their classmates) call out.

Use pictures together with the **letter flash cards on pages 193-195**. Put the letter flash cards on a wall. Pupils find a picture and think about the initial sound. They then put the picture under the appropriate letter.

Stage 2 – Speaking and reading

What is this? – words

Class organisation

Whole class.

Theme

Use with any of the Units of Work of the primary curriculum.

Aims

Associate written words with names and pictures of known objects.

Recognise written form of words for known objects.

Materials needed

Pictures of objects already learned.

Photocopy the sheet of **blank flash cards on page 191**.

Preparation

Write the vocabulary to be practised on the flash cards and cut them up.

Focus



Time

40 minutes.

Type of activity

Matching activities.

Approach

1. Use pictures to review words learned in previous class.
2. Hold up one of the word flash cards. Ask the class how many letters there are and to identify them. Point to the corresponding picture and ask pupils what it is. Attach the word to the picture. Say, "Milk" and point out the initial 'm' saying, "M for milk". Repeat with the other pictures. This process introduces the correspondence between sound and symbol.
3. Place pictures around the room. Put the wrong word cards next to the pictures. Point to a picture saying, "What is this?" Ask the class if the word is correct. Pupils look at the initial letter and try saying the word, then find the correct picture to match the word.
4. When the pictures and words are matched, ask pupils to close their eyes, mix up the pictures/cards and repeat.
5. Arrange the pictures in a column on the table with the matching word beside each one. Read each word slowly and ask the class to read it with you. Remove the pictures and ask pupils to read the words.
6. Put the pictures in a pile. Pupils turn over a picture and put it next to the matching word.
7. Rearrange the pictures so that they are beside the wrong words. Pupils match them up correctly.

Notes

Relating the word to something real is a vital step in the development of literacy skills.

Limit the first introduction to about 5-7 words that pupils are familiar with.

Successfully matching words does not mean that pupils can spell the word or even copy it accurately.

Extension

A3/flipchart sheets onto which pictures have been stuck can be used for simple and effective matching activities to develop word recognition skills. After putting the sheet on a wall:

1. Pupils name objects in the pictures. They then read word flash cards and put the words next to the pictures on the sheet.
2. The teacher points to the pictures one at a time. After correctly naming the objects, pupils take turns to remove the pictures from the sheet and put them on the table.
3. Pupils now read the words. They take turns to read a word, remove it from the sheet and put it next to the picture on the table.

In addition to snap, the activities '**Sight vocabulary**', '**Memory game**', '**I spy**' and '**Find the real thing**' on pages 61-63 can be easily adapted as matching activities using pictures and word cards.



pizza

chips

vegetables

cheese

orange juice

fish

chicken

milk

eggs

bread

Stage 3 – Towards writing

What is this? – writing sentences

Class organisation

Whole class.
Individual.

Theme

Use with any of the Units of Work of the primary curriculum.

Aims

Review known vocabulary.
Reinforce word recognition skills.
Practise speaking, reading and writing about food and drink.
Develop writing skills to sentence level.

Materials needed

Pictures of objects already learned, and matching word flash cards.
Photocopy the sheet of **blank flash cards on page 191**.
Class set of **Worksheet F on page 209** (back to back).

Preparation

Cut up the sheet of blank flash cards.

Focus



Time

40 minutes.

Type of activity

Matching activity.
Writing practice.

Approach

1. Use picture cards to review words learned in previous classes.
2. Ask pupils what day it is and on a blank sheet of A4 write in large print, 'On Monday I eat'. Move a few of the picture cards to the end of the sentence and say, for example, "On Monday I eat chicken, vegetables and orange juice".
3. In turn pupils move pictures to the end of the sentence on the A4 sheet and say what they have to eat on that day of the week – see 'Notes' below.
4. Spread out the picture cards in one area of the table. In another area of the table spread out the corresponding word flash cards. Read each word as it is put on the table. Then point to individual words and ask, "What is this?" Ask pupils to match the words to the pictures.
5. Draw attention to the sentence on the A4 sheet. Move word flash cards to the end of the sentence and say, "On Monday I eat chicken, vegetables and orange juice". Ask pupils to do the same.
6. Repeat this around the room three times. On the third time give each pupil a copy of **Worksheet F on page 209**. Write the model sentence ('On Monday I eat...') across the first line of the page. Pupils copy the sentence on the following lines.
7. Use the reverse side in the same way. Write what another pupil has to eat on the first line (e.g. 'On Monday Sergiy eats bread, cheese and milk'), which becomes the model for further writing practice.

Notes

Pupils will come up with words (in this example, food items) that have not been introduced to the class. Have blank A4 sheets and flashcards available and ask pupils to draw the food items they are referring to.

Extension

Use a scrapbook to develop a class food journal:

- Different pages denote different days of the week and pupils write in what they eat and drink.
- Pupils have their own pages and detail what they eat and drink over the course of the week.
- 'Healthy food' pages – pupils work together to list all the healthy food they eat.

