

## INTRODUCTION

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### 1 Who this book is for

*Teaching Children English* is a training resource book for teachers of English to young learners, aged seven years and over. The course addresses three main groups of teachers:

Teachers with some existing EFL experience and training, who have little or no experience of teaching English to children.

Teachers with experience of teaching children, but with little or no experience of teaching EFL.

Trainee teachers who are training to teach EFL, including EFL to children.

The book is intended for native and non-native English speakers. For non-native teachers, the tasks within the book give extensive opportunities to develop, where necessary, confidence and language competence within an activity-based environment.

The book is also intended as a resource for trainers.

### 2 Course contents

The book has two main parts – Part One, the *Training course*, contains all the activities, tasks reading texts and discussion questions for teachers in training. Part Two, the *Trainer's notes*, provide both general guidelines and step-by-step notes for the trainer. At the end of the book there is a *Resource file* of activities (See page 4 of this Introduction). There is also a list of further reading.

There are ten units, each dealing with a specific aspect of teaching methodology and classroom practice. We have used a *theme-based approach* for the *task content* of each unit. In other words, each unit contains *stories, rhymes, songs, practical tasks and language tasks*, etc. related to a specific theme – which illustrate the methodology and classroom practice issues in question.

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David Vale and Anne Feunteun

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Each unit is presented as an integrated segment of an overall training programme. The following is a list of topics:

- Unit 1 Establishing common ground: attitudes and approaches to teaching children
- Unit 2 Starting points: starting lessons in a language course
- Unit 3 Building up a teaching sequence
- Unit 4 Adapting EFL techniques to teaching children
- Unit 5 A balanced teaching diet
- Unit 6 Storytelling, comprehension, errors and correction
- Unit 7 Classroom management and organisation
- Unit 8 Visuals and other teaching aids
- Unit 9 Content and curriculum
- Unit 10 Observation, assessment and records

The chart below illustrates the main activities and key study areas:

Unit	Study area	Tasks include
1	Attitudes and approaches to the teaching of English to children	Mini-creatures: making a spider mobile word games based on the spelling of <i>communication</i> three ways of using a <i>snail</i> for teaching purposes
2	Starting points: an overview of three teaching approaches	Circus: preparing the first lesson, making masks, starting activities examples of TPR and <i>action songs</i> designing a tune for an action song and singing it
3	Building up a teaching sequence: an overview of two approaches	Potatoes: using a story as the central point of a unit – <i>The Giant Potato</i> : storytelling potato games potato (puppet) role play language development related to the story potato bingo potato chant
4	Overview of teaching techniques: examples from EFL and mainstream primary education	Islands: designing a board game and using it in the teaching situation action games – a TPR task, <i>island</i> song/action rhyme, island games

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Unit	Study area	Tasks include
5	A balanced teaching diet: focus on balancing activities to give variety, pace, and interest; the relationship between EFL and mainstream education	Bridges/the colour green: making and testing <i>bridges</i> the <i>Three Billy Goats</i> storytelling developing a language focus from the theme discussion/reading task on the relationship between educational ideals and teaching realities developing a balanced teaching diet study corners in the classroom
6	Storytelling, comprehension, errors and correction: validity of approaches and techniques in EFL and mainstream education	Activities related to measuring: group-dynamics activities storytelling: <i>Jack and the Beanstalk</i> extension activities from this story/study corners in the classroom use of error and correction techniques
7	Classroom management and organisation	Activities relating to the storytelling of <i>Goldilocks and the Three Bears</i> : organising the three bears' house tasks related to organisation of space in the classroom tasks related to control and discipline use of a simple <i>observation grid</i>
8	Visual and other teaching aids	Festivals/special days/Hallowe'en activities: making <i>festival</i> visual aids and using them masks, lanterns witch rhyme/ <i>Winnie the Witch</i> casting a spell illustrated lesson plans
9	Content and curriculum: review of training course content; developing this into a short activity-based curriculum for children	<i>This is the House that Jack Built</i> : a language curriculum related to cross-curricular tasks evaluation of an existing curriculum – producing a <i>curriculum poster</i> supplementing a curriculum
10	Observation, assessment and records	A wanted poster: working with <i>profiles</i> reading task – <i>assessment</i> developing an assessment/evaluation procedure and materials

As the above table shows, the book emphasises an *activity-based approach* to the teaching of English to children. However, it is not our intention to **impose** a particular approach in this book. Therefore, all ideas or approaches contained within this book, however dogmatic in style, should be treated as points of reflection for teachers' **own** beliefs. We want to encourage teachers to consider the relevance of their present teaching methods/approaches, as well as those included in the book, to the needs and interests of **their** pupils and **their** teaching situation.

