**Hickory Dickory Dog** by Alison Murray

The opening line from the well-known nursery rhyme hooks the reader in and is then varied in ways that encourage prediction and phonological awareness. The rhyming text describes a child’s day from morning to night, punctuated by the striking clock as he goes to play school, has fun with friends and eats his meals. Alison Murray’s distinctively designed book with its lively boldly outlined child figures (not to mention the dogs) will hold great appeal for young readers.

**Overall learning aims of this teaching sequence:**

- to introduce a text that can be read to, with and by children;
- to engage children in reading a rhyming text with predictable pattern and refrain;
- to take an interest in meaningful print and what it can do;
- to develop early phonological awareness through story, rhyme and song;
- to apply phonic knowledge through a rich reading programme;
- to broaden children’s experience of vocabulary through reading and grasp of language through word play;
- to explore and develop strategies to support early reading of whole words and printed texts;
- to orchestrate cues to learn to read print independently in familiar and supportive contexts.

**This teaching sequence is designed to support the teaching of reading in a Nursery or Reception Class**

**Overview of this teaching sequence:**

This teaching sequence is approximately 3 weeks long if spread out over a series of sessions. Many of the sessions will work well for small groups of children whilst other sessions might benefit from larger groups. The sessions are designed to encourage early reading. The book is a tuneful rhyme. Children will love joining in with the repeated phrases which support language learning and the learning to read process. The illustrations add humour and help children to understand the different layers of meaning in the story. The book offers many opportunities for re-reading and revisiting the story through a range of practical creative activities.

**Key Teaching Approaches:**

- Listening to audio books, poetry and songs
- Responding to illustration
- Reading aloud and re-reading
- Shared reading
- Reading with partners
- Group and guided reading
- Sharing books
- Poetry, rhyme and song
- One-to-one reading
- Word study - onset and rime
- Performance reading
- Environmental print walk – finding and making labels, signs and notices
- Body percussion and instrumental beat
- Rhyming pairs
- Word play
- Book-based game
Teaching Sessions

Rhythm and Rhyme: Learning songs and rhymes - Hickory Dickory Dock

- Provide plenty of opportunity for children to sing and learn nursery rhymes as well as traditional and contemporary songs, including the original nursery rhyme: Hickory Dickory Dock.
- Explore variations on this and other rhymes and those that are sung to well known tunes.

Rhythm and Rhyme: Listen to the beat – exploring syllables

- Provide plenty of opportunities for children to explore their own and their friends’ names in various contexts throughout the setting, e.g. Prepare cards with children’s photos and a syllable grid. First child takes a photo card from pack and holds it up for the class to beat out the syllables in the name. Place the card on a prepared syllable grid: 1/2/3/4/. Move to next child. Depending on experience, the children can use name word cards instead of photographs.
- Explore the syllables in Hickory, Dickory Dock and other well-known rhymes tapping hands alternately on laps for each of the syllables in each of the words. Make sure that children understand the difference between this and keeping beat if confusion arises.

Rhythm and Rhyme: Responding to music with rhythm sticks

- Sing songs and nursery rhymes for children to practise keeping a steady rhythm. Make explicit the different between keeping beat and tapping syllables. A lot of rhymes and songs are based on a four beats per bar structure so start with these.
- The songbook and CD ‘Bright Sparks’ by Steve Grocott (http://www.dronesmusic.net/page.php?pageid=childrens) contains a variety of songs that can be explored using rhythm sticks. His song, ‘The Clock Song’ links beautifully to the theme of Hickory Dickory Dog - as well as the original nursery rhyme - and enables children to explore voice sounds as well as keeping rhythm.

Group or paired reading – familiar print

- Sing ‘Hickory Dickory Dock’ as a group.
- Provide pairs of children with an attractive illustrated rhyme card so that they can tune in to the printed words and phrases that they are so familiar with, making explicit directionality and one-to-one correspondence as well as drawing attention to grapheme-phoneme correspondence.
- Create a core collection of rhymes and songs and share with the parents, sending home song and rhyme sheets for the children to learn and tune in to the printed words on the cards.

