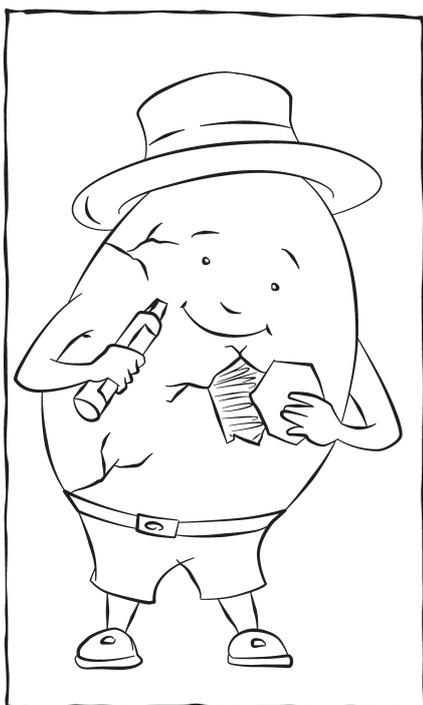


You Can... **Use birthdays as a theme for creativity**

Our birthdays mark the passing of another year, and for young children each birthday can seem a very long time coming. When a birthday does arrive, though, it is a time of great excitement, enjoyment and celebration.

Thinking points

- Increasingly in our culture, children's birthdays have become a time for excessive spending and consumption. You might like to get your children thinking about creative ways to have fun or make gifts *without* needing to spend money.
- Consider marking each pupil's birthday in a creative way, for instance, with some singing or by letting the class choose a few imaginative games to play.
- Organising a birthday party can be a very creative activity – you might like to adapt the birthday cake idea by asking your pupils to arrange a party for a favourite character.



Tips, ideas and activities

- Ask your children to tell or write a story called 'The best birthday present in the world'. Encourage them to think laterally and creatively about what the best present would be – it might not be something that can be bought at a shop.
- Use a range of stories, fairy tales and nursery rhymes to get your children thinking about what different characters might want for their birthdays, and why. For instance:
 - Humpty Dumpty might want a big pot of glue to mend himself.
 - Cinderella might want a real golden coach to replace the pumpkin.
 - Little Bo Peep might want a magic sheep-finding device.
- Use the photocopiable sheet on page 59 ('The birthday cake') to get your children designing an imaginative birthday cake for their favourite character.
 - Brainstorm lots of different characters with your class – include characters from storybooks, fairy tales, television programmes, cartoons, etc.
 - Talk about the kind of cake these characters might want – what sort of ingredients would they like? What kind of decorations would they enjoy?
 - For instance, Fifi from the *Flower tots* would probably like her ingredients to include vegetables and edible flowers and a garden theme to the decorations.
 - The worksheet includes a wordbank – go through these words with the class and perhaps make a longer list on your whiteboard.
 - Once they have chosen a character, the pupils draw the decorated cake on their worksheet, if possible adding collage effects such as sequins and glitter.
 - They should then write out some instructions for decorating the cake.
 - If there is time, the children could make a three-dimensional model of their cake.