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The contents of the book represent a range of key issues that have been raised by teachers and trainers in programmes and courses we have organised in Europe, Asia and Latin America. In these programmes we have seen that each new training group adds its own experience to the course content. Particular needs are raised, and differing conclusions are reached. This book, therefore, is not seen as an exhaustive programme of study. Instead, the contents provide a foundation and framework around which a training programme can be tailor made to suit the individual character of a training group, and its specific requirements.

### *Resource file*

This book also contains a Resource file (from page 233). This is not intended as a complete list of ideas, tips, materials and recipes. However, since many teachers do not have easy access to resource centres we have outlined potential extension activities for the topic, task or theme of each of the ten units. This file functions as a practical guide to the manner in which extension activities can be developed in a language/primary classroom around a specific theme.

## **3 How to use this book**

### *Training format*

The course is designed so that it may function in the following ways:

As a training text to be used by a trainer working with groups of teachers. For the trainer, there are additional notes on how to use the book in the section called Trainer's notes, starting on page 127.

As a training text to be used by teachers studying on their own. In this case, teachers will need to read the accompanying Trainer's notes. In a *self-access* situation, we suggest that individual teachers discuss and share the *group/pairwork* activities within the book with their teaching colleagues. We consider the *sharing* of ideas with colleagues as an essential part of the learning process.

### *Study procedure*

It is important for teachers to feel comfortable in the training situation, and to adapt the ideas in this book to suit their own style of teaching and teaching circumstances. In general, each study session within the book is broken down into four stages:

- 1 Planning and preparation, e.g.**
  - establishing the study agenda/targets
  - collecting resources and materials
  - organising the working space

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- 2 **Participatory tasks**, e.g.  
 group-formation activities  
 practical tasks  
 discussion tasks  
 storytelling  
 language teaching tasks
- 3 **Feedback and assessment**, e.g.  
 group discussion and assessing/reporting on completed activities  
 planning future activities  
 setting new targets
- 4 **Concluding activities**, e.g.  
 recording opinions in a journal or on a poster  
 group-formation activities

In addition, teachers may be expected to complete *outside tasks*, e.g. trying out new ideas in their own classroom, observation of other teachers and further reading.

### Recording

In this book, we suggest that teachers keep a *journal* of their studies, e.g. a record of teachers' discussions and reflections on the sessions, with particular reference to the relevance of the activities in their own teaching contexts. (See Trainer's notes page 133.) This could obviously take the form of a loose-leaf file. However, more appropriately in terms of working with child-centred materials, teachers might consider building up an *illustrated journal* (e.g. in a 'Big Book') of course studies. Where feasible, we recommend that teachers work co-operatively on their journal with a partner or small group.

### Further reading

Extensive background reading on child psychology, child development, child education theory, etc. lies outside the scope of this book. However, where appropriate there are short reading tasks related to the child, or teaching children. Although these passages usually present a specific point of view, they are not intended to be prescriptive.

## How to use this book: additional notes for the trainer

The Trainer's notes in this book are intended as a resource, and as points of reference for the trainer. They take into account the wide range of circumstances that a trainer might find him- or herself working in, and the variety of experience that a trainer might have.

