

My Pet Goldfish by Catherine Rayner (Walker)

A charming new Nature Storybook all about looking after goldfish – inspired by the author's own pet fish.

My Pet Goldfish is a delightful picture book with facts by the Greenaway Medal-winning author-illustrator Catherine Rayner. The child narrating this story has been given their first ever pet: a tiny fish with shimmering scales and bright beady eyes... Their very own goldfish! Sitting alongside the gentle narrative and dynamic illustrations, the subtext introduces facts about goldfish and their care – some gentle, some funny, some fascinating – making this a perfect choice for first-time owners.

Overall aims of this teaching sequence:

- To listen to and talk about selected non-fiction to develop a deep familiarity with new knowledge and vocabulary
- To enjoy an increasing range of books
- To know where information can be found in non-fiction texts
- To know that information can be retrieved from a variety of sources
- To identify some of the features of non-fiction texts
- To think and talk confidently about responses to a book, using prediction, asking questions and making connections with their own experience
- To think about the story meanings conveyed in the illustrations
- To explore and interpret stories through creative activity including play, art, drama, movement, poetry, drawing and writing
- To use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences
- To deepen understanding of the world through a text
- To write for meaning and purpose in a variety of narrative and non-narrative forms

This is a Power of Reading Teaching Sequence for Nursery and Reception

Overview of this teaching sequence

This teaching sequence is approximately 3 weeks long if spread over a series of sessions. It has a focus on exploring and enjoying contemporary non-fiction texts and using them for a range of purposes. Through the sequence the children will learn a vast amount of new knowledge and vocabulary around fish and pondlife and will be able to put this into practice as they learn how to care for a paper fish of their own. This work could be enhanced if you have or plan to have a class pet, so that the children can use and apply their learning in a real-life context.

The children will have the opportunity to explore a wide range of reading, mark making and writing opportunities; making links with other known and familiar texts, songs, and rhymes, as well as reading

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and writing across fiction and non-fiction. Through the sessions they will reflect on their own experiences of caring for animals and wildlife as well as strongly empathise with the goldfish and the children in the book.

Development Matters (2021) and Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2023)

Communication and Language:

- Enjoy listening to longer stories and can remember much of what happens.
- Understand why questions.
- Learn and use new vocabulary.
- Articulate their ideas and thoughts in well-formed sentences.
- Connect one idea or action to another using a range of connectives.
- Engage in story times.
- Listen to and talk about stories to build familiarity and understanding.
- Retell the story, once they have developed a deep familiarity with the text, some as exact repetition and some in their own words.
- Listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions.
- Develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.
- Listen to and talk about selected non-fiction to develop a deep familiarity with new knowledge and vocabulary.

Physical Development:

- Use one-handed tools and equipment, for example, making snips in paper with scissors.
- Use a comfortable grip with good control when holding pens and pencils.
- Show a preference for a dominant hand.

Literacy:

- Understand the five key concepts about print:
 - print has meaning
 - print can have different purposes
 - we read English text from left to right and from top to bottom
 - the names of the distinct parts of a book
 - page sequencing
- Blend sounds into words, so that they can read short words made up of known letter– sound correspondences.
- Read and understand simple sentences.
- Use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately.
- Read some common irregular words.
- Demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.
- Use some of their print and letter knowledge in their early writing.
- Write some letters accurately.
- Write short sentences with words with known sound-letter correspondences using a capital letter and full stop.
- Re-read what they have written to check that it makes sense.
- Use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds.
- Write some irregular common words.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop their small motor skills so that they can use a range of tools competently, safely, and confidently. ▪ Develop the foundations of a handwriting style which is fast, accurate and efficient. ▪ Handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly, and others are phonetically plausible. |
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Cross Curricular Links

Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

- This book follows the life and growth of a new goldfish and explores the relationship between a child and her much loved pet. It allows children to consider their own pets, the pets of others, and how to care for animals and wildlife around them.
- There are ample opportunities for the children to empathise with the goldfish and his life story as well as for children to share their own experiences of growing and changing.
- Through keeping their own 'pet goldfish' they will learn what their fish needs to survive and thrive and through planned role-play experiences will be able to use and apply this knowledge in the context of other animals.

Maths:

- The growth of the goldfish through the book allows for various measuring activities, size comparisons and ordering.
- Children can notice, describe and sort colours and patterns in the fish as well as other wildlife they encounter during nature walks or observational times in the outdoor environment.
- A vet or pet shop role-play area can be enhanced to include; scales to weigh food and animals, tills and money for purchasing pet equipment, as well as diaries and telephones to role-play scheduling appointments.

Understanding the World:

- Children will use all their senses in hands-on exploration of the natural world through time outside, visits to parks and ponds.
- They will explore the natural world around them, talking about what they see, hear and feel whilst outside, reflecting on those experiences and relating those to the text using a wide vocabulary related to living things.
- They will begin to understand the key features of the lifecycle of the goldfish and other animals of interest and consider different or changing habits and the effects these have on the survival and wellbeing of different species.

- The sequence has emphasis on the need to understand, respect and care for the natural environment and all living things.

Ideas for Continuous and Enhanced Provision

Role-Play/ Small World Area:

- Create a pet shop or vet's practice role-play area with the children. Ideally both role-play areas can be created to allow children to purchase the equipment they need for their imaginary pets and then visit the veterinary practice to continue to care and learn more about their animals.
- Wherever possible enrich the role-play areas with real world examples of care instruction pamphlets and posters, animal food packaging, and specific non-fiction texts and story books to enhance their ideas in play. They can also be selected or created collaboratively with the children.

Creative Area/ Expressive Arts:

- Provide pens and watercolour paints to create illustrations inspired by the style and media used by the illustrator; Catherine Rayner.
- Provide various contrasting sizes of paper and mark making materials for children to explore scale when creating images of fish and wildlife.
- Provide clipboards or large easels, mark making materials, and paints in the outdoor area for children to paint and draw from observation in nature.
- Create musical soundscapes related to experiences underwater.
- Collect plants, sticks and natural materials to create prints or etchings from.
- Create large collaborative multimedia collages of underwater scenes.
- Mix dish soap with paint, and using straws, blow the 'bubbly paint' then place paper on top to create unique bubble paintings/prints.

Writing and Mark Making:

- Label fish and wildlife diagrams/ observational drawings.
- Create observational drawings of water plants, fish, and found minibeasts.
- Ensure that children have plenty of opportunity to engage in different forms of writing, such as information texts, logs of their nature observations, posters, notes and stories.
- Encourage children to label and create posters and leaflets for their role-play areas and activities.
- Collaboratively create a large display of an underwater pond scene and a fish tank. Encourage the children to add their drawings and artwork to the display as they create them. Leave sentence strips and post-it notes nearby for children to add labels and new facts they learn over the teaching sequence.

