

Playscript

The Ants and the Grasshopper

Teacher notes: *The Ants and the Grasshopper*

Curriculum references: Year 2

Programme of study: Reading comprehension

Children should be taught to:

- develop pleasure in reading, motivation to read, vocabulary and understanding by:
 - listening to, discussing and expressing views about a wide range of contemporary and classic poetry, stories and non-fiction at a level beyond that at which they can read independently
 - discussing the sequence of events in books and how items of information are related
- understand both the books that they can already read accurately and fluently and those that they listen to by:
 - answering and asking questions
- participate in discussion about books, poems and other works that are read to them and those that they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say
- explain and discuss their understanding of books, poems and other material, both those that they listen to and those that they read for themselves.

Running the task

- Display the text. Ask the children what type of text it is, and how they know.
- Before reading the text, ask the children to explain which words are read aloud when the play is performed (those in regular type). Identify the various types of words that are not read aloud (character names in bold and stage directions in italics within brackets). Explain that you will read the stage directions aloud today.
- Divide the class into ten groups, assigning each group a different character. Read the play together, reading each group's lines with them this time. Also read the stage directions aloud (on your own).
- Ask the children a comprehension question about the text that is not covered on the task sheet, such as: *What does the lesson at the end of the story mean?*
- Give the children an opportunity to read the text a second time, this time independently, either as a whole class or in groups. Swap characters and encourage expressive reading.
- Display the task sheet. Read the discussion question, giving the children time to discuss it in pairs or small groups before sharing their ideas with the class.
- Read through the written questions together, ensuring the children understand what they need to do. Do not discuss the answers.
- Give out individual copies of the task sheet, and ask the children to write the answers to questions 1 to 5. Circulate as the children perform the task. Support those who need it and challenge those who may be able to show higher reading skills.

Assessment guidance

Use the list below to identify the content domains that the children are working on in this task.

Typically, children working at the expected standard will:

- retrieve and explain relevant details from fiction and non-fiction to demonstrate understanding of events in a range of straightforward texts. **1b**
- identify sequences of events in a range of straightforward texts. **1c**

What to expect

Discussion question

- How do you think the grasshopper's feelings change over the course of the play?

Children working towards the expected standard may use simple vocabulary to describe a narrow range of emotions (e.g. *"first happy, then sad, then happy again"*). Children working at the expected standard should be able to describe a wider range of emotions and link them to events in the play (e.g. *"happy during the summer weather, worried during the cold weather, scared when the bears growled at him, relieved and grateful when the ants gave him food"*). In addition, children working at greater depth within the expected standard may be able to use more advanced vocabulary to describe emotions (e.g. *"carefree"*, *"desperate"*, *"anxious"*).

Written questions

1. Why did the grasshopper get into trouble? Tick the *best* answer. (1b)

Because he didn't think ahead.

Children working at or at greater depth within the expected standard should be able to answer correctly. Children working towards the expected standard may choose one of the wrong answers, as they are close to the language that appears in the text.

2. Which were the first animals the grasshopper asked for help? (1c)

All children should be able to identify the correct answer (owls).

3. Write the numbers 1 to 4 in the boxes to show the order in which the events happen. (1c)

The grasshopper asks other animals to give him food.

The grasshopper enjoys the summer sunshine.

The grasshopper works hard to collect food.

The weather gets colder.

Most children should be able to number the events correctly. Some children working towards the expected standard may not.

4. Write *two* words to describe the character of the ants. (1b)

Possible answers include: *"hard-working"*, *"busy"*, *"active"*, *"thoughtful"*, *"sensible"*, *"wise"*, *"helpful"*, *"generous"*, *"kind"*.

Most children working at or at greater depth within the expected standard should be able to list two suitable words. Children working towards the expected standard may not be able to answer, or may provide words describing physical attributes rather than character traits (e.g. *"small"*).

5. Why did the ants ask the grasshopper to promise he would work hard next summer? (1b)

Children working towards the expected standard may not be able to answer this question. The answers of children working at the expected standard may show an understanding of simple cause and effect, e.g. *"so that the grasshopper would have enough to eat next winter"*. Children working at greater depth within the expected standard may demonstrate insight into the ants' motivation, e.g. *"because they did not want to have to feed him again"*.

The Ants and the Grasshopper by Julie Meighan

Characters: Three storytellers, three ants, grasshopper, owls, squirrels and bears

Storyteller 1: One hot summer's day ...

Storyteller 2: ... there were some ants working hard.

Storyteller 3: They were collecting food for the winter. *(All the ants are miming digging, pulling and pushing.)*

Ant 1: I am so hot.

Ant 2: Me too!

Ant 3: This is very hard work.

Storyteller 1: They saw a grasshopper listening to some music on his iPod. *(Grasshopper passes by, singing and dancing; the ants stop work and look at him.)*

Storyteller 2: He was dancing ...

Storyteller 3: ... and laughing and enjoying the lovely weather.

Grasshopper: Ants, you are so silly. You need to enjoy the sunshine.

(Ants start working again.)

Ant 1: We are working hard.

Ant 2: We want to have food for the winter.

(Grasshopper keeps on dancing.)

Storyteller 1: The grasshopper continued enjoying himself.

Storyteller 2: Winter started to come and the weather got colder and colder.

Storyteller 3: The snow began to fall.

Storyteller 1: The grasshopper was cold and hungry. *(Grasshopper rubs his stomach and shivers. He looks at the owls that start to fly around the stage.)*

Grasshopper: I am cold and hungry; perhaps my friends the owls will feed me. Owls! Owls! Will you please feed me?

Owls: Twit tuhooo! Oh no, we will not feed you.

Grasshopper: Oh dear! I know, I will ask my friends the bears to feed me. Bears! Bears! Please feed me. *(Bears are asleep so he wakes them up.)*

Bears: *(The bears are very angry that they have been woken up.)* Growl! Growl! Oh no, we will not feed you.

Storyteller 1: Then the grasshopper saw some squirrels. *(The squirrels mime eating nuts.)*

Grasshopper: Squirrels! Squirrels! Please feed me!

Squirrels: Oh no, we will not feed you.

Storyteller 2: The grasshopper was very cold and hungry. He didn't know what to do. *(Grasshopper is shivering and rubbing his stomach.)*

Storyteller 3: Then he thought of the ants.

Grasshopper: Ants! Ants! Please feed me. *(The ants go into a huddle away from the grasshopper.)*

Storyteller 1: The ants thought about it and decided to give him some food.

Ant 1: You must promise that next year you will work hard in the summer.

Grasshopper: Oh thank you Ants, I promise.

Storyteller 1: That summer the grasshopper kept his promise and worked hard to collect food for the next winter. *(Grasshopper mimes pushing, pulling, carrying and digging with all the ants.)*

Storyteller 2: The lesson of the story is: fail to prepare ...

Storyteller 3: ... prepare to fail.



Name:

Date:



Talk about this question.

- How do you think the grasshopper's feelings change over the course of the play?

Write the answers to these questions.

1. Why did the grasshopper get into trouble? Tick the **best** answer.

Because he listened to music.

Because he didn't think ahead.

Because he danced.

Because he enjoyed himself.

2. Which were the first animals the grasshopper asked for help?

3. Write the numbers 1 to 4 in the boxes to show the order in which the events happen.

The grasshopper asks other animals to give him food.

The grasshopper enjoys the summer sunshine.

The grasshopper works hard to collect food.

The weather gets colder.

4. Write **two** words to describe the character of the ants.

5. Why did the ants ask the grasshopper to promise he would work hard next summer?
