

Teaching children how to learn

Teachers' toolkit

Wilbur's storybook recommendations

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In my role as a 'bookworm', I recommend storybooks that can be used alongside the activities in *Teaching children how to learn*.

- In Part A of the book, I explain how they can consolidate and extend the language or themes presented in each activity.
- In Part B, I present the titles of the books I recommend for each activity. The synopses starting opposite are organised alphabetically by title, and give you an introduction to each one. They also refer you back to the corresponding activities in the book.
- In Part C, there are two activities to help you select storybooks for a particular class and to evaluate your own storytelling skills:
 - See *Selecting storybooks* on page 137.
 - See *Storytelling skills* on page 139.

I also suggest that you keep an ongoing 'storybook record' of your use of storybooks:

- See 'Storybooks and storytelling' on page 139.
- See the end of this document for a copy of the storybook record, and for my final suggestions.



In the Teachers' toolkit on the website, there are three downloadable A4 templates for you to complete, as part of your ongoing Teacher Development in the successful use of storybooks:

- *Class storybook profile*
- *Evaluating my storytelling skills*
- *Storybook record*

Go to: www.deltapublishing.co.uk/resources

Click on the cover of the book.

Click on Teachers' toolkit.

Click on Templates.

Augustus and his Smile

Catherine Rayner
Little Tiger Press, 2006

Augustus the tiger is sad. He has lost his smile, so he sets off to find it. The stunning illustrations take the reader under bushes, to the tops of the tallest trees and the highest mountains, to the bottom of the deepest oceans, through the largest desert – until the rain begins to fall and Augustus sees his smile in a huge silver-blue puddle just under his nose! He realises that happiness can be found in everyday things. The story teaches us to appreciate everything around us. The book also contains 'Amazing tiger facts' that teach children to become aware of animal conservation.

See *The water cycle* on page 86.

Bear about Town

Stella Blackstone. Illustrated by Debbie Harter
Barefoot Books, 2000

Bear about Town is suitable for younger children, and is about a bear who goes to town each day of the week to do something different. He goes to the bakery, goes for a swim, goes to the toyshop, goes to the playground, watches a film, visits the gym, strolls through the park and plays with his friends.

The story is told in rhyming text and is good for revising the days of the week, leisure activities and basic local geography, such as places in the town, colours and the weather. The bold illustrations are bright and colourful and full of detail, and invite discussion and questions from the children. A town map at the end of the story shows where the bear has been, and features clearly labelled street and place names.

See *Sounds in a town* on page 60.

Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?

Bill Martin, Jr. Illustrated by Eric Carle
Puffin Books, 1995

Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? is a story about animals and colours with a simple rhyming text, so it is ideal for presenting or revising both colours and animals. It is structured around the popular 'question and answer' technique, providing repetition of the question: *[Yellow] [duck], [yellow] [duck], what do you see?* And the answer: *I see a [blue] [horse] looking at me.*

The children recognise this question and respond spontaneously when the story is read aloud. The simple repetitive text and superb illustrations allow them to predict the story and join in during the storytelling, and thereby gain confidence.

The infectious rhythm of repetition helps them develop their awareness of stress and intonation, as well as the pronunciation of individual words. The story can be used as a springboard for a project on 'Bears around the world' for older children.

Story notes available:

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/tell-it-again-storytelling-handbook-primary-english-language-teachers>

See *At the Safari Park* on page 66.

Cloudland

John Burningham
Red Fox, 1999

Cloudland is a delightfully imaginative story about Albert, who falls off a cliff during a day out with his mother and father and is rescued by the Cloud Children. But soon Albert starts to feel homesick and wants to go back home. The story is told in the narrative past and direct speech.

Although the text contains language which is likely to be above the children's productive level, the vivid and clearly focused, visual context makes it easily accessible and comprehensible. John Burningham uses a combination of photos, paints, pen-and-ink drawings and collage to enhance the impact of this enchanting story.

Story notes available:

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/teaching-kids/magic-pencil>

See *The water cycle* on page 86.

Colour Me Happy

Shen Roddie. Illustrated by Ben Cort
Macmillan Children's Books, 2007

The main character of this story is a playful kitten accompanied by Ted, his teddy bear. Each double spread introduces a new colour, and associates this with an emotion or feeling: *When I'm sunny, colour me yellow. When I'm bored, colour me grey.* The story ends with a rainbow: *When I'm happy, colour me a rainbow.*

The illustrations will appeal to younger children, and older children can create their own 'Colour Me ...' book with illustrations of their own choosing.

See *Reading faces* on page 82.

Dear Diary

Sara Fanelli
Walker Books, 2000

Dear Diary is a wonderfully creative story which describes the events of one day from the point of view of seven different diary writers. The diaries are presented as narrative, mainly using the simple past and past continuous tenses. The layout and design of the text and illustrations is detailed and sophisticated, and the children may well need guidance and encouragement understanding it at first.

Dear Diary is ideal to use as a springboard into the children's own imaginative narrative writing within a context which also allows them to experiment with a range of different visual forms of individual personal expression. The illustrations make use of a variety of textures, collage, photos and hand-writing styles. It is suitable for older children who have a good basis in English.

Story notes available:

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/teaching-kids/magic-pencil>

See *English around me* on page 76.