- Zig-zag books or simple handmade books left available around the provision will encourage independent story or non-fiction writing in response to the text.
- Ensure resources are available for children to engage with self-initiated writing throughout the provision, both indoors and out. This will include a wide variety of mark making implements and a variety of materials to write on or in.

Reading area:

- Turn the book corner into a pond habitat. Involve the children in setting it up, creating dark cosy spaces surrounded by pebbles, fabrics and ribbons for pond weeds (or real potted plants). Gather blue, green or brown fabrics, blankets and cushions to resemble pond water. Place a goldfish toy inside for children to read with and have a 'Goldfish's book of the week' display to feature other fish stories, poetry and non-fiction books. Use the 'Links to other texts and resources' section of the sequence in combination with the children's own personal favourite books about fish to enhance this area.
- Create collections and displays of other books written and illustrated by Catherine Rayner.
- Create a display of a range of other non-fiction texts related to pets, animals and wildlife. Spend time sharing these with the children regularly, exploring and enjoying the features of non-fiction texts. Include decodable non-fiction books for children to read independently.
- Ensure that the children are provided with rich and varied opportunities to read for purpose across the provision such as reading care guides, leaflets, and posters in the role-play areas.
- Following any visits, provide maps of the journey to and from the pond or park for children to read when on the journey and to use later in role-play.
- In addition to the collections of non-fiction texts in your reading area, display and use non-fiction texts around other areas of your provision, linked to the play the children are engaged in in those areas, for instance non-fiction books about plants and minibeasts in your outdoor area, books about construction or transport in your construction areas, books about weather near your wellies etc.
- Provide opportunities for children to revisit and talk together to explore the narrative parts of the book for themselves in as many ways as possible:
 - Story props: create stick puppets of all the characters and create a tabletop theatre from a cardboard box.
 - Story box: Create a story box of the setting with the children. Fill it with a variety of small people to represent the children in the book, various fish and other objects to represent the characters and settings in the story.

Teaching Approaches

- Response to illustration
- Reading aloud

Writing Outcomes

- Observational drawings
- Speech and thought bubbles

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Re-reading ▪ Responding to reading through booktalk and questioning ▪ Learning through play ▪ Looking at language ▪ Writing in Role ▪ Shared writing ▪ Reading and performing poetry ▪ Information reading and writing ▪ Illustrating settings and characters ▪ Independent writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Labels and caption writing ▪ Shared poetry writing ▪ Personal narrative drawing and writing ▪ Collaborative poetry/ song writing ▪ Writing in role ▪ Letter writing ▪ Illustrating story settings and characters ▪ Independent non-fiction writing |
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Links to other texts and resources:

Other useful non-fiction texts:

- *There are Fish Everywhere*, Katie Haworth, illustrated by Britta Teckentrup (Big Picture Press)
- *Surprising Sharks*, Nicola Davies, Illustrated by James Croft (Walker)
- *A First Book of Nature*, Nicola Davies, illustrated by Mark Hearld (Walker)
- *Nature's Day*, Kay Maguire, illustrated by Danielle Kroll (Wide Eyed Editions)
- *Growing Frogs*, Vivian French, illustrated by Alison Bartlett (Walker)
- *Yucky Worms*, Vivian French, illustrated by Jessica Ahlberg (Walker)
- *Worms: Mucky Minibeasts*, Susie Williams (Wayland)
- *Blackbird*, Blackbird, What Do You Do?, Kate McLelland (Hodder)
- *The Beeman*, Laurie Krebs, illustrated by Valeria Cis (Barefoot Books)

Fiction books with fish or underwater characters:

- *Hooray for Fish!* Lucy Cousins (Walker)
- *The Rainbow Fish*, Marcus Pfister (North-South)
- *The Fish Who Could Wish* John Bush, illustrated by Korky Paul (Oxford)
- *Please, Mr Magic Fish!* Jessica Souhami (Otter-Barry Books)

Books about pets:

- *Lulu Gets a Cat*, Anna McQuinn, illustrated by Rosalind Beardshaw (Alanna Max)
- *We're Getting a Cat!* Vivian French, illustrated by Salvatore Rubbino (Walker)
- *Our Very Own Dog*, Amanda McCardie, illustrated by Salvatore Rubbino (Walker)
- *There are cats in this book*, Viviane Schwarz (Walker)
- *There are no cats in this book*, Viviane Schwarz (Walker)
- *Is there a dog in this book?* Viviane Schwarz (Walker)
- *The King Cat*, Marta Altés (Macmillan)

- *Matilda's Cat*, Emily Gravett (Two Hoots)
- *A Dog Called Rod*, Tim Hopgood (Macmillan)
- *Thank You for Looking After Our Pets*, Tim Hopgood (Simon and Schuster)
- *A Dog with Nice Ears*, Lauren Child (Orchard Books)
- *That Pesky Rat*, Lauren Child (Orchard Books)
- *I Want a Pet*, Lauren Child (Frances Lincoln)
- *Dear Zoo*, Rod Campbell (Puffin)

Songs and rhymes with related themes:

- 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Once I caught a fish alive
- Five little ducks went swimming one day
- Five little speckled frogs
- Wiggly Woo

Other books by Catherine Rayner:

- *Augustus and his Smile* (Little Tiger)
- *Abigail* (Little Tiger)
- *Iris and Isaac* (Little Tiger)
- *Arlo, The Lion Who Couldn't Sleep* (Macmillan)
- *Olga da Polga*, by Michael Bond, illustrated by Catherine Rayner (Oxford University Press)

Online Resources

- Lyrics to popular nursery rhymes related to ponds, gardens and underwater creatures can be found on: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/nursery-rhymes-a-to-z-index/z4ddgwx>
- Guidance on keeping freshwater fish: <https://www.rspca.org.uk/documents/1494939/7712578/Freshwater+Fish+Care.pdf/0116d9d9-8ab7-18f0-eba8-628f5eff612e?t=1553271150741>
- Pond dipping guidance: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-families/family-wild-challenge/activities/pond-dipping/>
- Ambient pond sounds: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=scRfTPcG2cY>

Teaching Sessions:

Before Beginning the Sequence:

- For many of the sessions, you will need to hold back from sharing the front cover illustration and title of the text with the children. Covering the front cover of the book loosely with wrapping paper and masking tape will support this. When the cover is eventually revealed near the end of the sequence, you are revealing this like a gift to the children, making the experience of sharing this book even more special, suspenseful and pleasurable.
- Prepare a Working Wall display space and/or shared journal where you can keep records of class discussions, artwork, photographs and writing that are produced as you work through the book. Your shared journal can be prepared by sewing or stapling together large pieces of sugar paper, if you don't have a scrap book or display book available.
- Part of your Working Wall/ shared reading journal should include space for new vocabulary from the book to be added. As you work through the teaching sequence, pause at any new or complex words, explore the meanings of the new words together and then add these to your display, referring back to them regularly and in new contexts such as in role-play or modelled alongside the children during independent play.
- You might wish to plan a trip to a local pet shop or aquarium shop for the children to be able to purchase the equipment they will need to care for their fish and see the other varieties of fish available to keep as pets.
- If you are considering getting a class pet as part of the provision, this may be a good time to introduce the pet, as the children will learn much about how to care for animals throughout the sequence. The welfare of any animals coming into schools must be carefully considered and guidance on this can be found on the RSPCA website. If you are considering a fish, specific guidance on freshwater fish care can be found at: <https://www.rspca.org.uk/documents/1494939/7712578/Freshwater+Fish+Care.pdf/0116d9d9-8ab7-18f0-eba8-628f5eff612e?t=1553271150741>
- Planning a group visit to a local pond will help contextualise parts of the book and allow children the opportunity to make observational drawings and notes from real world experiences. Revisiting the pond at various points during the teaching sequence and later, in different seasons, will provide the opportunity to notice growth and change in the life of the pond habitat.

Response to Illustration

- Without revealing the front cover, share with children the illustration from the first endpapers depicting the underwater pond illustration.
- Ask the children to discuss what they can see in the illustration, adapting Aidan Chambers' 'Tell Me' book talk prompts as a starting point (*Tell Me, Children, Reading and Talk with The Reading Environment*, Thimble Press 2011): Tell me:
 - *What is happening? What do you find most interesting?*
 - *What do you like? Is there anything you dislike? Why?*
 - *Does this remind you of anything in real life or in stories you know?*

- Focus the children's attention on the smaller details beginning with the snail shell. *What is this? Have you ever seen a snail like that? What might it be doing on that plant?*
- Next, notice the faint fish tail shapes on the edges of the pages. *What might they be? Where might the fish be going? What makes you think this?*
- Scribe the children's responses around an enlarged copy of the endpapers in your shared journal.
- Begin to draw out key vocabulary from this illustration. Spend time explaining, defining, writing and re-reading those words, creating word cards for key words, which children can use throughout the sequence. Model which of these are phonetically encodable and model how to sound out to spell these, drawing on knowledge of known phonemes, graphemes, digraphs and consonant clusters, using sound buttons to illustrate where necessary to support children's independent reading and spelling of words such as; **fish, fin, tail, weeds, shell** and **snail**. Other terms might require adult scribing such as; **bubbles, underwater, nature, wildlife, eating** and **swimming**.
- Now, reveal the illustration on the publication and title page, ensuring that you keep all of the text covered at this point. What do they notice in this illustration? Have they ever been to a place like this? Are there any more words they might want to add to their word collections from this illustration? Examples might include; reeds, pebbles, stones, pond and garden.
- Go on to talk about how the illustrations make the children feel, discussing words that the children use and why they feel this way and extending language where appropriate to be more precise, using words like calm, peaceful, tranquil, still, excited, free, happy, scared, spooky, creepy.
- Discuss whether the children have any predictions around what this story might be about from what they have seen so far in the book. Encourage them to use details from the illustrations to infer or predict what might happen next in the story.
- Additionally, list any questions children might have. *What are they wondering about? What makes them curious? What would they like to know more about?*
- Scribe or encourage the children to write their story predictions or any questions they have on sentence strips or in speech bubbles around the enlarged image showing children that their words and ideas are valued.

Personal Narratives: Pets

In preparation for this session, make each child a paper goldfish, just large enough to fit in the palm of their hand.

- Share and re-read some of the children's responses to the illustrations from the previous session to re-orientate them with the book and remind them of their story predictions.
- Turn to the first page spread and without reading any text aloud look at the illustration together. *How old might the person be? What might the relationship between the fish and the child be? What makes you think this?*

- Read aloud the first sentence. Notice how the character is 4 years old. Encourage the children to compare their own age to that of the character. *Are they the same age? Are they older or younger?*
- Come back to clarify some of the key vocabulary and concepts introduced on this page. Start with the seemingly simple word **fish**. *What kind of fish is this? What do the children already know about fish? Look at where this fish lives. Where else might fish live? What is the difference between this fish and fish that live in a river or in the sea?*
- Go on to look at the word **scales**, discussing and explaining its meaning in the context of the fish and add to your word collection on your Working Wall or shared journal to refer back to in future sessions.
- Invite the children to talk about their own pets. If they do not have any pets, they may want to imagine the kind of pet they would like, if they could have a pet.
- Re-read the sentence aloud pausing at 'a fish no bigger than my hand'. Place a pre-prepared paper fish into each child's hand, allow them time to think about its size and scale, in relation to the sentence in the book. Tell the children that this is going to be their own pet fish to look after.
- Read on to the end of this spread. *What would they call their little pet fish? What might they say to their little goldfish? What might your fish need if we are going to keep them as pets? Jot the children's ideas down to come back to in the next session. Collect in the fish ready to return to in the next session.*
- Also use this section of the text to clarify the word **pet**. *What does it mean when we have an animal as a pet? Do any of the children have pets themselves or know anyone who does? If they don't have a pet, would they like one? What would it be?* To clarify and extend understanding, you may wish to read aloud some more of the books about pets mentioned in the booklists at the start of the sequence in other parts of the day. Invite the children to talk about their own pets. If they do not have any pets, they may want to imagine the kind of pet they would like.
- As part of the extended provision, allow the children to draw their real or imagined pets. Encourage them to add captions or labels to their drawings. These might include their pet's name, what kind of animal they are, how old the pet is, what colour fur, scales or feathers they have.
- Spend time sharing the drawings together as a group. Encourage the children to talk about their drawings and, invite the children ask questions about each other's pets. Model some simple questions to begin the discussions such as: *What animal is your pet? How big is your pet? What is your pet's name? How do you care for your pet?*
- To support children in asking a wider range of questions, you can scribe some of their questions and some of your own onto different coloured strips of paper, fold these up and place in a 'questions bag'. Take turns having children pull out different questions and read them together. You can later create a display and place the 'questions bag' nearby for children to play this game independently.

- Invite families to bring in pictures of their pets or the pets of others they know to add to the display and support children in talking about their pets and home lives.

