



# Stellar Home Language

Supporting early language and literacy teaching in Grade R

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## Teacher's Guide for a two-week cycle

Second Edition 2018

## DEAR TEACHER

Wordworks is a non-profit organisation established in 2005 to support early language and literacy development. The Stellar programme was designed by Wordworks to support Grade R teachers in their important role as teachers of language and emergent literacy. We focus on Grade R because evidence shows that strong early language and literacy skills support all later learning.

### **Early language and literacy development**

In order to learn to read and write, children need to have opportunities to build their competence and understanding in two key areas:

- language skills (listening, speaking, vocabulary and comprehension)
- code-related skills (phonological awareness and letter–sound knowledge).

Children also need many opportunities to see how reading and writing work, and for these processes to be modelled by teachers. They need to read and enjoy books and use drawing and early writing to share their ideas.

### **Our programme**

Stellar provides theoretical and practical ideas to help you build a language-rich classroom that supports early literacy development. The programme has been developed and revised in response to feedback from Grade R teachers and trainers. Stellar aligns with CAPS requirements.

### **Stellar classroom materials**

This *Teacher's Guide* is one of a set of guides for the teaching of Home Language, each 'starring' a new story! Each *Teacher's Guide* contains a two-week programme of integrated activities for teaching Home Language to your Grade R class every day.

A *Teacher's Guide for parent meetings* assists you to guide parents to support language learning at home.

### **Stellar training**

For teachers training to use the Stellar programme, there is a set of *Teacher Workbooks* that takes you through the different elements of the programme while deepening your understanding about why each element is important.

### **Your stories**

We know that teachers are creative about using whatever is available to them. We encourage you to adapt the activities in this guide to suit your context and the resources available to you. As you become familiar with the two-week framework in the Stellar programme, you will be able to use your own story books and oral stories as a basis for teaching language and emergent literacy.

### **Meet Stella**

You will see that there is a teacher present throughout this *Teacher's Guide*. She will keep you company on your learning journey and will often give advice based on her years of experience in the Grade R classroom. Teachers have affectionately come to call her Stella!

We hope you enjoy using this programme. You will be giving your Grade R learners the best possible gift – and we know you will enjoy learning with them!

Our best wishes,

*Stella and the Wordworks Team*



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# Introduction to Stellar

## How to use this book

Two-week planner: Week 1		
ACTIVITY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
<b>SHOW AND TELL</b>	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.
<b>WHOLE CLASS LETTERS AND SOUNDS ACTIVITIES</b>	Tell the story for the first time, introducing a letter from the story (i).	Forming the letter (multisensory activities)
<b>WHOLE CLASS STORY-BASED ACTIVITIES</b>	Storytelling and building vocabulary	Storytelling and singing
<b>ROTATION GROUP ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Group 1</b> Practising the letter (i)	<b>Group 1</b> Creative play (art and construction)
	<b>Group 2</b> Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)	<b>Group 2</b> Practising the letter (i)
	<b>Group 3</b> Independent reading	<b>Group 3</b> Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)
	<b>Group 4</b> Letter puzzles and games	<b>Group 4</b> Independent reading
	<b>Group 5</b> Creative play (art and construction)	<b>Group 5</b> Letter puzzles and games
<b>STORY TIME</b>	Read a new book aloud every day.	Read a new book aloud every day.

Each *Stellar Teacher's Guide* stars one story, which you will find on page 8, together with a verse, a song or poem and a vocabulary list. Refer to this story at the front of the book whenever you need to.

Be sure to tell the story at the very beginning of the two-week cycle, before you do any of the activities.

### MONDAY Storytelling and building vocabulary

Children hear the Bushbuck's visitor story while learning new vocabulary.

**YOU WILL NEED**

- Diagram and group Bushbuck, Elephant and Frog.
- Discussion questions which focus on the story.
- Story, rhyme and vocabulary list on page 8.

**STORY**

Children hear the story for the first time.

**YOU WILL NEED**

- Diagram and group Bushbuck, Elephant and Frog.
- Discussion questions which focus on the story.
- Story, rhyme and vocabulary list on page 8.

**STORY**

Children hear the story for the first time.

### MONDAY Introducing a letter from the story

Help children to become familiar with the letter 'i' by using the story 'The Bushbuck's Visitor'.

**YOU WILL NEED**

- Diagram and group Bushbuck, Elephant and Frog.
- Discussion questions which focus on the story.
- Story, rhyme and vocabulary list on page 8.

**STORY**

Children hear the story for the first time.

### WEDNESDAY Practising the letter

Children work independently to practice the letter 'i' by using the story 'The Bushbuck's Visitor'.

**YOU WILL NEED**

- Diagram and group Bushbuck, Elephant and Frog.
- Discussion questions which focus on the story.
- Story, rhyme and vocabulary list on page 8.

**STORY**

Children hear the story for the first time.

### THURSDAY Independent reading

Children work independently to read the story 'The Bushbuck's Visitor'.

**YOU WILL NEED**

- Diagram and group Bushbuck, Elephant and Frog.
- Discussion questions which focus on the story.
- Story, rhyme and vocabulary list on page 8.

**STORY**

Children hear the story for the first time.

As you prepare for teaching a two-week cycle, start with the Two-week planner (page 12). It maps out all the activities you will do, every day, for two weeks.

If you follow the planner, you will be covering everything you need for good Home Language teaching in line with CAPS.

Children will have a balance of whole class and small group activities, some of which they do independently; others are teacher-led.

### Bushbuck's visitor

Two eyes to see, two ears to hear, two legs to walk and run, here are my hands – give yours to me – Time for stories everyone!

Once upon a time there was a bushbuck, and he lived in a little house made of sticks. Bushbuck always left his door open when he went out. One day...

Bushbuck ran to find his friend Elephant. He found Elephant standing under a tree, swinging his trunk like his. Bushbuck said, "Elephant, Elephant, can you help me?" Elephant replied, "Yes, my friend, what's the matter?" "My house is falling down!"

"Mmmmm, I don't want to go inside your house," said Elephant. "Oh my!" said Bushbuck. "Who can help us?" Elephant and Bushbuck looked at each other and they both said, "Let's go and call our brave friend, Lion!" They found Lion, but asleep in the warm sun. Elephant called...

When he got to the house, he said in his loud, angry voice, "Who is in Bushbuck's house?" Again, the voice said, "Do not open the door or I'll eat you!" Lion roared and said, "What! Eat me, the King of the jungle?" Then there was a little scuffling noise. Like...

### VOCABULARY LIST

Bushbuck's elephant, lion, frog, friend, house, door, stick, run, move, you, said, with, top, mouth, too, now, quiet, from, stick, proper, worried, afraid, crying, sitting, want, drink, leave, close, hand, smile, laugh, help, call, biggest, friends, surprise, tick.

If you should meet...  
To the tune of "If you should meet an elephant..."  
If you should meet a bushbuck walking down the street,  
What would you do? What would you say?  
If you should meet a lion walking down the street,  
What would you do? What would you say?  
If you should meet a frog walking down the street,  
What would you do? What would you say?  
If you should meet a friendly frog walking down the street,  
What would you do? What would you say?  
If you should meet a friendly frog walking down the street,  
What would you do? What would you say?  
If you should meet a friendly frog walking down the street,  
What would you do? What would you say?

The activities have been divided into three sections, each with its own introduction:

- 1 Letters and sounds activities
- 2 Story-based activities
- 3 Rotation group activities

Find your way easily by looking at the section names at the top and bottom of each page.

We give you two kinds of **Resources** at the end of the book: teacher resources and photocopiable resources for the children. The footer text tells you where to use each resource.



## Building up a toolkit

You will need to build up your own toolkit of resources over time to teach the Stellar programme. Some of these resources relate to the story in each guide. We have started you off with puppets, sequence pictures and a Big Book in each Story Pack, as well as a template to make little books. We know that as a creative teacher you will plan ahead to make and collect other resources to support the Stellar story. Children will enjoy props during storytelling and costumes for fantasy play, and you will need scrap materials for art and construction activities. Remember how important it is for children to see printed materials connected to the story: look out for picture books, shopping flyers and magazines for your book corner and posters for your walls.

You will always need colourful crayons, paints and paintbrushes, scissors and glue, and paper for children to draw on. You can make simple sand trays, white boards and play dough (recipe and method on page 52). This guide provides templates to make your own puzzles, game boards and letter cards as well as a few activity pages for you to photocopy for your children. If you cannot make photocopies, feel free to adapt the activity or to use the other options given to you in the guide.

We suggest that you make sure everything is set up before you start lessons, so you can make the most of your lesson time.

## Assessment

Assessment in Grade R is informal, which means it is particularly important for you to remain aware of each child's language and literacy strengths, challenges and progress, as well as their levels of confidence and enjoyment throughout Home Language lessons. We encourage you to keep notes about each child and jot down significant learning events, challenges being experienced at the time, together with any ideas you have for how you might respond. In addition to daily observations, there are many assessment opportunities built into the Stellar two-week cycle which give you the opportunity to focus on individual children's progress.

These include:

- rotation group activities: you will spend focused time with individual children as you support their drawing and emergent writing.
- paper-based activities: children will produce their own paper-based work in the *Rainbow letter* activity, the *Read and do* activities, and the second sequence picture activity (called *More sequencing pictures*).

It is vitally important that children never feel that you are assessing them or their work. Young children find it almost impossible to learn in an environment where they feel frightened, anxious or insecure. Your job is to build their confidence together with their skills and knowledge so they can show you their very best work.

## Language learning opportunities throughout the day

The Stellar programme gives structured activities for different parts of the day. However, we know that language learning happens all day in classrooms where teachers are responsive to children and allow rich to-and-fro conversations. It is so important for you to be responsive to what interests your children. Transition times, show and tell, snack times and morning ring all provide excellent opportunities to build language through questions, comments and conversations. On the next page, we give ideas for how you can maximise language learning during two much-loved Grade R activities – *Show and tell* and *Story time*.



## Show and tell

Show and tell is a much-loved part of the daily programme in Grade R. Children bring something from home to share with their class: it can be anything from a photograph of a family member to a story book to an autumn leaf newly fallen. It is important that this does not become a time for children to show off new possessions like clothes or expensive toys.

### STEPS

- 1 Children sit in a circle with you. (This can be the whole class, or a small group depending on how you structure this activity.)
- 2 Begin: *"Aren't we lucky! Three children have brought something for Show and Tell today. Let's sit quietly and listen attentively."*
- 3 Ask each child to tell the group about what they have brought.
- 4 Affirm the child's choice of object. For example: *"I love picking up shells; they remind me of summer!"*
- 5 Listen actively to the child speaking. Make eye contact.
- 6 Repeat and then elaborate on what they say about their object.
- 7 Draw them out by asking specific questions and listen carefully to their answers. Ask if anyone else has a question.
- 8 Once all the children have spoken about their object, do a quick memory and comprehension quiz:
  - Who told us about ... ?
  - Where did ... get her ... ?
  - Someone in the group explained why ... Can you remember the reason?



### Rules for Show and tell:

- Take turns to talk.
- Look at the person speaking.
- Listen carefully to what each person is saying and think about it.

## Story time: Reading aloud for enjoyment

The Stellar programme is story-based. We have written simple stories and adapted folk tales as the basis for learning activities over two weeks.

It is also important for children to hear stories for pure enjoyment. There needs to be time in the day when children are read stories with rich language and beautiful illustrations, with no expectations or activities. We want children to truly 'be in the moment' – to become absorbed in a story and to experience the magic of books.

We propose that reading aloud happens at the end of every day. You will need to plan ahead to line up a selection of storybooks that you and the children will love. See our website for some recommendations.

### STEPS

#### Before reading

- 1 Show children the cover of the book. Ask them to predict what the story will be about.
- 2 Take a picture walk through the book, looking at the pictures and predicting the story. (If the story has a delightful surprise, you may want to skip the picture walk or stop half way through!)
- 3 Link the story to the children's own knowledge and experience.
- 4 Introduce a few key words from the story.
- 5 Read the title of the story and the name of the author and illustrator.

#### During reading

- 1 Read with expression, using different voices for different characters.
- 2 Keep eye contact with the children.
- 3 Use dramatic pauses to make the story exciting.
- 4 Show the children the pictures as you read each page.
- 5 Keep the children involved by asking them, *"What do you think will happen now?"*
- 6 Enjoy the experience of sharing the story with your children!

#### After reading

- 1 Simply enjoy the magic of a shared story.
- 2 Discuss which character or part of the story they liked the most.

## Supporting multilingualism

It is likely that the children in your class speak a wealth of different languages at home. This means that some children's mother tongue is different from the Home Language chosen by the school. Although Stellar is a Home Language programme, we know that all children benefit from rich multilingual teaching spaces. Wherever possible, we encourage you to allow children to use their own language with peers, while they are building confidence using the new language of the classroom. Early in the school year, children who speak more than one language can be invited to assist with translating your instructions and children's responses. The voices of young children should never be silenced because they are not yet able to speak the language of the classroom. A second language should always build on the first, rather than replace it.

Although you will introduce the Stellar story in the language of instruction at the school, second language learners will benefit from hearing the same story in their own language. If you don't feel confident telling the story in this way, you could invite a parent to tell the story to the class in their language. Translations of the stories are free to download from the Wordworks website.