Diary of a Worm

Doreen Cronin. Pictures by Harry Bliss
Joanna Cotler Books, 2003

This story uses a diary format to give an insight into life as an earthworm. The story also has an important environmental message. A little boy worm writes his diary entries, pointing out the dangers he faces and explaining his most important jobs: he digs tunnels to 'help Earth breathe', teaches Spider how to dig, eats his homework, scares girls in the park, says good morning to 600 ants, does the 'hokey pokey' at the school dance, makes macaroni necklaces in art class – and much more!

The story is full of subtle humour and fun, there are colourful illustrations, and the inside front and back covers look like the little worm's scrapbook, with family photos and captions.

An ideal introduction to diary writing.

See *Wilbur the Worm: the facts* on page 40.

See *Earthworm – a poem* on page 70.

Dinosaurs and All That Rubbish

Michael Foreman
Puffin Books, 1972

Dinosaurs and All That Rubbish is a modern fable with a strong environmental message. A rich industrialist wants to get to a far-off star. He cuts down forests and burns coal to build a rocket to take him there, destroying the environment in the process. When he gets there, he finds nothing and sets off for another star, unaware that it is the earth.

In the meantime, the dinosaurs have awoken from their sleep on earth and cleaned up the environment. When the man returns, they explain to him that the earth belongs not just to him.

The moral of the story is that the earth should be shared and enjoyed by everyone. The language is quite challenging and told in the narrative past tense, and includes direct speech and useful functional phrases. The illustrations are big and colourful, and synchronise by and large with the text.

See *How green am I?* on page 88.

Eat Your Peas

Kes Gray and Nick Sharratt
Red Fox, 2000

Daisy does not like peas, and her mother tries to persuade her to eat them by offering her all kinds of rewards. Daisy stubbornly refuses: '*I don't like peas*', says Daisy. As each page turns, the rewards become more and more exaggerated, which adds to the humour of the story. The vivid, colourful illustrations, and the gradual zooming in on Daisy on the right-hand page as each page turns, also add to the humour, as well as to the dramatic affect.

Is Daisy going to eat her peas? How is the story going to end?

There is lots of repetition, and the children will love joining in, remembering and repeating all the rewards Daisy's mother proposes, and repeating Daisy's refrain: '*I don't like peas.*'

See *A royal feast* on page 72.

Five Little Fiends

Sarah Dyer
Bloomsbury Paperbacks, 2002

This is the story of Five Little Fiends who each live in a statue on a far away plain. Each day, they come outside to marvel at the world.

One day, they each decide to capture their favourite element for themselves, whether it be the sun, moon, sea, earth or sky. Once captured, however, they realise that, without the other four elements, the one they have chosen to keep cannot survive. What do you think they decide to do?

The clear and stunning illustrations synchronise with the text. The story has been described as an ecological parable about greed and sharing. It can also be used as a springboard for a project on statues throughout the world, as the statues on the plain evoke the Easter Island statues or Ma Desheng's more recent paintings of monumental rocks.

See *How green am I?* on page 88.

Froggy Gets Dressed

Jonathan London. Illustrated by Frank Remkiewicz
Viking, 1992

Getting dressed to go out into the snow isn't as easy as it sounds for Froggy. His mother keeps reminding him that he has forgotten an essential piece of clothing. The story is ideal for teaching vocabulary for clothes and the verbs put on and take off. There is lots of repetition and some amusing onomatopoeic words, and the children will love joining in with the storytelling. The illustrations are bright and colourful.

An ideal story for the winter months.

See *What's Fred wearing?* on page 46.

Funnybones

Janet and Allan Ahlberg
Little Mammoth, 1980

Funnybones is an amusing story about two skeleton friends who, together with their dog, want to frighten someone. They go to the park but the dog has an accident and ends up as a pile of bones. Big Skeleton and Little Skeleton try to put him together again but get his bones mixed up.

They then go off again in search of someone to frighten and visit a zoo, but finally, unable to find anyone to frighten, they decide to frighten each other! The story begins and ends with a twist on the traditional rhyme: '*In a dark, dark wood ...*'. The authors use their own version of the rhyme to develop the story: '*On a dark, dark hill ...*'.

This type of spooky rhyme or story is a common form of entertainment amongst children, and is to be recited when the lights are low, after dark, and told in a quiet and slow, frightening voice, until the last word is suddenly shouted.

The aim is to frighten, and the teller hopes to create an atmosphere of mystery and excitement. The tension of the rhyme is increased by the repetition of the adjective *dark* and the nouns that accompany it.

The story is a narrative using the simple past tense. The dialogue consists of useful functional phrases like *Good idea! What shall we do?* and *Let's ...* which are repeated and highlighted in speech bubbles.

A song based on the African American spiritual 'Dem Bones' contains the passive form: '*The toe bone's connected to the foot bone!*' The language is repetitive and rhythmical, and invites the children to join in with the storytelling.

Story notes available:
<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/tell-it-again-storytelling-handbook-primary-english-language-teachers>

See *H is for Halloween* on page 52.

See *Leisure time* on page 64.

How the kangaroos got their tails

Told by George Mung Mung Lirrimiyarri.
Compiled by Pamela Lofts
Scholastic, 1987

This is a retelling of an old 'dreamtime' Aboriginal tale about two kangaroos. One came from the hills and was small with short arms and legs, the other came from the hills and was big with long arms and long legs.

The short-armed kangaroo is hunting for sugarbag (wild bush honey) and he finds some in a hole in a rock. The big kangaroo is also hunting for sugarbag, and the short-armed kangaroo invites him to reach into the hole and get some. The big kangaroo puts his long arms deep into the hole and pulls out a handful of spiders.