Understanding the World: Knowledge Grid

In preparation for this session, gather together props and resources for creating a habitat for a pet fish, these might include a plastic tank, gravel, pebbles, pond plants. Also gather resources for the children to replicate a habitat for their own ‘pet’ fish, e.g., mini plastic tubs such as those which are used to package strawberries, gravel, a variety of textures and shades of green paper to cut up to make plants.

- Read aloud the book so far with the front cover still covered up.
- Turn to the second page spread and allow the children to respond to the illustration. Begin to make connections between this illustration and the endpapers by referring back to the word collections you made in the first session.
- Read the page aloud. Allow the children to notice and add any new words to their word collections which come up in response to these new pages, either from the text or the illustration. Words might include **rocks, pebbles, plants, tank, space, food** and **grow**. Look at which of these are phonetically decodable and which they might need support to read. Spend time defining any terms which may be new or uncommon to the children.
- Re-read aloud the two factual sentences ‘Goldfish have been kept as pets for thousands of years’ and ‘Goldfish need plenty of space to grow properly, so you need a BIG tank to keep them in.’
- Notice that on the page the information is written smaller and in a different type of font, pointing this out at this stage will support children when trying to extract information later or from other similar texts. Ask the children what they have found out about goldfish from reading this information and allow them to recast the facts back to you. Ask them if they already knew any of this information and whether the text taught them anything new about goldfish.
- Now, ask the children if there is anything else they already know, or think they know about goldfish.
- Display a grid, either on large paper or on the IWB with 3 columns labelled ‘What we know about goldfish’, ‘What we want to find out about goldfish’ and ‘What we have learnt about goldfish’.

What we know about goldfish	What we want to find out about goldfish	What we learnt about goldfish

- Scribe the children’s ideas into the first column, recasting them into complete sentences where necessary and modelling how to record their ideas through writing, including how to use phonic knowledge at the point of writing.
- Then ask them if there is anything else they would like to know about goldfish and support them in structuring questions for the second column, modelling how to write these out as well. It is useful here to also ask the children how they might find out this information, for instance, from this book, from a different information book, from someone who knows about goldfish, from the internet, from observing goldfish in the wild, from a wildlife magazine or from a pamphlet from the vets.
- Keep the grid somewhere visible that it can be revisited by you, the children and their families, either in your class journal or on a Working Wall.
- Leave sentence strips in a wallet close by, alongside an attractive display of texts that will support the children’s research and recording.
- Finish by turning to the back of the book and sharing the Note from the Author on p.28. Share with the children the real-life materials for keeping a fish and the materials available to make a home for their paper fish. Explore the text together looking at what the children can use to create everything their fish to live a happy life. Think about the point that advises you to get ‘Some good-quality goldfish food’. *Do any of the children know what goldfish might eat?* Take note of the suggestions and invite the children to talk about this question at home, trying to find out the answer and bring this back to school.
- As part of the extended provision, allow the children to use the available resources to create habitats for their own paper fish, if they wish to, drawing together what they have learnt from the text about what a suitable habitat for a fish includes.

Role Play and Drama

- Revisit the children’s thoughts and questions about goldfish from the previous session.
- Turn to the next new spread which begins, ‘After school, I would tell Richard about my day.’ and read aloud the whole page, including the factual sentences at the bottom of the page. *What have we learnt about goldfish on these pages? Is there any new information we can add to our knowledge grid? Did we find the answers to any of our questions?*
- Look at the illustration and think about the relationship between the child and the goldfish. *How might the fish feel? How might the child feel?*
- In pairs, spend time role-playing being the child and the goldfish. Take it in turns to talk about your day to the fish just as the child does every day. *What might you tell them about your day today? Or yesterday?* Encourage the children to ask the fish questions such as: *Do you remember me? Do you like it when I gently touch the glass? Can you see me?* Allow the child who is role-playing the goldfish to respond with answers sharing what the goldfish might be thinking in response, using the new information we have learnt about goldfish such as: ‘I remember you because I can remember things for up to five months.’ Or ‘I can see you clearly because goldfish have very good eyesight.’

- To support children in understanding what memories over five months might feel like, create a timeline for the class. You can link this to any previous learning you have done around calendars to support this and choose a format the children might be familiar with. One option would be to use a timeline with the months of the year clearly labelled, find the month you are in now and count back five months.
- Plot on your timeline any significant memories the children might have shared as a group such as starting Nursery or Reception, Christmas, half term holidays, any class trips or visitors, or any birthdays in the class during the past five months. Talk about their memories of those events and if there are any other memories they have. They might want to talk about things they did yesterday, for example, which they may remember quite vividly and how those memories differ from their memories from 5 months ago or much earlier memories that they have.
- Keep your class timeline somewhere visible so you and the children can continue to add to it as time passes and as they create new memories together.
- In the extended provision, encourage the children to talk to their paper fish, in the habitats they have created, sharing details about their day with them.

Non-fiction reading: Summarising information and scanning to locate specific information in the text

- As a focus of this session, set the children the task of being information finders. Explain that you are going to read the book aloud, and that as you read, they must listen carefully for any information that might tell someone else something about goldfish.
- Re-read the text so far and then turn the page to focus on pages 12 and 13. Ask the children whether they heard any information on this page, encouraging them to recall it in their own words. This might be from the more narrative text; for example, they might remember that goldfish don't have eyelids or that they sleep with their eyes open.
- As they talk, use the facts recalled to clarify vocabulary in context, for example by drawing attention to their own eyes and eyelids and comparing their own ways of sleeping to that of the goldfish.
- There is a lot of language and vocabulary in this section that relates to the fish, and also to the human body. A diagram or model of the human body, including the internal organs would be useful for the children to be able to compare and contrast their own bodies with the bodies of the fish, looking at where we are the same, e.g., both the fish and humans have eyes, but humans have eyelids and fish do not, and where we are different, e.g., that lungs help humans to breathe, but that fish have gills. You can add this new learning to the knowledge grid.
- Now read on to page 15. Ask the children to think carefully about what they have heard here. *Are the children surprised by the fact that fish eat worms? When they thought about and tried to find out what fish ate, what did they discover?* You may wish to show the children some fish flakes, allowing them time to observe these and describe how they look and even how they smell. Re-read the informational sentence at the bottom of the spread and use this to talk to

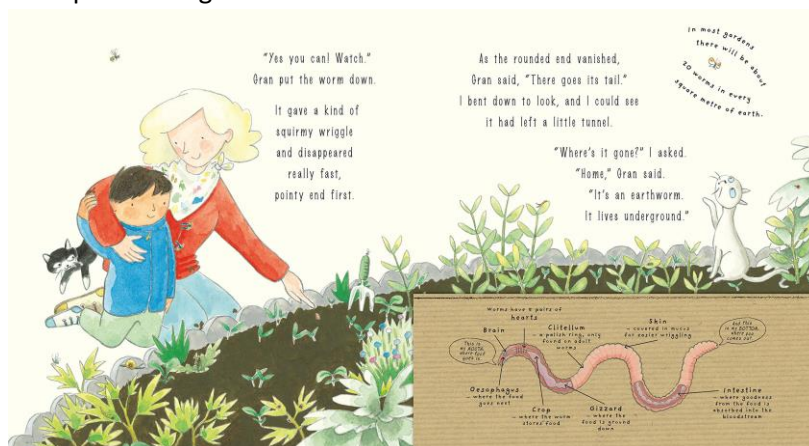
the children about the five senses we have, and what these support us to do. Find out. Why do you think the fish flakes have quite a strong smell?

