

## Tanka, Tanka Skunk by Steve Webb (Red Fox)

An elephant and a skunk set up a rhythmic repetitive drumbeat with which readers are encouraged to join in. Their other animal friends ranging from a kangaroo to a spider enter the game with each syllable of their names forming a beat. Each animal is clearly labelled against a background of big blocks of colour.

### Overall aims of this teaching sequence:

- To encourage children to enjoy listening to, responding to and using spoken and written language
- To encourage children to join in with repeated phrases, rhymes and refrains
- To support children in recognising that print carries meaning
- To support children in exploring and developing strategies and orchestrating cues to learn to read print independently
- To encourage children to think and talk confidently about their response to a book, using prediction, asking questions, making connections with their own experience
- To deepen children's understanding of the world through a fictional text

This teaching sequence is designed for an EYFS Class

### Overview of this teaching sequence

This book is a rich source of fun and learning. It provides a motivating way to develop children's auditory discrimination, a key early literacy experience, by drawing attention to the beats (chunks, syllables) in words. It also offers clear links with the music curriculum. The wonderfully rhythmic text offers a wealth of opportunity to teach, consolidate and apply a range of concepts that support children's early phonological and reading development.

The book can be read and revisited time and time again to focus on developing children's sense of rhythm and rhyme, investigating how to syllabify words, recognition that print carries meaning and play and exploration of words, including onomatopoeia, alliteration and investigating how to blend and segment words orally, looking at patterns within and between words.

It also offers the opportunity to consolidate known language, extend and enrich language and support children's wider development of oral language including using adjectives to create expanded noun phrases. Children can explore and investigate concepts from the text as part of continuous provision, supported by a well-resourced environment with access to name cards, instruments, small world play, role play and art.

**This teaching sequence forms part of the CLPE Phonics in a Rich Reading Curriculum two-day training and therefore contains a specific and detailed focus on learning the language of text and story and early phonological development.**

Teaching Approaches	Outcomes
Reading Aloud Looking at Language Syllabification Response to illustration Performance reading Oral blending and segmenting of words	Chiming in with known stories Using words and phrases to describe animals and their characteristics Statements and questions about animals Syllabifying words An oral performance of a text Orally blending and segmenting words A made book about a favourite animal

**Links to supporting texts and resources:**

**Other rhythmic texts and with animals:**

*Animal Music* by Julia Donaldson and Nick Sharratt (Macmillan)

*Walking Through the Jungle* by Julie Lacome (Walker)

*Farmyard Hullabaloo, Commotion in the Ocean and Rumble in the Jungle* by Giles Andreae and David Wojtowycz (Orchard)

*Hickory, Dickory Dog* by Alison Murray (Orchard)

*Animal Boogie* by Debbie Harter (Barefoot Books)

*Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* by Bill Martin Jnr, illustrated by Eric Carle (Puffin)

*Dear Zoo* by Rod Campbell (Puffin)

*We're Going on a Lion Hunt* by David Axtell (Macmillan)

*Where Bear?* by Sophy Henn (Puffin)

**Information texts about animals:**

*Blackbird, Blackbird, What do you do?* by Kate McLelland (Hodder)

*Who's Like Me?* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Marc Boutevant (Walker)

*Big Blue Whale* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Nick Maland (Walker)

*Is a Blue Whale the Biggest Thing There Is?* by Robert E Wells (Franklin Watts)

**Useful Websites for videos or information about animals:**

San Diego Zoo Kids Website: <http://kids.sandiegozoo.org/>

CBeebies Our Planet clips: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006m9ny/clips>

BBC Nature pages: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/wildlife>

Animal Fact Guide: <http://www.animalfactguide.com/>

## Teaching Sessions:

### Reading Aloud and chiming in:

- Look at the front cover and title of the book, *Tanka, Tanka, Skunk*. Read the first double page spread to introduce the children to the characters of Tanka and Skunk. Who are Tanka and Skunk? Have you seen these animals before? What do you know about them? Scribe children's thoughts and ideas around a copy of the illustrations of the characters on the working wall or in a Shared Journal.
- Ask the children whether they have ever played the drums before. Or if they have ever played any other instruments. Show the children a tambour and a beater, a bit like the one Skunk is holding in the first illustration. Have the children clap along to a steady beat that you play, seeing if they can keep to the pulse created. Have a go at changing the pace of the pulse and see if the children can copy back to you.
- Tell the children that they are now going to learn the beat of Tanka and Skunk's song. Read aloud the next double page spread, and slowly beat out the syllables of the words with your tambour as you read:

