

Level
2

Penguin Young Readers Factsheets

Poppet

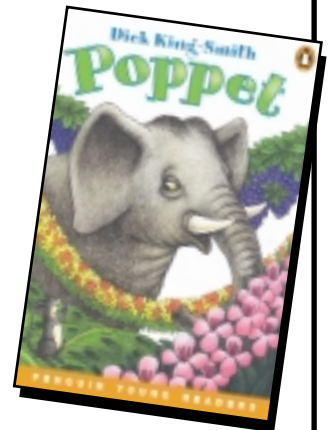
Teacher's Notes

Summary of the story

Poppet is a baby elephant who lives with his family in Africa. He goes into the jungle to find out what a mouse is and why grown-up elephants are afraid of mice. He meets Momo the mouse, they become friends, and Poppet shows his family that there is nothing to be afraid of.

About the author

Dick King-Smith is one of the most popular children's author today, best known for his funny animal stories. His book, *The Sheep-Pig* won the Guardian award and has been filmed as *Babe*.



Topics and themes

Animals The story accurately describes how elephants live together in groups, which could be extended with research to find out, for example, what happens to old elephants, who leads a group, how babies are cared for.

A mouse is an important animal in the story. Mice are found everywhere and pupils might like to find out if they really do live in jungles too. Other animals are illustrated on page 5 of the Reader.

The Country Elephants live in Africa, but do they really live in jungles? What kind of country is best for elephants (lots of space, lots of food, no people). Set up a geography lesson about places where elephants live.

Family Poppet is a baby elephant. This can introduce other animal 'families' and vocabulary like sheep-lamb, cow-calf, dog-puppy. Poppet

proved the adults were wrong. But is it safe not to listen to grown ups? What should Poppet have done? Poppet did not know that they were wrong and a mouse might have run up his trunk.

Friendships Poppet is the story of an unlikely friendship. Can pupils think up other animal pairs who would make funny friends? The class together can make up a story themselves. Put the class in groups and ask each in turn what happens next, or make up the story from anyone in the class who puts up their hand.

Size 'Elephant' and 'mouse' bring in the simple size vocabulary 'big' and 'small', this can lead onto work on comparatives. Poppet is a small elephant. His mother is bigger. Momo is the smallest. Compare the sizes of the animals on page 5 of the Reader.

Making use of the Reader

Animal charades Practise simple question forms based on the questions asked in Poppet: 'are you a...?' Ask the pupils to think of an animal. Each pupil then takes turns to come to the front of the class and to perform a small mime of that animal. The other pupils ask questions, 'are you a...?' to which the performer answers yes or no. You may want to go over animal vocabulary first.

Animal masks Give each pupil a paper plate with holes cut out for eyes and mouth. Explain that they should draw and colour the face of their favourite animal on it. You may want to suggest groups of animals jungle/pets/farm animals (see next activity.) When the drawings are complete,

attach some elastic string to each side of the plate with staples/sticky tape. The pupils must learn to say what they are. 'I am a big tiger.' 'I am a small mouse' for example.

Animal groups As a fun follow-up to the mask, separate the classroom into four sections (e.g. the zoo, the home, the farm and the jungle). Ask the pupils to go to the part of the room where their animal belongs. Ask the pupils to think of other animals that could be found in these places. Give each group a large piece of paper in which to draw pictures of all the animals which can be found in, for example, the zoo or the home. They may be able to think of some unlikely/likely pairs that make friends e.g. snake and worm in their group.



Using the accompanying audio cassette

During listening (before reading) Give the pupils a list of animals, some of whom are on the cassette and some who are not. As they listen to the cassette, they tick the animals that appear in the story.

During listening Write the story in five simple short sentences. Make a set of the sentences, cut up, for each pair, or group of pupils to work together. As they listen, the pupils put the strips in their correct order. Ask one member of each group afterwards to read out one strip in order.

Chants

Chants help pupils become familiar with the sounds and rhythm of English, in a fun way. The language in each chant recycles language from the story. Pupils listen to the chant a few times, clapping in time with the rhythm. Then they say the chant, verse by verse, with the cassette, beating out the rhythm as they say it, to become familiar with the words and rhythm. A possible activity with the chants, is to split a class into groups and each group says one verse.

Chant 1

What's a mouse?
Are you a mouse?
No, I'm not a mouse
I'm a frog.

What's a mouse?
Are you a mouse?
No, I'm not a mouse
I'm a lizard.

What's a mouse?
Are you a mouse?
No, I'm not a mouse
I'm a beetle.

What's a mouse?
Are you a mouse?
No, I'm not a mouse
I'm a caterpillar.

Chant 2

Why are elephants scared of mice,
Momo?
Elephants are scared of mice
Because we're small

Why are elephants scared of mice,
Momo?
Because we like
Running into holes

Why are elephants scared of mice,
Momo?
Why are elephants scared of mice,
Momo?
Because elephants have holes
In their trunks!

Chant 3

Can I look inside your trunk?
Aachoo!!
This is fun!

Now I'm walking up your trunk
Hooray, hooray
Mice are nice!