The kangaroos get their tails when they fight over the honey, the big kangaroo thinking he has been tricked into digging for spiders. They throw sticks at each other, and the sticks become their tails.

The story is illustrated by children in bright, primary watercolours.

See 'Principle 6: Routines' on page 123.

Hue Boy

Rita Phillips Mitchell. Illustrated by Caroline Binch
Puffin Books, 1992

This story is set in a Caribbean village. Hue Boy is smaller than all his friends, and he doesn't seem to grow, no matter what his mother gives him to eat, or how much he runs and jumps and plays. His mother takes him first to the doctor, and then to the Wise Man of the village and then to a Healer. But nothing seems to help Hue Boy to grow.

When Hue Boy's father comes home from working overseas, at last Hue Boy starts to grow. With his father back, he feels comfortable with himself, and he discovers that he is as tall as he feels and as tall as he needs to be.

This story will help children learn to accept differences and to cope with what are for most children only temporary situations. The narrative is quite lengthy and told in the simple past, with conversational phrases. The colourful illustrations depict Caribbean village life, and synchronise with the text.

Hue Boy won the Smarties Book Prize, and was Highly

Commended for the Kate Greenaway Medal in 1993.

See *Everyone is different* on page 50.

Inch by Inch

Leo Lionni
HarperCollins, 1960

This is a story of survival! The story begins when an inchworm is about to be gobbled up by a hungry robin. The clever inchworm explains why it would be a mistake to eat him: *'I am useful. I measure things.'* He measures the robin's tail and, impressed, the robin spares his life and carries the inchworm off to put his talent to good use. He takes him to measure the neck of a flamingo, the beak of a toucan, the legs of a heron, the tail of a pheasant, and a whole hummingbird.

Finally, a nightingale asks the inchworm to measure his song. Initially perplexed, the Inchworm has an idea! As the nightingale sings, the inchworm inches away until he is out of sight! The seemingly tiny and vulnerable inchworm uses his intellect to escape peril!

The beautiful, bold graphics and cut-out paper collages of birds, foliage and the green inchworm are appealing, and will support the children's understanding. This story links well with Science and Maths.

See *Wilbur the Worm: the facts* on page 40.

See *Earthworm – a poem* on page 70.

Is It Because?

Tony Ross
Andersen Press, 2004

Is It Because? skilfully addresses the issue of bullying. It tells an objective story that succeeds in engaging sympathy for both the bully's victim and the bully himself. The story is structured around the question *Is it because ...?* and told in rhyme: *Is it because he's got silly names? Is it because he's no good at games?*

A small boy asks his pet dog why a bully is picking on him. After many *Is it because ...?* questions, the boy comes to the conclusion that Peregrine Ffrogg is unhappy, has no friends and is jealous of him: *Is it because he'd rather be me?*

The question he asks makes him think, and leads him to a greater understanding of himself and of the bully. Is it because the bully is a victim, too?

Story notes available:
<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/it-because>

See *Don't be a bully!* on page 84.

It's a Book

Lane Smith
Macmillan Children's Books, 2010

This is a story about a book-loving monkey and a digital-loving jackass who, despite his love of all things digital, discovers the joys of traditional reading! There is lots of computer-based vocabulary, questions and short responses, humour and beautiful illustrations in brush and ink and soft pastel colours.

The story is ideal for comparing life with and without technology, 'modern versus traditional' and the role of books in our digital age. It links well with Technology and History.

See *My school day* on page 78.

See *My ideal English teacher* on page 94.

I will not ever NEVER eat a tomato

Lauren Child
Orchard Books, 2000

I will not ever NEVER eat a tomato is a wonderfully amusing and imaginative story about the trick Charlie plays on his little sister Lola, who is a very fussy eater, to get her to heat her dinner. The story is predominantly told using direct speech, in a reconstruction of Charlie and Lola's conversation from Charlie's point of view. As well as raising issues of sibling relationships, the story is ideal to use as part of a unit of work on the topic of food.

Lauren Child uses a combination of photos, collage and computer-generated backgrounds, as well as a variety of fonts, sizes and colours in the text, which all add to the humour and fresh appeal of the story.

Story notes available:
<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/teaching-kids/magic-pencil>

See *A royal feast* on page 72.

Ketchup on Your Cornflakes?

Nick Sharratt
Picture Hippo, Scholastic 1994

Ketchup on Your Cornflakes? uses the split-page technique, which allows many amusing combinations of words and images based on the question: *Do you like ketchup on your cornflakes?*

The book provides an ideal context for introducing or revising the question form *Do you like ...?* and related vocabulary and prepositions. The children are provided with the pattern *Do you like ...?* which allows them to generate other questions. This works by separating the chunks of sentences and putting them back together in a way that is sensible in terms of grammar, but amusing in terms of meaning.

It also gives the children an insight into British eating habits – custard on apple pie, ketchup on chips, salt on a boiled egg, jam on toast, milk on cornflakes. Using this storybook leads well onto making a personal or whole-class split-page book.

Story notes available:
Realbooks in the Primary Classroom

Sandie Mourão
Scholastic, 2003

See *A royal feast* on page 72.

Knuffle Bunny

Mo Willems
Walker Books, 2005

Set in Brooklyn, NY, Trixie, Knuffle Bunny and Daddy go on a trip to the local launderette. Unfortunately, Knuffle Bunny, Trixie's favourite toy, goes missing. Trixie, who is just learning to talk, has

problems communicating this to her father: 'Aggle flaggle, klabble!'