Skunka, Tanka, Skunka Tanka (Words)

X X, X X, X X, X X, (Beats)

Tanka, Tanka, Skunk (Words)

X X, X X, X (Beats)

- Practise first as a call and response, with you beating out the syllables of the first part, then ask the children to beat out the rhythm of the words as they say them using two fingers on their palm:
 

Skunka, Tanka, Skunka Tanka (Words)

X X, X X, X X, X X, (Beats)

Tanka, Tanka, Skunk (Words)

X X, X X, X (Beats)
- You can then graduate to the children joining in with the whole chorus, graduating to either clapping out the syllabic beat or using claves or rhythm sticks if you have these available. Class sets of rhythm sticks are available at: <http://www.dronesmusic.net/page.php?pageid=childrens>
- In the continuous provision, leave a wide variety of different kinds of drums, beaters and claves or rhythm sticks for children to continue to explore beat and rhythm in the indoor and outdoor music areas. Colour photocopy and laminate the large double page spreads of the chorus and have these on display in these areas and the reading area for children to practice the words and beat and be able to link written text to meaning.
- You may also want to share with the children a variety of different styles and types of drumming, investigating the different shapes and sizes of drums, different materials they are made from and different ways they are played e.g.

Jo Jones, Jazz Drummer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eANTTBvIXml>  
 Orchestral drums: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PbwZ\\_e-zk5w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PbwZ_e-zk5w)  
 Phil Collins, Rock drums: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n2NU4Xu\\_HXE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n2NU4Xu_HXE)  
 John Bonham, Led Zeppelin, Rock Drums: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n2NU4Xu\\_HXE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n2NU4Xu_HXE)  
 Djembe Drums: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZHfmg1b4mc>  
 Batucada Samba Drumming: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jQLvGghaDbE>  
 Johnny Kalsi, Dhol Drumming: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m7oXkTm2Mn0>  
 Jiangzhou drum music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D4hwpSeMN6M>  
 Hand Drums: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6KnnbiBwwTU>  
 Hang Drum: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EDQgU1CPpis>  
 Steel Pans: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITQR-KZBkw>

### Exploring and enriching vocabulary:

- In preparation for this session you will need to colour photocopy, cut out and laminate illustrations of each of the additional animals that will be named in the book as it progresses, starting with the kangaroo and caterpillar, up to the blue whale.
- Re-read the text from the previous session, including allowing the children to join in with the chorus of *'Skunka Tanka, Skunka Tanka, Tanka Tanka Skunk'* clapping or beating out the syllables.
- Re-read the last line, *'They've got the beat, and so have their friends.'* Ask the children who they think Tanka and Skunk's friends might be. Why do they think this? They may notice the animal pictures inside the drums on the facing single spread. If not, point these out to them – do you think these animals might be their friends? Do you recognise any of these animals? Are there any that you don't know the names of?
- Clarify any unknown vocabulary and put this into context by exploring what these animals look like in real life. You could use photographs or look at videos of the animals on the BBC Nature web pages:
  - Elephant: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/life/Elephantidae>
  - Skunk: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/life/Striped\\_Skunk](http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/life/Striped_Skunk)
  - Polar Bear: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/life/Polar\\_bear](http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/life/Polar_bear)
  - Blue Whale: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/life/Blue\\_Whale](http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/life/Blue_Whale)
  - Pig: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/life/Suidae>
  - Armadillo: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/life/Armadillo>
  - Zebra: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/life/Equus\\_\(genus\)](http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/life/Equus_(genus))
  - Anteater: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/life/Giant\\_Anteater](http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/life/Giant_Anteater)
  - Alligator: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/life/Alligatoridae>
- Spread out all the laminated pictures so that the children can see and look at which animals they immediately recognise and any that they are not sure of. You could use sorting hoops for this. Clarify the names of the animals that are unknown to the children and then look at the animals as a whole. How could we sort them out? Do any of them have anything in common? Engage in

discussion with the children about characteristics that might define the animals. Do some have two legs? Do some have four? Six? Eight? Do some swim? Fly? Do some have fur? Scales?