- Add the new knowledge gained from reading to the knowledge grid, prompting the children with a question, such as *What did we learn about what fish eat?* Ask the children, *have you ever seen a worm? Where was it? Do you like worms? Have you ever seen a fish eat worms?* Children with experiences of going fishing or seeing others going fishing may know worms can be used as bait.
- To contextualise this for children you might wish to sing along with the song **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, once I caught a fish alive**. An animated version of the song can be found on BBC School Radio: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/nursery-rhymes-1-2-3-4-5-once-i-caught-a-fish-alive/zdy6jhy>
- Leave some coloured paper, small pots and scissors out in the extended provision for children to make into fish flakes and some thick, pink wool to cut into worms for the children to use to feed their pet paper fish, if they wish to. This activity is fantastic for supporting fine motor development, co-ordination and concentration, essential precursors for the physical act of writing.

Non-fiction writing: Labelled diagrams

- Re-read the story so far to reactivate children's knowledge and understanding about the goldfish.
- Turn to the front page of the book with the title still covered (you might wish to unwrap it at this point just a little) to reveal just the illustration of the goldfish. If possible, pass the book around so that children can look at the finer details and textures on the fish, but keep the title covered until near the end of the teaching sequence. As you look at the illustration, encourage the children to support you in describing the features of the fish, drawing on language heard and seen in the book so far, such as: **scales, tail, eyes, gills**. Look at other parts of the fish that we haven't seen the name of yet, point to the fins and ask the children if they know the name for these parts of the goldfish, and what they might be useful for.
- On a flipchart or large piece of paper, draw a large goldfish, using the illustration on the front of the book as a guide. Ensure that you leave space on the page for adding writing around it.
- As you draw, carefully narrate your intentions and thought processes, e.g. 'I'm going to start at the goldfish's head, curve round to the body, follow a line out to the tail, round the other side of the body and back to the head.' and again as you add specific features, e.g. 'I am drawing these curved lines to show where the gills are on the goldfish.' You might ask questions such as 'I wonder how many fins I need to draw on my diagram?' Keep referring back to the book to support your answers and inform your drawing. You may also wish to invite the children to draw along with you, creating their own fish as you draw.
- Talk about how we might use this drawing to share what we know about goldfish. Talk about the purpose of diagrams and the various features of labelled diagrams which help us to find

information clearly and with ease, drawing on real life examples of these from other texts, for example the diagram of the worm in Vivian French and Jessica Ahlberg's *Yucky Worms*:



- Explain how this is a diagram of a worm which gives us a lot of information about the body of a worm. Spend time looking at the features which help us to learn this new information; the clear details and colours in the drawing, the arrows or lines pointing to the important parts, the word labels for different anatomical parts, the factual sentences and captions that help us to understand more about each part of the worm.
- Use this knowledge to make your drawing of the goldfish into a labelled diagram. You might start by labelling the features of the goldfish, general features like the head, eyes and body, and specific features like the gills, fins and tail. Once you have added this information, look back over the information on your Knowledge Grid. Decide and collaboratively select any extra information that the children think should be included alongside the basic labelling. Help them to structure the information in short sentences, which communicate additional detail about the anatomy of the goldfish.
- Model how to use and apply phonic knowledge at the point of writing and how to draw on your word collections to support writing your labels and information. You might wish to also carefully model and support using a ruler to draw lines to parts of the anatomy of the fish.
- Older or more experienced writers can then continue to add information to their own diagrams in the form of sentences or phrases, alternatively adults can scribe their factual captions around children's diagrams. Inviting the children to draw on A4 pages and then sticking these into the centre of A3 pages provides them with more space to write extended responses.
- Share how to condense ideas into a phrase or sentence ready for writing and how to translate spoken text to writing, appropriate to the children's age and stage of writing development. Display the diagrams prominently for the children to see and refer to.
- In the extended provision, look for and investigate other labelled diagrams. Search in non-fiction books and around your school environment. Useful examples can be found in *Surprising Sharks* by Nicola Davies, Illustrated by James Croft (Walker) on pages 16-17 and 20-

21. You might also find some in children's magazines such as *National Geographic Kids* or through online sources.

- Print, photocopy or take photographs of the diagrams you find as you encounter them with the children and create a collection of class favourites. Enjoy reading them aloud with the children, noticing and talking about the similar features and any differences between the examples. Think about how they are laid out on the page and how that helps you find information from them.
- Place the collected examples in your reading area for children to revisit independently, or in your writing area to inform children's independent non-fiction writing.

Understanding the World: Exploring the pond habitat, writing poetry to describe experiences

Prior to this session it is useful to arrange a visit to a local pond to observe and talk about this natural habitat looking at the plant and animal life that can be found there and making observational drawings and taking photographs of the habitat. Whilst there, you could also engage the children in some pond-dipping. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds provides useful ideas and guidance for this:

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-families/family-wild-challenge/activities/pond-dipping/>.

- Re-read the book so far and then turn to pages 16 & 17, sharing the illustration but without reading the text. If you have managed to visit a local pond before this, take time to look at this illustration carefully, comparing and contrasting this pond with the pond they visited. Encourage them to observe and talk in detail about the plant and animal life they see, naming these if possible and talking about their features – leaf or flower size, shapes and colours, body features, sizes and colours of creatures. You may wish to display this illustration under a visualiser, scan the spread to display large on a screen or provide copies for children to read the image closely in pairs or small groups.
- Allow time and space for the children to share their connections with the spread, and to connect with the experiences of the characters they see. *How do you think they are feeling? What do you think they might be thinking or saying to each other?*
- Now read aloud the text on the page. *Did they already know that goldfish lived in ponds as well as in tanks, or was this a surprise? What clues do you get about how the goldfish feel about the habitat in which they live?* Look at the sentence 'They wiggled and whirled through the water, their scales shining', discussing the verbs which describe their actions, like wiggled and whirled, acting these out to gain a greater sense of the meaning and feeling behind them, and the way the scales are described as shining. *How do these words give us a sense of how the goldfish feel?*
- Depending on the age and experience of the children you may also wish to point out the alliteration in wiggles, whirled and water. Using their knowledge of initial sounds see if they

can find any other words that also began with the sound 'w'. Start to gather these into alliterative collections.