This is a story of parental misunderstanding, and the children can relate to Trixie's frustration as she tries over and over again to get her father to understand why she is unhappy. Fortunately, when they get home Trixie's mother realises what is wrong, and the story ends happily. The illustrations, a combination of expressive cartoon drawings and black and white photography, are stunning and invite lots of cross-cultural comparison. There are also lots of details on each page that the children can discuss, as well as the clearly depicted emotions on Trixie's father's face.

Older children can discuss the differences between British and American English (*launderette* and *laundromat*, for example) and how children acquire language. The story is told in the narrative past, with plenty of repetition and opportunities to learn or revise prepositions and vocabulary related to the town.

See *Sounds in a town* on page 60.

See *Our language learning rights* on page 74.

Meg and Mog

Helen Nicoll. Illustrated by Jan Pienkowski
Puffin Books, 1972

Meg, the witch, Mog, her cat, and Owl go off to a wild Halloween party with Meg's friends: Jess, Bess, Tess and Cress. Meg's spell, however, goes off with a bang and changes her friends into mice! The bright, clear pictures in vibrant colour, the speech bubbles and the comic-style presentation provide a visual representation of the written text. The pictures are easily seen by large classes, and the text is printed in large black letters.

There is some interesting layout of the text, for example, as Meg goes down the stairs and as she flies up the chimney. The story is told in the narrative past, and Meg's spells represent short, contextualised rhymes which the children can learn and imitate. The story contains lots of onomatopoeic words that the children enjoy imitating – *Whoo, clip clop, zzzzzz, meeeow, bubble, yum, mmmm, prrr, boom* – and the story lends itself well to acting out.

It can be used to coincide with and to celebrate Halloween.

See *What's Fred wearing?* on page 46.

See *H is for Halloween* on page 52.

Mr Gumpy's Motor Car

John Burningham
Puffin Books, 1979

Mr Gumpy goes for a drive in his car with two children and his animal friends. They are all enjoying the drive, when the sunny weather turns to rain and the car gets stuck in the mud. Nobody wants to get out and push. The story has a beginning, middle and an end, and provides a direct sequence of events to exploit the concept of time.

There are short conversational phrases which allow the story to be acted out, and there is a selection of onomatopoeic words which the children will enjoy miming and repeating. Delicate pastel and ink drawings support understanding.

See *How do you come to school?* on page 54.

Mrs Armitage on Wheels

Quentin Blake
Collins Picture Lions, 1990

This is a story about need. Mrs Armitage sets out on a cycle ride accompanied by her dog, who runs alongside. Throughout her ride, she convinces herself that she needs more and more improvements for her bicycle. The children will soon be joining in with the refrain: *What this bike needs is ...*

She starts with a really loud horn, then somewhere to wash her hands, followed by various other gadgets until her bicycle crashes and she finds herself without wheels. *And what I need is ...*, and Mrs Armitage appears on a pair of roller skates!

The beautiful illustrations and onomatopoeic words enable the children to follow the story easily, despite some quite technical vocabulary. This story links well with the theme of transport.

See *How do you come to school?* on page 54.

My Book of Playtime Rhymes

Illustrated by Margaret Chamberlain
Ladybird Books, 1987

A collection of 21 well-known traditional nursery rhymes, including *Pat-a-cake*.

See *Pat-a-cake!* on page 48.

My Green Day

Melanie Walsh
Walker Books, 2010

This beautiful storybook shows ten ways in which every child can make their day greener. There are innovative, shaped pages and the text is short and simple. Each activity is backed up with a useful informative explanation, making it suitable for a range of ages.

The book teaches children the importance of conserving the world around them. They can make their own 'My Green Day' book, and become aware of cultural similarities and differences.

See *How green am I?* on page 88.

Peace at Last

Jill Murphy
Macmillan Children's Books, 1995

This story is about Mr Bear's constant attempts to find enough peace to get a good night's sleep.

It's late at night and he is trying to sleep – but Mrs Bear snores, so he tries Baby Bear's room. Baby Bear is pretending to be an aeroplane, so there's no peace there. Room by room, Mr Bear goes through the house trying to find somewhere to sleep.

There are lots of sound effects which the children will love to repeat – *TICK-TOCK went the living room clock ... TICK-TOCK, TICK-TOCK. CUCKOO! CUCKOO!* – and Mr Bear's reactions: *'Oh NO! I can't stand THIS'*.

The simple, repetitive text is on the left-hand pages with the main, bright, colourful pictures on the right-hand pages. The

black and white drawings on the left-hand pages also support understanding. The facial expressions are easy for children to 'read'.

This story raises the children's awareness of the different sounds we are surrounded by.

See *A listening experiment* on page 58.

Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes

Eric Litwin. Illustrated by James Dean
HarperCollins, 2008

This is a story with a moral. Pete the Cat is walking along in his brand-new white shoes and singing a song – *I love my white shoes* – but unfortunately his shoes don't stay white for very long! But Pete does not let this bother him, and he keeps walking along singing his song.

The story teaches children resilience – not to let little things in life bother you – and builds self-confidence. The illustrations are bright and colourful, and the song is catchy and memorable. The children join in, spontaneously singing the song and predicting the colour of Pete's shoes.

See *Reading faces* on page 82.

