



LESSON PLANS FOR RECEPTION AND YEAR 1

THE SNOW THIEF

BY ALICE HEMMING AND NICOLA SLATER

RECEPTION

LET'S MAKE SNOWFLAKES!

Learning Objectives

- To explore magnified images of snowflakes
- To learn that each snowflake has its own beautiful and unique shape

Resources

- *The Snow Thief* by Alice Hemming and Nicola Slater
- Resource Sheet 1: Small White Blobs
- Resource Sheet 2: Super Cool Snow Fact
- Magnified images/videos of real snowflakes

Lead-In

Share the book with your class, encouraging them to talk about the story and its beautiful illustrations. Ask the children to think about Squirrel's 'confusions' about snow – what does Squirrel say that is wrong? Encourage the children to talk about what they already know about snow and what they have discovered from the book.

Main Task

Explain to the children that they are going to show that snow certainly isn't just small white blobs, by making their own beautiful snowflakes. Explain that, first, they are going to have a look at some real snowflakes (this could be a video and/or photographs of snowflakes under a microscope and, if you are lucky enough to have some real snow, the children could be encouraged to look more closely at the snow with magnifying glasses).

Using **Resource Sheet 1: Small White Blobs**, the children can cut out and fold their blobs, then transform them into beautiful and unique snowflakes of their own with careful cutting and snipping. (A reminder about safety with scissors is always important.) Once this activity has been modelled by an adult and the children are confident, a snowflake factory could be set up so that the children can create an endless supply of snowflakes to decorate the classroom and celebrate the season.

Extension

This beautifully illustrated book can be used to inspire the children to paint their own snowy scenes that show their favourite parts of the story. They may choose to paint a picture of Squirrel and Bird having a snowball fight or catching snowflakes. They may even choose to paint a picture of a snow squirrel with hazelnut features. These paintings can be used to make a dazzling display that celebrates the story. Using **Resource Sheet 2: Super Cool Snow Fact**, ask the children tell you their own fantastic facts about snow and add these to the display, just in case another 'confused' squirrel just happens to peek through the classroom window.



Curriculum Links

Comprehension

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary;
- Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories;
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

Listening, Attention and Understanding

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions;
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding;
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

Speaking

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary;
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate;
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