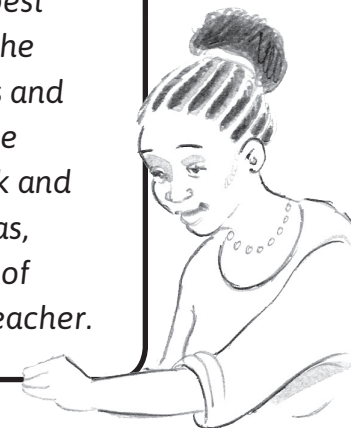
In some of the Stellar activities, we encourage you to work with words from more than one language. This gives you the opportunity to talk with your children about our multilingual world. It also allows you to acknowledge the contribution of children who bring language diversity to your classroom – give them a chance to shine! We encourage you to have fun with words from the story, and build your own knowledge of other languages. Try to introduce some vocabulary words from the Stellar stories in different languages to ensure comprehension for those learning a second language, and to broaden the knowledge base of your monolingual children.

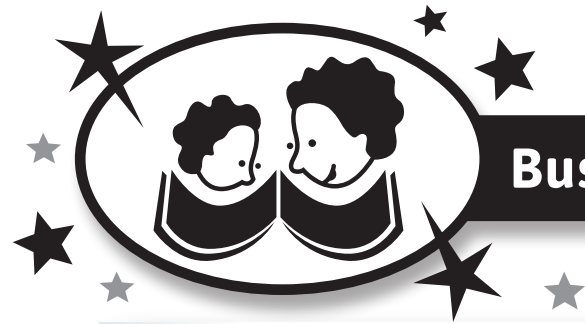
## Parents

It's very important for parents to be involved in their children's learning, particularly when children are young. When parents are positive about what happens at school, this helps children hold two very important parts of their world together – the home part and the school part. When parents pay attention to their children talking and reading, writing and drawing, then children will believe these activities are valued and important.

The *Stellar Teacher's Guide for parent meetings* has been developed to help you get parents interested in your Grade R classroom, especially with your implementation of the Stellar Home Language programme. Even if you never organise parent meetings, there are many simple ways to encourage parental involvement in children's learning. Look out for the suggestions to send little books home for children to read to their parents, possibilities for parents to assist with storytelling and games in the classroom, and the ever-important idea that parents talk and read with their children!

*Research has shown that one of the best measures of quality in classrooms is the level of interaction between teachers and children. Make your classroom a place where children are encouraged to ask and answer questions and share their ideas, and where they are given the benefit of meaningful conversation with their teacher.*





## Bushbuck's visitor

### Two eyes to see

Two eyes to see,  
Two ears to hear,  
Two legs to walk and run;  
Here are my hands –  
Give yours to me –  
Time for stories everyone!



Once upon a time there was a bushbuck, and he lived in a little house made of sticks. Bushbuck always left his door open when he went out. One day, Bushbuck went out to the river to drink some water, and he left his door open as always. He was walking back to his house when he noticed that his door was closed. Bushbuck was worried, and he said in his quiet Bushbuck voice, "Who is in my house?" He listened and waited. Somebody answered in a deep voice, "Do not open the door or I will eat you!" Bushbuck was very frightened.

Bushbuck ran to find his friend Elephant. He found Elephant standing under a tree, swinging his trunk like this. Bushbuck said, "Elephant, Elephant, can you help me?" Elephant replied, "Yes, my friend, what's the matter?" "There's someone in my house and he says he's going to eat me," said Bushbuck.

So Elephant and Bushbuck went back to the house. Elephant walked in his slow Elephant way. Bushbuck ran in his quick, jumpy Bushbuck way. When they got back to the house, Elephant said in his slow Elephant voice, "Who is in Bushbuck's house?" The deep voice answered, "Do not open the door or I will eat you!"





"Mmmmm, I don't want to go inside your house," said Elephant. "Oh my!" said Bushbuck. "Who can help us?" Elephant and Bushbuck looked at each other and they both said, "Let's go and call our brave friend, Lion." They found Lion, fast asleep in the warm sun. Elephant called



to Lion, "Lion, Lion, can you help us?" Lion said, "Yes, my friend, what's the matter?" "There is somebody in Bushbuck's house and he says he is going to eat us," said Elephant. Lion threw back his head and roared. Then he got up and walked to Bushbuck's house in his proud, lionish way.

When he got to the house, he said in his loud, angry voice, "Who is in Bushbuck's house?" Again, the voice said, "Do not open the door or I will eat you!" Lion roared and said, "What? Eat me, the King of the animals?" Then there was a little scuffling noise, like this, and a little giggling noise, like this.

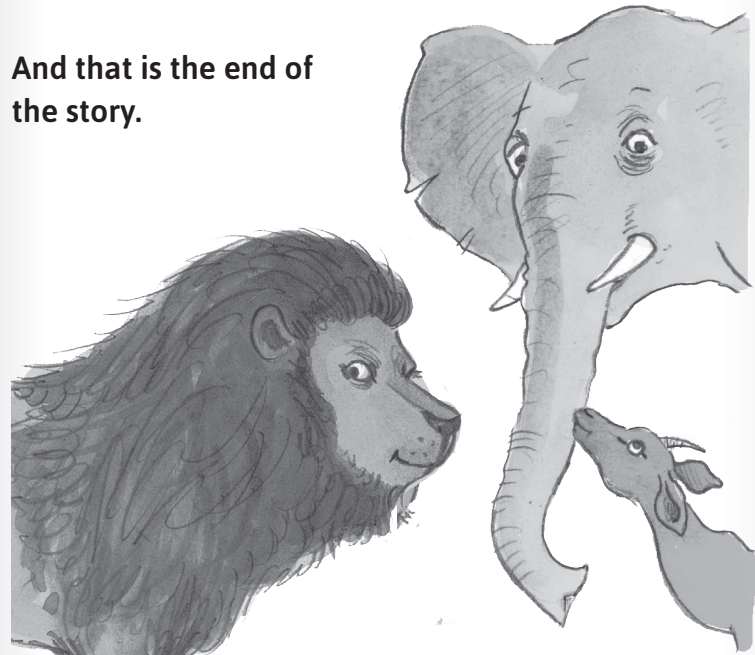


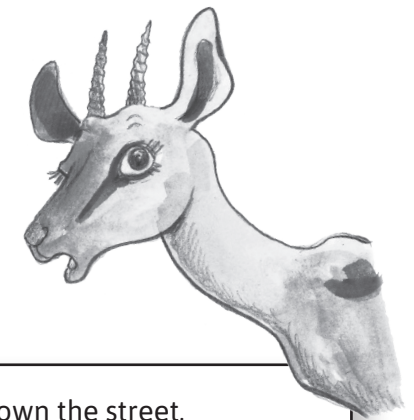
Then the door opened slowly and Frog hopped out with a big smile on his face. "Surprise! Surprise! It's only me," said Frog. Everyone laughed and Elephant said, "I am the biggest, but Lion, you are the bravest! And you, Frog, you are the smallest and the funniest of us all!"



Bushbuck said, "Thank you, thank you for your help, my good friends."

**And that is the end of the story.**





## VOCABULARY LIST

bushbuck; elephant; lion; frog; friend; house; door; stick; roar; trunk; sun; loud; soft; big; small; fast; slow; quiet; brave; quick; jumpy; worried; proud; giggle; asleep; warm; drink; leave; close; swing; smile; laugh; help; call; biggest; bravest; surprise; trick

### If you should meet ...

To the tune of "If you should meet an elephant ..."

6 If you should meet a Bush buck walk - ing down the street,

10 What would you do? What would you say? I'd

14 say, "Good mor - ning, Bush buck, how do you do? I'm

19 pleased to meet you, Bush - buck, and may I dance with you?" La

la la la la la la la la la la

(Children hook arms and dance in pairs.)

If you should meet a Bushbuck walking down the street,  
What would you do? What would you say?  
I'd say, "Good morning, Bushbuck, how do you do?  
I'm pleased to meet you, Bushbuck, and may I dance with you?"  
(Children hook arms and dance in pairs.)

If you should meet an Elephant walking down the street,  
What would you do? What would you say?  
I'd say, "Good morning Elephant, how do you do?  
I'm pleased to meet you, Elephant, and may I dance with you?"  
(Children hook arms and dance in pairs.)

If you should meet a Li-on walking down the street,  
What would you do? What would you say?  
I'd say, "Good morning Li-on, how do you do?  
I'm pleased to meet you, Lion, and may I dance with you?"  
(Children hook arms and dance in pairs.)

If you should meet a friendly Frog walking down the street,  
What would you do? What would you say?  
I'd say, "Good morning friendly Frog, how do you do?  
I'm pleased to meet you, friendly Frog, and may I dance with you?"  
(Children hook arms and dance in pairs.)

# Two-week planner: Week 1

ACTIVITY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
<b>SHOW AND TELL</b>	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.
<b>WHOLE CLASS LETTERS AND SOUNDS ACTIVITIES</b>	Tell the story for the first time. Introducing a letter from the story (l)	Forming the letter (multisensory activities)
<b>WHOLE CLASS STORY-BASED ACTIVITIES</b>	Storytelling and building vocabulary	Storytelling and singing
<b>ROTATION GROUP ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Group 1</b> Practising the letter (l)	<b>Group 1</b> Creative play (Art and construction)
	<b>Group 2</b> Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)	<b>Group 2</b> Practising the letter (l)
	<b>Group 3</b> Independent reading	<b>Group 3</b> Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)
	<b>Group 4</b> Letter puzzles and games	<b>Group 4</b> Independent reading
	<b>Group 5</b> Creative play (Art and construction)	<b>Group 5</b> Letter puzzles and games
<b>STORY TIME</b>	Read a new book aloud every day.	Read a new book aloud every day.





WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.
Letter boxes	Listening for beginning and end sounds	Blending and segmenting (syllables)
Storytelling and role play	Sequencing pictures	Shared writing and reading
<b>Group 1</b> Letter puzzles and games	<b>Group 1</b> Independent reading	<b>Group 1</b> Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)
<b>Group 2</b> Creative play (Art and construction)	<b>Group 2</b> Letter puzzles and games	<b>Group 2</b> Independent reading
<b>Group 3</b> Practising the letter (l)	<b>Group 3</b> Creative play (Art and construction)	<b>Group 3</b> Letter puzzles and games
<b>Group 4</b> Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)	<b>Group 4</b> Practising the letter (l)	<b>Group 4</b> Creative play (Art and construction)
<b>Group 5</b> Independent reading	<b>Group 5</b> Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)	<b>Group 5</b> Practising the letter (l)
Read a new book aloud every day.	Read a new book aloud every day.	Read a new book aloud every day.

## Two-week planner: Week 2

ACTIVITY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
<b>SHOW AND TELL</b>	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.
<b>WHOLE CLASS LETTERS AND SOUNDS ACTIVITIES</b>	Introducing letters from the story ( <b>u</b> and <b>e</b> )	Forming the letters (multisensory activities)
<b>WHOLE CLASS STORY-BASED ACTIVITIES</b>	More sequencing pictures	Shared reading: Big Book
<b>ROTATION GROUP ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Group 1</b> Practising the letters ( <b>u</b> and <b>e</b> )	<b>Group 1</b> Creative play (Fantasy play)
	<b>Group 2</b> Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)	<b>Group 2</b> Practising the letters ( <b>u</b> and <b>e</b> )
	<b>Group 3</b> Independent reading	<b>Group 3</b> Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)
	<b>Group 4</b> Letter puzzles and games	<b>Group 4</b> Independent reading
	<b>Group 5</b> Creative play (Fantasy play)	<b>Group 5</b> Letter puzzles and games
<b>STORY TIME</b>	Read a new book aloud every day.	Read a new book aloud every day.



WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.
Letter boxes	Listening for beginning and end sounds	Blending and segmenting (syllables and CVC)
Read and do	Shared writing and reading	Listen and do
<b>Group 1</b> Letter puzzles and games	<b>Group 1</b> Independent reading	<b>Group 1</b> Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)
<b>Group 2</b> Creative play (Fantasy play)	<b>Group 2</b> Letter puzzles and games	<b>Group 2</b> Independent reading
<b>Group 3</b> Practising the letters (u and e)	<b>Group 3</b> Creative play (Fantasy play)	<b>Group 3</b> Letter puzzles and games
<b>Group 4</b> Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)	<b>Group 4</b> Practising the letters (u and e)	<b>Group 4</b> Creative play (Fantasy play)
<b>Group 5</b> Independent reading	<b>Group 5</b> Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)	<b>Group 5</b> Practising the letters (u and e)
Read a new book aloud every day.	Read a new book aloud every day.	Read a new book aloud every day.



# Introduction to letters and sounds activities

## ***The world of letters and sounds***

We know from research that children who know something about letters and the sounds they make are likely to learn to read and write more easily than children who have limited letter–sound knowledge. However, we are not suggesting that children in Grade R should be taught about letters in a formal way. The Stellar programme includes many fun, age-appropriate ways to build children’s knowledge of letters.

We don’t believe Grade R children should be drilled or chant the alphabet, copy letters from a board or practise writing letters between lines or on paper with a pencil. In the Stellar programme, children learn how to form letters through big movements and through experiences that involve all of their senses. We know that children learn best when something has meaning to them, so we take care to link letters and sounds to stories – and to new words, pictures and objects. Children learn about language while building their knowledge of letters.

In addition to learning about the relationships between letters and sounds, research has shown that it is vital for children to become aware of sounds in spoken language (phonological awareness). If children don’t learn to pay attention to sounds in spoken language, they might know what they want to write, but not be able to hear the sounds in words in order to write them. The letters and sounds section of the Stellar programme includes many oral activities that help children to develop this awareness.

We have included multilingual lists of words from the story in an activity to develop children’s ability to break words up into syllables, and to blend syllables to make words. Research tells us that young children who learn to pay attention to sounds in words in one language can transfer this skill to another language. Most importantly, children come to know that there is so much to learn about

words from all languages – and so much fun to be had while playing with words!

