

# One Elephant Went out to Play

## This week the children will:

- Following the text using a left to right movement.
- Recalling details of the text.
- Being able to recognise that musical notation can show you what music should sound like, whether it is sung or played.
- Understanding the safety requirements for using trampolines and bouncy castles.
- Singing *Nelly the Elephant*.
- Knowing how to list creatures according to size, and recognising the different criteria for 'large' – height or weight?
- Knowing that rhyming means that the ends of the words sound the same and finding rhyming words.
- Accessing and recording information.
- Finding words beginning with 'th'.
- Using a dictionary.
- Acting out a story. Working out who should do what.
- Learning where elephants come from and the differences between African and Indian elephants.



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## Day 1

### Shared reading

Show the class the book's front cover and read them the blurb on the back. What is going to happen? Are they going to find out just how many elephants can jump on a spider's web before it breaks? Do the children think this is a true story or one that is fun and nonsense?

Show the children the musical staves on the back of the book. Does anyone know what they are? The black circles are notes and we know what they should sound like by the line or space that they are on.

The higher up the stave, the higher the note. Demonstrate high and low pitch with the class and then teach them the simple *One Elephant* song.

Why is there no author for this book, but only an illustrator? Because it is a well-known rhyme and the illustrator has chosen it so that we can all have some fun.

Sing the book through with the class, giving them plenty of opportunity to comment on all the different creatures that appear.

The basic rhyme is the same all the way through, so the children should be able to join in with you quite quickly.

Ask them to hold up the right number of fingers to go with each page and count

through the numbers on each page, pointing at them as you do so.

Why do the children think that Eight, Nine and Ten Elephants are all on one page? Probably because there wouldn't be enough room for all those holes. How are the elephants on this page using the numbers? Like playground equipment. Before you sing *Ten Elephants*, ask the children what they think is going to happen.

### Whole class activity

Ask the class whether the spider's web is like anything they have played on. They will probably say a trampoline or bouncy castle – or maybe even a bed!

Ask them whether playing on these things is safe or whether there are rules which they ought to follow. The ones that spring to mind are: trampolines and bouncy castles should be supervised by adults; trampolines should have protective nets if they are above the ground; only one person at a time should go on them; they should not be slippery.

The children will probably be able to think of other suggestions. Remind them that they should be careful at all times when trampolining.

### Independent activity

I suggest a carousel of five different activities which each group of children can do during the week. This makes resourcing much easier, but if you would prefer to do one activity on each day with the whole class, that is obviously an option.

- Make a list of all the creatures in the book: lion, butterfly, bird, snake, spider, crocodile, monkey, giraffe, hippo, lemur, elephant, frog. Ask the children

to list them in order of size and to draw each one beside its name. Ask them to decide how they are going to work out their list. Is the giraffe largest because it is tallest, or is the elephant largest because it is heaviest? Both answers can be right, but you need to decide which kind of measurement you are going to use.

- In the verses we have the rhyming words 'play' and 'day'. Remind the children that rhyming words have the same sound at the end. How many other words can the children find to rhyme with 'play' and 'day'? Ask them to work in pairs and to illustrate their list.
- This group should find out as much as possible about elephants. Where will they look? They need to think about what they already know and then look in books and on the internet. Ask them to present their information on a mind map so that not too much writing is involved.
- Ask this group find as many words as possible which begin with 'th'. Children can work individually and illustrate the words they find. They might like to use a dictionary to help them.
- Let the last group act out the story, although they will probably only get to 'five' or 'six'.

### Plenary

You will want to choose the order in which the children talk about their work to ensure that each group gets a turn. Ask the children in the first group to show their work if they would like to.

Discuss the different ways in which 'large' can be interpreted. In how many

other ways could we discuss differences? (Number of legs, wings or no wings, what they eat, where they live, do they move fast or slowly, for example.) Does anyone know *Nelly the Elephant*? Sing it and explain that elephants used to work in circuses, but nowadays we think this is cruel.

## Day 2

### Shared reading

Sing through the book again, encouraging the children to join in. To make their singing more expressive, suggest that they sing the first line quietly, the second and third increasingly loudly. Before turning each page, ask them what comes next.

### Whole class activity

Ask the children to look at the illustrations. Are they realistic or do they represent the artist's idea of what the animals are like? The artist has drawn what he knows children will recognise: the elephant has a trunk, the lemur has a stripy tail; but they are unusual colours and are wearing clothes. So these drawings are cartoons rather than realistic. What other differences do the children notice between cartoons and reality?

### Independent activity

Rotate the groups so that each one is doing different work.

### Plenary

Ask the group who has been finding out about elephants to show what they have done. They probably haven't found out two very surprising facts: elephants are the only animals which have four knees (that is, all their leg joints bend the same way) and they can't jump (which makes a nonsense of the story).

## Day 3

### Shared reading

Sing through the book again, this time dividing the children into four groups. The first group will sing the first line quietly, the second group will sing the second verse more loudly, the third group will be even louder and the fourth will be loud and will beckon to more elephants to join them.

### Whole class activity

Ask the children what stories they know with elephants in them. (Elmer, Elephant

and the Bad Baby, Babar, The Enormous Crocodile, for example.) What are elephants like in these stories? Usually kind, sensible and resourceful. Read an elephant story of your (or their) choice. You may decide to do this later in the day if time is an issue.

### Independent activity

Rotate the groups again.

### Plenary

Ask the rhyming word group to tell you their words. Can anyone add to their list?

## Day 4

### Shared reading

Sing the book through once again. This time ask the children how they would like to do it: groups doing different verses, getting louder? Let them decide what would sound best.

### Whole class activity

Where do elephants come from? They originally came from Africa and India. Show these on a globe or world map. What are the main differences between the two kinds of elephant? The African elephant is the largest living land animal, weighing up to 7,500 kilograms. The Indian elephant weighs about 5,500 kilograms. The African elephant has larger ears and three toenails on its hind feet. Indian elephants have smaller ears and four toenails on their hind feet. Show pictures of the two kinds of elephant.

## Independent work

Back to the carousel.

### Plenary

Ask the acting group if they would like to perform to the whole class. Did they find any problems when they were deciding what to do? If so, can any of the other groups make suggestions?

## Day 5

### Shared reading

Give the book a final reading. Ask the children for any final ideas on performance.

### Whole class activity

Do the children know what elephants can be used for? They are protected in their natural habitats, but often work where strength is needed, especially in forests where they can pull and lift logs. Sometimes they have chairs on their backs, known as 'howdahs' which people can sit in. In this case, the elephant will be guided by a 'mahout' who sits just behind the elephant's ears. In the old days, elephants' tusks were used to make things of ivory, but this is no longer allowed.

### Independent work

Each group should carry out the last activity.

### Plenary

Discuss the work done by the final group. Finish with a rousing chorus of 'Nelly the Elephant'.

5to7

## This week's essentials

- A big book copy of *One Elephant Went out to Play* illustrated by Sanja Rescek, published by Child's Play International. £4.99.
- The words for *Nelly the Elephant*.
- A list of all the creatures in the book.
- Paper and crayons.
- A4 paper.
- Internet access; encyclopaedias.
- Large sheet of paper for the group.
- Dictionaries. A4 paper.
- A selection of elephant fiction books.
- A globe or world map; pictures of African and Indian elephants.

