

# Teacher Guide for

## 'The cat that barked'

Pupils should be enabled to "consider, interpret and discuss the ways in which language can be manipulated in order to affect the reader or engage attention" (CCEA, 2007, p.56).

This poem and teacher guide is for a P6 class.

### Lesson One- Feelings and emotions

#### Objectives:

- To identify the emotion and mood created in the poem
- To understand the impact that words and language have

#### Introduction

1. Read out the title and ask the class to note down what they think the poem will be about.
2. Ask the class to write down two positive things about the person who sits across from them, for example, they are good at football or they are funny.
3. Next, get the class to swap their notes across and ask them how they felt reading these positive things about themselves. Then, read the poem to the class.

**Task 1:** In pairs, ask the class to discuss and write down their answers to these questions and then have a class discussion with each pair providing feedback.

- First, ask the class to note down what they thought of the poem.
- Can you identify the theme of the poem?
- Identify the different types of mood that are displayed throughout the poem using different adjectives?
- How does the cat feel in the poem and how does this make you feel?

Refer to the positive notes they wrote about each other and ask them how they would feel if it was all nasty things written down. Emphasise the impact words have on people's feelings and how we should think before we speak.

#### Task 2

Using 3 different colours ask them to highlight the following:

- Highlight in yellow the words that stand out to them
- Highlight in blue any rhyme in the poem
- Highlight in pink any other techniques used and note what these were.

### Task 3

As a class discuss the language used in the poem: how it is used to engage the reader? Why did those specific words stand out to you? Express the emotions and feelings of the cat in the poem.

The class should go through any language techniques in the poem and explain the effect these have on the reader. These notes could be displayed on a mind-map on the board.

Each child could then create their own word storm with school or bullying being the topic and they must use different words to describe their thoughts and feelings about the topic.

### Lesson Two- Developing writing skills

Pupils should be enabled to "express thoughts, feelings and opinions in imaginative and factual writing" (2007, p.56).

#### Objectives:

- To stimulate creative writing and imagination
- To write their own poem using themes and emotions displayed in the poem

### Task 1

Before reading the poem, ask the children to mind-map 'bullying' and then see if there are any similarities or differences between their words and phrases used compared to the words in the poem, after reading it.

### Task 2

Play a game with the class which involves the teacher calling out a phrase such as 'anyone who has a black school bag stand to the left side of the room' and 'anyone who has any other colour go to the right side of the room'. The teacher should use around five examples, ensuring that someone or a minority of people will be separated from the class. This will highlight that the teacher is singling out certain pupils ('odd one out').

The teacher should then ask the class how they felt if they were one of the ones who were singled out. The children may say lonely or sad for example, and the teacher should then relate this with how the cat in the poem is feeling. The children will now be engaged, understanding the full meaning of the emotions expressed in the poem and this will provide them with more ideas for their valuable PDMU task.

### Task 3

The class should go through the different language techniques used in the poem, for example the rhetorical question and rhyme then go on to give more examples of other language techniques such as personification and similes to show what they could use in

their own writing. Next, give them time to think of and write down their own examples of language techniques using the theme bullying and the different moods expressed in the poem as a stimulus.

#### Task 4

Work with the whole class to write a class poem relating to a topic that is linked to 'The cat that barked'.

The pupils should then write a group poem. The poem can be about an emotion or feeling from the poem, for example the feeling of being the odd one out, sadness, the feeling of being special or different, or the theme of bullying. This should be shared with the class, expressing emotion through their tone of voice, facial expression and role play skills.

Challenge the pupils to select two or three of the words from the poem that stood out to them.

Finally, children should create their own verse for the group poem or create their own poem .

#### References

CCEA, (2007) Northern Ireland Curriculum-Primary, Belfast, pp.1-110.