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[More information](#)*Introduction**The teachers' needs*

From our experience, teachers require support in the areas shown in Tables 1–3 below. These tables outline typical points raised by teachers, and give examples of training course content used in response to these needs:

<b>Table 1 Teachers with EFL experience, but with no experience of working with children</b>	
<b>Teachers say they need</b>	<b>Trainer and training content focus on</b>
Tips for teaching children	Awareness of the needs of children Awareness of the value of child-centred activities
Solutions to discipline problems Keys to manage large classes effectively	Guidelines for classroom management Guidelines for class control Guidelines for pace and variety within a lesson
Ready-made patterns for lessons	Ways to integrate EFL methods to the teaching of children Awareness of the potential relationship between a <i>language curriculum</i> and a <i>mainstream education curriculum</i>
Games and songs for children Ways to keep children interested Ways to enliven dull coursebooks	Guidance related to resource materials Confidence and reassurance activities Information related to resource materials

<b>Table 2 Teachers with experience of teaching children, but with little or no experience of teaching EFL</b>	
<b>Teachers say they need</b>	<b>Trainer and training content focus on</b>
EFL teaching techniques	Guidelines on EFL techniques Ways to integrate primary methods to the teaching of EFL to children Awareness of the potential relationship between a <i>mainstream education curriculum</i> and a <i>language curriculum</i>
More English (non-native speakers)	Linguistic reassurance and training (non-native teachers) Language awareness activities
Knowledge of English grammar and language structure Confidence to get results Ways to find time to fit English into a full timetable Resource materials	Confidence and reassurance activities Opportunities to share and exchange ideas with other teachers Guidance and information related to resource materials

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Teachers say they need	Trainer and training content focus on
Experience and practice working with children Hands-on teaching experience/simulation Lots of ideas and tips Solutions to discipline and ways to manage large classes effectively  Models and examples of good teaching practice Recipes for lessons	Observation of live teaching sessions  Work on video of classroom teaching Guidelines for, and practice of classroom management Ways to integrate EFL methods to the teaching of children Awareness of the potential relationship between a <i>language curriculum</i> and a <i>mainstream education curriculum</i> Experience teaching English across the curriculum Guidance and information related to resource materials Confidence and reassurance activities

**The training tasks**

Bearing in mind the above needs, this book contains a wide variety of input and practical activities for the teachers. This content is outlined on pages 2–3 of this Introduction. There are five main types of tasks:

**Practical tasks** These provide a wide range of cross-curricular experiences. They include *art and craft*, *science*, *technology*, *maths*, *music*, *storytelling*, *drama*, and *PE* activities. The aims of these activities include:

- giving teachers first-hand experience of the sort of tasks that children enjoy doing;
- reassuring teachers that, through this first-hand experience, they will be able to adapt and use the tasks with their classes;
- demonstrating the value of practical tasks as *social*, *motivational*, and *language teaching* tools in the learning situation;
- providing a *spiral* input. In other words the teachers will be learning in a similar manner to the way they may wish to teach.

**Observational tasks** These ask teachers to view a teaching situation, or read information on practical teaching content. The aims include:

- providing points of reference for teachers with respect to specific aspects of classroom practice;
- providing resource information with respect to specific teaching content, techniques and approaches.

**Teaching tasks** These ask teachers to prepare and try out teaching content and techniques within the training classroom. Ideally, teachers may go on to try out new ideas and techniques with groups of children, and

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give feedback on the results. The main aim here is to give teachers confidence and reassurance with respect to their teaching content, skills and methods.

**Discussion tasks** Broadly speaking, these fall into two categories:

- discussion before taking part in an activity. In this case the main aim is to raise the teachers' awareness of the points in question;
- discussion or feedback following the completion of a task. Here there are two main aims:
  - 1 to encourage an active sharing and exchanging of information within the training group;
  - 2 to give teachers further confidence and reassurance with respect to their teaching ideas.

**Recording tasks** These tasks encourage teachers to find attractive and motivating ways of recording work done in a specific training session. This is another example of providing a *spiral* input (see **Practical tasks** above) in the training situation. In addition, teachers are asked to keep a personal journal of their training course. Here teachers can be encouraged to illustrate their journals, and to work co-operatively with fellow teachers to produce an attractive record of their studies.