Spending time on these activities will take Grade R children on a journey of exploration into the world of letters and sounds, which will ensure that they are well-prepared to meet the demands of the Grade 1 curriculum.

## ***Teaching letters and sounds***

The Stellar programme focuses on a new letter every week. The letters that have been selected for each story are different for each language because they are linked to words in the story. It is ideal to introduce a new letter by linking it to words from a familiar story, but if you must teach letters in a different order, you can still make use of the ideas for teaching letters in the Stellar Programme.

Plan for the letters and sounds activities to take approximately 15 minutes every day. We have given you activities to use from Monday to Friday. The Week 1 activities are repeated in Week 2, with a focus on a new letter. The whole class usually does these activities together at the beginning of the daily programme. However, you can focus on letters and sounds at any time in your everyday routine, particularly during outdoor play and transition times (lining up outside the toilet; preparing for lunch time and so on). Use opportunities to point out letters in the environment and ask children what letters they see around them. This helps children to see how we use letters as clues to read things around us.



## Resources to make for the letters and sounds activities

### Play dough mats

Put copies of the letter templates in the **Resources** into plastic sleeves. Children can use the printed letter as a guide when forming play dough letters. Play dough mats can also be downloaded and printed from websites such as [www.sparklebox.co.uk](http://www.sparklebox.co.uk).

### Whiteboards

Insert a piece of cardboard or paper into a plastic sleeve. Children can use a whiteboard marker to practise 'writing' big letters. These can be cleaned easily with a cloth or tissue.

### A set of letter boxes

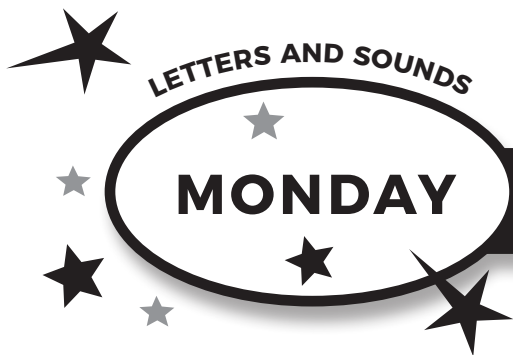
Fill empty ice-cream containers with objects (or pictures of objects) that start with a specific sound. For example, the **g** box will contain objects whose names begin with the sound /g/.

Use the word lists to help you choose items for the boxes. Label each letter box using the letter templates. It is best to trace letters onto a sensory material like felt, sandpaper or corrugated cardboard. Cut out the letter and stick it onto the lid of the letter box. Stick a smaller letter on the side of the box so that you can easily identify the box you need when the letter boxes are stacked on a shelf.



*It is not necessary to make a letter box for every letter of the alphabet. Finding appropriate objects for the letters **q**, **x**, **y** and **z** can be difficult and children will learn these letters as they encounter them in print when they are learning to read. Very few words begin with vowels in English, and vowels make different sounds in different words, so letter boxes are not a good way to introduce vowels.*





## Introducing a letter from the story

**Letter-sound knowledge:** Children learn about three new letters linked to words from the story. In Week 1, the focus letter is **l**, and in Week 2, the focus letters are **u** and **e**.

### YOU WILL NEED

Tell the story of *Bushbuck's visitor* on page 8; big alphabet chart; board

### Week 1: Introducing l STEPS

#### Listening for sounds

- 1 Ask the children to sit on the mat and listen carefully to you. Say these words from the story: "lion, lived, little, left, listen, laugh, loud, leave".
- 2 Say to the children: "Can you hear what sound these words start with: l-l-lion, l-l-lived, l-l-little? Yes, you are right, they start with the sound /l/. Here are some more words that start with /l/: ladder, lamb, late, leopard, library, lizard, lock, lunch." (Emphasise the beginning sound as you say these words, for example: "l-l-ladder, l-l-lamb".)

#### Saying the sound

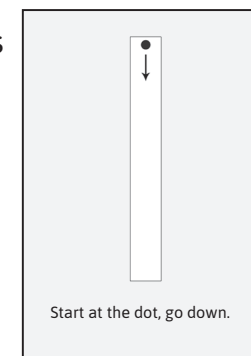
- 1 Say the sound /l/ clearly and tell the children to watch your mouth.
- 2 Ask the children to say the sound /l/: "l-l-l-l". Make this fun: say it softly, loudly, to the wall, to the ceiling and to each other. Make sure the children say the sound of the letter and not the letter name l ('el').
- 3 Teach the children an action associated with the sound. For example: the children can lick an imaginary lollipop saying "l-l-l-l".

#### Thinking of words beginning with the sound

- 1 Ask if anyone's name starts with /l/ or if any other words start with the sound /l/.

#### Forming the letter

- 1 Ask the children if they know how to write a letter that makes the sound /l/.
- 2 Show the children how to form the letter l. Write a large letter on the board as you say the letter formation instruction: "Start at the dot, go down"
- 3 Let the children practise the in the air, on the carpet, on their hands and so on.



#### Linking the letter to the alphabet chart

- 1 If you have an alphabet chart in your class, show the children the letter l on the alphabet chart. Explain that this letter also has a name: 'el'. This will help them to link the sounds they are learning with the letter names and the alphabet song.



In Week 2, we will introduce the letters **e** and **u**, both of which are vowels. Very few words start with a vowel sound, so we encourage children to listen for vowels in the middle of words. We introduce two vowels so that children can compare and contrast these sounds.



## Week 2: Introducing **u** and **e**

### STEPS

#### Listening for sounds

- 1 Ask the children what sounds they hear in the beginning of these words:
  - umbrella; underwear; up; untidy
  - egg; elephant; end; empty
- 2 Ask the children what sound they hear in the middle of these words. Read them in groups with the same vowel, as they are presented here:
  - mug, hug, truck, cup
  - bed, leg, hen, wet
  - jug, bus, run, duck
  - pen, rest, red, ten

#### Saying the sound

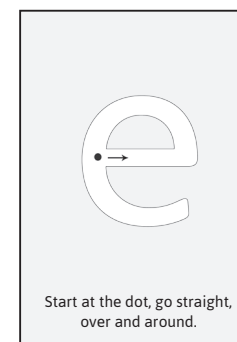
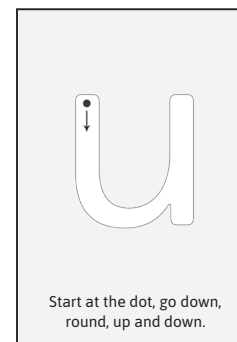
- 1 Teach the children actions associated with these two sounds. Pretend to hold an egg in one hand and crack it while saying: “eh-eh-eh-egg”. Hold your arms up in the shape of a **u** and reach up as high as you can while saying: “uh-uh-uh-up-up-up”

#### Thinking of words beginning with the sound

- 1 Ask the children if they can think of any words that have these sounds at the beginning or the middle of the word (for example **u**mbrella, **u**ncle, **j**ump or **e**lephant, lettuce, lemon).

#### Forming the letter

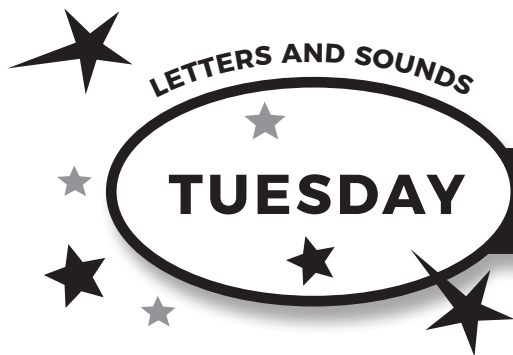
- 1 When you form **u** with the children say: “Start at the dot, go down, round, up and down.”
- 2 Form **e**: “Start at the dot, go straight over and around.”



#### Linking the letter to the alphabet chart

- 1 Show the children the letters **u** and **e** on an alphabet chart. Explain that these letters also have names: ‘yoo’ and ‘ee’.





## Forming the letter (multisensory activities)

**Letter-sound knowledge:** Children learn to form the focus letters using different materials which give them a rich sensory experience that helps them to remember the shape of the letter.

### STEPS

- 1 Begin by modelling how to write the focus letter: ask the children if they can remember words that start with the focus letter. Remember to say the sound the letter makes (/l/) and not the name of the letter ('ell').
- 2 Show the children how to form the letter. Write a large letter on the board or in the air. Say the following as you model forming the letter **l** in Week 1: "Start at the dot, go down." Say the following as you model forming the letter **u** in Week 2: "Start at the dot, go down, round, up and down." Say the following as you show the children how to form the letter **e**: "Start at the dot, go straight, over and around."
- 3 Let the children practise the letter formation in the air, on the carpet, on each other's backs or on their hands.
- 4 Once you have modelled how to write the letter, choose from the following activities to give children the experience of forming these letters using big movements and as many of their senses as possible.

*In Week 1, the focus letter is **l**.*

*In Week 2, the focus letters are **e** and **u**.*



### Chalk letters

#### YOU WILL NEED

A large piece of chalk

### STEPS

- 1 Go outside and give each child a piece of large chalk.
- 2 Ask the children to write a letter in chalk on the bricks/wall/paving.
- 3 Encourage the children to say the sound the letter makes as they write the letter.





## Water letters

### YOU WILL NEED

Water; paintbrushes

### STEPS

- 1 Go outside and give each child a container with water and a paintbrush.
- 2 Ask the children to paint a letter many times in water on the bricks/ wall/paving.
- 3 Encourage the children to say the sound the letter makes as they write the letter.



## Sand letters

### YOU WILL NEED

Sand trays or a sandy area outside

### STEPS

- 1 Divide the children into small groups and give each group a sand tray. Alternatively, take the children outside to a sandy area.
- 2 Ask the children to write a letter in the sand with their finger or a small twig.
- 3 Encourage the children to say the sound the letter makes as they write the letter.





## Play dough letters

### YOU WILL NEED

Play dough (recipe on page 52); play dough mats

### STEPS

- 1 Give each child a ball of play dough. Ask the children to roll the play dough into long sausage shapes.
- 2 Put copies of the letter templates in a plastic sleeve. Show the children how to form a letter out of play dough using the printed letter as a guide.
- 3 Encourage the children to make their own letter and trace over the play dough letter with their finger while saying the sound the letter makes.



## Whiteboard letters

### YOU WILL NEED

Whiteboards; marker pens; pieces of cloth

### STEPS

- 1 Give each child a whiteboard and let them write the letter while saying the sound the letter makes.
- 2 The children can repeat this many times. At the beginning of the activity, encourage them to write letters that take up the whole page. Once they feel confident, they can try writing smaller letters.



# LETTERS AND SOUNDS

## WEDNESDAY Letter boxes

**Letter-sound knowledge:** The children build their knowledge of the focus letters by linking them to the beginning sounds of the names of objects.



The Activity steps below focus on the letter 'l' and should be used in Week 1. In Week 2, choose any of the letter boxes you have used so far, and use the opportunity to revise letters by sorting and comparing.

### YOU WILL NEED

A letter box containing objects or pictures that start with 'l': lion; leopard; lobster; ladder; laces; ladybird; lamp; lighter; lipstick; lollipop; lizard; lips; leg

### STEPS

#### Naming objects

- 1 Ask the children to sit on the mat and let them hold the objects or pictures of objects and pass them around.
- 2 Ask questions: "Have you seen one of these? What do we use this for?"

#### Listening for beginning sounds

- 1 Say: "Listen to this word: l-l-lamp. Can you hear what sound 'lamp' starts with? What is the first sound of the word?"

- 2 Encourage the children to emphasise the beginning sound when they say a word.

#### Linking the sound with a letter

- 1 Once the children have practised the new sound, then show them the letter on the letter box and say: "This is how we write l". Let the children trace over the letter on the lid with their fingers.

#### Working with more than one letter

- 1 Now, combine objects from two or more letter boxes and spread them on the floor or table.
- 2 Ask children to find objects that start with one of the sounds. For example: "Nomsa, can you find something that starts with the sound /g/?" The child must name the object, say the beginning sound and place the object in the correct letter box.
- 3 You can also give each child an object and then say one of the sounds. Ask all those children who have an object starting with that sound to come forward and put the object in the correct letter box.

# THURSDAY

## Listen for beginning and end sounds

**Phonological awareness:** Children learn to hear and identify beginning and end sounds in words.



*Begin today's listening activity by saying: "Let's close our eyes and be quiet for a few minutes while we listen carefully to the sounds around us."*

### YOU WILL NEED

Pictures or objects with the same ending sounds (eight pairs of pictures from page 57). You can add more objects or picture cards from the lists in the grey box.

**/k/:** cake; snake (more words that end with /k/ – sock; shark; stick; rock; book; fork; milk; duck; clock)

**/d/:** bird; bed (more words that end with /d/ – bread; card; red)

**/g/:** dog; pig (more words that end with /g/ – flag; plug; peg; frog; jug)

**/l/:** ball; wool (more words that end with /l/ – nail; snail; bell; shell)

**/n/:** pen; spoon (more words that end with /n/ – stone; pin; man; sun; ten)

**/p/:** tap; soap (more words that end with /p/ – cap; chip; shop; cup)

**/t/:** cat; goat (more words that end with /t/ – carrot; plate; pot; feet; heart; hat; sit)

**/s/:** dress; horse (more words that end with /s/ – bus; house)

**/m/:** drum; jam (more words that end with /m/ – worm; plum)



## STEPS

- 1 Select two pairs of picture cards or objects ending with the same sound. Ask four children to stand in front of the class. Give each child a picture or object to hold up so all the children can see. Ask the children to help you name the pictures or objects.
- 2 Say the name of each picture or object slowly, while emphasising the sounds in the words, particularly the end sound.
- 3 Ask the children in the class to help you decide which two objects or pictures end with the same sound. The children holding these pictures must move and stand next to each other.
- 4 Once the children are familiar with this game, try the following variation: Make sure you have enough objects or pictures so that you can give each child one. Explain to the children that they must find other children whose objects or pictures have the same end sound.