Sample activities for pupils with A1 level speaking skills

The activities can be used to focus on a range of literacy needs from the basic skills of recognising letters of the alphabet, through word recognition and reading short sentences to the more developed skills of writing sentences from prompts.

Introduction (model approach)

The previous cycles contained activities for developing the basic literacy skills of pupils with no or little English. The following activities address the needs of pupils with a different profile – those who need to continue (or begin) literacy development but whose speaking skills are developed to A1+.

Consequently, a different approach has been taken to the design of the activities that follow. In recognising pupils' speaking skills, the activities establish language in context from the outset and quickly adopt an integrated approach. This facilitates a situation in which the language at the centre of each activity can be used by different pupils in different ways to address their particular literacy needs be they at alphabet, word or sentence level.

The issue of age-appropriate materials

Existing materials for developing basic literacy skills are generally aimed at pupils in the very early years of primary education. Consequently their content may not be suitable for older pupils.

All the activities in this section address the issue of age-appropriate materials as they are based on the principle that the most effective way to support pupils in developing early reading and writing skills is to use language which is known to pupils and which relates directly to Units of Work in the primary curriculum. The activity 'Using pupils' own language' takes this principle a step further in that it roots the development of literacy skills in the language which pupils produce.

The activities as models

The two activities which follow are intended as models. They can be used as the basis for teachers to create their own activities according to the needs and known language of their pupils.

In the house

Class organisation

Whole class.
Individual. Pairs

Theme

Use with different Units of Work of the primary curriculum – see next page.

Aims

Learn vocabulary of rooms and objects in the house.
Talk about location.
Practise question forms 'who' and 'where'.
Develop scan reading skills.
Write sentences using key words as prompts.

Materials/preparation

One A3 copy and class set of A4 copies of the picture of the house.
Write pupils' names in the blank word tabs on Sheet 1 and make a class set of copies.
Write names of pupils in the spaces on Worksheet A and make a class set of copies.
Word cards of pupils' names.
Photocopy the sheet of **blank flash cards on page 191**.
Scissors and blu-tack™.

Notes

Sheet 1 – word tabs offers a pool of vocabulary for names of rooms. Decide which (and how many) of these vocabulary items to introduce taking into account what your pupils know, what is appropriate to their situation and what they ask about.

Sheet 2 of the word tabs contains vocabulary related to household objects and ties in with Worksheets E, F and G. In both sheets use the blank tab cards to write in vocabulary which pupils produce.

Focus



Time

Open.

Type of activity

Matching. Listening and reading comprehension. Writing.

Approach

1. Talk about the picture of the house (A3 size) with the class. Write the names of the rooms on the blank flash cards and do some word recognition exercises. Pupils place the words in the corresponding rooms in the picture.
2. Hand out A4 copies of the house and Sheet 1 – word tabs, one each per pupil. Ask pupils to cut out the names of the rooms and use BLU-TACK™ to stick them in the corresponding rooms in their pictures. Pupils can check their work by referencing the completed A3 picture.
3. Remove the words from the A3 picture and place flash cards containing pupils' names next to it. Call out sentences locating pupils in different rooms – e.g. "Sylvain is in the kitchen". Pupils find their name cards and put them in the picture according to the sentences.
4. When all pupils' names are in the picture, do some oral practice of 'who' and 'where' questions:
"Who is in the kitchen?" Sylvain (is in the kitchen).
"Where is Sylvain?" (Sylvain is) in the kitchen.

Worksheet A

1. Hand out Worksheet A containing the names of the pupils. Ask simple questions to familiarise pupils with the sentences – e.g. "Which sentence has toilet?" (number 7), "Which sentence has Sylvain?"
2. Draw attention to the pupils' names in the lower half of (the now cut up) Sheet 1 – word tabs. Pupils cut out the names and stick them in the rooms of their A4 pictures according to the sentences in Worksheet A.
3. Pupils turn Worksheet A face down. Looking at their pictures with the word cards for rooms and name tabs, the pupils write what they see – so recreating the sentences on the worksheet.

Extension

Worksheet A

Put pupils into pairs and give only one pupil in each pair a copy of Worksheet A. This creates an information gap and pupils must exchange information to complete the task:

1. Pupil A reads the sentences on the worksheet to Pupil B.
2. Using the tab cards of names and rooms, Pupil B finds the key words and fixes them to the rooms in the pictures.
3. Discarding the worksheet, Pupil A looks at the picture and makes sentences which Pupil B writes down.

Worksheets B, C and D

After working through Worksheet A, Worksheets B-D can be used in subsequent classes. A suggested approach for each sheet is as follows:

1. Review the activity by asking pupils to label their pictures according to the information on Worksheet A. This can be done individually, in pairs or as a whole class using the A3 picture.
2. Hand out the selected worksheet*. Pupils answer the questions by referring to the picture.
3. As pupils finish, put them into pairs and ask them to check their answers. Pupils can simply compare or they can ask and answer the questions on the worksheet.

