

Animal ABC – Teachers' Notes



The *Animal ABC* uses a mixture of:

- words that are only found in Scots, eg *birlin*, *drookit*, *dub*
- words that are the Scots equivalents of familiar English words, eg *draigon*, *moose*, *pentin*, *washin*
- names for exotic animals that are the same in Scots and English, eg *crocodile*, *flamingo*, *jaguar*, *narwhal*

Each of the phrases in the *Animal ABC* uses *alliteration*, meaning that most of the words start with the same letter of the alphabet. Alliteration was a favourite technique of Scots poets in the past. Here is a brilliant example by the 15th-century poet, Robert Henryson, in his description of winter:

Thir *dalis deip* with *dubbis drounit* is,
Baith *hill* and *holt heillit* with *frostis hair*,
And *bewis bene* ar *bethit bair* off *blis*
Be *wickit windis* off the *winter wair*.

(from 'The Preaching of the Swallow' in *Morall Fabillis*).

Some Ideas for Using the *Animal ABC* with your class

Ask pupils to:

- draw their own pictures for the phrases in the book
- invent a new alliterative phrase and draw a picture, eg *blue baboons blawin balloons*. See who can make up the longest one!
- guess each other's phrases from these pictures
- make up Scots rhyming phrases, too, eg *wabbit* (or *crabbit!*) *rabbit*, *string o mingin ingans*



Try choosing a different theme for making ABC phrases, eg *Jungle ABC*, *Ferm ABC*, *Ooter-Space ABC*, *Seaside ABC*, *My Body ABC*, *Dinosaur ABC*, *Food ABC*.

Encourage bairns to use a mixture of Scots and English in their phrases, or (if they are multilingual), Scots and another language, eg *snakes on skateboards sookin samosas*.

A good way to extend your use of Scots is to add the Scots participle ending *-in* (instead of the English *-ing*) to a verb that you know in English, eg *bungee-jumpin*, *emailin*, *parachutin*, *rollerbladin*, *see-sawin*, *skateboardin*, *trampolinin*.



If you or your class don't know many Scots words, try using some from the list below. You can mix them with the words already in the [Animal ABC](#) to make new phrases.

Nouns

aipple, airieplane, arra
 bairn, bananie, baw,
 booncy-castle, brae,
 brambles, breeks, brig,
 bunnet
 caird, cairt, claith, clood,
 cloot, close, coo, corbie,
 cowp
 daud, denner, dug

 elbae
 fit, floofer
 gairden, glesses, goonie,
 gowdfish, gress, gutties
 heid, hoose

 jaikit, jeelie, jeeliefish, jotter
 lichthoose, lum
 mooth
 neep, nicht
 oobit, oxter
 pairty, pent, perk, piece,
 piecebox, pillae, pincil,
 poke
 rammy

 scuil, shae, shoodder,
 stookie, sweeties

 taes, tatties, thrapple

 watter, waw

Adjectives

barkit, bilin, bleck, bonnie,
 bowfin, braid, bricht, broon

 cannie, cauld, crinchie

 dreich

 fantoosh, foostie
 gallus, gowden

 heich

 licht, lood
 mawkit, mingin
 nippy

 pecht-oot, peeliewallie,
 puggelt

 radge, roastit, raivelt,
 ricklie, roond
 scunnert, shooglie, sma,
 spottit, squint, stoorie

 thrawn, ticht, tousie

 weet

Present participles

argy-bargyin
 bizzin, blawin, bletherin,
 booncin, breengin

 cairryin, cairtin, champin,
 chawin, chappin, cleekin,
 cooryin, cowpin
 danderin, dichtin, dirlin,
 dookin, duntin
 ettlin
 fleein, fleggin, footerin
 gabbin, gawkin, girnin,
 guddlin
 heezin, hingin, hirplin,
 hotchin, humphin
 jinin, jeeglin, joukin
 leein
 makkin
 nippin

 pechin, pittin, plaisterin,
 plowterin, poorin, pouin,
 prentin
 raivellin, reddin, rowin,
 rummlin
 scartin, shauchlin, shooglin,
 skailin, skelpin, skirlin, skitin,
 skitterin, skooshin, slaisterin,
 smoorin, sookin, staundin,
 sweemin, switherin
 thrawin, traipsin, traivellin,
 trauchlin
 wheechin



Encourage the bairns to use Scots **adverbs**, **conjunctions** and **prepositions** in their phrases. Mind, they don't always have to start with the same letter as the rest of the phrase. Here are some you could try (listed with their English equivalents and example phrase):

ablow = below: **tousie toucan ablow a tree**
about = about: **racoons rinnin about the room**
or (as adverb): **hungry hyenas hingin about**
abuin = above,: **hoolets hootin abuin a hoose**
afore = before, in front of: **stork staundin afore a statue**
ahint = behind: **bear on a bicycle ahint a bus**
alang = along: **dug danderin alang a dyke**
or (as adverb): **airmy o ants amblin alang**
an = and: **pelicans an penguins plowterin**
around = around: **bee bizzin aroond a bustop**
or (as an adverb) **reindeer rinnin aroond**
ben = inside: **brontosaurus ben a bungalow**
doon = down: **seal skitin doon the stair**
or (as adverb): **jeeliefish jeeglin up an doon**
etter = after: **shark sweemin etter a ship**
fae = from: **parrot parachutin fae a plane**
intae = into: **dolphin duntin intae a door**
o = of: **a clanjamfrie o clams**
ontae = onto: **leopard lowpin ontae a lorry**
oot = out: **wasps wheechin oot a windae**
outside = outside: **chimpanzee outside a chip-shop**
ower = over: **baboon booncin ower a brae**
roond = round: **centipede cyclin roond in circles**
tae = to: **bears bletherin tae bairns**
throu = through: **tyrannosaurus traipsin throu a tunnel**
unner = under: **crab cooryin unner the covers**
wi = with: **turtles wi tartan troosers**
wioot (or **withoot**) = without: **monkey wioot (or withoot) a macintosh**



MIND Words like **o** and **wi** are spelled without apostrophes in **Itchy Coo** books. Modern Scots tends not to use apostrophes, although you will find them in older texts. Encourage children not to use them if possible.

Further ideas for using the **Animal ABC** in other areas of the curriculum:

- play charades where teams act out and guess each other's phrases
- make up songs using alliterative phrases
- make a class calendar with ABC phrases for each month, eg **shiverin sheep** in September, **freezin flamingo** in February
- ask older pupils to make up a wee story about one of the creatures illustrated in the **Animal ABC**. Ask them to think about what might have happened to the creatures **before** the picture (eg who is pelting the crocodile with tomatoes, how did the octopus get into outer-space), or what might happen to them **afterwards** (eg will the zebras get out the maze, will the moose escape from the jaguar, where are the foxes going with their saxophones).

Send us pictures, stories or poems your class have made for our web gallery (Itchy Cool Ideas) at www.itchy-coo.com.