

Is There a Dog in This Book by Viviane Schwarz (Walker)

The playful cats Viviane Schwarz introduced in two earlier books reappear for further face to face interaction with us, their readers. They suspect that there may be a dog close by and they implore us to hide them from him. Do they really need to be afraid? And who is really the scaredy cat?

Overall aims of this teaching sequence

- To explore, interpret and respond to a picture book
- To explore characters through reading and drawing and draw inferences to aid our understanding of them
- To explore narrative plots and characters through role-play and play
- To broaden understanding and use of appropriate vocabulary
- To write character descriptions
- To write a short narrative episode
- To have purposeful opportunities for non-fiction writing, shaping for an audience

This teaching sequence is designed for a Year 1 or a Year 2 class.

Overview of this teaching sequence.

This teaching sequence is approximately 3 weeks long if spread out over 15 sessions.

The book supports teachers to teach about character development, familiar settings and plot in fiction. The images and text are carefully crafted and the characters and settings are well drawn, fun and highly interactive, offering young readers a good model for their own story planning and writing.

National Curriculum 2014 Links:

Reading: (Word reading / Comprehension)

- Increase familiarity with a range of books;
- Explain and discuss understanding of books;
- Discuss the sequence of events in books;
- Answer and ask questions;
- Predict what might happen on the basis of what has been read;
- Draw inferences on the basis of what is being said and done;
- Express views and opinions about reading.

Writing: (Transcription / Composition)

- Draft and write by composing and rehearsing sentences orally;
- Sequence sentences to form short narratives;
- In narrative create settings, characters and plot;
- Write for different purposes including about fictional personal experiences and fictional narratives;
- Re-read writing to check it makes sense and make simple revisions.

Speaking and Listening:

- Participate in discussion about what is read, taking turns and listening to what others say;
- Listen and respond appropriately to adults and peers;
- Articulate and justify answers and opinions;

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- Speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English;
- Use spoken language to develop understanding through imagining and exploring ideas in discussion, role-play and drama.

Cross Curricular Links:

Art and design

KS1 subject content: to use a range of materials creatively to design and make products; to use drawing, painting and sculpture to develop and share their ideas, experiences and imagination.

Science

KS1 subject content: Pupils should be taught to:

- identify and name a variety of common animals including fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals
- identify and name a variety of common animals that are carnivores, herbivores and omnivores
- describe and compare the structure of a variety of common animals (fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals, including pets)
- identify that most living things live in habitats to which they are suited and describe how different habitats provide for the basic needs of different kinds of animals and plants, and how they depend on each other

Pupils should use the local environment throughout the year to explore and answer questions about animals in their habitat. They should understand how to take care of animals taken from their local environment and the need to return them safely after study. Pupils should become familiar with the common names of some fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals, including those that are kept as pets

Teaching Approaches

Reading aloud and rereading
 'Tell me'
 Responding to illustration
 Hot-Seating
 Role-play and drama
 Re-enactment through play
 Drawing and annotating
 Shared writing
 Book making

Writing Outcomes

Thought bubbles
 Labelled drawings
 Captions
 Dog fact file
 Instructions
 Speech bubbles
 Short narrative
 Non Fiction Poster

Links to other texts and resources.

- *There are Cats in This Book* by Viviane Schwarz
- *There Are No Cats in This Book* by Viviane Schwarz
- *Dogs* by Emily Gravett
- *Oh No George!* By Chris Haughton

- *I Want a Pet!* By Lauren Child
- *The Great Pet Sale* by Mick Inkpen
- *Thank You for Looking After Our Pets!* by Tim Hopgood
- *A Dog Called Rod* by Tim Hopgood
- *What Pet to Get* by Emma Dodd
- *Let's Get a Pup!* said Kate by Bob Graham
- *Our Dog* by Helen Oxenbury
- *Fleabag* by Helen Stephens
- *Six Dinner Sid* by Inga Moore
- *Mog* by Judith Kerr
- *My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes* by Eve Sutton

Watch author/illustrator Viviane Schwarz reading the text at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O8aICIS2Kg4>

See all her books read on her YouTube channel:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZax7sptvCxi4M_KRDXQWDA

Teaching Sessions:

Session 1: Exploring thinking around a text. Shared Writing

Shared writing is one of the most important ways a teacher can show children how writing works and what it's like to be a writer. Acting as scribe, the teacher works with a small or large group of children to create a text together, enabling them to concentrate on their ideas and composition. Teacher and children work as active partners, talking together to share ideas, while the teacher guides the children through all the decisions that writers need to make and helps them shape their thoughts on paper

- Prepare a class reading journal by sewing or stapling together sugar paper to collect children's responses or examples of their work throughout the unit.
- Find a toy dog that can be a class pet throughout the unit. On the first day, have him sitting on the carpet when the children enter, with a label tied round his neck saying *Please look after me!*
- Explore children's thinking through questioning; where did it come from? Who do we think it belongs to? What does the label say? What does this mean? Ask the children what they already know about dogs and how to look after them. Is there anything we might need or would like to find out? How could we do this? Scribe thoughts and questions onto a large sheet of paper to come back to.
- Ask the children to help write a list of things that might be needed to look after a dog. Use mini whiteboards to scribe lists of ideas.
- Use the list to shared write informational sentences about looking after a dog.
- Have children write their own ideas for looking after the dog.

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Session 2: Reading aloud, book talk, illustrating a character

Drawing characters focuses attention on them: how they look; what they say; how they behave. To build their ideas of what a character is like, children have to refer to the text. They can also be encouraged to draw on the language of the text in making annotations around the drawings.

- Look at the first double page spread of the cats. Read the first page and explore the first illustration spread.
- Who are they? What are they like? What do you think they are doing? Are they the same or different? Look at the illustrations carefully. What things do these cats have? Do you think they are well looked after? Why do they need a bowl? A toy?
- How do we know what the cats are called? Look at matching each cat to their bowl.
- Collect words, phrases and sentences to describe the cats based on their pictures. Focus on words and phrases to describe character as well as appearance, focussing on words to describe their emotions.
 - Note initial ideas around a copy of the illustration of the characters to record first perceptions.
- Now introduce the picture from the front cover.
 - What further information does this give us? Record in a different colour on the illustration.
- Use demonstration illustration to create your own cat character and write your thoughts about them as words and phrases around the picture or as a character description to accompany it.
- If the character in your drawing was to say something, what would they say? Record in a speech bubble to put on your drawing.
- Discuss the book title; *Is There a Dog in This Book?* What do we think the cats will do if there is? Why? Scribe predictions about what might happen in the story in thought bubbles to add to a working display.

Sessions 3 and 4: Book talk, writing

Shared writing gives children a model for their own independent writing and can introduce them to unfamiliar genre or style of writing. Children can then present their written work in a range of literary outcomes such as a poster, big book or poem for everyone to enjoy.

- Re-read the beginning of the text; focus on the second spread. How do the cats look now? How can you tell? Why do you think they look like this? Read the speech bubbles, encouraging the children to interact with the cat's questions. Who do you think drank up the milk and chewed the toy? Scribe children's ideas around a copy of the illustration in the shared journal.
- Look at Andre's question 'Is there... A DOG in this book?' What do the children think would happen if a dog was in the book? Add these ideas to the journal.
- Read the next page, up to 'What is a dog?' How could we tell Tiny about dogs? Where could we find information about dogs?
- Look at various informational texts about Dogs. You could try Usborne Beginners: Dogs or this fact sheet from Wood Green Animal Charity:
http://www.woodgreen.org.uk/assets/0012/2538/FactSheets_Dogs.pdf. You could also watch a video,

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such as <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j1GViwhByMU>. It would also be good if a local vet could come into the setting to talk about dogs to the children and answer questions they may have about dogs and other pets.

- Collect notes about dogs from the different sources of information. What do we think are the most important things someone needs to know about owning a dog? Write these down. What information do we need to tell people about these things?
- Look at how to organise the information under headings such as 'Feeding', 'Keeping Healthy', 'Care'. Model how to make a concept map to share information that can be written under each heading in note form as a plan for writing.
- Draft paragraphs of writing to go with each setting, looking at the referential purpose of informing someone else about dogs who knows nothing about them.
- These could be published in origami book factfiles.

Session 5: Responding to illustration, writing

The children's books featured on Power of Pictures have been chosen because of the quality of the illustrations they contain and the ways in which the illustrations work with the text to create meaning for the reader. Children will need time and opportunities to enjoy and respond to the pictures, and to talk together about what the illustrations contribute to their understanding of the text. Children can develop their responses to the book by drawing or painting in a similar style to the illustrations.