- Now, remind the children of their own visit to the pond. Encourage them to think back to all the sights and sounds they experienced and think about how they could describe these to someone else. *How could they describe how things looked and moved, or how they felt being there?* Draw back to the rich descriptions in the text to keep supporting and expanding their ideas.
- Demonstrate to the children how they can collect their descriptive words and phrases to create a collaborative free verse list poem. This can be done by inviting children to contribute individual lines about their experience – what they saw, or heard, how things felt if they touched them, or how it felt to be there.
- When you have a series of lines, look together at how these might be organised to flow best in a poem. Read the lines aloud to make decisions on how they could be organised and to see which lines work well together.
- You could learn the poem and perform it for parents or other classes in the school. You can also extend this activity by typing up the class pond poem and leaving copies of it in the writing or creative area for children to illustrate.
- Now, read the information sentence at the bottom of the page, talking about the word troubling. What word does this remind them of? Do they think it's a good word to describe a group of goldfish? Why or why not? What word might they choose instead? You could look at collective nouns for other animals to explore this further.
- In the extended provision, following your visit to a pond or local nature reserve, continue to encourage children's interest in nurturing wildlife and observing growth and change by visiting the pond at different times of the year and in different seasons. Support the children to make log books in which to record their observations and share their findings of how the pond habitat changes over time. Instructions can be found and followed here by the children: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/makes/mr-blooms-log-book-make>



Non-Fiction Writing: Lifecycles

- Re-read the book so far. Explain that today, you are going to find out specifically about Goldfish babies. Demonstrate using the index at the back of the book and looking up **Babies**.
- Turn to page 18, as directed, giving time for the children to orientate themselves with the illustration. *What are we seeing here? Where are we looking from? Through whose eyes might we be looking?* Allow them to step inside the shoes of the child as they look at the image – *what might they be thinking, saying or feeling as they look down into the pond? Can they see any fish that look like babies here? Where might they be?* Scribe the children’s ideas around a copy of this illustration.
- Now, read the accompanying text, including the information text, ‘Baby goldfish are called “fry”’. *What have we learnt about baby goldfish from reading this page? How do the baby goldfish change as they grow older?* Add any new information to the knowledge chart.
- Now, encourage the children to think about how they have changed since they were babies. *How do they look or behave differently? What can they do now that they couldn’t do when they were babies?*
- Extend this learning by asking the children to think about the names of other animal offspring they are familiar with, and how the baby animals change as they grow older. You might wish to make this as a list or word collection with pictures of animals with their young.
- You could also use this as an opportunity to look at lifecycles. This might include any animals or minibeasts that the children know about the lifecycle of, if they have little prior knowledge you could start with thinking about the human lifecycle, and the transition from babies to children, to teenagers, to adults, and how as humans we grow and change.
- Look at the information that the book has already provided about how the goldfish grow and change over their lives and go on to build a fuller picture of the lifecycle of the goldfish using web sources such as Britannica for Kids:
<https://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/goldfish/353193>
- Once you have gathered the information about the life and growth of goldfish provide the children with the opportunity to present their information in a form of their choice. For instance, they may wish to work in groups to make a video inspired by this video of a clown fish lifecycle: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lgUFkM34R7U> (watch from beginning up to 2min 25 sec), and narrate over their video clips or pictures. Or they may wish to craft a goldfish lifecycle with recycled materials to make labelled models of the different stages.

Closely observing and using language for description:

Before this session, collate some photographic images of the different goldfish described in the spread on p20-21. Print these out large – about A4 sized and laminate these to be used in the taught session and in the creative area for an art activity following this. If you don’t have these resources readily available for children to access, you will also need to gather together soft drawing pencils (2B-4B), watercolour paints, brushes of varying sizes, pots of water, mixing palettes, heavy duty paper, coloured pencils, and crayons.

- Re-read the book so far, and on to pages 20-21. Look at how the children react to the page turn and seeing the fish up close. Talk together about where we're seeing the fish from now, instead of looking down on them from over the pond in the spread before, we're now alongside the fish in the water.
- Display this illustration for all the children to closely observe, this might be under a visualiser, scanned and displayed on a screen or copied for pairs or small groups to share. Allow the children to share their observations of the fish, looking at what makes them similar and what makes each one unique. Look at their sizes, shapes, colours and patterns, the differences in their features, e.g., some fish have bigger eyes or longer tails or fins. Make notes of what the children say about the fish around a copy of the illustration, supporting them to extend descriptions from single word utterances to more descriptive phrases where necessary.
- Re-read the text, connecting vocabulary to the illustration to clarify meanings. Talk about the word species and what this means. Talk about some of the other descriptions in the text - *Which fish look like they are wearing goggles? Which one do you think looks fancy?* Discuss the names of the fish, exploring the sounds in the names, how the words look when they are written down and why the fish might have these names, linked to their wider knowledge of words included in the names of certain species.
- Show the children the photographic images that correspond to the species named and illustrated on the spread. *Can the children connect each photograph with a fish in the illustration? How did they connect each one?* Look at how closely the illustrator has captured the features of each fish. To do this she will have observed them closely either in real life or through photographs like this.
- Leave the photographs on a large table in the creative area along with soft drawing pencils (2B-4B), watercolour paints, brushes of varying sizes, pots of water, mixing palettes, heavy duty paper, coloured pencils, and crayons. Provide magnifying glasses for the children to look closely at small details in the photographs. Allow time and space for the children to choose a fish to create their own illustration of.
- Draw and paint alongside them, modelling artistic technique like how to sketch out lightly in pencil first, looking at the size and shapes they can see, how to use watercolour paints, including mixing colours, shades and tones, how to create effects using more or less water, using implements other than brushes, using white crayons to create a wax resist and how to overlay detail on the paint when it is dry using coloured pencils or crayons.
- When the artwork is complete, hang this prominently for all to see. Allow time and space for the children to look at and reflect on their own artwork and that of others, noting their thoughts and feelings on cards around the paintings.
- Allow the children to research other things they would like to paint in this way, allowing them to print photos or collect objects to observe and paint from life.