*Here is an alternative activity. Use the group of words from the lists in the grey box. Sing these words to the tune of "Mary had a little lamb."*

*Teacher: "What's the sound that ends these words,  
Ends these words,  
Ends these words?  
What's the sound that ends these words:  
goat and feet and heart."*

*[Signal child to respond.]*

*Child sings the sound that ends the word, for example: /t/*

*Teacher: [Give thumbs-up sign and sing:]  
"/t/ is the sound that ends these words,  
Ends these words,  
Ends these words!  
/t/ is the sound that ends these words:  
goat and feet and heart."*





FRIDAY

## Blending and segmenting (syllables and CVC)

**Phonological awareness:** Children learn to blend syllables to make words and segment words into syllables.

Once children can break up words into syllables with ease, they can begin activities that focus on individual sounds in short words. The skills needed are more advanced, even though the words are shorter. It can be difficult for children to hear each sound in short words.



### What am I saying? (multisyllabic words)

#### YOU WILL NEED

Multisyllabic words relating to the story: bushbuck; elephant; animals; surprise; little; angry; open; worried; scuffling; giggling

#### STEPS

- 1 Choose a word from the list and say the word slowly in syllables. For example: bushbuck.
- 2 Ask the children: "What word am I saying? **bush** | **buck**." They must put the syllables together to make a word.
- 3 Repeat the steps above with the other words on the list, and then include some words from other languages spoken by children in your class.

To help promote multilingualism and affirm children's home languages, try this activity with a few of these multisyllabic words. Ask children to help with your pronunciation if needed!

**Xhosa:** indlovu (elephant); kugquma (roar); umboko (trunk); ukukhalipha (brave); ukugigitheka (giggle); ukuzingca (proud); iseke (frog); uxhalabile (worried); iqhinga (trick); umhlobo (friend)

**Afrikaans:** bosbok (bushbuck); besoeker (visitor); huisie (house); bekommerd (worried); luister (listen); antwoord (answer); hardloop (run); olifant (elephant); geskuifel (moved); padda (frog)

If the children in your class speak other languages, ask them to give you a word from the story in their language.



## What am I saying? (CVC words)

### YOU WILL NEED

A small bag containing CVC picture cards or objects

### STEPS

- 1 Hold the bag in your hand and choose a picture card from the bag but keep it hidden from the children.
- 2 Say the sounds in the word slowly, emphasising each sound. For example: /c/ → /a/ → /t/.
- 3 Ask the children: "What is a /c/ → /a/ → /t/?" They must put the sounds together to make a word.
- 4 Show the picture card or object to the children and say: "Yes, I have a cat!"
- 5 Continue taking cards or objects out of the bag and repeat the steps above.
- 6 Let the children take turns to choose a card or object from the bag and repeat the same steps.

*Remember that children will need much practice blending the syllables in words before they will be able to blend individual sounds.*





# Introduction to story-based activities

## ***Moving from oral to written language***

### ***Storytelling (Monday, Week 1)***

Stellar is a story-based programme that takes children on a journey from spoken to written language. The children's first encounter with the story is when they hear the story being told by their teacher with puppets to make the characters come alive. Although you will have the printed version of the story, please understand that it is a script to guide you, rather than a text to be read to the children. It is important that you speak directly to the children as you tell them the story, rather than focusing on the printed words.

### ***Singing and role play (Tuesday and Wednesday, Week 1)***

After hearing the story being told, children will have a chance to sing a song related to the story. Songs are a wonderful way to develop language skills and some children find it easier to remember new language through melody, rhythm and rhyme. After singing, children participate in role playing the story as it is narrated. This gives them a chance to participate in the telling of the story in an active way and use the words and phrases of the different characters. It also requires them to think about the story sequence – what happens next.

### ***Story sequencing (Thursday, Week 1; Monday, Week 2)***

Once children have heard the story being told, and participated in singing and acting out the story, they have an opportunity to think carefully about the events in the story and to sequence these in the correct order. Telling a story in the correct sequence is a very important skill, and something that can be challenging for young children. When children understand that stories are made up of sequenced events, they are able to plan their own stories to have a beginning, middle and end. They learn to ask themselves, "What do I want to happen next?"

The sequencing of the events in the story is first led by you as the teacher, as you guide children's conversations about how the story started and what came next. At first you work with big colourful pictures in the whole class. Later on, the children are encouraged to sequence the events more independently. This provides a useful assessment opportunity.

### ***Writing inspired by the story (Friday, Week 1)***

Building on the oral telling of the story, the singing, role play and sequencing of events, children have a chance to discuss their ideas related to something in the story, and then see how these ideas can be written down. This activity begins with rich discussions and sharing of ideas, with contributions from as many children as possible. As you model the writing process, using the children's words and ideas, they see that what we say can be written down. This will give them the confidence to start trying to write themselves – even if they begin with scribbles and made-up letters!

### ***Shared reading (Friday, Week 1; Tuesday, Week 2)***

Shared writing provides an ideal text for shared reading as the text contains ideas and words that are very familiar to the children. It is important to take the time to read over the text you have written together, pointing to each word as you read so that children start noticing how our speech is made up of different words, with spaces between each word.





In addition to reading the texts they have co-written with you, children will have another opportunity to see how reading works when you read the Big Book in the second week. Here they will encounter the same, familiar story but in print form. When you read the Big Book to them they will see how words on a page link with the words you say. The story in the Big Book is a simplified version, so that children feel confident to try to 'read' it themselves. This gives them the experience of being a reader – even if they are just reciting the words in the book from memory.

### ***Read and do (Wednesday, Week 2)***

While shared reading activities are teacher-led, children benefit from trying to 'read' and make sense of text themselves. The Read and do activity gives children a chance to read pictures and symbols and follow what the symbols tell them to do. This provides another assessment opportunity.

### ***Listening (Friday, Week 2)***

The two-week cycle of story-based activities ends with a whole class listening activity to support the development of children's ability to pay attention, follow instructions and understand what they hear.

### ***Using story-based activities to build vocabulary***

Some teachers have initially been concerned that it may become boring for children if the activities for two weeks are based on one story. However, teachers have repeatedly reported the benefit of having so many ways for children to engage with new language. We know that in order to learn new vocabulary and make it their own, children need to hear and use words often and in different contexts. Children often understand words before they have the confidence to use them, so it is important that we do not move on to another theme or story before they have had the chance to develop a deep and lasting knowledge of new words.

Although children will learn new language and word meanings through all of the activities in the Stellar programme, we have selected new words from each story for you to focus on. These are listed on the last page of the story section under the heading Vocabulary list. The list includes a combination of common, everyday words and more difficult words. As a teacher, you know your children best, so choose to focus on words that are appropriate for the children in your class. Be especially aware of what will be helpful for children who are learning in a second language, and remember to extend children whose basic vocabulary is strong.

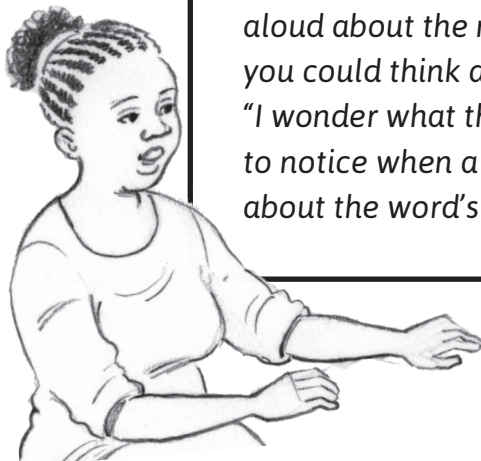
When you are working through the activities with the children, remember to draw their attention to the words you have introduced. Ask them what they know about these words, and how they say a particular word in their own language. Build on children's natural curiosity by encouraging an interest in word meanings in your class. This is one of the most important building blocks for comprehension.



Children hear the *Bush buck's visitor* story while learning new vocabulary.

#### YOU WILL NEED

- Puppets and props: Bushbuck; Elephant; Lion; Frog; Bushbuck's house
- Objects or picture cards for a few words from the vocabulary list
- Story, rhyme and vocabulary list on pages 8–11.

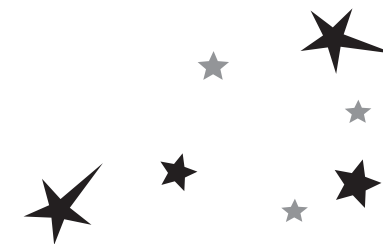


Help children to become 'word conscious' by thinking aloud about the meanings of new words. For example, you could think aloud while reading a story and say: "I wonder what that new word means?" Help children to notice when a new word is used and listen for clues about the word's meaning.

#### STEPS

##### *Before you tell the story*

- 1 Say the rhyme ***Two eyes to see*** with the children, to focus the class on the story to come.
- 2 Introduce the story to the children: "*The title of our story is **Bushbuck's visitor.***"
- 3 Relate the story to the children's lives. Ask if anybody has seen wild animals in a game reserve or on TV. Talk about the difference between domestic (pet), farm and wild animals
- 4 Introduce the characters, for example: "*This is Bushbuck and these are his friends, Elephant and Lion.*" Talk about the different ways animals move. Encourage the children to walk like a bushbuck, in a quick, jumpy sort of way; like an elephant, slowly waving his trunk from side to side; and like a lion with his head up like a king. (Don't introduce Frog at the beginning otherwise the children will know what happens in the story!)



- 5 Introduce two or three new words from the vocabulary list: *"Before we begin, I want to tell you the meanings of some new words which we will find in the story"*
  - Discuss what each word means, using simple language.
  - Where possible, show children an object or a picture to illustrate what the word means.
  - Ask children who speak different languages at home, to say the word in their own language.

#### **While you tell the story**

- 1 Make sure you tell the story in a lively way to keep the children's attention. Do actions, use props and tell the story in different voices.
- 2 Ask children to predict what happens next in the story and involve them through open-ended questions, such as: *"Who do you think Elephant and Bushbuck are going to call to help them?"*
- 3 Emphasise new vocabulary. Give short explanations if you feel it will help the children to understand the story. Ask if anyone can remember the meaning of a new word.

#### **After you tell the story**

- 1 Ask questions to check and consolidate children's understanding, such as: *"Who did Bushbuck first ask for help?"* Praise and elaborate on even the simplest answers. For example: *"Yes, that's right, he asked Elephant."*

- 2 Ask open ended questions to stimulate discussion: *"How would you feel if one of your friends played a trick on you like Frog did? Would you be angry or do you think you would laugh once you knew it was a trick?"*
- 3 Consolidate new vocabulary from the story by asking questions about a word, for example: *"What is a ... ? Can you point to a ... ? What is a ... used for?"*
- 4 Talk about the category the new words belong to, for example: 'wild animals'.

*Children will learn a new word when they are interested in the meaning of the word. By exposing children to stories with unusual words, we can help them develop an interest in knowing these words. Once they understand the words they will begin to use them in their communication with others.*



Children learn the language of the story by listening to the story again and singing a song related to the story.

### YOU WILL NEED

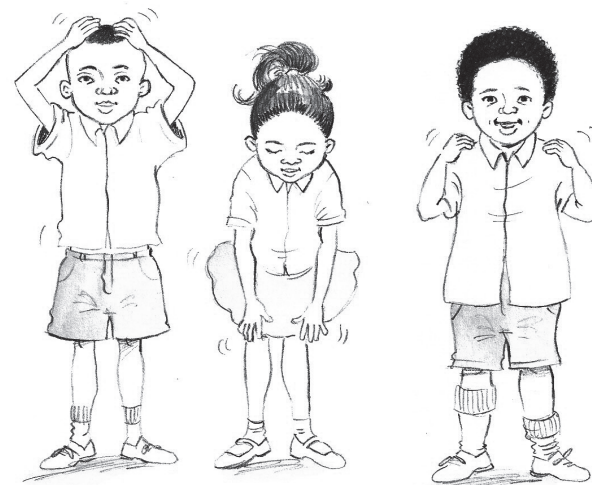
Words and music for the song *If you should meet ...* (page 11) to the tune of 'If you should meet an elephant'.



Sing the song every day! Remember to do the actions too. Let the children sing the song at certain times during the day, such as when they are waiting on the carpet or lining up outside the door after break.

### STEPS

- 1 Re-tell the story using the puppets. Ask questions as you tell the story. Encourage the children to predict what will happen next.
- 2 Sing the song to the children.
- 3 Teach the song in small parts – it may be difficult for the children to remember all the words at once.
- 4 Teach the children actions for the song.



## YOU WILL NEED

*Monitor that all the children are given a fair chance to speak and act, regardless of their skills or personality type.*

## STEPS

- 6** Start the story like this: *“Once upon a time there was a Bushbuck and he lived in a little house. His house was made of sticks. Bushbuck always left his door open when he went out.”* The child acting as Bushbuck pretends to walk away from his house.
- 7** Continue telling the story in this way. The children do the actions to match the narrator’s words.
- 8** The rest of the class watches the role play.
- 9** Organise the class into groups of five. Help the children decide who is going to play each character and the narrator.
- 10** Give the children time to practise the role play as a small group.
- 11** If there is time, let some of the groups present their role play to the class.