- Introduce the illustration on the 'Help us find our doggy!' page, without sharing any of the text in the speech bubbles.
- Ask them to talk about what they can see, the questions which occur to them and how it makes them feel. Make a note of interesting ideas around an enlarged image.
- Think about the characters in the pictures; what are they thinking/doing?
- In groups of three, freeze frame the scene, taking on the roles of the 3 cats looking for the dog. What is your character thinking or saying?
- Use speech or thought bubbles to record ideas, writing as the character would think or speak.
- If you have iPad access, you could photograph the page and use the Comic Book! App to add in the speech bubbles.

Session 6: Role Play, Hotseating – Empathising with a character:

In hot-seating, one member of the class role-plays a central character from a poem or story and is interviewed by the other children. This activity involves children closely examining a character's motivation and responses. Before the hot-seating, they need to discuss what it is they want to know and identify questions they want answering. If children have no experience of hot-seating, the teachers may initially need to take the role.

- Re-read on to 'It must be here somewhere...'(but don't lift Andre's flap to discover the dog!)
- Look carefully at the illustrations of the cats. Come up with words, phrases and sentences to describe how the cats are feeling and jot these around a copy of the illustration in the shared journal.
- Have three children working in role as the three cats. Ask them questions to ascertain information

about the disappearance of the dog; what happened, how it makes them feel and why. Have the teacher or teaching assistant help to prompt with questions to obtain more detailed information. An adult could also work in role as one of the cats to model the hotseating.

- Ask the children what we think we could do to help the cats? Do any of them know what usually happens when an animal goes missing?
- Scaffold ideas to shared write a missing dog poster. Ask the children what they think we need to include so that people know what happened, how to describe the dog what impact it is making on the cats and what should happen if they find it. Use ideas from the hot seating to improve the writing. Draw a picture of the dog on the poster to aid the description. You could also label the diagram with features of the dog.
- Have the children make their own missing posters. Make sure they add sufficient detail about how the cats are feeling, descriptive sentences about where the dog was last seen and a description of the dog, and what to do if the dog is found.

Session 7: Storyboxes

Story boxes create special opportunities to revisit themes and storylines of a particular story. Typically, they consist of a shoebox or diorama containing a range of small characters and objects. The box itself can be turned into a setting for the story using a variety of collage materials and with sides cut to fold down. However, the box is at its most effective when something intriguing or unexpected is added. Children can use the box to story tell the next episode of a story or create another story with similar setting or characters.

- Re-read the story up to ‘It must be here somewhere...’(but still don’t lift Andre’s flap to discover the dog!)
- Where have they looked for the dog? Could they try somewhere else? Another room or place?
- What other places could they look for the dog in?
- Use storyboxes, diorama, drawing or collage to create a scene where the cats are looking somewhere else for the dog.
- Add speech bubbles to the cat characters to show what they are saying while they look. Cat characters can be made or printed onto card and inserted into scenes – download at:
http://www.walker.co.uk/UserFiles/file/There%20are%20cats/Cats_Cutout_Sheet_One_A3.pdf
- Encourage children to collaborate on other scenes and insert speech bubbles for the cats.

Session 8: Shared writing

- Look back at the dioramas created in yesterday’s session and talk about the story behind the action.
- Show the children how to shared write the story, either in first person in role as one of the cats, or in third person narrative. You can model how to insert speech, add description and detail about what is happening in the scene and the impact that the dogs disappearance has on the cats. Model how to transcribe difficult words using phonics and other spelling strategies as appropriate.
- Have children draft their own narratives behind the scenes, either collaboratively in the groups that they designed the dioramas in, or individually based on the dioramas created.

Sessions 9 & 10: Publishing writing

Publishing their work for an audience helps children to write more purposefully.

- Using the draft writing created in yesterday's session, show how to read to a response partner and improve to add further description or detail. Show children how to mark up a text, deleting and changing words and sentences where necessary, or adding words for sense and meaning.
- Have the children look at their own writing in the same way, first checking for sense and meaning then looking at where they may be able to add more detail.
- When children are happy with their writing, publish their work in best, either hand written using their best handwriting or digitally published, using an appropriate ICT programme.
- Display the writing next to the dioramas in a prominent communal space.