**Note:** See pages 129–132 of the Trainer's notes for further information on the management of tasks.

### *The role of the trainer*

A training situation where the trainees are themselves teachers, or student teachers, is especially demanding. Teachers are usually extremely emotionally committed to their work and may be reluctant to consider new ideas or approaches. This is especially true if teachers are used to practising (and learning) in a more or less traditional manner. Furthermore, it may be difficult to teach concepts in the manner that **you**, the trainer, understand them within a short training course since these are usually taken on board over a long period of time. Teachers need the opportunity to experience them at first hand. They also need the time to reflect on how new concepts affect their own thinking and principles within their own teaching situation. In addition, they need time to put them into practice in their own classrooms.

Therefore, for the purpose of managing the content of this book, we see the trainer as a facilitator, an organiser, a motivator, a supportive voice – and believe that he/she should be open to accepting alternative ways of teaching which may conflict with his/her own beliefs.



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### *Practice and theory*

The contents of this book are essentially of a practical nature. Teachers may wish to discuss some of the theoretical implications of the activities they complete. In this case, time should be allocated for such discussion, and appropriate reference books made available. A list of possible further reading is provided on page 274 of this book for this purpose.

### *Reflection and assessment*

We recommend putting time aside regularly for the purposes of reflection and assessment, in particular for teachers to consider how the course content may affect their own teaching. In section 4 of Unit 10 (see page 123) of this book, we discuss the role of *profiling* in assessment. If you would like to use profiling as an ongoing assessment procedure, it is sensible to make the necessary arrangements for doing so at the beginning of the course, rather than when you reach Unit 10.

Similarly, on extended training programmes, we have found that teachers often raise issues they wish to see (or they would like to have had included) within their training programme, at the end of the programme, when it may be too late to influence the content of the course they are attending. We therefore recommend that, even within a busy training schedule, time for assessment, review and reflection is included and built into the schedule on, for example, every other training day.

In addition, at the beginning of the course, we have found it extremely useful to encourage the teachers, as a course requirement, to establish a regular *written dialogue* with another teacher on the training course (if possible, not a teaching colleague from the same school), or to keep a personal diary of their training experience. Teachers may write what they wish, for example, they could comment on course content, comment on how they felt during the day, comment on the training location, food, etc.

A letter board, or *post box*, is a convenient exchange/collection point for such correspondence. Although all letters are obviously private, teachers, through a written dialogue, may wish to keep the trainer informed of issues that affect training content and approach. Similarly, we believe that time invested by the trainer in the exchange of supportive words with teachers on an intensive training programme is time well spent.

## PART ONE TRAINING COURSE

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# 1 Establishing common ground: attitudes and approaches to teaching children

## 1.1 Establishing key issues related to the teaching of children

- You are about to start your training course. What do you want the course to deal with? Think of the four most important issues related to teaching English to children. You have five minutes. Work individually and write down these four issues, or questions, on four separate slips of paper. When you have finished, hand them to your trainer, who will display them alongside the rest of your group's suggestions.
- Stand up. Select the **four** most important statements that are on display. (They need not be the ones you have written.)
- Work with a partner. Share the statements you have collected. You have ten minutes to discuss and select the **four** most important out of the eight statements you have collected between you.
- With your partner, join another pair of teachers. Share the statements you have selected. You have ten minutes to discuss and select the **four** most important out of the eight statements you now have in your group.
- With your group, join another group of four teachers. Share the statements you have decided on. You have ten minutes to discuss and select the **four** most important out of the eight statements you now have in your group. When you have finished, report your final selection to the whole group. Choose two teachers: one to write the final selections on the board, the other to copy them onto a sheet of A4 paper and to photocopy it for the rest of the group.

This activity will most likely have demonstrated the diversity of expectations which each teacher may have, even though all of you are attending the same course. It is therefore very important to establish common ground with respect to the attitudes you may have, and the approaches you may favour in the teaching of English to children.

## 1.2 Attitudes: what are your views on teaching English?

- Work with three other teachers. Read and complete the statements below. Discuss your answers.

	Children learn English because	Adults learn English because	I (am going to) teach English to children because
a)			
b)			
c)			

- When you are ready, share your responses with others in your training group.