Pete the Cat: Rocking in My School Shoes

Eric Litwin. Illustrated by James Dean
HarperCollins, 2011

Another Pete the Cat story, with a catchy rhyming text and a song that the children will automatically start singing.

Pete discovers the library, the lunchroom, the playground, and lots of other places at school. And when he arrives home on the school bus, his mother asks: *What did you do at school today?*

See *My school day* on page 78.

Ping and Pong are Best Friends (mostly)

Tim Hopgood
Simon and Schuster, 2013

This is a story about the ups and downs of friendship. Ping and Pong are a pair of penguins who love to do new things. But whatever Ping tries to do, Pong can do it better. Ping can catch a fish, Pong can catch a shark. Ping can squeak in French, Pong can squeak in nine different languages.

Is there anything Ping can do best? Fed up, he decides enough is enough and decides to do nothing. Doing nothing is impossible for Pong, but doing things without Ping isn't much fun.

The story teaches children the value of friendship and loyalty, and its moral helps the children understand you don't always have to be the best. The bright, bold artwork is beautiful, and synchronises with the text.

See *A friend is someone who ...* on page 56.

Rain

Manya Stojic
David Bennet Books, 2000

Rain tells the story of the rain cycle in the African savannah, from scorching drought to frenzied rainfall. The story begins as the dry season is ending. Each animal reacts to a sensory perception, to predict the change of weather and the coming rainy season. They smell, hear, see, feel and taste the approach of rain. Each animal passes on its prediction of rain in a cumulative text.

After the rain comes, they enjoy the benefits it brings. Then the cycle repeats. The story gives a sense of what life is like in the hot, dry African savannah, and the effect rain has on the landscape. This is done with minimal, text via onomatopoeia and action verbs. The predictive and repetitive text encourages class participation and discussion of weather patterns, the seasons, the water cycle and the five senses.

Manya Stojic blends big bold type and illustrations painted with bold, thick, colourful brush strokes to depict the dry heat and the pleasure of the downpour.

Story notes available:

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/rain>

See *The water cycle* on page 86.

See *Learning English feels like ...* on page 92.

Sharing a Shell

Julia Donaldson. Illustrated by Lydia Monks
Macmillan Children's Books, 2004

This is a story about sharing and friendship, which takes place at the seaside. The main character is a hermit crab who loves his new shell and does not want to share it. However, life in a rock pool proves tougher than he thinks, and he soon finds he needs his new housemates, an anemone and a bristleworm.

The story is told in rhyme, and the illustrations are soft yet bright, and enriched by feely glittery patches, which depict the bright seaside sunshine and the lightening and rain during a storm. There are lots of additional details in the illustrations which can lead to further discussion.

The moral of the story is what can happen if you take things for granted and are not prepared to share.

See *A friend is someone who ...* on page 56.

Shark in the Park

Nick Sharratt
David Fickling Books, 2006

Timothy Pope is testing out his telescope – *There's a shark in the park!* Is that really a shark in the park? The bold, colourful illustrations and the 'hole in the page' device challenge the children to think. What could it be, if it isn't a shark? The text is rhythmical, and partly rhyming partly repetitive, which means that the children can join in with the storytelling. The story encourages predictions, and is good for directions – *he looks at the sky, at the ground, left, right, up and all around.*

See *Sounds in a town* on page 60.

'Slowly, Slowly, Slowly,' Said the Sloth

Eric Carle
Puffin Books, 2002

Slowly, slowly, slowly, a sloth crawled along a branch of a tree, begins this beautiful story. The other animals in the rainforest want to know why the sloth is so slow, so quiet, so boring and so lazy. The sloth thinks for a long time, and gives a long, detailed reply.

The narrative's use of simple repeated phrases, which has a 'slowing down' effect on the reader, contrasts with the sloth's thoughtful reply. It is full of rich adjectives, and he explains that he likes to live in peace, that he is not lazy, that's just how he is – *'I like to do things, slowly, slowly, slowly'*. The illustrations are beautiful, and synchronise perfectly with the text.

The last double-page spread gives an inventory of Amazon rain forest animals, and there is a foreword by zoologist Jane Goodall, giving information about sloths. The back cover contains a personal message from Eric Carle, urging us to take a lesson from the sloth and to slow the pace of today's hurried lifestyle.

The book carries two important messages: be yourself and accept that people are different, and slow down and take time to appreciate life!

See *Everyone is different* on page 50.

Something Else

Kathryn Cave. Illustrated by Chris Riddell
Puffin Books, 1995

Something Else is a touching story about friendship and tolerance which won the 1997 UNESCO Prize for Literature in the Service of Tolerance.

The main character, Something Else, wants to be like the other creatures, but they won't accept him. One day, a strange creature comes to his house and wants to be friends. At first, Something Else is not sure about this. Then he is reminded of something.

The story is told in the narrative past and direct speech. Although the text contains some language which is likely to be beyond the children's current productive level, vivid visual contextualisation makes it easily accessible and comprehensible.

Story notes available:
<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/tell-it-again-storytelling-handbook-primary-english-language-teachers>

See *Everyone is different* on page 50.

Splish, Splash, Splosh!

Mick Manning and Brita Granström
Franklin Watts, 1996

This is a story about water. We follow the adventures of a young boy and his dog as they ride the waves, float on rain-filled clouds, shoot down fast-flowing rivers and splash through sewers until they get to where all water ends ... and begins.