Responding to illustration

- Without sharing the front cover of the book, introduce the dog through the illustration on the first page with the dog waiting expectantly with the ball at the feet of his boy, satchel on back. Allow children time to look and respond to what they can see, what they think is happening. Encourage the children to draw on their own experiences:
  - Who is the dog? Who is the child? What are they doing?
  - What do you think the dog is thinking? What makes you think that?
  - What do you think will happen next?
  - Does it remind you of anything in stories or real life?
  - Do you have any questions?
- Scribe ideas in the shared journal around the picture for display or in a class reading journal made from a scrap book with the title, Hickory Dickory Dog on the front.

Reading aloud – Hickory Dickory Dog

- Look at the front cover and read the whole title: Hickory Dickory Dog. Elicit comparisons with the rhyme, ‘Hickory Dickory Dock’ and discuss what is happening in the illustration.
- Pause at the title page inside and ask the children to make predictions about what might happen in this story and how the dog became covered in leaves.
- Read the story aloud from the beginning until ‘Dogs aren’t allowed in there. A sneaky peak through...’ Draw attention to the printed sign ‘NO DOGS ALLOWED’ on the fence.
- Ask the children to share their ideas about what they think is going to happen next and how the children will react.

### Shared Reading

*In shared reading, the teacher reads the story first to, and then with, early readers while pointing to the print. This both demonstrates the reading process to the children and establishes a basis for the phonics to come. During this first shared reading session, it is important to check that each child can match spoken words to print words and teach one-to-one matching if needed.*

- Encourage the children to join in with the repeated refrain, drawing attention to the rhyming pairs to support prediction.
- Model expression and intonation which will support the children’s understanding of unfamiliar language and vocabulary.
- Model strategies to tackle unknown words, demonstrating how to use cues to self-check.

### Drama and Role Play - Freeze frame

- Revisit the double-page spread illustration when the dog finally gets into the playground: ‘Then a hullabaloo! Hickory, dickory, dare.’
- Scribe the children’s ideas about what is happening in the class journal.
- Small groups of five or six children could be supported in re-enacting then freeze framing the scene. When you tap them on the shoulder each child could voice their character’s thoughts or speech in role. These could be scribed on thought or speech bubbles and displayed around the image.

### Revisiting and re-reading

*Establishing familiarity through re-reading, enables the children to join in with the repetitive refrain and begin to memorise the story.*

- Read the story on several occasions, encouraging the children to chime in as they become more confident with key phrases in the story, particularly the dialogue.
- Prepare magnetic story props of the characters and places on the way to the launderette, to use for your oral telling of the story and to support children’s independent retelling.
- Provide extra copies of the book, alongside the props to support the children’s retelling and early attempts at reading. The familiarity of the story will be extremely enabling as the children begin to focus on the print.
- You might model telling the story from the viewpoint of the dog.

### Hotseating – asking the ‘teacher’ questions

- Invite the boy’s ‘teacher’ into the classroom so that the children can ask him/her how it felt to have a dog come into the school, causing such a hullabaloo everywhere. This could be an unfamiliar colleague or parent dressed up.
- Encourage the children to ask the teacher ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions, giving them time to compose orally the questions in pairs first. Model the first few yourself as well as drawing out further information and recasting closed questioning:
  - What did you think when did you first saw the dog?
  - How did you feel when it spilled things?
  - Why was it allowed to stay all day?
- Ask the teacher to retell the story from his/her point of view, using the illustrations as prompts. Make notes of key phrases that you can draw on in later retellings.

### Audio stories, rhymes and songs – matching spoken word to the printed word

- Create a home-made audio book by recording yourself reading the book aloud and copying onto a format that can be shared with the children, e.g. CD or MP3
- Provide opportunities for the children to revisit the text by listening to it whilst reading the book, reinforcing the oral
match with the print on the page.

- You could build a class collection of core stories, songs and rhymes (commercially produced or home-made) that the children can listen to and practise matching spoken to printed word in familiar contexts.

