

LPF Reading Exemplar

Animal Communication

Task Description

In this reading activity, students read an information text about animal communication. After reading about how animals can communicate using colour, sound, smell and movement, students then responded to the related questions.

Preparation

Before the reading activity, the teacher asked students to share their experience or prior knowledge of animal communication. The teacher then guided students to explore the interesting facts they could find out about animal communication through the contents page and the introduction of the book. The teacher also aroused students' interest by asking the following questions:

- How do you communicate if you cannot use words?
- When do animals need to communicate?
- In what ways do they show their feelings?
- How do they recognise each other?

Learning Outcomes: CVO s 4-5

CVO '4

Understanding and inferring information, ideas and feelings in a range of simple texts, using and integrating a small range of reading strategies as appropriate

CVO '5

Understanding and inferring information, ideas, feelings and opinions in a range of texts with some degree of complexity, using and integrating a small range of reading strategies as appropriate

Questions	When students respond to the questions appropriately, they can:
<p>1. Do male peacocks and male ducks use colour to communicate the same or different message(s)? What does their colour do?</p> <p><u><i>They use colour to communicate the same message. Their brilliant and coloured feathers attract females / mates.</i></u></p>	<p>CVO '4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work out the meaning of the expression 'attract a mate' in the description about male ducks by using the semantic and syntactic clues in the parallel description of the male peacock, e.g. 'A male peacock... to attract female peacocks.'
<p>2. a) On page 9, it is said that 'This helps them to stay together when they swim in large shoals.' What does 'This' refer to?</p> <p><u><i>'This' refers to the fact that different kinds of fish have different colour patterns.</i></u></p> <p>b) Do animals that stay together always use the same way of communication? Give two examples to illustrate your answers.</p> <p><u><i>No, they don't. Fish stay together and swim in large shoals by recognising their own colour patterns. Wolves stay together and communicate by howling.</i></u></p>	<p>ATM 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> follow ideas by understanding the use of cohesive devices, e.g. 'this' to refer to the previous sentence <p>ATM 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> make connection between ideas and information not explicitly stated by using semantic and syntactic clues, e.g. 'Different kinds of fish have their own colour patterns. This helps them to stay together when they swim in large shoals.', 'Wolves live in packs and they communicate by howling.', 'The howl of the wolf-pack leader calls the pack together.'

<p>3. How is colour used in animal communication? Give two examples to illustrate your answers.</p> <p><u><i>Colour helps animals to notice one another.</i></u> <u><i>Colour helps animals to recognise others of their own kind.</i></u> <u><i>Some colours can mean danger.</i></u> <i>(Any two)</i></p>	<p>ATM 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • follow ideas by recognising the simple text structure of an information text, e.g. the use of subheadings to give information on how colour is used in animal communication under the heading ‘Colour’ in the text
<p>4. Does colour play an important role in human communication? Give two examples to support your answers.</p> <p><u><i>Yes, it does.</i></u> <u><i>People wear colourful clothes so that other people notice them.</i></u> <u><i>Team players wear different colours to recognise each other.</i></u> <u><i>People use red traffic lights to tell cars to stop / to warn of danger.</i></u> <i>(Any two)</i></p>	<p>ATM 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • locate details about the role of colour in human communication to support the main idea that ‘colour is important in animal communication’ from different parts of the text

5. Which animals can make noise to communicate without using their voice? How do these animals make their sounds? What do their sounds communicate? Complete the following table by using the information on pages 14 and 15.

Animals communicate without using their voice	How the sounds are made	What the sounds communicate
<u>Porcupines</u>	Rattle their quills (e.g.)	To warn other animals to keep away (e.g.)
<u>Death-watch beetles</u>	<u>Bang their heads on the tunnel walls</u>	<u>To send messages to their own kind</u>
<u>Rabbits</u>	<u>Thump their feet on the ground</u>	<u>To warn other rabbits of the danger</u>
<u>Beavers</u>	<u>Slap the surface of the water with their flat tails</u>	<u>To warn other beavers of danger</u>
<u>Rattlesnakes</u>	<u>Shake the rattle on the tail</u>	<u>To warn other dangerous animals not to come close</u>
Grasshoppers (e.g.)	<u>Rub their legs against the edges of their hard wings</u>	

ATM 4

- follow ideas by
 - recognising the simple text structure of an information text, e.g. the use of subheadings to give information on how sound is used in animal communication
 - understanding the use of cohesive devices, e.g. the connective ‘but’ in the subheading ‘... animals that do not call or sing to each other but still use sound to communicate.’

ATM 5

- organise information and ideas about how and why animals make noise to communicate by using knowledge of the text structure of an information text and a table

 **Colour**

Colour is important in animal communication.

Many birds show off their colourful feathers to make other birds notice them.



A male peacock spreads out its brilliant tail feathers to attract female peacocks.

In spring, male ducks grow brightly coloured feathers that help them to attract a mate.



People sometimes wear colourful clothes so that other people will look at them.



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Many animals have special colours or patterns which help them to recognise animals of their own kind.



Different kinds of fish have their own colour patterns. This helps them to stay together when they swim in large shoals.

Over 150 different kinds of butterfly fish live on a coral reef. Each kind has its own special pattern.



Humming-birds hover in front of flowers and drink the sweet liquid, called nectar, that they find inside. There are 320 different kinds of humming-bird. Each type has a special pattern of brightly coloured feathers.

In team games, players need to recognise each other quickly, so each team wears different colours.



(Materials adapted from **Animal Communication – Text** by **Phil Gates** with the permission of **Cambridge University Press**)

Red is an important colour in animal communication. It often means 'danger'.



A robin puffs out its red breast feathers to warn other robins that it will fight them if they come too close.



The red belly of a male stickleback warns other sticklebacks in the pond to keep away.



Ladybirds are poisonous to birds. If a bird tries to eat one, it will find that the ladybird tastes very bad and will spit it out. The ladybird's bright red colour reminds the bird never to try to eat a ladybird again.

People often use the colour red to warn of danger. Red traffic lights tell cars to stop.



(Materials adapted from **Animal Communication – Text** by **Phil Gates** with the permission of **Cambridge University Press**)

There are many kinds of animals that do not call or sing to each other but still use sound to communicate.

Porcupines have sharp spines called quills on their backs. When they rattle their quills the noise warns other animals to keep away. The quills are hollow so they make a loud noise.



Death-watch beetles live inside tunnels that they have made in wood. They send messages to each other by banging their heads on the tunnel walls.



Beavers slap the surface of the water with their flat tails to warn each other of danger.

Rabbits thump their feet on the ground when danger is near. This warns other rabbits of the danger.



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Rattlesnakes have a rattle on their tail. They shake this rattle when a dangerous animal comes too close.

Male grasshoppers communicate by making a chirruping sound. They do this by rubbing their rough legs against the edges of their hard wings.



There are about 10,000 different kinds of grasshopper and each type has its own chirruping sound.



People living in parts of Africa sometimes use drums to send messages. The sound of the drums can travel a long way.

Try this

Try using a drum to send messages to a friend in another room.

First, you will need to work out together the different drum beats that you will use for different messages. Two beats could mean "Can you hear me?" Three slow beats could mean "Come here."



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