*The role-play activities are a wonderful way for children to learn to work in groups and to learn to trust each other. Our role as teachers is to create this space of trust and acceptance in the classroom.*

# THURSDAY Sequencing pictures

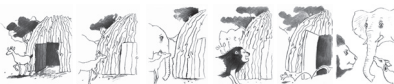
Children learn that stories are made up of a sequence of events by re-telling the story using pictures.



*Jumble up the pictures and try to tell the story in this sequence – the children will find it very funny! The silly story will help to make the correct sequence obvious and meaningful for them.*

## YOU WILL NEED

Big sequence pictures in the Story Pack



## STEPS

- 1 Sing *If you should meet ...* (page 11).
- 2 Choose one of the sequence pictures and hold it up.
- 3 Ask the children what they see and talk about the picture in detail.
- 4 Once you have discussed each picture, stick it on the board so the children can see it. Make sure the pictures are not in sequence at this stage of the activity.
- 5 After talking about all the pictures, ask the children: “Are the pictures in the correct order?”
- 6 Ask the children to point out the picture for the beginning of the story.

*These are useful questions to ask about each picture:*

- “**Who** can you see?” (characters)
- “**What** is he/she/it **doing**?” (verbs and actions)
- “**What** else can you see?” (looking again)
- “**Where** is the...?” (naming places/ position)
- “**Why** do you think...?” (creative thinking, expressing opinions)



- 7 Work together to rearrange the sequence of the pictures so the story makes sense.
- 8 Keep the children actively involved in this process. Ask questions like: “What happened next? Who can remember the next part of the story?”
- 9 When the pictures are in the correct order, invite a few children to retell the story in the correct sequence.
- 10 If you have extra time, muddle up the order again and repeat the activity.





## Shared writing and reading

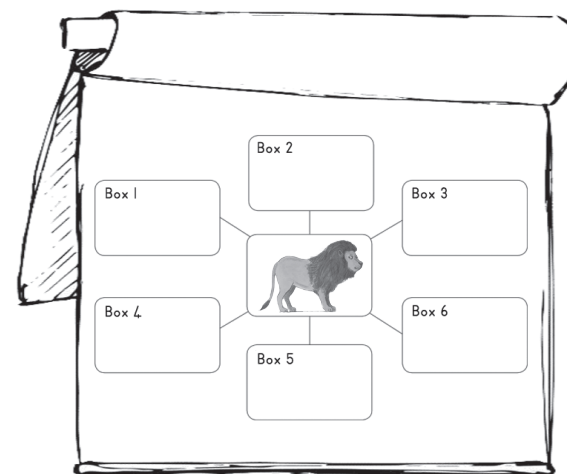
Children learn how their words and ideas can be recorded as you model the writing of *Bushbuck's visitor*.

### YOU WILL NEED

A large sheet of paper with a space in the middle and six bubbles drawn in a mind map format; the puppets; a thick black marker.

### STEPS

- 1 Say to the children: "Today we are going to write our own story about some of the animals in the story. To start, let's choose which animal to write about." Show the children the pictures of the animals from the story. Once you have chosen which animal to write about, place the picture of the animal in the middle of the paper.
- 2 Use the following questions to guide the story writing process:
  - **Box 1:** Ask the children to think of a name for the animal and write its name down.
  - **Box 2:** Ask the children for ideas about where the animal lives. Describe this place in a sentence.
  - **Box 3:** Discuss what the animal likes to eat. Once you have agreed, write this down.
- 3 Now read the story to the children using the boxes to help you. If there is time, you can ask some of the children to illustrate the story. Stick the story on the wall.



Children consolidate their own story knowledge by sequencing pictures more independently.

### YOU WILL NEED

- Sequence pictures in the Story Pack
- A black and white photocopy of small sequence pictures for each child (page 59); additional white paper for each child; scissors; glue
- Photocopied and folded little book for each child (page 60).
- Set up the tables beforehand with a black and white set of pictures for each child and enough pairs of scissors and glue for all the children to use.

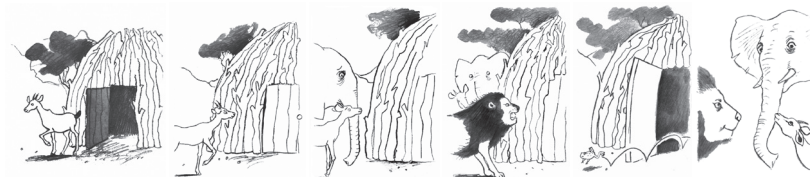
*Photocopy a little book for each child before the lesson. Fold all the little books in advance. This task might be too difficult for the children and will waste valuable teaching time if you do it during the lesson.*



### STEPS

#### On the mat

- 1 Begin with the children sitting on the mat. Choose children to stand in front of the class, each holding one of the colour sequence pictures. Make sure that the pictures are not in the correct order.
- 2 Ask the children if the pictures are in the right order. Ask them to point out the picture which should be at the beginning of the story.
- 3 Together as a group, move the children that are holding the pictures until the story makes sense. Ask questions such as: "What happened next? Who can remember the next part of the story?"
- 4 Once you have sequenced the story using the colour pictures, children will need to move to their tables and sit in small groups.





### *At their tables*

- 1** Ask the children to cut out the black and white pictures, arrange them in the correct order and then glue them on a blank page. Walk around the class and assist where necessary. This activity is useful for assessing the children's ability to put the main events of the story in the correct order.
- 2** Once children have completed their sequence pictures, give each child a little book. Encourage them to look at the cover and read the title of the story with them.
- 3** Take the children on a picture walk through the little book, helping them to notice that the pictures in the book are the same as the sequence pictures.
- 4** If there is time, children should 'read' their little book to a partner in the class.
- 5** Encourage the children to take the books home to read with their families.



Children learn about reading a familiar story in print as you model the reading process.

### YOU WILL NEED

**Bushbuck's visitor** Big Book



*Point out letters the children have learnt and encourage them to identify letters in the title or sentences. The more letters the children know the more they will be able to start to make sense of the text independently.*

### STEPS

- 1 Say the rhyme **Two eyes to see** (page 8) with the children, to focus the class on the story to come.
- 2 Encourage the children to look at the cover picture and talk about what they see and recognise.
- 3 Read the title of the story to the class. Point to each word as you read. Read it again and ask the children to read with you.
- 4 Take the children on a picture walk through the book, discussing the pictures in detail and allowing children to ask questions.

- 5 Allow the children to talk about the story and make connections to the language and experiences from the week before.
- 6 Point out the page numbers as you go and talk about what number will come next.
- 7 When you have 'walked' through the whole book, go back to the beginning and read the title again.
- 8 Turn the pages and read each sentence in a clear, steady and natural voice.
- 9 Point to each word as you read.
- 10 Point out any letters the children may know and reinforce the focus letters for this story.
- 11 Read the book again and encourage the children to 'read' with you.

*Interactive conversations that happen after story reading, when the teacher and children discuss the links between the story and real life, help children comprehend the story better and also make the experience personal, increasing the children's motivation to listen and participate.*



# WEEK 2 STORY-BASED

## WEDNESDAY Read and do

Children learn to interpret written and picture cues and follow instructions.

### YOU WILL NEED

An activity page photocopied per child (page 61);  
coloured crayons/pencils; scissors; glue



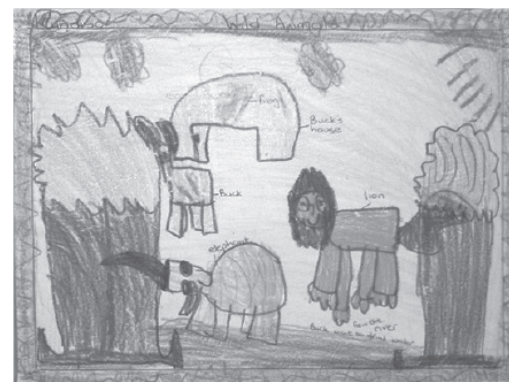
*The longer list of instructions will challenge the children's planning skills, as they will need to consider how to fit everything onto the page. Discuss this with the children before they begin. You can photocopy the activity page onto A3 paper for children with spatial difficulties.*



### STEPS

- 1 Children should be seated in small groups at their tables. Each child needs their own activity page.
- 2 Tell the children to look at the list on the page and to talk about what they see (numbers, pictures and words).
- 3 Remind the children that they are going to 'read' each line and then do what it says.

- 4 Try to avoid reading the list with the children, but encourage them to read through the whole list before starting to draw.
- 5 Encourage the children to work as a group and to work out the instructions together.
- 6 Walk around as children are working and give support where necessary.
- 7 Remind the children to check the list again after they have finished 'reading' and drawing and to put a tick next to each line when they have done that task. Ticking the list at the end of the activity is an important self-evaluation task, giving the children control over their learning and their final product.





## Shared writing and reading

Children learn how their words and ideas can be recorded as you model the labelling of a drawing.

### YOU WILL NEED

Lion puppet or cut-out picture of a lion; a large piece of paper; Prestik; pieces of white cardboard; a thick black marker

### STEPS

- 1 Put the lion puppet or cut-out picture in the middle of the large page.
- 2 Ask the children to share any interesting facts they know about lions. You can stimulate discussion by asking where lions live (in the bush in Africa) and what they eat (zebra, impala and other animals). Introduce new words like carnivore, a pride of lions, mammal, cub and so on.
- 3 Ask the children if they can name the parts of the lion's body. Choose individual children to come up and point to the correct part of the body (head, mane, body, tail, leg, paw).
- 4 Say to the children that you would like their help labelling the picture of the lion. Begin by pointing to the tail and drawing a line from the tail to the right-hand side of the picture. Pick up a piece of card and stick it with Prestik on the piece of paper, next to the line you drew from the tail. Now say to the children: *"Who can help me start writing the word 'tail'? Yes, it starts with the sound /t/ and this is the way we write a t."* Continue writing the rest of the word 'tail' without asking the children to sound out each letter.
- 5 Continue labelling the lion's head, mane, body, leg and paw. Each time you write a word, ask the children to help you listen for the beginning sound and write the corresponding letter. Remember to write in lower case. Don't sound out the whole word as many of these words are difficult to sound out fully in English. Just focus on the beginning sound and letter.
- 6 Stick up the labelled picture on the wall and watch how children begin reading the labels.

# WEEK 2 STORY-BASED

## FRIDAY Listen and do

Children learn to listen carefully and follow verbal instructions.

### YOU WILL NEED

Bell; musical instruments; noise makers

### STEPS

- 1 Begin today's listening activity by saying: *"I want you to close your eyes, then I am going to make a sound. I want you to listen carefully and put up your hand if you can tell me what sound it is."* Make sounds such as knocking on the table, clapping your hands, ringing a small bell, clicking your fingers, playing a note on a musical instrument. Once you have made the sounds and the children have identified them, make a sequence of five sounds. Then repeat the sequence, but leave one sound out – the children must identify the missing sound.
- 2 Say to the children: *"Now that we have practised listening carefully, I am going to say some words and you must tell me which one is the odd one out. Listen carefully to all the words before you try and guess. Put your hand on your head if you think you know the answer."* After each list of words, ask one child to give you the answer.

- bushbuck; bird; (chocolate); lion
- heads; shoulders; knees; (books)
- dress; jacket; shoes; (sugar)
- shark; (bee); whale; dolphin
- carrot; potato; (chair); cabbage

- 3 Now say to the children: *"I am going to give you some clues and you must try and guess which wild animal I am thinking of. Listen carefully to all of the clues before you try and guess. Put your hand on your head if you think you know the answer."* After each list of words, ask one child to give you the answer.

- *"I have big ears. I have a long trunk."* (elephant)
- *"I have a mane. I roar. I am a predator."* (lion)
- *"I like to eat grass. I have hooves."* (buck)
- *"I eat the leaves at the top of the trees. I have very long legs and a long neck."* (giraffe)
- *"I live in rivers. I have sharp teeth and a long tail."* (crocodile)
- *"I can swing from trees by my tail. I like to eat bananas."* (monkey)

# Introduction to rotation group activities

## **Helping children to work independently and in groups**

There are five group activities for each story. These activities are repeated in the second week, with some new activities added in Week 2.

Before beginning the activities, talk to the whole class about what they will do in each activity. The children might find it difficult to work independently and manage themselves initially, but as they become familiar with each other, the classroom rules and the activities, you will find they need less guidance.

### ***The importance of rules***

Negotiate some rules for rotation group activities. Allowing the children to come up with some suggestions will help them to take pride in the rules. Make sure the rules are clearly displayed and include drawings next to the written words as a reminder to children.

Here are some suggestions:

#### **Rules for Fantasy play area**

- Share and take turns
- Don't push or pull each other
- Clean hands
- Take good care of our dress-up clothes and props
- Don't hurt each other's feelings
- Talk in quiet voices
- Tidy up after playing

## **Rotating the activities**

Children will do a different activity each day, so by the end of the week they will have done all five activities. Plan carefully and prepare everything in advance.

You may choose to begin the year with all the children doing the same activity on one day, and then another activity on the next day. This will reduce your daily preparation and allow you to give instructions to all the children at the same time.

However, as soon as you feel your class is ready, we advise that you rotate the groups between activities, with each group doing a different activity on a day.

Our two-week planner (page 12) shows how each group does all the activities in a week.

*Four of the groups will be busy with activities that need less teacher guidance so that you can focus on the group that is doing **Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)**. Therefore you will be able to interact meaningfully with each of the groups in a week, giving you an opportunity to connect with the children and assess their individual progress.*







## **Overview of the activities**

### ***Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)***

Focus your time on the group doing this activity as this group is likely to need the most support. You might need to help children decide what they want to draw, and guide them with prompts without telling them how to draw! Talk with them about their drawings and encourage them to 'write' something themselves or tell you what to write on their behalf.