### Group or paired reading – tuning into print
- Once the children have memorised the language of the story through repeated readings, they can be given copies of the story to read to partners. This helps children to see themselves as readers.
- The children can be supported in tuning in to the print on the pages, applying their understanding of one-to-one correspondence to familiar words and phrases.

### Role Play and re-enactment
- Provide props, such as a school satchel, lunch box, and maybe a toy dog so that the story can be acted out using parts of the school setting and home corner to support the re-enactment.
- Alternatively, you could create a small world of the story in a tuff tray, recreating the home, street and school and providing appropriate figures for the children to play out the story.
- Record the children during role play, scribing their story making and unfolding narratives. Take photographs of the children for them to talk about and sequence afterwards, reinforcing the narrative language in the re-enactment.

### Making a Story Map
- Explain to the children that you would like them to help you map out the story as it will help to retell the story. Ask them to retell the story orally to a partner, establishing the main events as the story unfolds. Provide children with the story props if required.
- Ask the children to consider where the story took place, i.e. in a city and more specifically from home to the Laundromat and back again.
- Ask the children to recall the places the story takes place (home, street, school, home) and the things the dog and its boy got up to.
- Swiftly demonstrate drawing these places on a large piece of paper. You may choose to represent these places akin to a geographical map or use junk modelling to recreate key buildings to help represent a 3-D storymap.
- Use the map to retell the story orally, adding in key phrases from the book as the children recall them.
- Provide large rolls of paper, and drawing and writing equipment so that the children can map out the story for themselves in small groups. Support their oral retelling using key phrases that help move the story on.

### Shared writing and bookmaking
- Children can have their story scribed or make their own marks/write the story in their book either as a retelling or from the viewpoint of the teacher, the boy, another child or the dog.
- Published books can be placed on display in the reading area alongside the cuddly toy characters used. The children will re-read and revisit their own stories and that of their peers.

### Rhythm and Rhyme: word collection
- The book is rich with rhyming pairs that can be explored or made into a rhyming pairs game.
- Ask the children to identify them with you, as they become increasingly familiar with the story and are able to use the rhymes to predict when reading aloud.
- Make a collection of the rhyming pairs:
  - Dock/clock, begun/fun, here/dear, whine/pine, dare/there, through/hullabaloo, dee/yippee, eleven/heaven, lunch/munch, noon/spoon, doo/glue, fine/time*, stack/back, pup/up, five/diver, fly/dry*, itch/twitch, time/rhyme
- Discuss the words with the children; what they mean, what they sound like, how they feel, what they look like and what they do for the story.
- Identify onsets and rimes* and those pairs that are half rhymes. Encourage the children to listen extra carefully to these pairs.
- Which are the children’s favourite rhyming pairs? Why?
- Can they think of alternative rhyming words to add to the collection? Again, note onsets and rimes when the opportunity arises.

* Onset and rime (from Whole to Part Phonics, Henrietta Dombey et al, CLPE 1998)
“Words comprising of individual syllables can be split in to two parts: the ‘onset’ and the ‘rime’ (Goswami and Bryant 1990):
- Onset - the part of the syllable before the first vowel
- Rime - the part of the syllable from the first vowel onwards

e.g.: s/un b/un st/un

Some two-syllable words are best treated in the same way:

e.g.: n/ettle k/ettle s/ettle

Rimes are much more reliable in their sound-spelling relationship than their individual phonemes. They provide much clearer information about how a word is pronounced than do the individual phonemes. The patterning of onset and rimes makes up a substantial part of the patterning of English spelling.

Children find it relatively easy to recognise the units of onset and rime than they do individual phonemes and, notably, can overcome difficulties in picking out final phonemes by being encouraged to detect those words sharing a whole rime, such as dock and clock, noon and spoon in the book.”

**Book-based game**

In book-based reading games, familiar phrases from books that children know well can be used as part of the games. Familiarity is essential in developing early reading strategies.