*For Worksheets B and C, write pupils' names in the spaces before making a class set of copies.

The worksheets can also be used to focus on speaking skills:

1. In pairs, Pupil A dictates the questions on one of the worksheets for Pupil B to write down.
2. Pupil B reads the questions back to Pupil A who answers them by referring to the picture of the completed house.
3. They repeat the activity, but switch roles. Ask Pupil B (who is now answering the questions) to move the names around so that they are in different rooms.

Worksheet E

The approach outlined for Worksheet A can be used in exactly the same way for Worksheet E and Sheet 2 – word tabs to introduce and practise household objects.

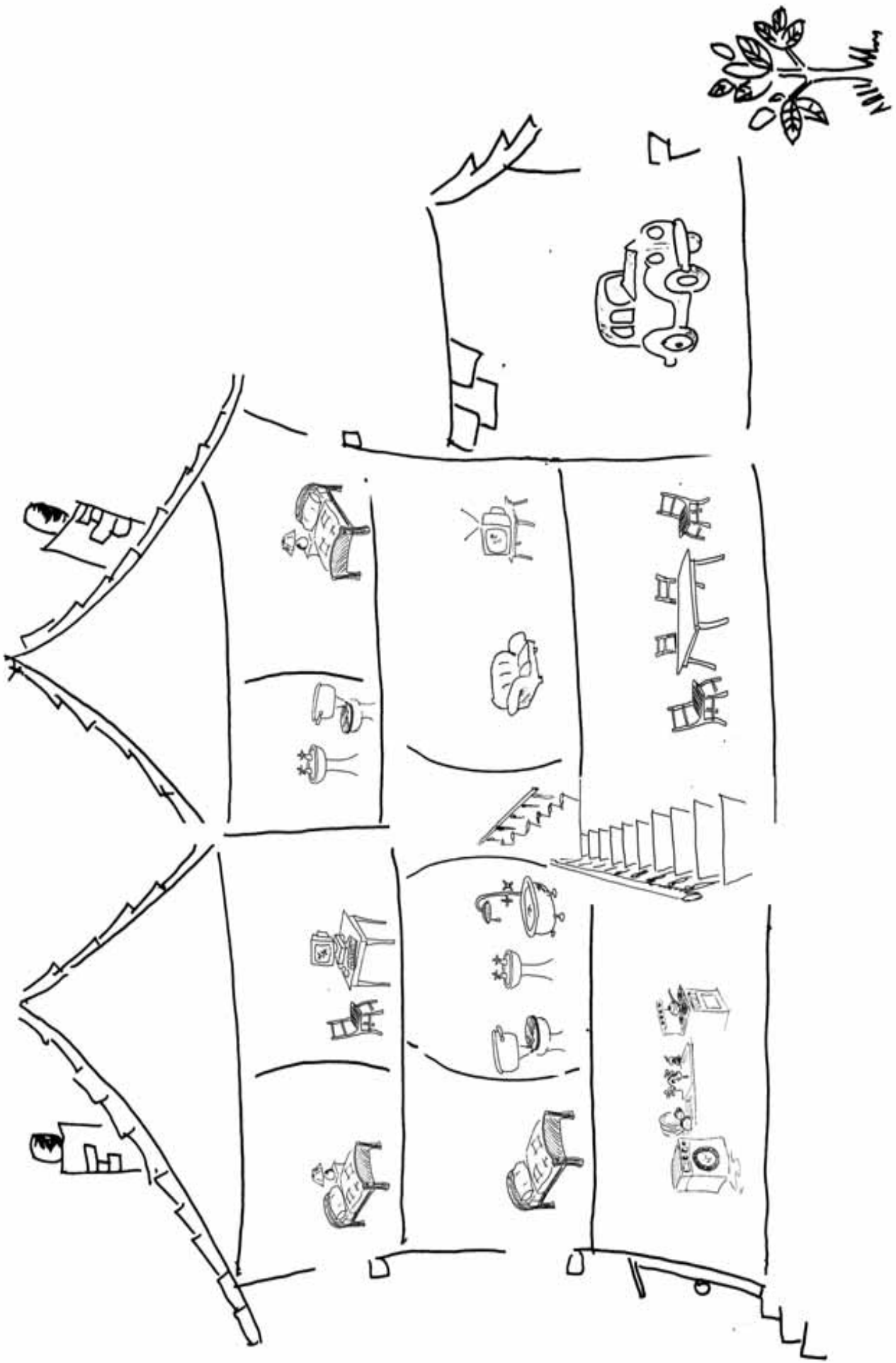
Worksheets F and G


In the same way that Worksheets B-D refer back to Worksheet A (see above), Worksheets F and G can be used in conjunction with Worksheet E.