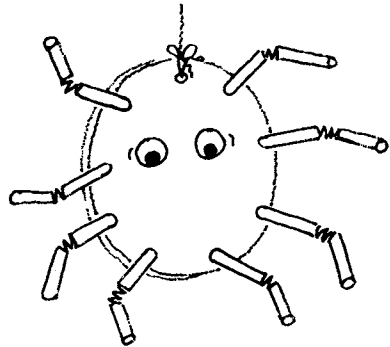
## 1.3 A 'practical' challenge: a spider mobile

The practical activities in this book relate to various areas of the primary school curriculum. These tasks aim to:

- give you a first-hand opportunity to do the sort of tasks that you may require the children in your class to do;
- raise your awareness of specific language teaching points that may be generated by a practical task;
- raise your awareness of, and give you practice with, a range of useful classroom instruction language;
- give you the opportunity to work closely and co-operatively with the others in your training group.

### *Preparing instructions for the spider mobile*

- Look at the diagram alongside of a spider mobile. (This is an example only, and should not necessarily be copied.)



- Work individually and write a set of instructions for an eight-year-old audience (at near-beginner level) for making the spider mobile.
- Now work with three or four others. Take turns within your group to give and show the instructions you have produced. Share ideas and

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produce one consensus set of instructions (for an eight-year-old audience) on a sheet of A3 paper, and illustrate them.

**Practical task: making the spider mobile**

- Discuss the materials you need. Find these materials or suitable substitutes. Follow the instructions you have prepared and make one spider mobile within your group, as a group activity. Share skills and resources.

**Discussion**

- When you have finished, discuss:
  - 1 how you made the language of instruction clear to an eight-year-old audience;
  - 2 how you might exploit these instructions in an EFL classroom;
  - 3 how you felt as *learners* during the making of the mobile;
  - 4 how you might exploit the making of a spider mobile as a language teaching activity in an EFL classroom;
  - 5 how you might adapt this activity to suit an eleven-year-old audience rather than a class of eight year olds.

## 1.4 Spiders across the curriculum and the needs of children

**A cross-curricular analysis**

The chart below shows the tasks primary teachers might do on the topic of *spiders/mini-creatures* and a potential language focus that each activity might generate for *language teaching* purposes.

Curricular area	Example activity	Example language focus
Art and craft	Making a spider mobile Making glue and salt webs	Parts of the body: A spider has ... Colours and shapes
Music	A tune for a spider rhyme	Singing the rhyme
Science	Close observation of spiders Sorting mini-creatures by the number of legs	Present simple: <i>Spiders eat/don't eat ...</i>
Maths	Working with the number 8	
Geography		
Drama and movement		
Hygiene		

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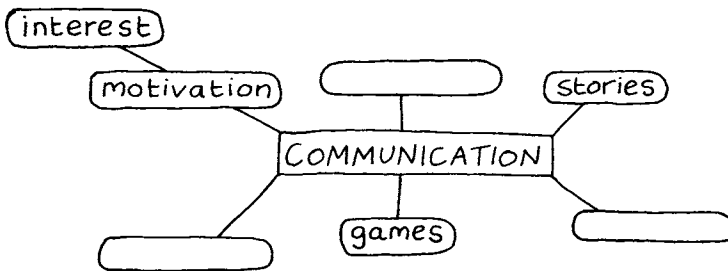
- Complete the chart with more examples.
  - Indicate the activities in the table you think you would be able to do with your children in English in the language classroom.
  - Indicate the activities in the table that would best be done in L1.
  - Discuss the possibilities of liaising/linking work in English with work carried out in L1 within the mainstream curriculum.
- (You can refer to the topic web on page 234 if necessary.)

**A 'needs' spidergram: reflection and feedback**

- Work with a partner or within a group of four/six. You (or half your group) complete Spidergram A on page 267. Your partner (or the rest of the group) completes Spidergram B on page 271. Please do **not** look at both spidergrams while you do this activity.
- When you have finished, compare and discuss your results with your partner and the rest of your training group. For example, discuss the action a teacher might take for each of the needs of children you have listed.