The narrative is interspersed with short factual texts, and the final double spread provides a water map of the water cycle. There is also a glossary of helpful words.

See *The water cycle* on page 86.

Susan Laughs

Jeanne Willis and Tony Ross
Red Fox, 1999

Susan Laughs is a short story told in rhyming couplets using the simple present. It describes a range of common emotions and activities experienced by a little girl, Susan.

She swims with her father, works hard at school, plays with her friends, rides a horse. The use of 'withheld image' means that it is not until the last page that we discover that Susan uses a wheelchair.

The story delivers a powerful message, and provides a positive image of children with a disability. It focuses on Susan's abilities and shows she is like all children: she is good, she is bad, she is strong and she is weak.

It is beautifully illustrated, using pastel crayon and pencil to create expressive pictures. There are only two words to a page, so the book relies on the illustrations. The children quickly become engaged by the rhythm of the text and the interest created by the illustrations.

The story can be used as an excellent classroom tool to raise awareness of disability. *Susan Laughs* was the winner of the NASEN Special Educational Needs Book Awards in 2000.

Storynotes available:
<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/susan-laughs>

See *Everyone is different* on page 50.

See *My two hands* on page 68.

Tasty poems

Collected by Jill Bennett. Illustrated by Nick Sharratt
Oxford University Press, 1992

A collection of 12 poems from poets including John Agard, Grace Nichols, Judith Nicholls and Jack Prelutsky, themed around all kinds of food – eggs, cake, chocolate milk, grapes, noodles, sausages, jelly, mangoes – and much more.

Each poem is presented on a double spread, with a detailed, amusing illustration which gives the poem a context and supports understanding.

See *Pat-a-cake!* on page 48.

The Bad-Tempered Ladybird

Eric Carle
Puffin Books, 1982

This is another story about sharing and friendship. *The Bad-Tempered Ladybird* is a grumpy individual who thinks he is bigger and better than anyone else. He is mean and rude, and always ready to start a fight.

The story begins at five o'clock in the morning, when a friendly ladybird is eating a breakfast of aphids on a leaf and is joined by the bad-tempered ladybird, who also wants to eat the aphids but refuses to share. The bad-tempered ladybird proceeds to pick a fight with every creature he meets, never satisfied that they are big enough to fight. The repetitive text will soon have the children joining in: *'Oh, you're not big enough.'*

The day progresses, as indicated by a clock face at the top of each page and the sun's path across the sky on the right-hand pages.

The clever use of cut-away pages means that, as the beautifully illustrated animals on the right-hand page get bigger, so do the pages and the font of the text on the left-hand page also increase in size.

At six o'clock, the exhausted bad-tempered ladybird arrives back on the leaf it had started from, and humbly accepts the friendly ladybird's invitation to share the aphids for dinner. This story can also be used to consolidate the concepts of size and time.

See *Reading faces* on page 82.

The Black Book of Colours

Menena Cottin. Illustrated by Rosana Faria
Walker Books, 2010

This is the story of Thomas, a visually impaired child, who describes colours to the sighted child through his senses. The pages are black, but using your imagination and senses you can hear, smell, touch and taste colours! *Red is sour like unripe strawberries and sweet as watermelon. Yellow tastes like mustard, but is as soft as a baby chick's feathers. Blue is the colour of the sky when kites are flying.*

The descriptions are at the bottom of the left-hand page in white and, at the top of the page in black, the children can touch the embossed Braille translation. On the right-hand pages, the illustrations are also raised, allowing the child to feel and visualise the images.

Although the Braille is not raised enough to allow non-sighted children to read the book, it is an ideal way of raising awareness of visual impairment amongst sighted children. It can also be used to discuss different ways people can communicate with each other, including speech, writing, Braille sign language, texting, screen readers or other assisted technology.

The story was first published in Spanish in 2006 and has won many awards, including the New Horizons prize at the Bologna Children's Book Fair in 2007 and the Best Children's Illustrated Book Award in 2010.

See *Learning English feels like ...* on page 92.

The Chinese New Year

Joanna Troughton
Cambridge University Press, 2004

Chinese New Year celebrations are well-known in many parts of the world, so this story is ideal to use around the time of the Chinese New Year.

The Chinese calendar is based on the lunar year, so the date changes every year. It follows a 12-year pattern, with each year named after an animal.

This story is set in China when the old year is coming to an end, and gives the children an explanation for the names of the years. The animals began to quarrel, as each one wanted the New Year to be named after it.

The Princess organises a swimming race across a river, and declares that the New Year will be named after the winner. The children will probably know some of the animals in the story, and will be able to learn new animal names.

The illustrations will support their understanding, and they will be able to transfer phrases from the story, such as *'Me too. 1, 2, 3, go! I am the winner! and Well done!*

Story notes available:
<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/language-assistant/primary-tips/chinese-new-year>

See *Fireworks safety* on page 80.
See 'Selecting storybooks' on page 137.

The Doorbell Rang

Pat Hutchins
Puffin Books, 1986

The Doorbell Rang is a story about a very familiar situation – Ma (mother) makes a batch of 12 cookies for tea for her two children, Victoria and Sam. *'That's six each'*, say Sam and Victoria. Then the doorbell rings, and rings, and rings, and each time more children arrive.

As the number of children increases, the number of cookies per child decreases – *'That's three each. That's one each'* – as sharing the cookies requires division, so everyone has equal amounts. There is of, course, a happy ending, when more freshly-baked cookies unexpectedly arrive.