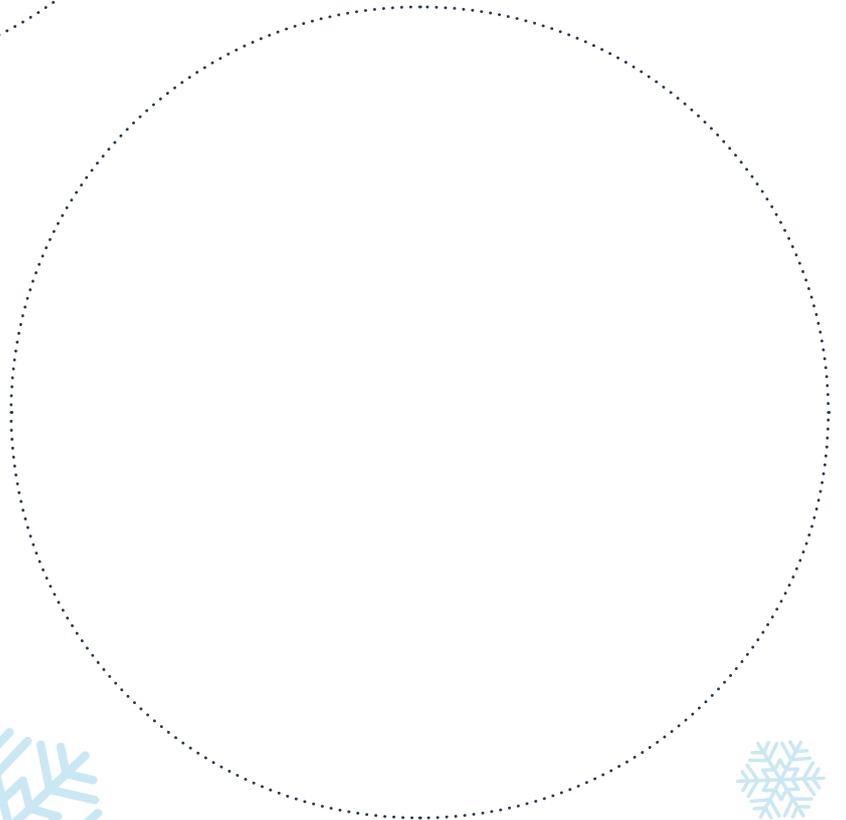
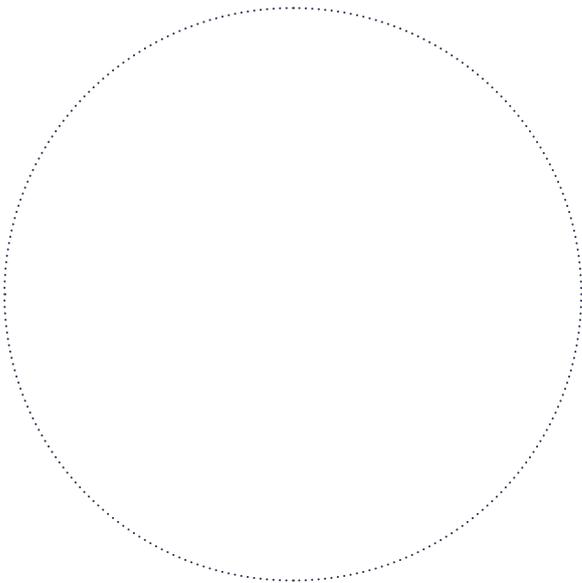
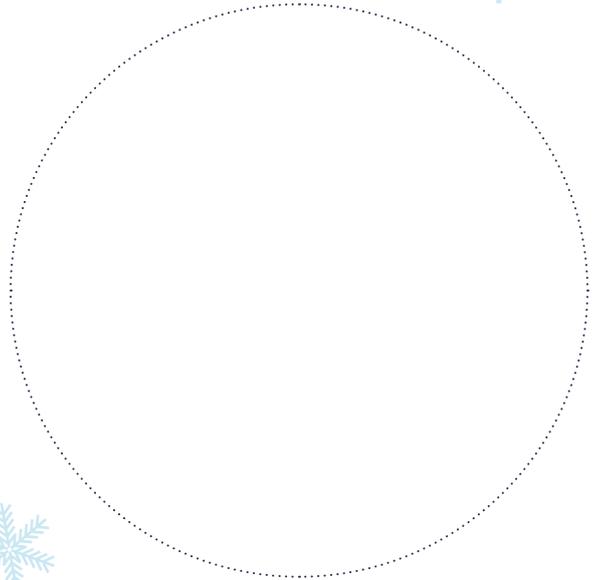
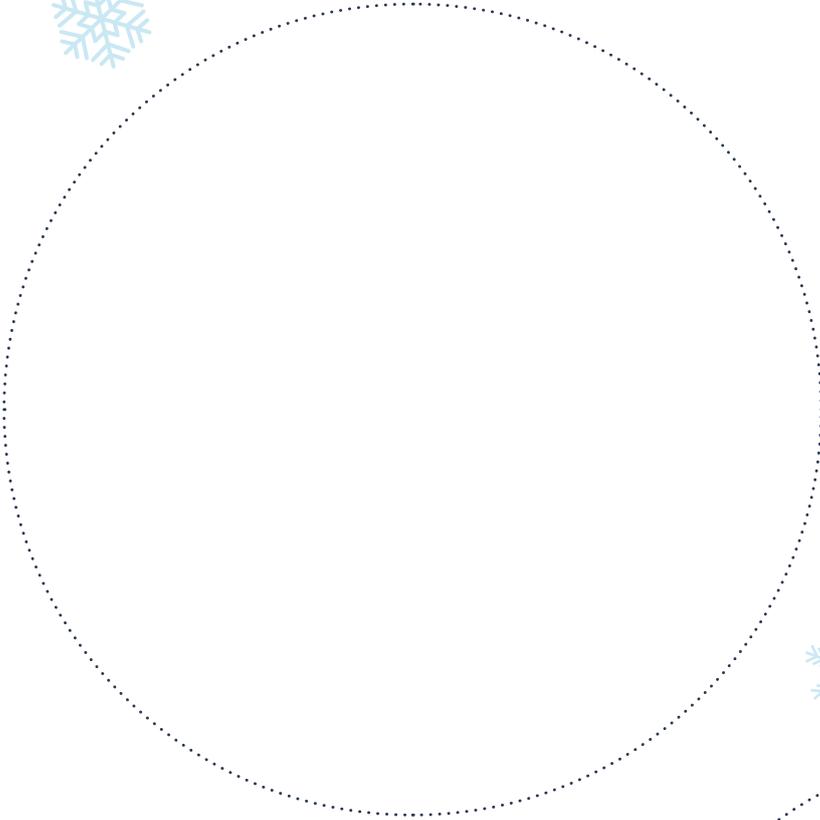
Creating with Materials

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function;
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used;
- Make use of props and materials when role-playing characters in narratives and stories.