Role-play and writing in Role

- Re-read the book so far and then the spread on page 22-23. Take time to clarify children's knowledge of the concepts explored and the new knowledge gained. Encourage the children to hold out their arms in front of them to visualise the size of Goldy. Explore Goldy's age, 18. *How much older is Goldy than them? Do they know anyone who is 18?*
- Read and discuss the information sentence at the bottom of the page. *Are they surprised that a goldfish would live for 43 years?*
- Now think about what this page tells us about Richard. *Why do you think the child frowns when they think about Richard getting too big for the tank? Why do you think they liked the sound of Richard being able to live in Sandy's pond?* Explore the concept of the child putting Richard's needs above their own – how they might miss having Richard as a pet in a tank, but also, how they know that him having space to swim, and new friends might be better for him as he grows.
- Link this to the lives of people, looking at how when children become adults, they might move away from home into their own space.
- Now, turn to the next spread, pausing to reflect on the illustration together before reading the text. *What are the children's initial thoughts, what do they notice? How does it make them feel?* Draw their attention to Richard's eyes and mouth. *How might he be feeling? What tells you this?*
- Now read the text aloud. *How might Richard be feeling about the need to go into Sandy's 'big' pond? Have you ever felt this way?* You could also link Richard's experiences and feelings to any the children might have had about transitions such as starting school or Nursery or the anticipation of moving into Year 1.
- Remind them of what the child had realised about the benefits of Richard moving to the pond. *Do they think Richard might also want some more space and some new friends? What details in the illustration might make them think this?*
- Explore the concept of Richard getting too big for his tank by using a ruler to create a cut out of a fish that is 30cm long alongside the children. Place this in a real fish tank for the children to see how challenging it would be for Richard to move around and survive in a small tank as the size he now is.
- Compare the size of this fish with one of their pet paper fish, which they could place in the palm of their hands. Look at how much Richard has grown throughout his 4-and-a-half years. You could also compare the children's own height with the average length of a new-born baby (51cm) and look at the difference in their height now.
- Connect Richard's experience to children's own experiences of growing up. Perhaps, much like Richard they have grown out of shoes or clothes, or physical spaces such as cots to beds, or highchairs/pushchairs to children's school chairs.
- Ask the children to close their eyes and imagine they are Richard in his little tank and invite them to act in role saying aloud all his thoughts. Depending on the ages and stages of the children model how to take those thoughts and feelings to form sentences for writing. Add the children's ideas to thought or speech bubbles around the illustration of Richard.

- To extend this session further, create a timeline for Richard's life so far, with notable or memorable information or points so far, they could also map their life experiences alongside Richard's. This helps contextualise Richard's lifespan so far in relation to the children's own ages and life experiences.

Music and Movement

- Read the narrative part of the story from the beginning to the end on page 27. Turn back to pages 25 and 26. *What has happened in between these two pages? How do you think the child is feeling about Richard living in the pond? What makes you think this?*
- Re-read the final question. "Remember me?" *Do you think Richard remembers the child? What is it in the text or illusions that makes you think this?*
- Look over the timeline of Richard's life. *What else might he remember?* Ideas might include the child telling him all about their day each day, his transition from the tank to the pond, making new friends or how he felt worried about his new home.
- Read aloud the phrase "... he swims up, doing the same happy little dance and wiggling his tail." Pretend to be Richard in this moment wiggling with happiness. Explore all the different movements you can make with your body to wiggle or express happiness in different ways. Encourage the children to think about the movement across their whole body including the tips of their fingers and toes. *If they could do it as a 'little happy dance' what might it look like?*
- Invite the children to express the whole story as a longer dance. Encourage an adult or a child to turn the pages of the book and slowly retell the story parts of the book, pausing on each page to explore the different ways in which they might express the narration with their bodies in movement. Think, for instance, about the different body movements involved in blowing bubbles, nibbling pebbles, hiding behind stones, swimming up to the surface for food, wiggling and whirling through the water, outgrowing your tank and feeling trapped and then feeling free and happy in your large pond.
- You might wish to add the ambient sounds of fish in a pond in the background, such as: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=scRfTPcG2cY> or create your own musical accompaniment.
- Rehearse doing this a few times. You can split into groups and allow children present their dance to the rest of their class as their audience.
- You might wish to perform your music and movement to another class or invite families in to see the performance.

Booktalk

- Before you finally completely unwrap the book and reveal the title, give the children the opportunity to guess what they think the book may be called or to write their own title as if

they were the authors of this book. You can extend this by letting the children create their own titles and front-page illustrations.

- Then unwrap the book and read the title and share the back cover with the children including reading the blurb aloud. *Do they think this was a good title? Why or why not?*
- Come back to the book again and re-read the entire book as a whole, including the front cover and title. Leave out just the small section entitled 'YOUR FISH WILL NEED'.
- Allow the children to begin to explore their responses to the book through booktalk, with the help of what Aidan Chambers calls 'the four basic questions'. These questions give children accessible starting points for discussion:
 - *Tell me ... was there anything you liked about this story?*
 - *Was there anything that you particularly disliked?*
 - *Was there anything that puzzled you?*
 - *Were there any patterns ... any connections that you noticed? Did it remind you of anything else you've read or seen?*
- The openness of these questions unlike the more interrogative 'Why?' question encourages every child to feel that they have something to say. It allows everyone to take part in arriving at a shared view without the fear of the 'wrong' answer. Record the children's booktalk in your group journal or Working Wall.
- You can extend the children's thinking through more evaluative questions, such as: *Why do you think the author, Catherine Rayner, chose to write this book? Who do you think would like this book? How could this book be used by other children?*
- Encourage the children to capture their thoughts either by scribing or writing them themselves, around a copy of the front cover of the book to add to the Working Wall or shared journal.
- Leave a copy of the book in the book corner, along with your group journal, for the children to revisit and re-read in independent learning time, by themselves or socially in a group.

Informational Writing

- Look at the front cover of the book again. *Why do you think the child wanted to tell everyone about their pet goldfish? If you were going to tell someone about something special to you, what would it be? Do you have a special pet? A special toy? A special hobby? Is there a special place you like to visit?*
- Share with the children how to make a simple origami book:
https://clpe.org.uk/system/files/how-to-make-a-simple-origami-book%20%288%29_1.pdf.
You can pre-make these for younger children or work alongside the children to demonstrate how to make these for themselves. This is a fantastic activity to develop concentration, listening stamina, comprehension and fine motor control, and gives children the skills to make a book for themselves to use for any kind of writing.

