

Block 1 Session 3

‘The Donkey’s Shadow’ Teaching Notes

1. Practice the exercise in focusing attention. Praise those who are obviously connected in the present moment and not day-dreaming.
2. Remind children of last week’s activity and ask a pupil to describe it. Recall the purpose and any strategies used, and take further comments or evidence from children.
3. Read the story ‘The Donkey’s Shadow’.
4. Ask pupils to remember three things that happened in the story but in reverse chronological order. After giving time for them to do this, let them share these with a partner.
5. Ask children what they thought was the theme of the story. Take answers and build up an ideas web on the board. Do not give the children them, but examples could be ‘greed’, ‘selfishness’, ‘ownership’.
6. Move to using the ‘Questions for Thinking’ to stimulate dialogue.
7. For a closure activity, look again at the web on the board and see which idea or ideas have been developed through the dialogue, and how they have developed.
8. Discuss the ‘Thought for the Week’.

The Donkey's Shadow

Aesop's Fable

A traveller had a long distance to go so he hired a donkey to carry him and his bags. They set off, the traveller riding the donkey and the donkey's owner walking alongside.

Along the dusty track they went, through the cool forest and up towards the distant hills. After a time they emerged from the cover of the forest to the bare hills where there was no shade.

It was a fine day and as time went by it grew hotter and hotter. The traveller wore a hat but still the sweat trickled down his neck and he longed for a drink. He became so hot and thirsty that soon he couldn't stop thinking about having a drink. Oh for some lovely cool water.

'I must rest and have some water,' he said to the donkey owner, who was well used to walking in hot weather.

He dismounted and sat down in the donkey's shadow, which was the only shade there was. The owner of the donkey was at ease, and sat waiting on the traveller to feel better.

Soon the donkey's owner also began to feel too hot in the sun. He saw that the only shadow there was, was the donkey's shadow - and there was only room for one person to rest in that shadow!

'Move over,' he said. 'I own the donkey and therefore his shadow too. I want to use the shadow.'

'But when I hired the donkey I also hired his shadow,' said the traveller.

'No, you did not.' The owner gave him a little push.

'Oh yes I did! A donkey and his shadow cannot be separated, and since I've paid for the donkey, I've paid for his shadow.'

Soon the two men were pushing and shoving each other and then thumping and punching.

While all this was going on they didn't notice the donkey wandering away, so that when the men eventually fell exhausted to the ground there was no shadow ... and no donkey either.

Questions for Thinking:

1. Why did the men begin to quarrel?
2. Who do you agree with – the traveller or the donkey owner? Why?
3. Why did the traveller think he owned the shadow?
4. What is a shadow?
5. Is it possible to own a shadow? Why? Why not??
6. What was the problem?
7. Was there any other solution?
8. How would you have acted in that situation? Why?
9. Why do people share? Reasons? Evidence?
10. Why do people not share? Evidence?

Thought for the Week:

During the week, see whether you share, or whether you are greedy. How do you feel at the time? What makes you share or not share?