

The Hodgeheg

Fiction

Content domain focus:

- 2b** retrieve and record information/identify key details from fiction and non-fiction
- 2d** make inferences from the text/explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text
- 2g** identify/explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases

Text summary

This extract is taken from the much-loved modern classic *The Hodgeheg* by Dick King-Smith. In the story, the hedgehog family dream of going to the park, which is full of their favourite food. However, between them and the park is a very busy road and we all know the perils of crossing roads – particularly for hedgehogs. Max – who is a bright young hedgehog – is determined to solve the problem of crossing the road and getting his family to the park.

Unit summary

The answers to the questions in this unit are found in chronological order. They start by focusing on straightforward information retrieval. Question 3, although addressing content domain 2a, involves the children in synthesising information from across a paragraph.

The skill of inference is addressed in questions 6 and 10, which give the children the opportunity to provide open-ended responses by drawing on clues in the text and on their own experiences.

Questions 5 and 7–10 explore how meaning is enhanced through choice of words. They also require the children to make some inferences about the meaning of words and phrases.



Teaching prompts

- Introduce the children to the extract by talking about hedgehogs. Establish what they know about the animals, including their living and eating habits.
- Explore the children's awareness of techniques they can use to find information efficiently and effectively, e.g. identifying and visualising key words in questions, looking for capital letters when searching for proper nouns, running the eye down the centre of the page rather than reading every word.
- Ask the children to remind you of what they understand about making inferences. If appropriate, introduce the idea of reading beyond the lines – using clues that the author has left in the text to help them work out information about the characters, the setting and the plot. Establish that they should try to make connections with their own experiences: from real life, their reading and their viewing experiences.
- Discuss how an author chooses words carefully when they write to help readers imagine what characters and settings are like and to think about what is happening in the story. Explain that the children can think about how words help them to do this when they answer questions relating to this skill.

Revisiting the text

Ask the children to:

- role-play the conversation between Ma, Pa and Max
- design posters warning motorists of the likelihood of hedgehogs crossing the road
- create fact files about hedgehogs, based on information given in the extract
- carry out research into hedgehogs and the reasons for their current decline
- practise and present a 'read aloud' of the extract, focusing on reading with fluency and expression.



Answers

Links to content domain requirements are in brackets after the answer.

1. In the garden of Number 5A of a row of semi-detached houses. [2b]
2. To hunt for food. [2b]
- 3.

	Yes	No
worms	✓	
mice	✓	
rabbits		✓
frogs	✓	

4. a road [2b]
5. They are very tasty. [2g]
6. Because she didn't want them to hear what they were saying in case it upset them./Because they were talking about a death. [2d]
7. reluctantly [2g]
8. He is very intelligent. [2g]
9. a long lecture [2g]
10. How do humans cross the road safely? [2d]



Assessment

The children are able to locate and note down information effectively if they find and visualise key words in the questions to help them look for specific words and phrases.

The children are able to make inferences if they link clues in the text with their own experience and knowledge. Check that they can support their responses with evidence from the text and their own opinions.

The children are secure in the ability to understand how meaning is enhanced through choice of words if they can explain their understanding of the words and phrases in the questions and make links with their existing knowledge of language and the text.

Next steps

Develop the children's ability to find information efficiently and effectively by challenging them to find objects in pictures within a limited timescale. Play games – such as spotting the odd one out, finding differences between pictures and 'Kim's Game' – that encourage them to identify, visualise and remember objects.

When reading fiction texts, develop inferential skills by encouraging the children to carry out hot-seating and freeze-frame activities to build an understanding of characters, their interactions and behaviour. Give individual children A4 whiteboards and ask them to write thought and speech bubbles to add to freeze-frame scenarios. Encourage the children in the freeze frame to think about how to use their body language to demonstrate thoughts and feelings. Ask the children observing to draw conclusions from the portrayal of the characters.

Focus on the author's choice of words when reading aloud to the children in order to explore how meaning is developed through word choice. Use cloze activities to raise awareness of choosing words and phrases that have specific effects.