- You could create a track game, acknowledging the journey of the story and incorporating the physical locations visited. It should include opportunities for the children to read familiar words and phrases from the text and signs in the illustrations and link movement along the track with events in the narrative, e.g. ‘Miss a turn WET PAINT’ or ‘Go back one NO DOGS’.
- Alternatively, you could make a pairs game to develop visual memory and book language, creating cards using laminated images from the book. Make two sets of picture cards for the characters, places and key features of the story. Spread these out face down on the table/floor. Children take turns to turn over two cards. If they are the same they can keep them, if not they have to turn them back over again. The game proceeds until all the pairs have been found.

**Pets research**

- What other sorts of pets do people keep? Suggest children try and find out, putting the children into pairs to interview some of the children and adults about their own pets; both within the school community and at home.
- They could record what they find out as drawings, take photos or record the ‘interview’ using sound recorders or easy speak microphones. Make a display of the findings.

**Drawing and annotating: Special pets and dogs**

- What are dogs like? How do we know? Discuss the pets owned by children in the class, including dogs. Elicit how the children feel about them and why. Make links with the loyalty and enjoyment the dog and its boy share in the story.
- With the children’s help draw a large dog on a flip chart or whiteboard, and around the outside of the drawing write everything the children already know about dogs. Inside the drawing write all the questions they would like to find answers to (for example, they might ask: What do dogs eat? What are puppies like? Children will also be able to draw on this chart as a word bank in their own independent writing.

**Researching information – Dogs**

- Put together a collection of information and storybooks about dogs for children to look at, read and talk about. This will be a useful collection to draw on both in reading aloud sessions and for children to choose from when taking books home. Provide a variety of resources nearby that children can use to draw or write about anything of interest they find out. Make a regular time for children to talk to the class about anything that they have discovered for themselves or would like to draw other children’s attention to.
- Use the Internet and other age-appropriate non-fiction texts to find out more and to look more closely at what dogs are like.
Shared writing: Information writing

- Write a Big class book about dogs in shared writing, adding a new page each day about something that the children have observed or found out. Children can illustrate each page using a variety of media.
- More experienced writers should go on to write their own information books using homemade books. When finished (or ‘published’) these should be shared with the class and put into the book corner for everyone to enjoy.

Response to poetry – ‘Dog in the Playground’ by Allan Ahlberg

- Introduce the children to the poetry of Allan Ahlberg. It is likely that he is known to them through works such as: Peepol!, The Baby’s Catalogue and Each Peach Pear Plum.
- You can find him reading a selection of his poems aloud by visiting CLPE’s Poetryline website and specifically the poem, ‘Dog in the Playground’ at: http://www.poetryline.org.uk/poems/dog-in-the-playground-837
- Remind the children of their freeze frame activity re-enacting the scene in the book when the dog breaches the playground fence and draws a crowd. Imagine a cute, friendly dog coming into our playground. What would happen? How would the children and the teachers react?
- Watch Ahlberg reading the poem then re-read and revisit on several occasions, enabling the children to create pictures in their mind and find amusement in it.
- Encourage the children to join in with the repeated refrain, ‘Dog in the playground…’
- Ask the children to pick out their favourite words, phrases or verse, eliciting why they find those so memorable or enjoyable.
- The children could create illustrations for parts of the poem that they are able to envisage most clearly, discussing why they find that particular phrase or verse so memorable. The illustrations could be displayed alongside the printed poem in a book or on display in the reading area for everyone to enjoy.
- As the poem becomes more well known the children will be better able to tune in to the print in the handmade book and begin to read it more independently.

Use and Application of Phonics at Phases 2-4:

Phase 2 words:
a, dog, it, fun, wet, in, pup, pig, get, an, up

Phase 3 words:
Hick, dick, dock, for, dear, then, hullabaloo, haroo, dee, (yippee), eleven, mess, noon, doo, back, muck, lick, needs

Phase 4 words:
clock, paint, lunch, munch, spoon, gloop, stack, stick, crash, flick, still, twist, end

High Frequency Words:
A, it, the, has, to, and, in, no, then, is, so, you, up, an, for, of