Display the pictures at the children's eye level around the classroom. Don't choose only the most advanced work to display. It is important to affirm every child's work throughout the year. Once all the children have done this activity, you could bind all the drawings together to make a class book which the children can 'read'.

### ***Creative play***

#### **Art and construction (Week 1)**

Encourage children to talk with each other about what they are making and how it links to the story. You can give the children freedom with a wide range of materials or you can structure the activity by providing selected materials.

#### **Fantasy play (Week 2)**

Fantasy play can be noisy, but remember that when children play in this way, they have to negotiate roles and explain what they are doing. They also learn about representation - that one thing can stand for another. This will help them to understand that the writing on a page stands for the words we speak.

Some children might find it difficult to negotiate with others for roles and the sequence of events as they play. Try spending time with them guiding their play and interacting with children who are shy to join in.

### ***Letter puzzles and games***

Set up the puzzles and games before the lesson. The children might find it difficult to play the games independently at the beginning of the year. You may want to play one game with the whole class a few times before setting it up as a small group rotation activity. You may like to invite some parents to help manage the game activity.

### ***Practising the letter***

Children need regular practice to become confident with the letters of the alphabet. This activity gives children the practice they need to form letters correctly and connect a letter to the sound it makes and to objects that begin with that sound. Begin by setting up one activity for the group. As the year progresses and children become familiar with the activities, you can set up more than one activity.

### ***Independent reading***

Choose different types of storybooks, picture books, magazines, shopping brochures, picture dictionaries, atlases, non-fiction and recipe books for the children to 'read'. Include reading material that reflects the different languages and cultures in your class. Include content that connects with the theme of the story. Include copies of the Big Book, little books and sequence pictures. If you are able to spend some time with this group during rotation activities, you might try sitting next to a child and saying, "That looks like a lovely book. Can you read some of it to me?"



## ACTIVITY

# Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)

Children learn to record their ideas through drawing and emergent writing, as you write what they say about their drawings.

### Week 1: My favourite part of the story

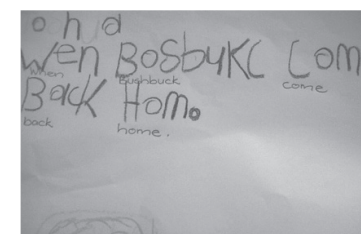
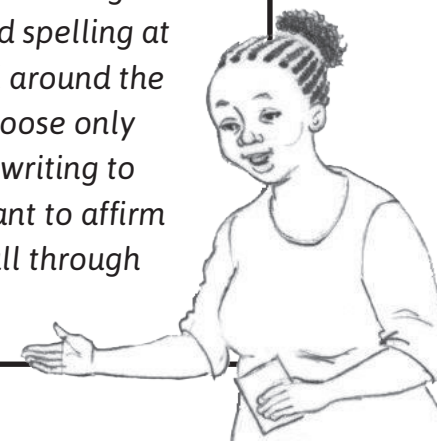
#### STEPS

- 1 Write **Bushbuck's visitor** at the top of each page before the lesson. Ask the children to point to the words of the title as you read them together.
- 2 Ask the children to think about the story and discuss the part that they like best. Give some suggestions. For example: "Did you like the part when Frog hopped out with a big smile on his face?" Encourage the children to draw their favourite part of the story. Ask the children if they would like to write something about their picture.
- 3 Make a comment or ask a question about the drawing, such as: "I love the big golden mane you have drawn for Lion."
- 4 If you write for them, keep them involved by asking them to say the words slowly as you write them down. Think aloud as you write the child's sentence, for example: "Lion ... was ... asleep ... in ... the ... What word did you want to say next? Sun. I am going to write sun."
- 5 Write exactly what the child tells you, word for word, clearly.
- 6 When you have finished writing, encourage the child to read the sentence with you. Point to each word as you read and acknowledge their efforts.

#### YOU WILL NEED

A blank A4 page for each child; crayons

Display the children's emergent writing and invented spelling at the child's eye level around the classroom. Don't choose only the most advanced writing to display. It is important to affirm every child's work all through the year.



## Week 2: My own idea

### STEPS

- 1 Write **My surprise visitor** at the top of each page before the lesson.
- 2 Ask the children to point to the words of the title as you read them together.
- 3 Remind the children that all the animals were scared to go in the house because the visitor said he would eat them; but then at the end of the story, the surprise visitor is a little frog! Ask the children: “Who would you like to come and give you a surprise visit?”. Encourage them to draw a picture of a surprise visitor. Ask the children if they would like to write something about their picture.
- 4 Make a comment or ask a question about the drawing, such as: “Look at your beautiful writing! Please tell me what it says.” or “What will you do with your visitor”
- 5 If they would like you to write for them, keep them involved by asking them to say the words slowly as you write them down. Think aloud as you write the child’s sentence, for example: “My surprise ... visitor ... is ... my cousin ... from Gauteng.”
- 6 Write exactly what the child tells you, word for word. Remember to write neatly and clearly.
- 7 When you have finished writing, encourage the child to read the sentence with you. Point to each word as you read and acknowledge their efforts.

Here’s another idea linked to the story: write **Wild animals from South Africa** on the children’s pages. Follow the steps for Week 2, but ask your class to draw and write about a wild animal that lives in South Africa. Ask the children to tell you the names of the animals in the story: bushbuck, elephant, lion and frog. They may draw one of these animals or any other South African wild animal.



# ROTATION GROUPS **ACTIVITY** Creative play

Children build on the story language and theme through pretend play and art and construction activities.

## YOU WILL NEED

Scrap paper; cardboard; recycled materials; glue; scissors; paint and paintbrushes

## Week 1: Art and construction

### STEPS

- 1 Tell the children to look carefully at everything that has been set out on the table and talk about the objects they see.
- 2 Explain to the children that they are going to make a frog.
- 3 Tell them they can design the frog any way they want to.
- 4 Explain that they can use any of the objects on the table for the frog.
- 5 Encourage the children to make a body, eyes, mouth, tongue and legs for their frog.
- 6 Create time for the children to talk about their frogs in pairs.
- 7 Display the frogs around the classroom when they are complete.

You can give the children freedom by providing a wide range of materials or you can structure the activity by providing selected materials. Always remember to give the children choice about how they make their creations however, even if the materials are prescribed. Remember as children grow up they will need to be able to work independently, so ensure that they are able to 'make a plan' and create a frog without needing teacher support.



## Week 2: Fantasy play

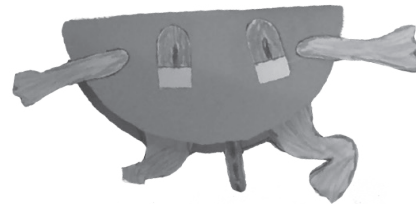
### STEPS

- 1 Explain to the group that there are lots of lovely props in the corner and they should feel free to have fun playing together. They can play any game they like as long as they remember the rules of the fantasy corner.
- 2 Ask the group leader to take the group to the fantasy corner.
- 3 Visit the corner at least once to observe and encourage the children's game.



### YOU WILL NEED

The following props: plastic animals; face masks for different animals; old socks to make animal puppets



# ACTIVITY

## Letter puzzles and games

Children consolidate their letter sound knowledge as they do puzzles and play games.

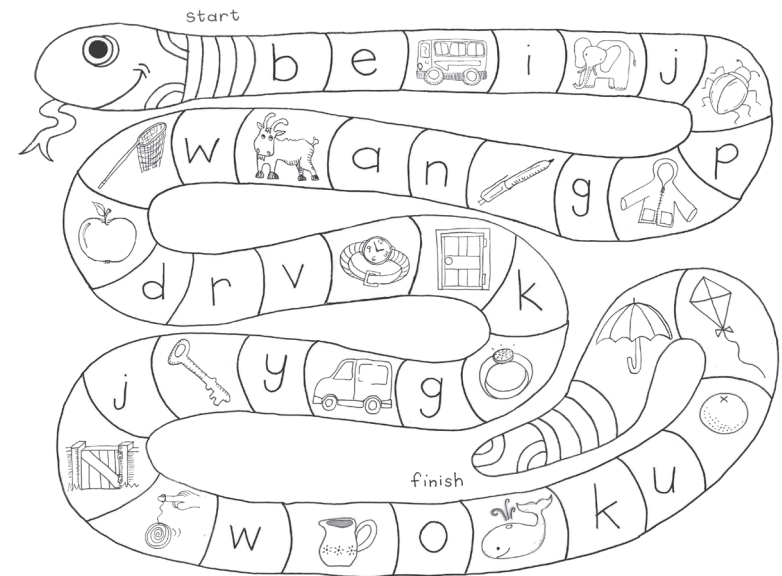
### Letter snake game

#### YOU WILL NEED

Two letter snake game boards (A3 size if possible, page 66); two large dice

#### STEPS

- 1 Place the large game board on the carpet with two to three children seated around it.
- 2 Explain the rules to the children:
  - Children begin by putting their counters on the snake's head.
  - Children take turns to throw the die and move the counter the correct number of spaces.
  - If they land on a letter, they must say the sound and move their counter forward to a picture that starts with that letter.
  - The first child to reach the end of the snake is the winner and the game is over.
- 3 Once children have played this game a few times, you can introduce a new rule: if they land on a picture, they must name the picture, say the beginning sound and then move back to the corresponding letter.





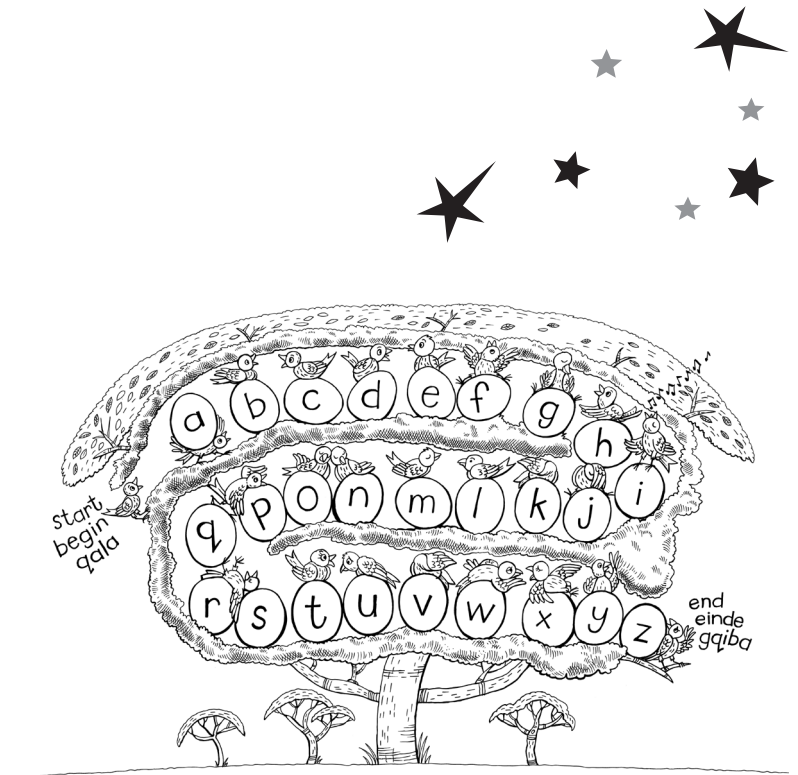
## Word bird game

### YOU WILL NEED

Two word bird game boards, (A3 if possible, page 63); two dice and counters

### STEPS

- 1 Place the large game board on the carpet with two to three children seated around it.
- 2 Explain the rules to the children:
  - Children put their counters on Begin.
  - Each child takes a turn to throw the die and moves the counter the correct number of spaces following the path on the word bird.
  - When they land on a letter, they must say the sound that letter makes and name something that begins with that sound.
  - The first child to reach the end of the bird is the winner and the game is over.





ROTATION GROUPS

## ACTIVITY

## Practising the letter

Children work independently to practise the formation of the focus letters and draw objects that start with the focus sounds.

### Little letter books

#### STEPS

- 1 Point to the letter **l** on the letter card and say, "Do you remember this letter? It makes the sound /l/ like in l-l-lion, l-l-listen and l-l-little." Ask the children to say **l-l-l-l** with you.
- 2 Ask the children to trace the shape of the letter on the card with their fingers, starting from the dot.
- 3 Give each child a pre-folded little book (blank) and tell them they are going to make their own little letter book. Ask them to write the letter **l** on the front cover of their little book.
- 4 Encourage them to say the sound /l/ again. Then ask them to draw things that start with that sound on each page in the book.
- 5 If there is time, ask the children to give you the name for each picture, and write the word on each page.
- 6 When the children have finished, let them sit in pairs and 'read' the books to each other.
- 7 Ask the children to take their little book home to 'read' to their families.

#### YOU WILL NEED

An A4 blank page folded into a little book for each child (see page 53); letter cards **l**, **u** and **e** for each child in the group; coloured pencils or crayons (six to eight different colours)

*If you think your learners will benefit from doing the Rainbow letters activity, we suggest they do it before they make their little book. Photocopy the activity on page 54 or write the letter as large as possible on a piece of paper.*

*The activity steps focus on the letter **l** and should be used in Week 1.*

*In Week 2, follow the same steps, but focus on the letters **u** and **e** and the sound /e/ like e-e-egg, e-e-elephant, e-e-engine and e-e-exercise and /u/ like u-u-umbrella, u-u-uncle and u-u-us. In Week 2, children could make one little book for both vowel sounds.*





## Independent reading

Children learn to read independently and enjoy books and other printed material.