- When you have made your book, demonstrate how to use this to write about something that means something to you and that you have engaged with over a period of time. It should be something that you can communicate, based on your own direct experience. It might be a pet or animal you're interested in, a favourite toy, character or game, it might be a hobby like baking or gardening.
- Model out loud how to come up with ideas for writing, vocalising your thought processes, such as: 'Ever since I was small, I've loved baking cakes. Maybe I could write about that?' Model the kinds of sentences you would write to present your own personal story and to present pieces of information, including how each of these sounds distinctly different. For example, the personal story on one page might read: 'The first cakes I ever made were chocolate cupcakes. They were covered in white icing and rainbow sprinkles.' The information sentence to accompany it might read: 'A cupcake is a small cake, which will feed one person.' Then think about an illustration that could accompany the text and draw this out.
- The origami book has just two spreads to fill, as well as the front and back cover, which makes this an accessible kind of writing for young children. On your second spread you might show how the thing you are writing about has stayed with you over time. The second spread could read, for example, 'Now, my favourite thing to bake is a Victoria Sponge cake. I make these as birthday cakes for my friends and family.' Show the children how to find additional information about the thing they are writing about, in other information texts, or by searching reputable sources online, to craft an information sentence alongside it, for example: 'The Victoria Sponge was named after Queen Victoria, who enjoyed afternoon tea.' Once again, talk about how you might illustrate this spread, to include the passing of time.
- Support the children in communicating ideas of their own in writing in this way. They might want to write about their own pets, a special toy, hobbies or their favourite TV show or a character from popular culture. Show them how to express their personal connection in a personal story narrative and how to include specific facts by asking them to compose these orally to you. For example: 'Since I was two, my favourite TV show has been *Paw Patrol*.' then, as an information sentence: 'The main character in *Paw Patrol* is called Ryder. He works with the dogs to protect Adventure Bay'. Younger children can mark make to share their ideas in their books or have an enabling adult scribe their oral contributions. Older children can be supported to use their developing phonic knowledge to communicate their ideas onto the page.
- When the inside text is complete, encourage them to think of a title for their book, and to design a front and back cover.
- When the books are complete, display these prominently in the book corner for children and adults to share together. Use what you have learnt about the children to build their needs and interests into the curriculum moving forwards.

Instructional writing:

- Go back to look at the instructional writing at the back of the book on page 28, reading this aloud to the children. *What is this writing for? What does it help us to do? Why do you think the author might have included this information at the back of the book?*
- Encourage the children to think about where else in the provision instructions might be useful, and work together to model how to write these up for display in the environment. You could write instructions for making playdough to display in the malleable area, how to build a specific object in the construction area, how to make a mud pie in the mud kitchen or how to write a letter in the writing area.
- Think about the list of what you'll need as modelled in the original text, then think about how to communicate what to do with these things to achieve your goal. Talk your ideas out loud, so that the children can hear how to compose this style of writing, then demonstrate how to transfer your ideas into writing on the page, including using phonics to encode words. You might also look at how to include illustrations or photographs to demonstrate processes.
- You could build up a bank of different instructions for different things over the course of the year, displaying different instructions throughout the provision at different times, encouraging the children to use these and to write their own to communicate their own ideas for others.

Reading and engaging with other information texts:

- To complete the learning, revisit the book as a whole. *What did you learn from reading this book? Why do you think books like this are useful?*
- Engage the children in talking about topics they would like to find out more about. Gather together a range of information texts, from your school library, a school library service if you subscribe to one, or visit a local library to borrow books. Quality recommendations for information texts can be found in the Early Years Information Collection of CLPE's Corebooks database:
<https://clpe.org.uk/books/corebooks?f%5B0%5D=collection%3A1&f%5B1%5D=year-group%3A343>
- Take time to read information texts at different parts of the day, individually or in small groups to children who have particular or shared interests, and to the whole group to extend their knowledge of topics.
- Make further origami books to keep a constant supply in the writing area, along with a range of writing and drawing equipment and tools, so that children can make their own books to share their knowledge and understanding of particular topics with others.
- Display any information texts the children make themselves with other information texts in the reading area, sharing these with the whole class as you would any other book. This supports the development of the children's writing identities.

Vocabulary Development:

Word collections:

- There is ample opportunity for children to explore and extend vocabulary related to fish and pondlife from the text and illustration. The new vocabulary can be used and explored in real contexts through role-play and small world play as well as through real world experiences of observing nature in your outdoor area or on park or pond visits. Further topic specific vocabulary can be added when encountering them in other non-fiction texts including digital texts or through rhyme and song.

Early Phonological Development:

Environmental Sounds:

- Explore different environmental sounds by going on sound walks out in nature.

Oral blending:

- Play oral blending games with the children by having an adult segment key words aloud and have the children orally blend the words to understand the instructions or questions such as: *Touch the fishes t-ai-l, point to the 'f-i-n', where is the 'f-i-sh'?, Do fish breath through their mouth or their 'g-i-ll-s'?*

Rhyme and Song:

- Gather together poetry collections, rhyme cards, song cards about fish, ponds, pond life, or under the water themed songs and rhymes. Gather a small collection of toys or puppets which link to those familiar songs and rhymes to create a pond or under the water themed 'rhyme and song bag'.
- Share well-known songs such as: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Once I caught a fish alive; Five little ducks went swimming one day; Five little speckled frogs.
- Invite the children to sing any other rhymes or songs they know about wildlife they might find at a pond. Alternatively, you could think about songs about life under water and include songs from films such as *Finding Nemo*, or *The Little Mermaid*.
- List all the songs or rhymes they remember and spend time joining in, singing and enjoying them together. You may wish to video or voice record some to allow children to hear them back later. You could also invite parents and carers to share or record known songs or rhymes from home based on the topic.
- Extend the children's knowledge by introducing a few new poems or songs that the children may not have heard before. You can use the CLPE website to explore seeing the poets perform their

own poetry such as Jane Newberry performing 'Fish Tales':

<https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poems/fish-tales>

- Link children's wider observations of nature and wildlife to other familiar songs such as:
Wiggly Woo,
Incy wincy spider
The Ants go Marching
Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary

Use and Application of Phonics and Spelling:

Basic code:

- Basic code- fin, gills, pet, lot, get, big, up, in, him, dots, fish, deep, meet, look, food, up, will

Consonant clusters:

- Pond, lung, still, swam, space, scale, plants, tanks

Compound and Multi Syllabic Words

- Goldfish, eyelids, pompoms, butterfly, bubble-eye, eyesight

High Frequency Words:

- My, with, in, our, the, and, for, to, them, in, he, I but, that, who, was, than, see, of, said, his

Opportunities to Introduce the Complex Code:

- Explore the difference in spelling and meaning in 'tail' and 'tale'.
- -ed endings in wiggled, whirled, spotted
- -ing endings in wiggling, troubling, pointing, wearing, frowning, blowing
- -er endings in bigger, brighter

Opportunities for extending grammar knowledge:

- Notice the various examples of the use of exclamation points and explore how it changes our expression when we read aloud.
- Notice the apostrophes for contractions in: don't, couldn't, he's, sister's