Notes on the activities in the Factsheet

- 1 Show the pupils how to draw a line through the words they find in the word search.
- 2 Enlarge the photocopies to A4. Cut out the animal's body-parts beforehand and distribute to the pupils. Give them a piece of paper on which to stick their reassembled animals which they can then colour in and write the name of the animal.
- 3 The pupils create their own strange animal.
- 4 The pupils provide the responses to Poppet's question on the lines. The answers should follow the example, 'no, I'm a . . . '.

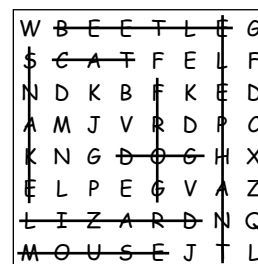
Answers to the activities

In the back of the Reader

1. 1. Big, 2. Small, 3. Small, 4. Small, 5. Big
2. Numbers 2, 4, and 5 are not in the book.

In the Factsheet

Activity 1



Activity 4

- 'No, I'm a ': a. frog, b. caterpillar, c. horse, d. lion, e. giraffe, f. beetle



Poppet

Name.....

Activity 1

How many animal words can you find?

They are:

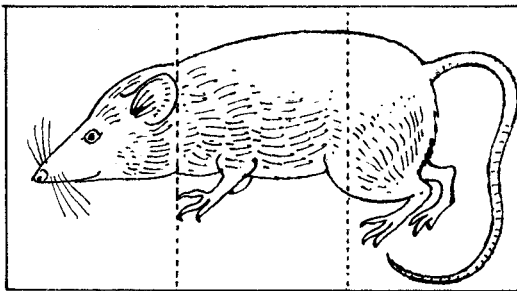
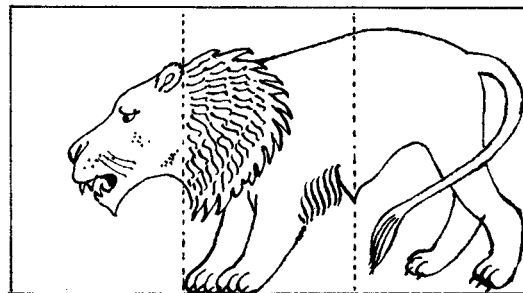
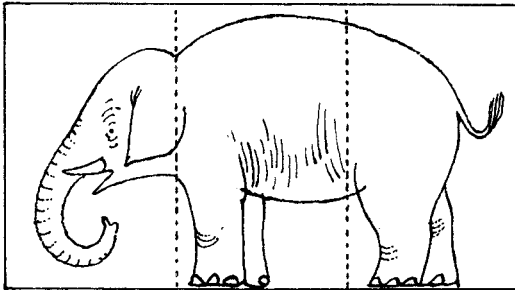
beetle cat snake lizard mouse

dog frog elephant

W	B	E	E	T	L	E	G
S	C	A	T	F	E	L	F
N	D	K	B	F	K	E	D
A	M	J	V	R	D	P	C
K	N	G	D	O	G	H	X
E	L	P	E	G	V	A	Z
L	I	Z	A	R	D	N	Q
M	O	U	S	E	J	T	L

Activity 2

Make a lion, an elephant and a mouse.



Poppet

Name.....

Activity 3

Draw an animal in the box.

The animal has:

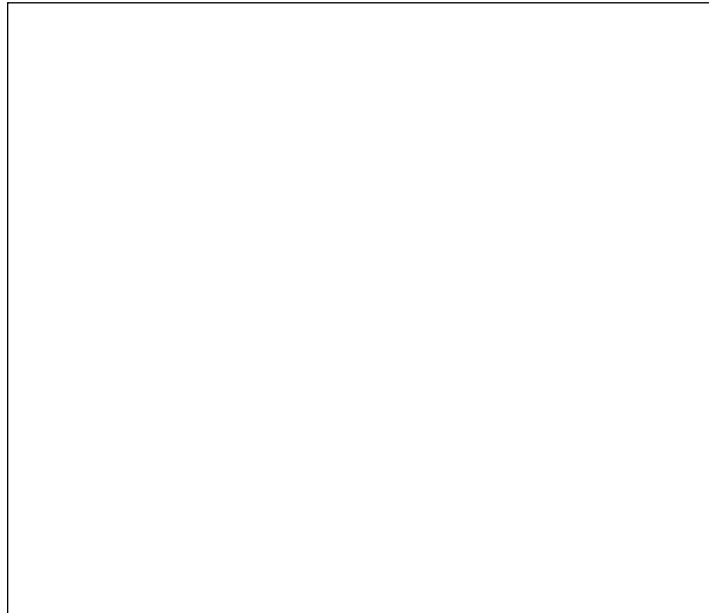
a lion's head

an elephant's trunk

a frog's body

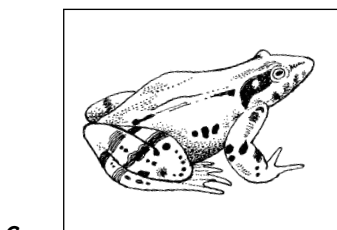
a caterpillar's legs

a mouse's tail



Activity 4

Answer the question: 'Are you a mouse?' Write on the lines.



'No, I'm a
frog!'