- Define some possible groupings with the children and add these to the working wall and allow children access during continuous provision to a range of ways to explore and talk about the characteristics of the animals. This could be through providing small world play habitats, or through providing stimuli such as masks or costumes for role play, where children can physically interact and engage in sustained shared thinking, or by watching further examples of nature documentaries such as the quality 'Our Planet' series from CBeebies (see <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006m9ny/clips>), or leaving the laminate animals with blue tac to sort and categorise in different ways on the working wall.

### Reading aloud:

- Read aloud the text from the beginning to the end of the second chorus. Now, turn the page – do we think these are Tanka and Skunk's friends? Who are they?
- Draw children's attention to the fact that each time, there is an illustration of an animal, with a word alongside it. Look at the first illustration of the tiger and ask the children for ideas on what the word says. How could we tell if this word does say tiger? Children may be at the stage where they are able to apply their knowledge of letters and sounds to make observations such as 'it's next to a picture of a tiger, so I think it says tiger', 'it starts with a t', 'It has er at the end like in my name, Oliver' or 'it says t-i-g-er'.
- Now tell the children that they are going to help you join in with the reading. Every time you point to a new animal word, they are going to read it along with you. Pointing to words as you read in the early stages of learning promotes one-to-one-correspondence; the ability to match written word to spoken word while reading. You could also cover the words with post-it notes and slowly reveal these to the children.
- Practise the first page slowly together, making sure the children only say the word when you point to it. Turn it into a game where you play tricks like slowing down or speeding up the gaps between pointing or moving backwards as well as forwards between words to ensure they are tracking your finger. Now read the rest of the book, up to 'BIG BLUE WHALE', allowing the children to join in the refrains of '*Skunka Tanka, Skunka Tanka, Tanka Tanka Skunk*'.
- Discuss the wide range of friends that Tanka and Skunk have. Do they have a favourite animal? Which one?
- Assess children's prior knowledge by asking them what they already know about any of the animals, and what they would like to find out about them. Collect the information on a large chart, like this:

What we already know about the animals:	What we want to find out about the animals:

- Display this prominently in the environment and allow children to continue contributing to the ideas as part of the continuous provision.
- Allow lots of access to small word animals in the indoor environment, larger scale animal figures in the outdoor environment and animal costumes for role play as part of the continuous provision.
- Invite the children to draw, paint or construct models of their animals, using the text to help them write the animal's name to label it.
- In the reading environment, provide access to a range of good quality stories, rhymes and non-fiction texts about animals to provide further opportunities for children to talk together, ask questions and enjoy the language and rhythms of text.

### Exploring syllables in words:

- In preparation for this session, make a large scale laminated copy of Skunk on the drums, beating out *kan-ga-roo* and Tanka on the drums beating out *cat-er-pil-lar*
- Re-read the text from the previous session, including allowing the children to join in with the chorus of '*Skunka Tanka, Skunka Tanka, Tanka Tanka Skunk*' clapping or beating out the syllables.
- Read on to the next double page spread: 'This is kangaroo. His name has three beats, like this...'
- Look at the large scale illustration of Skunk on the drums, beating out *kan-ga-roo*. Point to each part of the word to demonstrate how it has been broken down into its three syllables *kan-ga-roo*. You could draw out three circles to record this visually and point to each circle to help them follow the beats, as represented in the drums on the page, e.g:  
 kan ga roo  
 ○ ○ ○
- Have the children beat back the word to you using two fingers on their palm.
- Now read on to 'And this is caterpillar. His name has four beats, like this...'
- Show the large scale of illustration of Tanka on the drums, beating out *cat-er-pil-lar*. Once again, point to each part of the word to demonstrate how it has been broken down into its four syllables *cat-er-pil-lar*. You could draw out four circles to record this visually and point to each circle to help them follow the beats, e.g:  
 cat er pil lar  
 ○ ○ ○ ○

Have the children beat back the word to you using two fingers on their palm.