Working with other themes

The underlying idea of this activity (learning new vocabulary by putting words into the places they are normally located) can be applied to other Units of Work in the primary curriculum:

Food and clothes	Put items of food and drink in a supermarket trolley, in the fridge/press. Put items of clothing in the wardrobe/drawers.
People who help us	Put people into their places of work on a simple map.
Our school	Put people and objects into appropriate places in the school.
Seasons, holidays and festivals	Pack clothes, holiday items in a bag according to the type of holiday/season.
Animals and plants	Categorise animals – e.g. pets, farm and wild.





attic	garage	kitchen
bathroom	garden	toilet
bedroom	hall	car park
landing	lounge	stairs
living room	sitting room	





armchair	cushion	pot
bed	fork	press
bin	fridge	rug
blanket	glass	sheet
bowl	heater	shelf
brush	hoover	sofa
buggy	kettle	spoon
CD player	knife	table
chair	ladder	telephone
computer	lamp	television
cooker	mattress	tool box
cot	mirror	towel
cup	pillow	
curtains	plate	



1. _____ is in the kitchen.
2. _____ is in the bedroom.
3. _____ is in the living room.
4. _____ is in the bathroom.
5. _____ is in the attic.
6. _____ is in the hall.
7. _____ is in the toilet.
8. _____ is in the garage.

Yes or no

1. Is _____ in the kitchen? _____

2. Is _____ in the garage? _____

3. Is _____ in the toilet? _____

4. Is _____ in the attic? _____

5. Is _____ in the living room? _____

6. Is _____ in the hall? _____

7. Is _____ in the bedroom? _____

8. Is _____ in the bathroom? _____

Where

1. Where is _____ ? _____

2. Where is _____ ? _____

3. Where is _____ ? _____

4. Where is _____ ? _____

5. Where is _____ ? _____

6. Where is _____ ? _____

7. Where is _____ ? _____

8. Where is _____ ? _____

Who

1. Who is in the attic? _____
2. Who is in the garage? _____
3. Who is in the toilet? _____
4. Who is in the kitchen? _____
5. Who is in the hall? _____
6. Who is in the living room? _____
7. Who is in the bedroom? _____
8. Who is in the bathroom? _____

1. The table is in the kitchen.
2. The lamp is in the bedroom.
3. The buggy is in the hall.
4. The mirror is in the bathroom.
5. The car is in the garage.
6. The sofa is in the living room.
7. The towel is in the toilet.
8. The tool box is in the attic.

Yes or no

1. Is the table in the kitchen? _____

2. Is the lamp in the bedroom? _____

3. Is the buggy in the bathroom? _____

4. Is the mirror in the hall? _____

5. Is the car in the garage? _____

6. Is the sofa in the attic? _____

7. Is the towel in the toilet? _____

8. Is the tool box in the living room? _____

Where

1. Where is the table? _____

2. Where is the lamp? _____

3. Where is the buggy? _____

4. Where is the mirror? _____

5. Where is the car? _____

6. Where is the sofa? _____

7. Where is the towel? _____

8. Where is the tool box? _____

Using pupils' own language

Class organisation

Whole class.
Individual. Pairs.

Theme

Use with any of the Units of Work of the primary curriculum.

Aims

Develop speaking skills.
Learn new vocabulary in known contexts.
Develop literacy skills based on pupils' own language.

Materials/preparation

To focus on full sentences, make multiple copies of [page 234](#) to A3 size.
Make multiple copies of [page 235](#) to focus on word sequence in sentences.
Scissors.

Notes

It may be necessary to reformulate what pupils say, helping with structure and supplying vocabulary.

Asking pupils to cut up the sentences into individual words encourages them to think about spacing between words.

Time

The time taken will vary according to:

- The ability of the pupils.
- The amount of language that is put into writing.
- The number of activities undertaken.

Ideally spend 5-20 minutes on any one activity.

Focus



Time

See 'Notes' below.

Type of activity

Varied.

Method

1. Approaches for generating spoken language

Provide pupils with a focus for talking by:

- Using photographs and clip art of places, people, objects, situations, etc. that are familiar to the class.
- Using pictures from textbooks.
- Using a picture which pupils have drawn and invite them to describe or tell a story about it.
- Using a picture story.
- Holding a session on 'My news'.

2. Using oral language for practice activities

Write sentences produced by pupils on to strips of paper, one sentence per strip – [see page 234](#).

3. Developing reading and writing skills

After the pupils have read through the sentences a number of times and are familiar with the content, use the following activities. Pupils work together to manipulate the strips of paper.

A. Sequencing (whole text)

- Mix up the strips of paper (i.e. the sentences).
 - Pupils work together to put the sentences in order. Start with two or three sentences and build up until the whole text is being worked on.
- N.B. Use this activity only if the pupils' language has a logical sequence, such as with a story.