**1.5 Discussing communication***Discussion*

Work with a partner. Write the word *communication* in the centre of a page. Form a *mind map* of words/activities that encourage authentic communication between children. Start with this:



Now look at this example of a *step* word game:

- 1 interest  
     topics for children  
     novelties and games  
     story and rhyme  
     energy
- 2 enthusiasm  
     magic  
     curiosity  
     young  
     group activities  
     songs

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- Start with the word *communication*. In five minutes, share ideas and create as many *steps* as you can. The words/steps must relate to approaches or strategies that *encourage* or *discourage* authentic communication in the children's language classroom.
- When you have finished, compare your *communication steps* with others in your training group. Under the headings below, make a table on the board that includes the words and phrases you have produced.

Factors, approaches, strategies and attitudes that encourage authentic communication	Factors, approaches, strategies and attitudes that discourage authentic communication

**Reading task: 'Teaching approaches'**

- Work in a *base* group of three or six teachers. In each group appoint: T1 (and T4) who will read and summarise Lesson Plan A below; T2 (and T5) who will read and summarise Lesson Plan B below; T3 (and T6) who will read and summarise Lesson Plan C below. The whole training group now reorganises into three *expert* groups:
  - Group 1 (*Lesson Plan A* group), consisting of the T1 (and T4) members from each base group;
  - Group 2 (*Lesson Plan B* group), consisting of the T2 (and T5) members from each base group;
  - Group 3 (*Lesson Plan C* group) consisting of the T3 (and T6) members from each base group.
- Expert groups now read and discuss their lesson plans. When finished, return to your base groups to share notes and discuss the strong and weak points of each of the teaching plans. Use the following questions to start your discussion:
  - 1 How do you imagine the classroom is organised for each lesson plan?
  - 2 Which lesson plan do you associate with:
    - the way **you** learned a language?
    - the way you **teach** English to children?
    - the coursebooks you know for teaching English to children?

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[More information](#)*Training course***LESSON PLAN A**

**Presentation.** Draw a snail on the board. Identify the snail and main parts of the snail's body. Get the children to repeat after you.

T: *This is a snail.*

Class: *This is a snail.*

T: *The snail has a round shell.*

Class: *The snail has a round shell.*

T: *The snail has a long body.*

Class: *The snail has a long body. etc.*

**Drill.** When finished, give the children word cues, and get them to say the complete sentences about the snail, e.g.

T: *Snail.*

Class: *This is a snail.*

T: *Shell.*

Class: *The snail has a round shell. etc.*

When the class is confident, choose individual children to say the complete sentences.

**Pairwork.** Organise the children in pairs. Ask them to repeat this activity in their pairs. Go round and listen for mistakes. Correct them where necessary.

**Writing.** Write the sentences on the board. Ask the children to copy them into their exercise books. Alternatively, leave gaps in the sentences and ask the children to complete the gaps and to write the whole sentences in their books, e.g.

*This is .....*

*The snail has .....*

*The ..... a long ..... etc.*

**LESSON PLAN B**

**Presentation.** Organise the class so that the children can work individually. Make sure that they all have a pencil and a piece of paper. Give them the following instructions for drawing a snail. You may draw on the board as you give the instructions to make sure that everyone understands:

T: *Start at the centre of the page, like this. Draw a very, very small circle, like this. Now draw a bigger circle, like this, around the small circle. Now draw a bigger circle, like this. Now draw a bigger circle, like this. Now draw a line, like this, under the circles. And two little things, like this. etc.*

Continue until the whole snail has been drawn.

Ask the children to describe the snails they have drawn. You give the examples. First, ask them to listen. Then ask them to repeat after you, or to complete your sentences, e.g.

T: *This is a snail. It has a round shell. It has a long body. It has two antennae. It has two eyes. It has a little nose. It has a little mouth. Now you try with me. This is a ...*

Class: *Snail.*

T: *It has a round shell. Everyone.*

Class: *It has a round shell.*

T: *Good. It has a long ...*

Class: *Body. etc.*

### Part 1

Repeat this activity until the children are confident and they can more or less pronounce all the words correctly. Next, point to the snail you have drawn on the board and ask the class questions about it. You may accept short answers, or encourage complete sentences.