### STEPS

- 1 Lead the group to the book corner and settle them down quickly.
- 2 Read the rules for the book corner to the children
- 3 Show the children what is new in the book corner this week. Ask them: *"Why do you think I have chosen these books/magazines/leaflets?"*
- 4 Spend a few minutes motivating and helping children to choose something they would like to read.
- 5 Visit the corner at least once to observe and encourage the children's reading.



You could also put the **Bushbuck's visitor** Big Book and sequence cards in the book corner. Some children will value the opportunity to read and retell the familiar story.



# Resources

## How to make play dough

### YOU WILL NEED

2 cups flour; 1 cup salt; 2 cups water; 2 dessert spoons oil; 4 teaspoons cream of tartar (available at supermarkets and chemists); food colouring

### STEPS

- 1 Mix all ingredients and cook over heat until the dough comes away from the sides of the pot.
- 2 Store in an airtight container once it has cooled.



Show the children how to warm up the play dough by squeezing it in their hands. This is a good exercise for the children's hand muscles. Divide the play dough into enough plastic bags so that each child has a ball to work with. Children roll the play dough into a ball at the end of each activity. Pack it away in the bag to keep it fresh.



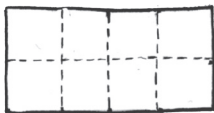
## How to make a little book

### YOU WILL NEED

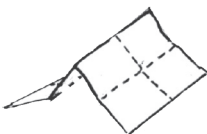
Photocopy of the little book for this story

### STEPS

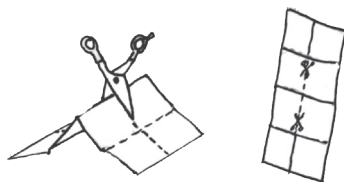
- 1 Fold an A4 page into eight pieces. Unfold.



- 2 Fold the page in half.

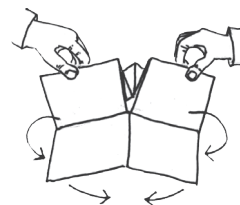


- 3 Cut on the middle fold.



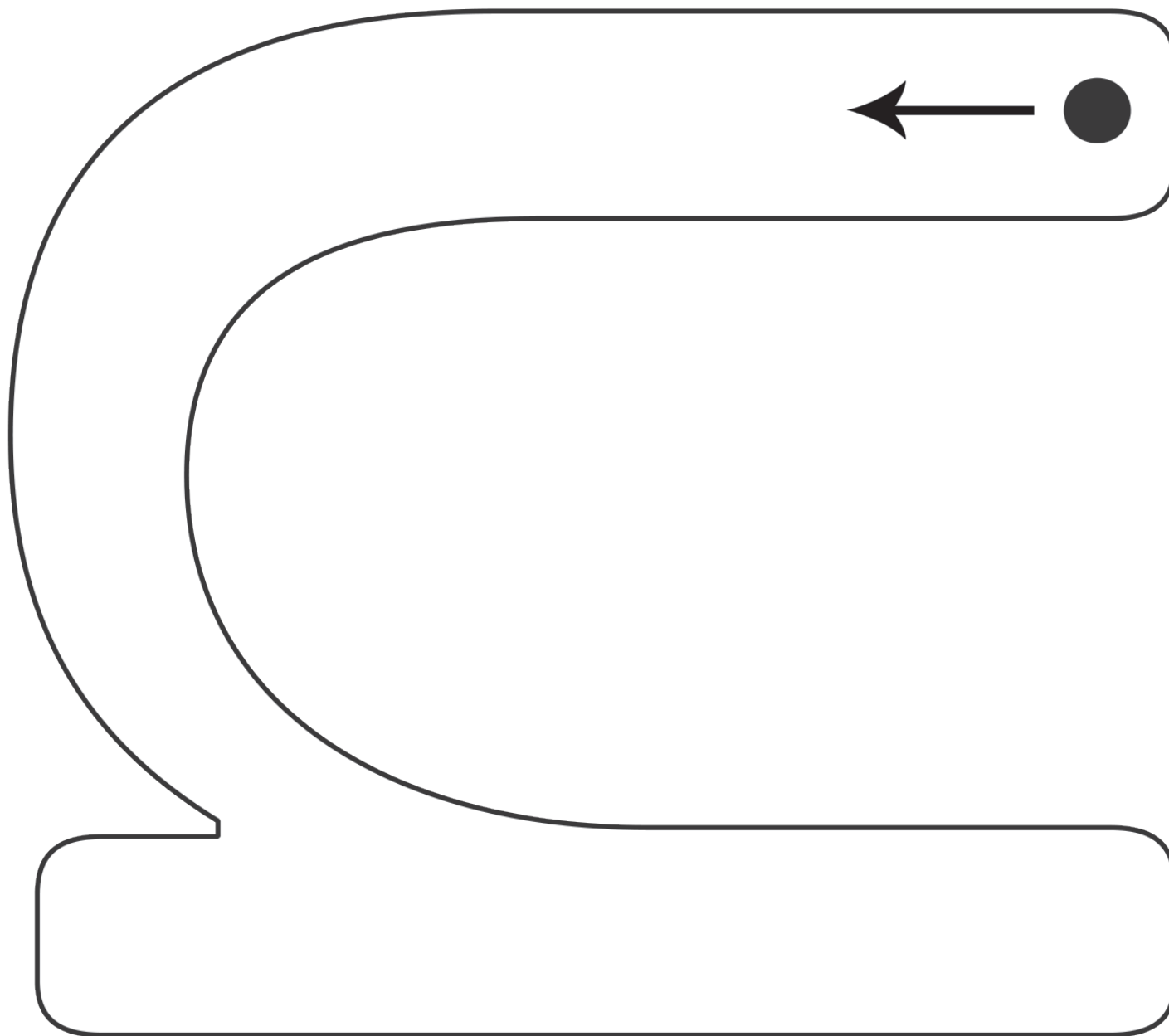
- 4 Hold the page between your finger and your thumb on both sides.

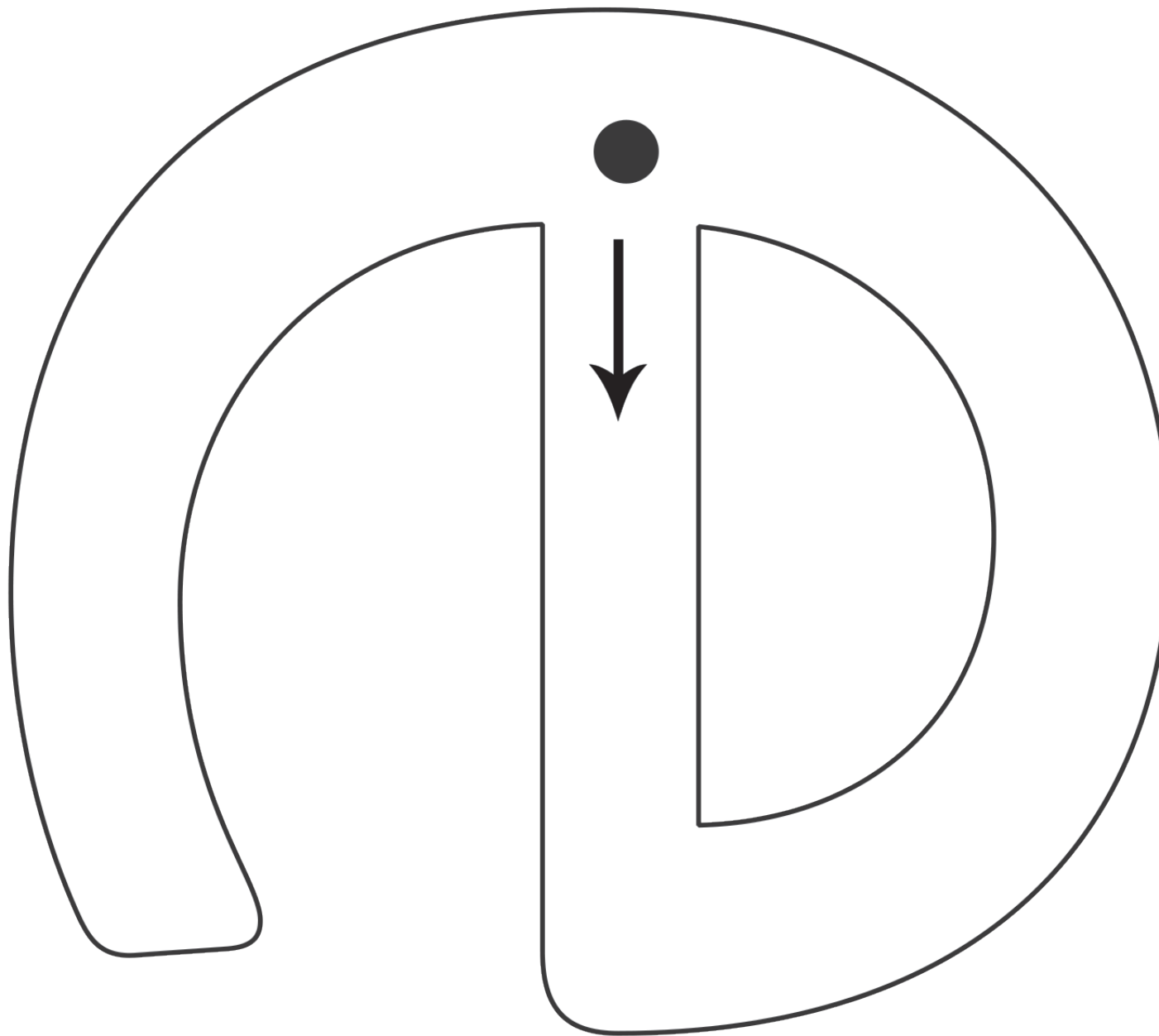
- 5 Bring your hands down and together.

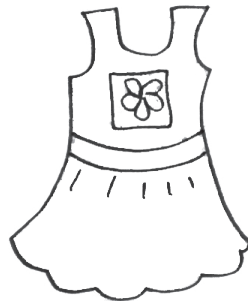
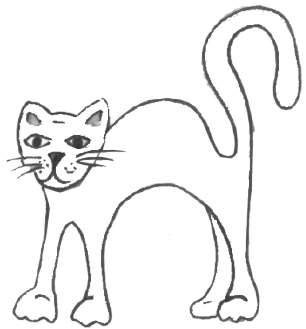
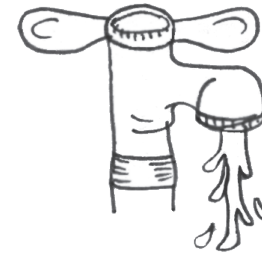
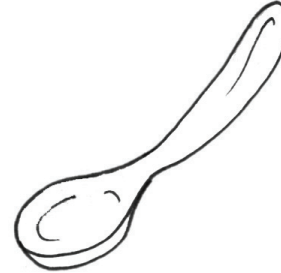
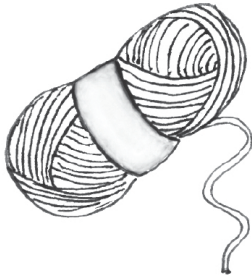
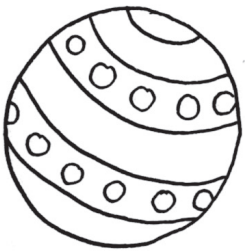
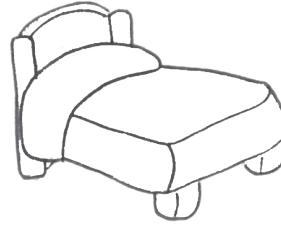
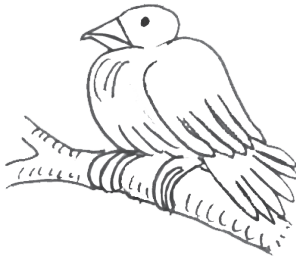


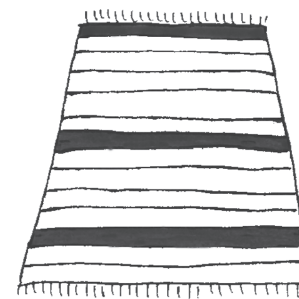
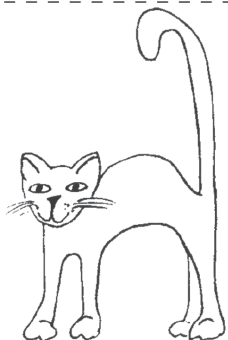
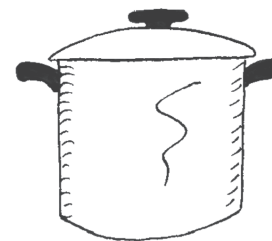
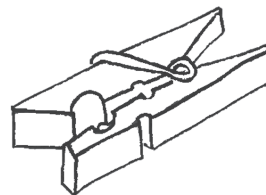
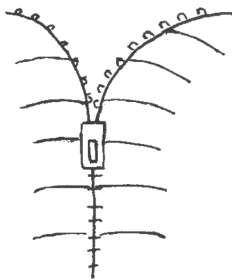
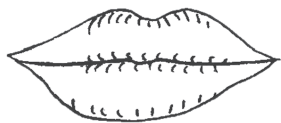
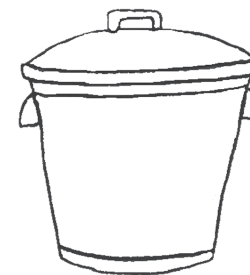
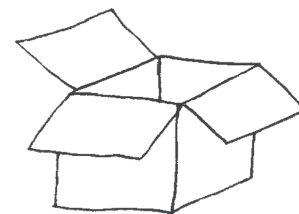
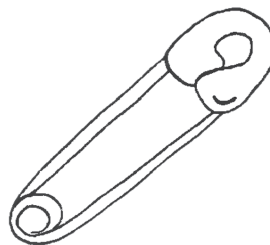
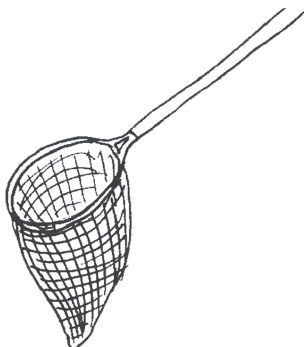
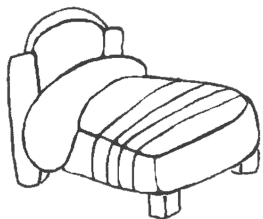