B. Sequencing (sentences)

- Take one of the strips of paper (i.e. one sentence) and cut it into individual words.
- Pupils sequence the words to remake the sentence.
- Repeat with the other sentences.

C. Rewriting

- Start with the first sentence of the text. Cut the strip into individual words and place them in the wrong order.
- Pupils remake the correct sentence.
- They then write out the sentence ([use Worksheet F on page 209](#)). Repeat with the other sentences to complete the full text.

Continued on next page.

3. Developing reading and writing skills (continued)

D. Rebuilding the text

- i. Cut each strip of paper (i.e. each sentence) into individual words, being careful not to mix up words from different sentences.
- ii. Put pupils into pairs and give each pair one of the cut-up sentences. Each pair remakes its sentence and, in turn, puts it onto the table for the group to check.
- iii. The class now works together to put the sentences into the correct sequence.

E. Gap fill (whole text)

- i. After rebuilding the text in the previous activity, a good follow-on is a gap fill exercise.
- ii. Take out a word from each sentence and put these words together in one area of the table.
- iii. Pupils work together to put each word back into its appropriate place in the text.
- iv. Remove different words from the text and repeat the exercise with pupils working in pairs.

F. Gap fill (sentences)

- i. Put one of the strips of paper (i.e. one sentence) on the table.
- ii. On blank strips of paper write the same sentence as many times as there are words in the sentence (i.e. for a five-word sentence, write the sentence five times).
- iii. Pupils cut up the sentences into individual words, put the words into the correct order and then put the sentence under the original.
- iv. Remove one word from each sentence and put these words together in one area of the table.
- v. Pupils take turns to read one of the sentences containing a gap. They identify the missing word, find it in the group of removed words and put it into the sentence.
- vi. Make this task more difficult by removing the original sentence.

G. Match the words

- i. Write one of the sentences twice and cut the sentences into individual words.
- ii. Make two columns of words ensuring that the words are in a different order.
- iii. Pupils match the words and then work together with one set of words to construct the sentence.

N.B. All the above activities can be worksheet based. However, using strips of paper to work through the activities has the advantage of allowing pupils to focus exclusively on reading.

Variation

The following worksheet-based activities are also useful for developing literacy skills:

Gap fill (words)

- i. Write one word from the text at the top of the board.
- ii. Underneath write the word as many times as there are letters in the word. In each copy rub out one letter, replacing it with a line.
- iii. Pupils take turns to fill in the gaps in the different copies of the word.
- iv. Draw up worksheets based on the same activity.

Word search – see the activity 'Making word searches' on page 151.

Find new words – see the activity 'Words from words' on page 153.

Find the same word

- i. Write a word from the text on the left of a page. To the right, write the word four times, once correctly and three times differently.
- ii. Pupils identify and circle the correct version of the word.

Worksheet A of the activity 'Writing names' on page 199 can also be used for this exercise.

More reading – new sentences from old

- i. Use different combinations of words from the text to make 'new' sentences.
- ii. Pupils read new meanings by recognising familiar words.

Using pupils' own language – an example

Language produced by a pupil:

"My mum works in a shop.
She likes her job".

Ask some questions:

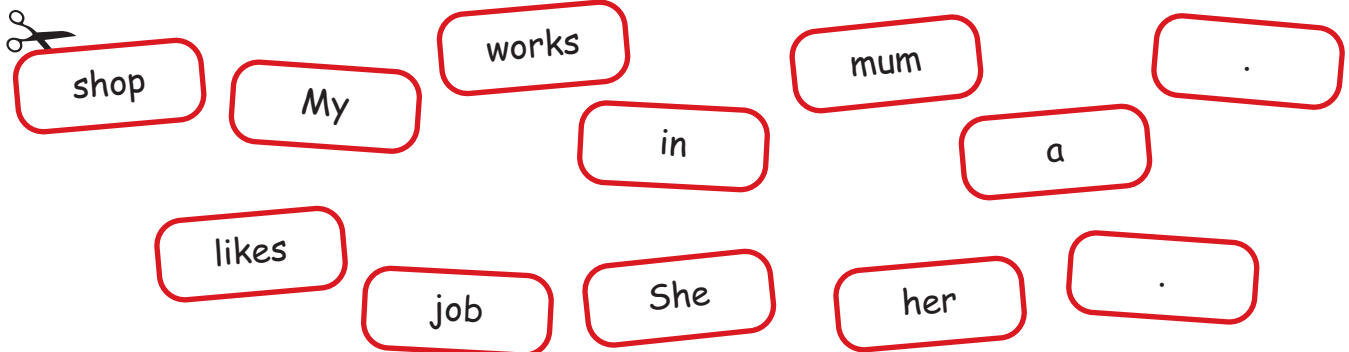
- Who works in a shop?
- What does your mum do?
- Does she like the shop?
- Does she work there every day?
- Do you go to the shop?
- What can you buy in the shop?