T: *What's this?*

P: *Snail.*

T: *Good. This is a snail. Repeat, everyone.*

Class: *This is a snail.*

T: *And what does the snail have? Does it have three antennae?*

P: *No.*

T: *No, it doesn't. It has two antennae. Repeat, everyone. etc.*

**Pairwork.** When the children are confident with the language, organise the class in pairs. Ask them to ask and answer questions about the snails they have drawn. Go round and correct mistakes and help with the language and pronunciation.

**Writing.** Get ideas from the class and write up five or six sentences about the snail you have drawn, e.g.

*This is a snail. It has a long body. It has a round shell. It has ..., etc.*

Ask the children to write six similar sentences about the snails they have drawn.

### LESSON PLAN C

#### Activity

- Organise the class into a semicircle. Show the children the pictures and posters of snails that you have brought in. Describe the snails in the pictures. Confirm the names of the parts of the body you taught last time. Use lots of gesture and mime to help put across the meaning of your description. Are the snails all the same size? What about the shells? What about the colour of the snails? Encourage the children to look carefully at the pictures. Find out if the children have seen snails around their home.
- Organise the class into groups of four or five. Tell the groups that they are going to make one monster snail in their group. They can use any colours they want. They can make it the shape they want. It is *their snail*. Assign roles within the group:
  - Appoint a *tidy monitor* (C1), whose role it is to collect materials for the group, and to make sure that everything is clean and tidy after the activity.
  - Appoint a *noise controller* (C2), whose role it is to make sure that, if necessary, his or her group speaks quietly.
- When the children finish, ask them to display their snails, for example on the wall.
- Ask the children to describe the snails they have made. You give examples. Refer to one of the snails as you speak:
 

T: *This is a fantastic, monster snail. It has an enormous square shell. It has a long, long, blue body. It has five wavy antennae. It has six tiny green eyes. etc.*
- Repeat your example, moving from snail to snail, leaving out key words and encouraging the group whose snail it is to provide the missing information.



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T: *This is a fantastic, ...*

G1: *... monster snail.*

T: *It has an enormous ...*

G2: *... round shell. etc.*

**Rehearsal stage.** Choose a pupil to stand by his or her snail and to point to parts of the model. You and the class describe the parts. Repeat this step several times.

- Finally, organise the class into new groups of four or five. Each group stands beside a snail. Appoint a *teacher* for each group. The teachers point to parts of the snail. The remaining children in the group describe it. You go round and help with the language. Encourage the children to help each other if they have problems. Discourage the children from merely repeating after you. Give children the complete examples to listen to, leave the group, and allow them time to practise. Return later to check on results.

**Writing.** Choose a confident volunteer (C1). Get ideas from the class and encourage them to help C1 to write up five or six statements or words about one of the snails they have made. Allow errors in this first draft and praise the result. If you wish, write an error-free version beside the children's work. Encourage the class to spot the differences.

- Organise the children in pairs or threes. Ask the children to write (on the board or in their exercise books) similar statements about the snails they have made. Encourage them to help each other. Give help if children ask you. You will work on producing more accurate written language next time.

## 1.6 Summary

Work with a partner or in a group of three to:

- share the reading of the following extract;
- discuss what you understand by an *activity-based approach*.

Keep your discussion notes concerning an *activity-based approach*. Read them again after you have finished the reading assignment in Unit 2.6, pages 27–35.

Traditional EFL approaches usually imply that the language presented on a textbook page is the learning aim. The result is that (in the case of teaching adults) a similar content is taught to all the students at the same time for a similar purpose. If this approach is transferred to the teaching of children, it assumes that all the children are able to, and motivated to, learn the same language, for the same purpose, at the same time. It may certainly be more **convenient**, from the teacher's point of view, to **teach** the same language content to all the children at the same time, from the same page in the same book. However, the validity of such an approach is extremely doubtful when one considers the wide range of ability, interest and motivation that is likely to exist within, for example, an average class of twenty eight-year-old children. Moreover, if our aim is for the individual child to be