The story is full of suspense and repeating patterns, not only in the text but also in the superb illustrations. There are patterns everywhere, on the floor, the clothes, the table, the carpet, the crockery.

Ask the children to tell you where the cat is in each illustration – a great way to practice prepositions!

The story serves as a superb introduction and consolidation to the theme of sharing and division.

See *A friend is someone who ...* on page 56.

The Important Book

Margaret Wise Brown. Illustrated by Leonard Weisgard
HarperCollins, 1949

The important thing about *The Important Book* is that the children learn what is important about familiar things, such as a spoon, a daisy, the rain, grass, snow, an apple, the wind, the sky, a shoe – and you!

We find out in rhythmic words, accompanied by beautiful illustrations. The format of the book provides the children with a perfect model in how to write a good paragraph, with a topic sentence and supporting sentences about an object of their own choice.

A timeless book, which encourages the children to find something they feel is important in everyday things.

See *The important thing about ...* on page 90.

The Kangaroo from Woolloomooloo

Joy Cowley. Illustrated by Rodney McRae
Shortland Publications Ltd, 1985

The Kangaroo from Woolloomooloo is a story about a child's trip to the Sydney Zoo and the native Australian animals that he sees there. The story contains repetition and rhyme, and is structured around the familiar 'question and answer' technique: *When I went to the Sydney Zoo, what did I see? The [bandicoot playing a flute], and the kangaroo from Woolloomooloo.*

Each animal is associated with an object that rhymes with its name (*cockatoo/didgeridoo, magpie/patch on one eye*, etc) and the refrain – *and the Kangaroo from Woolloomooloo* – is repeated for each animal.

Story, illustrations and story notes available:
<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/tell-it-again-storytelling-handbook-primary-english-language-teachers>

See *At the Safari Park* on page 66.

The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything

Linda Williams and Eileen Spinelli. Illustrated by Megan Lloyd HarperTrophy, 1988

Once upon a time, there was a little old lady who was not afraid of anything! But one autumn night, she goes into the forest in search of seeds and roots for her cooking, and heard *CLOMP CLOMP SHAKE SHAKE CLAP CLAP*, and had the scare of her life! Some funny clothing items (boots, a shirt, a hat ...) move mysteriously, and start chasing her.

This story is ideal to use around the time of Halloween.

See *What's Fred wearing?* on page 46.
See *H is for Halloween* on page 52.

The Rainbow Fish

Marcus Pfister
North-South Books, 2007

The stunning illustrations complement this simple story of a vain fish. The octopus advises him to give one of his glittering scales to each of the other fish.

He will no longer be the most beautiful fish in the sea, but he will learn to make friends by sharing his most prized possessions – and discover how to be happy.

See *A friend is someone who ...* on page 56.

The Snowman

Raymond Briggs
Puffin Books, 1978

The Snowman is a moving story about a boy who builds a snowman, and of the friendship that develops between them. The story relates well to the themes of weather and the seasons.

It is a wordless picture book in comic strip format. The children can interpret the story through the pictures, making it easily accessible to a wide age-range and children with different levels

of English. It enables them to exercise their imagination, and to become personally and creatively involved in the story.

Story notes available:

The Snowman: The original storybook with activities for young learners of English Raymond Briggs and Gail Ellis, OUP 1995

See *It's snowing!* on page 62.

See 'Using the target language' on page 130.

The Snowy Day

Ezra Jack Keats
Puffin Books, 1962

Winner of the 1963 Caldecott Medal, this story captures the wonder and pleasure a child experiences at the first snowfall and when the world is blanketed in snow.

It reveals a child's amazement at a new world, and the hope of capturing and keeping that wonder forever. The simple story is about a boy, Peter, exploring snow in the city. He hears the crunch, crunch, crunch as his feet sink into the snow, and he makes footprints and tracks, he makes snowballs, a snowman and angels.

The sparse collage illustrations capture the beauty of a snowy day.

According to *Horn Book Magazine*, *The Snowy Day* was the very first full-colour picture book to feature a small black child.

See *It's snowing!* on page 62.

The World Came to My Place Today

Jo Readman. Illustrated by Ley Honor Roberts
Eden Project Books, 2004

Grandpa arrives, with a globe, to look after George and his sister for the day. Grandpa explains how everything, from the cereal they eat for breakfast and the chocolate bars they love, to the rubber in their bicycle tyres and the wood in their toys, come from plants all over the world.

The lively, simple text follows George's day – from breakfast to lunchtime to suppertime and bedtime. The fun illustrations are coupled with photos of the original grasses, fruits and plants on the right-hand pages, accompanied by short factual texts.

The first and final double spreads contain a world map, so the children can locate where things come from. The world maps have borders of all kinds of transport, and are ideal for developing vocabulary around this theme.

The book broadens the children's perspectives, and raises their awareness of how plants from all over the world affect their daily lives.

See *English around me* on page 76.

Through the Magic Mirror

Anthony Browne
Puffin Books, 1976

Toby is fed up and bored. But when he walks through the magic mirror and into a town, things are very different!

The text is short and simple, but *Through the Magic Mirror* is full of surreal details and visual humour, with references to René Magritte. The children can be invited to discuss what's unusual, and describe the pictures. The book can be used to explore feelings, and to imagine what sounds the children might hear on each page.

See *Sounds in a town* on page 60.