Write the pupil's language on strips of paper, one sentence per strip.

Sequencing:

My mum works in a shop.

She likes her job.



Rewriting:

works a mum shop in My .

her She job likes .

Match the word:

List A	List B
my	mum
mum	in
works	a
in	my
a	shop
shop	works

List A	List B
She	likes
likes	job
her	She
job	her

Gap fill:

My mum works in a shop.

My _____ works in a shop.

My mum _____ in a shop.

My mum works _____ a shop.

_____ mum works in a shop.

My mum works in a _____.

She likes her job.

She likes her _____.

She _____ her job.

_____ likes her job.

She likes _____ job.

works

work_

_orks

wo_ks

w_rks

wor_s

her

h_r

_er

he_

shop

sho_

_hop

s_op

sh_p

she

s_e

sh_

_he

Word search:

- my
- mum
- job
- works
- shop
- likes

l	l	i	k	e	s	o	p	h	p
m	u	s	h	p	w	o	r	k	s
l	i	e	s	h	o	p	b	j	o
m	j	m	y	m	j	o	b	b	o
w	o	k	l	i	k	y	m	u	m

Find the same word:

works

shop

likes

wrkos

phos

lekis

wokrs

sohp

likes

works

shpo

kiles

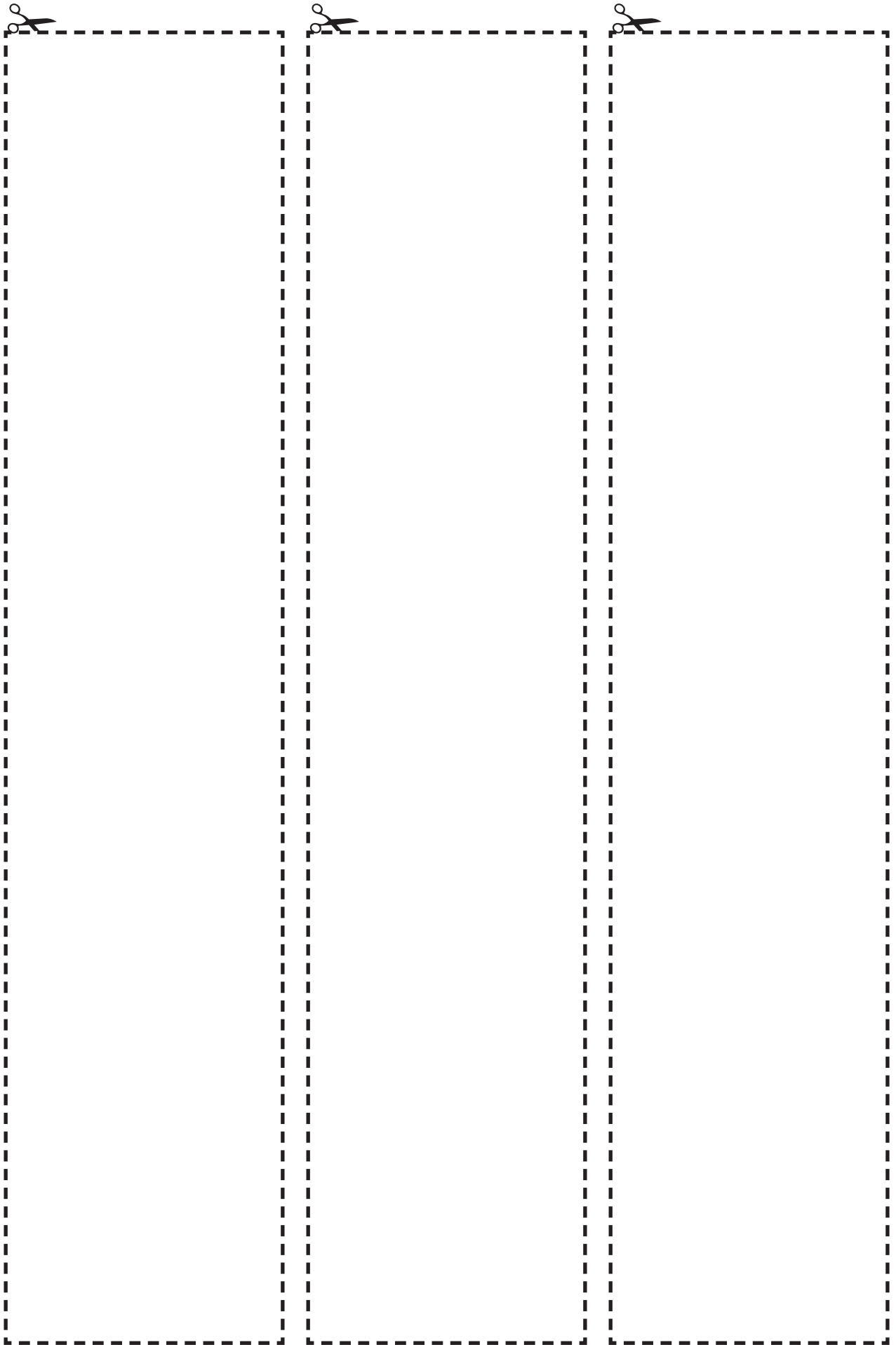
wroks

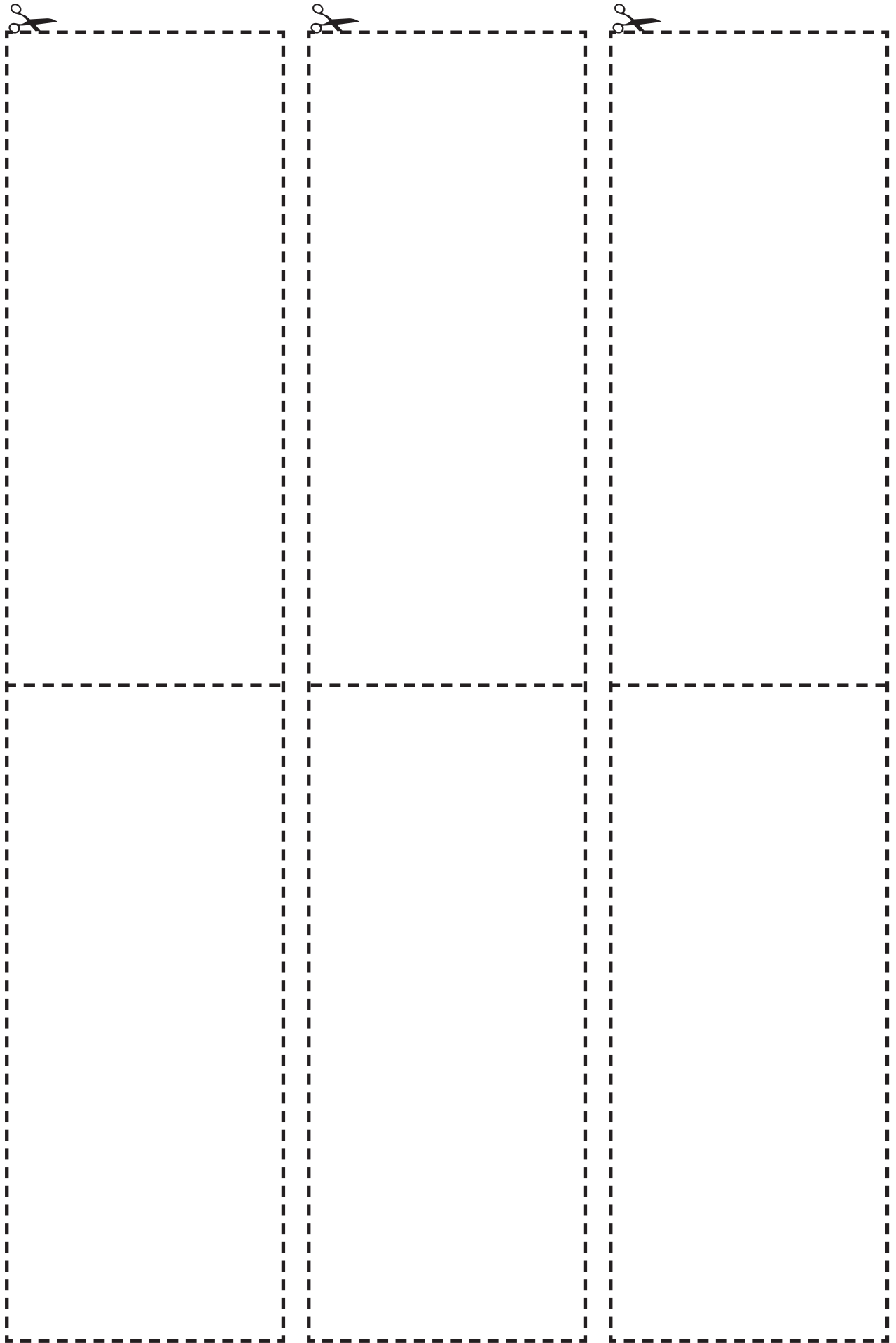
shop

lieks

More reading – new sentences from old:

1. My mum likes her job.
2. She works in a shop.
3. She likes her job.
4. My mum likes her shop.





Notes

Section 7

More ideas ...

Introduction

Generally speaking, the principles and approaches which form the basis of mainstream teaching are entirely appropriate for the planning and delivery of language support. However, there are a number of routines which are particularly important for successful language learning/teaching and these are highlighted in the following pages.

This section is intended to provide additional support to teachers, both in implementing the activities described in this book and in designing and developing their own activities and materials.