Session 11: Re-reading and book talk

Discussion about books forms the foundations for working with books. Children need frequent, regular and sustained opportunities to talk together about the books that they are reading as a whole class. The more experience they have of talking together like this, the better they get at making explicit the meaning that a text holds for them. This booktalk is supportive to all readers and writers, but it is especially empowering for children who find literacy difficult. It helps the class as a whole to reach shared understandings and move towards a more dispassionate and informed debate of ideas and issues.

- Read the whole book, beginning to end.
- Talk with children about what they like or don't like about the story, about any questions that they have or anything that the story makes them think about. Scribe these responses in the shared journal.
- Ask them to say which part of the book stays in their minds most vividly.
- Do they have any other questions about the book? Scribe these in the shared journal.
- What will they tell their friends about this book?
- Ask the children if they would like to read the other cat books. Why or why not? Have these books available on display or to read at read aloud sessions.
- Have the children write comments or book reviews about the text to display in the book corner or as part of the display of Viviane Schwarz's books.

Session 12: Instructional writing

- Reread the entire book.
- Think about how to help the cats look after the dog in future. What do dogs need to keep them happy and healthy?
- Model how to write a set of instructions for the cats to explain 'How to look after a dog'. Think about the imperative verbs and appropriate sentence starters to extend writing,
e.g. Feed the dog at least twice every day. Have a
Make sure the dog has clean, fresh water to drink.
Put a lead on the dog to take it for a walk.
When you are out, don't let the dog off the lead.

- You could also encourage the children to add 'Top tips' to make it more exciting for the reader e.g. **Remember, dare easily scared, try not to startle it!** or diagrams to make the instructions clearer.
- The finished instructions can be published in a greeting card style folded guide book.

Session 13: Illustrating and writing own stories

Opportunities to illustrate a story during an activity such as bookmaking give children the chance to build on ideas that they have gained from talk, story making, role-play and drawing. They enable them to engage in creative re-interpretations of the texts.

- Return to the character drawings that the children created at the beginning of the sequence. What do you think would happen if this character met the cats in the story? What would they do together? What would they say to each other? Discuss lots of possible ideas, and how to shape the scenes to develop the narrative behind the scene.
- As part of shared writing, imagine a scene where your new character is with the cats. Visualise exactly what they are doing together, and draw what you see. Think about whether, if this was in a book, you would use any Paper Technology to create flaps.
- Articulate your ideas and where they are coming from and how you are developing your scene to add more detail to the event occurring. Show how to add speech as part of speech bubbles to show how the characters are interacting in the scene.
- Have the children do the same with their cat characters, drawing and shaping a new scene where their character is interacting with the cats in the book. Give plenty of time and space for children to experiment with different ideas. Encourage them to add speech bubbles to show the interactions as in the original text.
- With more time, you could show the children how to add further scenes to develop a story narrative as a longer picture book. The first few scenes could be about the characters meeting and interacting, a problem could occur, and be resolved. This will need time for the children to sketch out each scene and add appropriate speech bubbles. This could be done in a sketchbook, storyboard, or A3 piece of paper folded into quarters.

Sessions 14 & 15: Publishing writing:

Bookmaking provides a motivating context within which children can bring together their developing understanding of what written language is like; making written language meaningful as they construct their own texts.

- Using the scene drafted in the last session, show the children how to make an A3 sized greeting card fold book, using heavyweight paper. Have smaller pieces of this paper available, in case children would like to use it to make flaps.
- Give time for the children to draw out the scene in best, taking care over each drawing, using felt tips or watercolour paints to draw and then ink over each character, before adding speech bubbles, scenery and any necessary flap technology.
- If children are making a full story, you may want to show the alternative Paper Technology to create a longer book. Ideas for this can be found in Paul Johnson's publications Making Books and Get Writing

4-7.

- Present the finished books or scenes on public display, in the book corner, or in another communal space in the setting.

You could also:

- Investigate writing for persuasion, by asking the children the question 'If you could have any pet, what would it be and why?' You could conduct a conscience alley, where children line up on either side, advising the decision maker on what pet they should get and why and the decision maker then makes their choice after they have heard all the responses. Children could then go on to write an extended piece, persuading the reader why their choice of pet is the best, including reasons why it is a better choice than other animals.