The Sheep-Pig
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
2e predict what might happen from details stated and implied

Text summary

This extract is taken from *The Sheep-Pig* by Dick King-Smith, the book that inspired the film *Babe*. Farmer Hogget, a man of few words, has taken his wife's cakes to the local village fair and comes across a 'Guess the weight of the pig' competition. Although he doesn't keep pigs himself, he is persuaded to have a go and, by the end of the extract, it would seem that he has won the piglet. Note that references to the weight of the piglet are in pounds rather than kilos. You may wish to explain this to the children.

Unit summary

The questions start by involving the children in finding specific details in the passage. They then move on to making inferential responses and finally make predictions at the end of the passage.

🚏 **Teaching prompts**

• Ask the children whether they have ever been to an event such as a school fete. Discuss who they went with and what they did there. Explain that some villages and towns hold fairs or fetes; elaborate on what happens and what there is to do at these events. You may wish to elaborate on the activities mentioned at the beginning of the extract, e.g. the Hoopla Stall, the Coconut Shy, the Aunt Sally, the skittles. Establish that thinking about their own experiences when they read helps them to understand what they are reading, as well as helping them to make predictions.

• Remind the children to find clues in the questions to help them identify the kinds of details they are looking for in the passage.

Revisiting the text

Ask the children to:

• complete a 'role on the wall' for Farmer Hogget by drawing a picture of him and annotating it with words and phrases that describe him. They can add further information inside the picture that describes his personality

• role-play the interaction between the Vicar and Farmer Hogget

• role-play the scene where Farmer Hogget explains to his wife what happened at the village fair

• identify their favourite words and phrases in the extract and explain why they have chosen them

• read the extract aloud using expression – particularly in terms of the dialogue.

✓ Answers

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

1. Any two of the following: the Produce Stall; the Hoopla Stall; the Coconut Shy; the Aunt Sally; the skittles; the band; the churchyard. [2b]

2. a pig [2d]

3. 10 pence [2b]

4. Because the pig went quiet when Farmer Hogget picked it up. [2d]

5. The money people have paid to enter the competition. Farmer Hogget puts his ten pence into it. [2d]

6. thirty-one and a quarter pounds [2b]

7. Because they could eat it at Christmas. [2d]

8. He scratched its back. He picked it up gently. He puts it in the pen carefully. [2d]

9. Farmer Hoggett seems quiet and thoughtful because the author uses words like *carefully*, *slowly* and *thoughtful* to describe him and what he does. [2d]

10. The child's response, explained with evidence from the text. [2e]

▤ Assessment

The children are secure in their ability to retrieve information if they use clues in the questions to help them look for key details, e.g. "*How much?*" means that they are looking for a number.

The children are able to make inferences effectively if they make connections between what they are reading and their own experiences. Check that they have identified evidence in the text to support their responses.

The children are able to make reasonable predictions if they have drawn on clues in the text and on their own knowledge of stories.

Next steps

Play 'Kim's Game' to develop the children's scanning skills. Ask them to look at a selection of objects on a surface. Cover up the objects and remove one or more of them, then challenge the children to spot the missing object(s) . Remind them to visualise the original objects in terms of colour, size, shape, etc.

Give the children copies of an appropriate text. Ask them to find particular words as quickly as they can by thinking about clues in the question, e.g. looking for capital letters when trying to find proper nouns in answer to questions that ask "*Who?*" or "*Where?*"; looking for numbers when trying to find quantities or dates in answer to questions that ask "*When?*" or "*How many?*" Challenge them to carry out speedy searches, e.g. three verbs; two adjectives; two words starting with the letter 's'.

Develop inference by encouraging the children to visualise characters as they read, discussing what the character might look like and be like with their reading buddies and then hot-seating the character.

Explore and discuss a series of images from wordless picture books to develop the children's prediction skills. Encourage them to look for clues in the pictures and to think about other stories they have read to support their predictions.