Types of activity

Information gap

Usually a pair-work activity in which one member of the pair (Pupil A) has information which the other member (Pupil B) does not have.

This 'gap' in information forms the basis for activities which provide practice in spoken interaction and communication skills. Examples of this kind of activity in the book are:

Colours See the visual resources on pages 120-147. Pupil A is given one picture to colour in, Pupil B a different picture. When the pair is ready, give Pupil B a blank copy of Pupil A's picture. Pupil A now describes her/his picture telling B the colours used. B listens and tries to colour the picture in the same way. Then change roles so B describes her/his picture to A.

Spot the difference See the visual resources on pages 137-140 and the corresponding instructions on page 119.

Time Use the visuals of the blank clocks on page x to make a new worksheet. Give Pupil A a copy of this page and Pupil B a simple worksheet containing times in written form – e.g. '1. It's 2 o'clock. 2. It's half past 8.' etc. Pupil B reads the sentences to pupil A who draws the hands on the clock faces.

In the house See Worksheets A-D on pages 222-225 and the corresponding notes on page 217.

Sequencing exercises

This activity, which is typically used in primary education, is also important in language support. It may be carried out at different levels:

Paragraph level Write each sentence of the paragraph onto a strip of paper – the worksheet on page 234 has been specifically designed for this purpose. In pairs or small groups, pupils put the sentences in the correct order.

Sentence level Write the sentence onto a strip of paper and cut it into individual words – the worksheet on page 235 has been specifically designed for this purpose. In pairs or small groups, pupils rearrange the words to form the correct sentence.

Jigsaw reading exercises

An activity where a text is divided into sections, each section to be read by a different pupil or pair/small group. The pupils (or pairs/small groups) then pool what they have learned so the whole group comes to an understanding of the complete text.

Note Both sequencing and jigsaw reading exercises highlight an integrated approach to second language development. Although the focus is on reading, the activities promote communication and team-working skills as pupils need to share their ideas in order to complete the task.

Pre-teaching

This refers to the work of the teacher in the early part of a class, specifically:

1. Introducing the theme.
2. Setting up the activity.

Pre-teaching is an important procedure in language support as it ensures that all pupils understand the focus of the session even though they may have low levels of target language proficiency.

1. Introducing the theme

Talking about the theme in general terms, asking pupils what they know about it and (if possible) personalising it, places new language in a known context. Understanding that the new words they learn are related to a context which they know about or have experienced, helps to reassure pupils who may be vulnerable to feelings of being overwhelmed.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a particularly useful approach for pre-teaching in activities where learning new vocabulary is the focus or where pupils encounter a high level of new vocabulary. Pupils gain confidence when they can show what they know already.

Graphic organisers such as spidergrams (see the examples on pages 168 and 170) and grids/tables (see the example on page 172) are useful tools for brainstorming as they help pupils to organise and categorise both vocabulary and ideas.

Eliciting

Eliciting involves the careful use of language by the teacher in order to guide pupils into producing target language. This process may be used to review earlier learning or to find out what pupils already know about a new topic.

When eliciting new words from pupils it is important that the teacher does not provide the target language her/himself.

See the activity **'In the house'** on page 216.

Pointing to a room and asking, "Is this room the attic?" undermines the aim of eliciting. Not only does the teacher introduce the target language ('attic'), but the pupils' input is reduced to either 'yes' or 'no'.

By asking "What is the name of this room?" the pupils' own general knowledge and existing language knowledge is immediately activated. As a result, they become fully engaged with learning.

2. Setting up the activity

When setting up an activity for pupils whose language proficiency could be a barrier to understanding, it is important to make the instructions clear. Techniques for achieving clarity include:

- Using a minimum of words.
- Emphasising the key words with voice and actions.
- Rephrasing while re-emphasising key words.
- Modelling, by demonstrating what you want pupils to do. If necessary a stronger pupil may help in the demonstration.

Examples of modelling can be found in the approaches for the following activities:

'Making word searches' on page 151 – see the 'Observations' section.

'Words from words' on page 153.

'Word chains' on page 159.

'Making Crosswords' on page 162.

'Making a grid' on page 171.

'Writing names' on page 197.

Further points

Dictionaries

It is very important to have a number of English language dictionaries available as resources.

- Picture/photo dictionaries are particularly useful for younger and beginner learners.
- Learner dictionaries are more suitable for learners at A2 and B1 levels as they provide examples of how to use words.

Consolidation

Learning a language is a process of constant reinforcement. Leave displays and visuals on the walls for longer periods in the language support classroom than in the mainstream class as they enable pupils to consolidate their language knowledge.

Project work

Use 'Big Books' for ongoing class projects such as:

- Weather journal.
- Diary of school outings.
- Journal of places in the community.
- Food diary/journal.
- Festivals.
- Holidays.



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