RESOURCE SHEET 1

SMALL WHITE BLOBS

CAN YOU TURN THESE SMALL WHITE BLOBS
INTO SNOWFLAKES?



Fold the shape twice (into quarters) and snip out shapes on the outer edge. Unfold to reveal the snowflake.

RESOURCE SHEET 2

SUPER COOL SNOW FACT



THE SNOW THIEF

BY ALICE HEMMING AND NICOLA SLATER

YEAR ONE

SQUIRREL'S WINTER JOURNAL

Learning Objectives

- To recall and write the key events of a story
- To explore scientific information about aspects of winter such as snow and ice

Resources

- *The Snow Thief* by Alice Hemming and Nicola Slater
- Resource Sheet 1: Squirrel's Winter Journal (Part 1)
- Resource Sheet 2: Squirrel's Winter Journal (Part 2)

Lead-In

Share the book with your class, encouraging them to talk about the story and its beautiful illustrations. Revisit the cosy page where Squirrel and Bird are enjoying a hot drink and discussing the case of the missing hazelnuts.

Ask the children to recall Squirrel's wintry activities in the order that they happen, revisiting the book as they do so (these can be written down and displayed for the children to refer to later). Encourage the children to think carefully about how Squirrel would have felt when he experienced these new things; they may suggest adjectives such as, surprised, worried and amazed. Also, ask the children to generate some useful noun phrases to describe the snowball, the snowflake, the frozen puddle and the snow squirrel. For example:

The speedy, cold snowball

The delicate, glistening snowflakes

The slippery, frozen puddle

The silent, smiley snow squirrel

Main Task

Ask the children to imagine that they are Squirrel, and as they are snuggled under their blanket, they are going to write down their happy memories of the fun they had in the snow with Bird. Hopefully, this should cheer Squirrel up and take his mind off the missing hazelnuts!

Explain that a journal is a book that someone can write down their memories, thoughts, feelings and ideas in. Using **Resource Sheet 1: Squirrel's Winter Journal (Part 1)**, the children can imagine they are looking back on their first experiences of a snowy day, recalling the sights, the sounds and their feelings as that first snowball landed in their treetop home and when they made and threw their first snowball back at Bird. They can describe the snowflakes they caught and the frozen puddle that they had a good attempt at skating on. They can even describe their unexpected encounter with the snow squirrel.

There are also spaces on the page for children to draw pictures, inspired by Nicola Slater's illustrations in the book, that capture Squirrel's day. With this beautifully illustrated and written account, Squirrel is sure to look back fondly on his first experience of snow, whenever he reads his journal.

Extension

Share with the class the last two pages of the book, where Squirrel's questions and concerns are answered and explained beautifully. Explain to the children, that thanks to Bird's explanations throughout the story, the children can add some more pages to Squirrel's journal. This time, they will be writing with a non-fiction (information) focus. Explain to the children that they will be using **Resource Sheet 2: Squirrel's Winter Journal (Part 2)**, imagining they are Squirrel proudly writing down all the amazing facts he has learnt about winter in his journal. The following questions or themes can be explored:

Why does it snow?

What colour is snow?

Snowflakes are not small white blobs

Frozen water can be dangerous

These journals could be displayed in your classroom reading or writing area to celebrate the book.

Curriculum Links

English – Reading Comprehension

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Develop pleasure in reading, motivation to read, vocabulary and understanding by listening to and discussing a wide range of poems, stories and non-fiction at a level beyond that at which they can read independently.

English – Writing Composition

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Sequence sentences to form short narratives.
- Encapsulate what they want to say, sentence by sentence.

Science – Seasonal Changes

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Observe changes across the four seasons;
- Observe and describe weather associated with the seasons and how day length varies.

Art – KS1

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Use drawing, painting and sculpture to develop and share their ideas, experiences and imagination.

SQUIRREL'S WINTER JOURNAL (PART 1)

SQUIRREL'S WINTER JOURNAL

IMAGINE YOU ARE SQUIRREL,
WARM AND COSY AT HOME,
WRITING ABOUT THE FUN YOU HAD
WITH BIRD IN THE SNOW.



SQUIRREL'S WINTER JOURNAL (PART 1)

MY SNOWBALL FIGHT
WITH BIRD

SKATING ON THE
PUDDLE

CATCHING
SNOWFLAKES

THE SNOW SQUIRREL

SQUIRREL'S WINTER JOURNAL (PART 2)

WHY DOES IT SNOW?

SNOWFLAKES ARE NOT
SMALL WHITE BLOBS.

WHAT COLOUR IS
SNOW?

FROZEN WATER CAN
BE DANGEROUS.