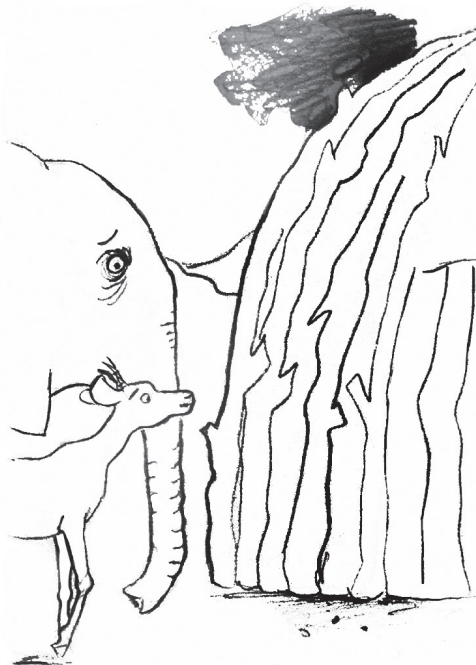
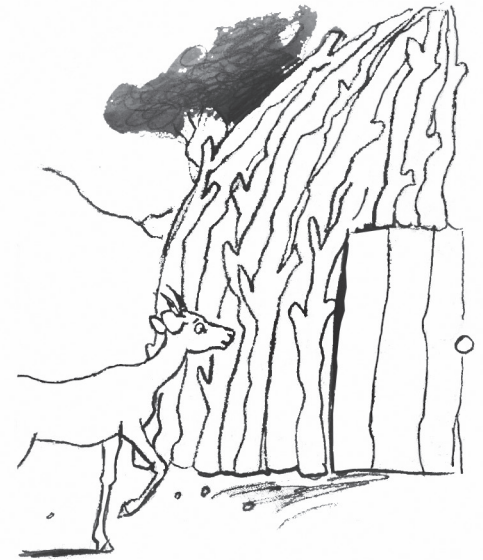
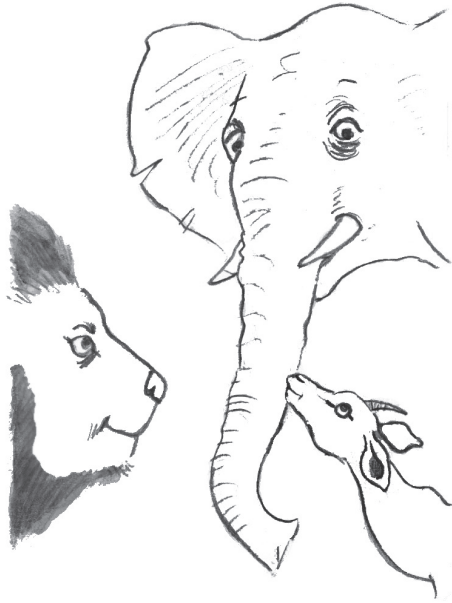




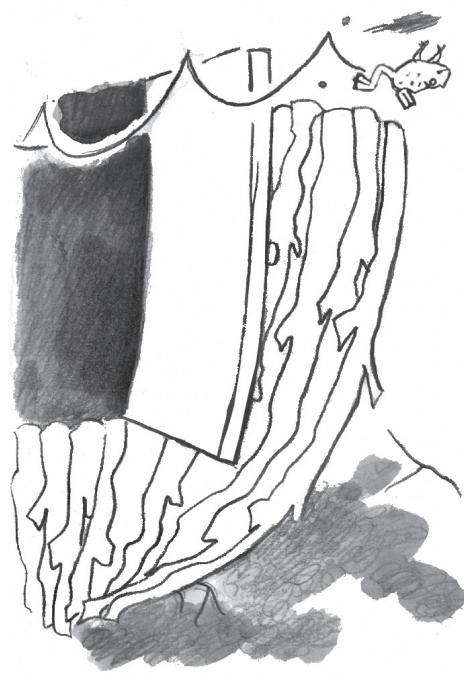








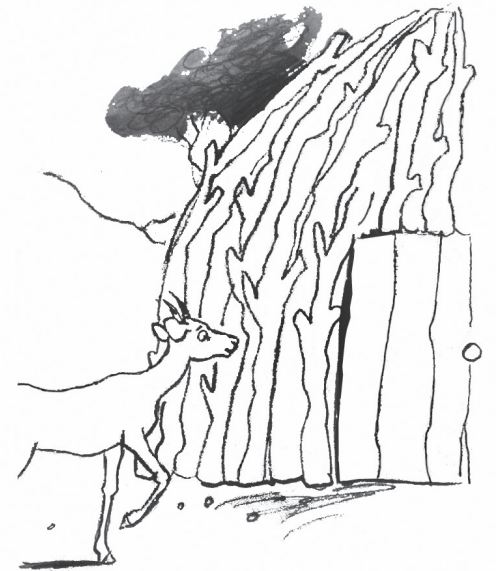




This book  
belongs to:

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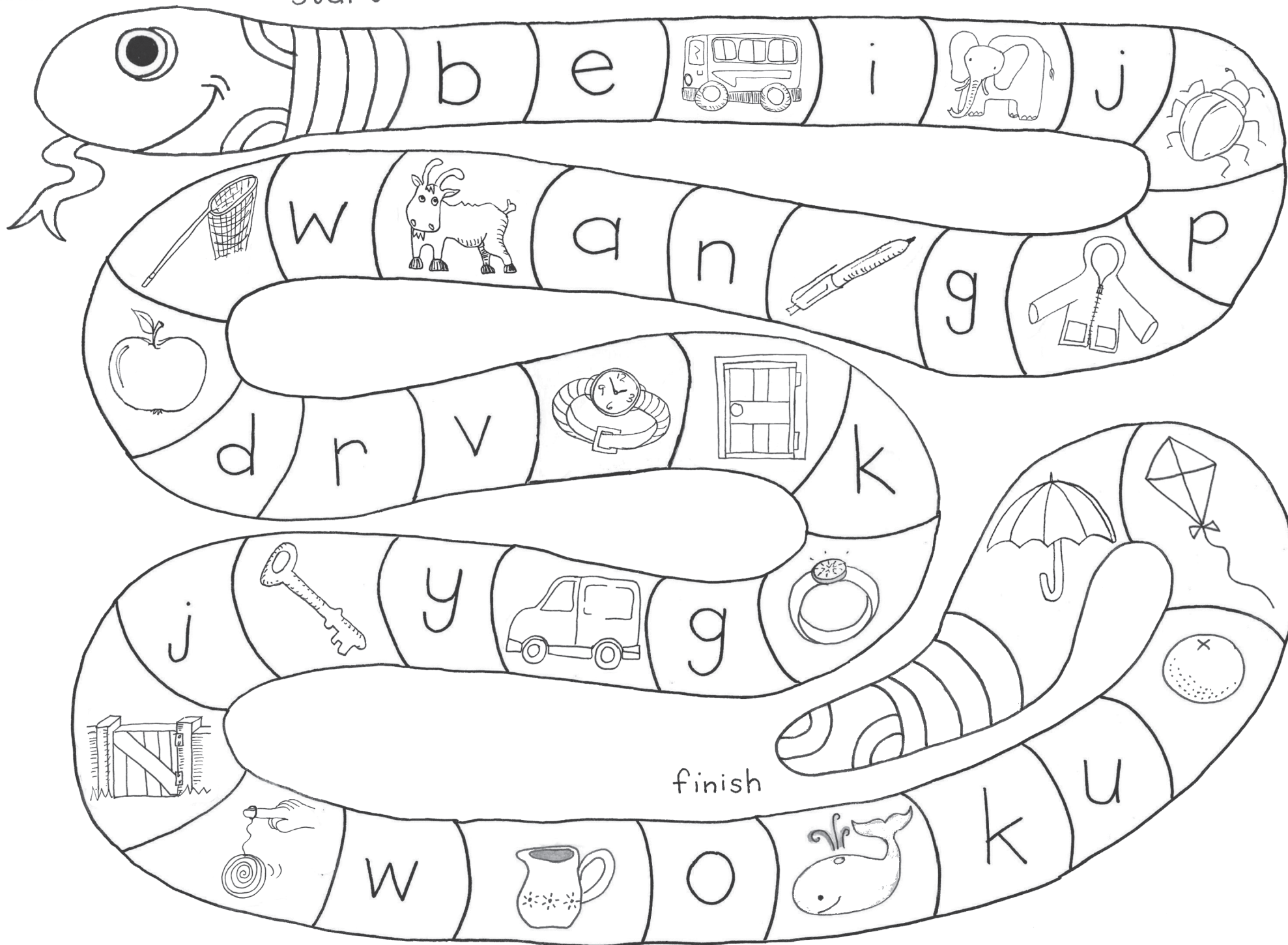
## Bushbuck's visitor

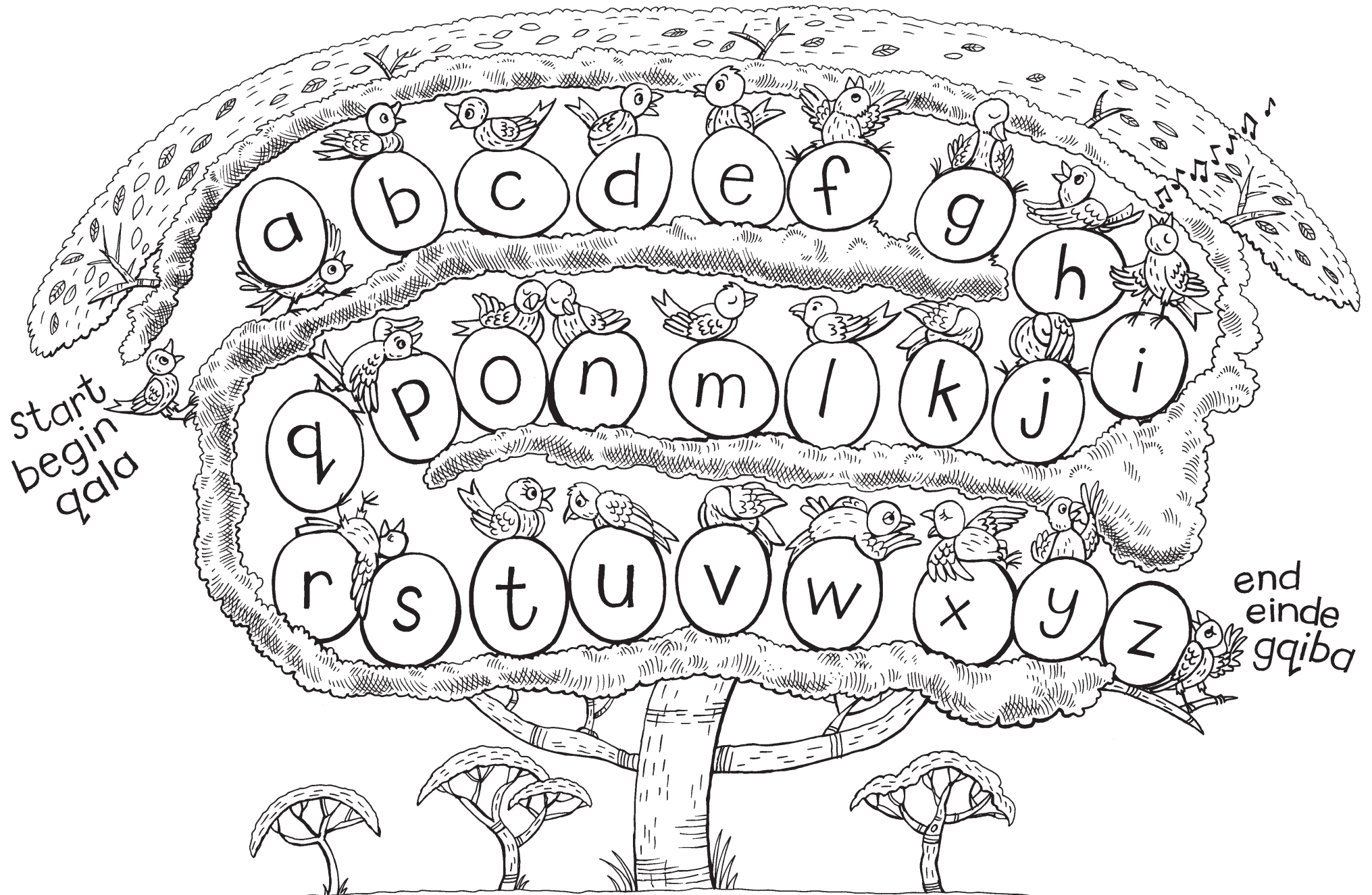




	1	house	
	1	sun	
	3	clouds	
	1	river	
	1	elephant	
	1	bushbuck	
	1	lion	
	1	frog	
	2	trees	

start







Handwriting practice lines on the left page, consisting of 15 horizontal lines.

Handwriting practice lines on the right page, consisting of 15 horizontal lines.