We All Went on Safari

Laurie Krebs. Illustrated by Julia Cairns
Scholastic, 2004

This is a beautiful story about three children who join their Maasai friends on a 'counting journey' through the grasslands of Tanzania. Along the way, they encounter a range of African animals, while counting from one to ten in English and Swahili.

The lively, rhyming text is accompanied by brightly coloured stunning illustrations. Ideal for younger and older children, who will love the information about the animals, the map and facts about Tanzania and the Maasai people and their names.

A portion of the proceeds from the sale of each book is donated to the African Wildlife Foundation, to aid wildlife conservation and community building efforts in Tanzania.

See *At the Safari Park* on page 66.

We're Going on a Lion Hunt

David Axtell
Macmillan Children's Books, 2000

A retelling of Michael Rosen's well-known *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, set in the African savannah. Two sisters go on a lion hunt. Each page begins with the same phrase: '*We're going on a lion hunt. We're going to catch a big one. We're not scared. Oh, no ...*'

The repetition gives way to new obstacles to navigate – swishy-swashy long grass under the watchful eye of a giraffe; a splishy-splashy blue lake with zebras and a flamingo; a squishy swamp with a hippo. The girls wake a lion sleeping in a cave who pursues them. They retrace their tracks, running side by side, and arrive home and shut the door safely.

The illustrations depict the beautiful landscapes and animals of the savannah.

See *At the Safari Park* on page 66.

What if? A book about recycling

Mick Manning and Brita Granström
Franklin Watts, 2014

This is a story about recycling, and it is structured around the question: *What if ...?*

The children follow the journey of a thrown-away bottle, and are encouraged to think about several different scenarios. For example: *What if you found the bottle and put a message inside?* The book is also an information book, and each page is full of fascinating items to discuss and think about.

The children are made aware of things that can be recycled and

made into other useful goods, and there is a recipe for making paper at the back of the book. The book provides an ideal starting point for working on the theme of recycling.

Story notes available:

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/what-if>

See *How green am I?* on page 88.

Why Is The Sky Blue?

Sally Grindley and Susan Varley
Andersen Press, 1996

Young Rabbit would like to know why the sky is blue. In fact, Rabbit wants to know everything. His old friend, Donkey, who knows lots of things, promises to teach him. The repeated phrase '*But I can only teach you if you sit still and listen*' reminds the children of the need to concentrate and listen to the replies to their questions.

It is a story that teaches us that we can always learn something new, we can learn from each other and that there are different ways of learning.

See *My English language portfolio* on page 38.

See *Wilbur the Worm: the puppet* on page 42.

See *My ideal English teacher* on page 94.

Willy and Hugh

Anthony Browne
Red Fox, 1992

Willy is a lonely chimpanzee, picked on by others, when he literally bumps into Hugh Jape in the park one day and his whole life changes. He has a friend! Willy is no longer lonely. When Buster Nose, the bully, appears, Hugh Jape stands up for Willy. Willy and Hugh enjoy sharing time and doing things together, and Willy even gets to reciprocate and help Hugh when he sees a terrifying creature.

The colourful illustrations on plain white pages are full of interesting details and humour. This is a moving story of friendship, and reveals how it feels to be bullied and why people bully.

See *Don't be a bully!* on page 84.

Winnie the Witch

Korky Paul and Valerie Thomas
Oxford University Press, 1987

Winnie the Witch lives in a black house, and everything in the house is black too – including her cat, Wilbur. When the cat closes his eyes and goes to sleep, Winnie can't see him at all and trips over him. So she decides to use some magic, and transforms Wilbur into a green cat.

However, now she can't see him when he goes outside in the grass, so she transforms him into a multi-coloured cat. But Wilbur is miserable, and climbs to the top of a tree and stays there until Winnie used her magic again.

See *H is for Halloween* on page 52.

You Choose

Nick Sharratt and Pippa Goodhard
Picture Corgi, 2003

Imagine you could have anything you wanted! So begins You Choose. It is a great book for stimulating the imagination. Each double-page spread is packed with choices, asking the children: *Where would you go? Who would you like for family and friends? What would you wear?*

The children can take turns choosing an item on each page and describing it, which helps develop vocabulary around places, family and friends, houses, furniture, transport, food, clothes, jobs, sports and pastimes. The images are bright and colourful.

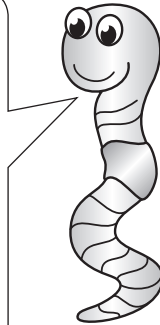
The first and final double spreads contain short paragraphs combining choices from each of the pages, and provide older children with models to create their own paragraphs.

See *Leisure time* on page 64.
See *My two hands* on page 68.

These, then, are the storybooks that are directly related to the activities presented in *Teaching children how to learn*.

As you teach your classes and create your own lessons, you will also be choosing and using other stories and other storybooks:

- Keep a record of them all, using the *Storybook record* template opposite.
- Add them to your English Teaching Portfolio.
- Share them with your colleagues.
- Help your colleagues find the books if necessary.



There is a downloadable A4 template of the *Storybook record* in the Teachers' toolkit on the website, as well as the other two templates dedicated to successful storytelling with storybooks.

Go to: www.deltapublishing.co.uk/resources
Click on the cover of the book.
Click on Teachers' toolkit.
Click on Templates.

Storybook record

Title:

Author/Illustrator:

Publisher:

Class/age used with:

Date:

Notes

Narrative:

Illustrations:

Children's response:

Other:



Happy storytelling!