- Now take some of the children's own names. Explore, using your tambour to model, how many beats are in their names; e.g. Rae has one beat, Jay-den has two beats, Al-i-son has three beats. Pass the tambour to the children to see if they can beat back their name to you.
- Ensure handwritten, laminated name cards with children's photos on are part of the literacy environment to help children link print to meaning, recognise their own names and those of others. Leave these in the designated music areas indoors and out to give children the opportunity to practise beating, tapping or clapping out their own names and those of others. Leave sentence strips and felt tips in the area so they can record the beats visually using circles as you modelled.

### Reinforcing children's knowledge of syllables:

- In preparation for this session, gather back together the laminated illustrations of Skunk and Tanka's animal friends.
- Re-read the text from the previous session, and on until the second chorus, allowing the children to join in with both refrains of '*Skunka Tanka, Skunka Tanka, Tanka Tanka Skunk*' clapping or beating out the syllables.
- Select the laminated pictures of the animal friends from the next double page spread: the tiger, cheetah, panda and polar bear. Encourage the children to help you investigate how many beats are in these animal's names. Say the names slowly to enhance this orally for the children ti-ger (2 syllables), chee-tah (2 syllables), pan-da (2 syllables), po-lar bear (3 syllables across the two words). Now read the double page spread with the children joining in with clapping or beating out the animals' names alongside your reading.
- Now read on to the next double page spread, and do the same with *le-mur* (2 syllables), *lla-ma* (2 syllables), *ze-bra* (2 syllables), *ba-dger* (2 syllables), *bat* (1 syllable), *cat-er-pil-lar* (4 syllables), *big go-ril-la* (four syllables across the two words), *ya-ke-ty ya-ke-ty yak* (7 syllables across the three words) and finishing with a third refrain of the chorus '*Skunka Tanka, Skunka Tanka, Tanka Tanka Skunk*'.
- Using sorting hoops or numbered boxes from 1-7 invite the children to look again at the illustrations of the animals explored in the previous two spreads, including Skunk (1 syllable) and Tank-a (2 syllables). Invite the children to sort the animals into the hoops or boxes with you according to how many syllables are in their names. This gives them a chance to both reinforce the names of new and unknown animals and their ability to syllabify words.

### Response to illustration, exploring and expanding vocabulary:

- Re-read the text from the previous session, and on until '*BIG BLUE WHALE*', allowing the children to join in with both refrains of '*Skunka Tanka, Skunka Tanka, Tanka Tanka Skunk*' clapping or beating out the syllables in the chorus and for the animal names.
- Pull out the laminated illustrations of the gorilla, yak, spider and whale. Re-read the descriptions of these animals from the book: '*Big gorilla*', '*Yakety, Yakety, Yak*', '*tiny little spider*'. Investigate the fact that some of the animals have words to describe them and some don't.

- Look at the illustration of one of the other animals in the text, for example the panther and think of a word that could describe it. Some children might think that, in the illustration, its body positioning looks like it is sneaking along the page, so you could suggest the phrase 'sneaky panther', you could also suggest something like 'snappy alligator'. You could also look at the way the author plays with words in '*Yakety, Yakety, Yak*' and mimic this with phrases like 'Foxy, foxy, fox'.
- Scribe the children's ideas on sentence strips to display on the working wall or in the shared journal alongside illustrations of the animals to share the children's thoughts and ideas.

### Voice Sounds - Performance Reading:

- Re-read the text from the previous session, and on until '*BIG BLUE WHALE*', allowing the children to join in with both refrains of '*Skunka Tanka, Skunka Tanka, Tanka Tanka Skunk*', clapping or beating out the syllables in the chorus and for the animal names.
- Now turn to the next double page spread and read aloud the text from '*quiet now*' to '*baby bear night night*'. At this point try to read as normally as possible, without using any vocal effects to convey meaning. Ask the children what is happening on these pages. How do they think we should read the words out loud to help paint a picture of what is happening in the story? Use questions to prompt if the children find this a difficult concept, e.g. Should we use loud or quiet voices? Should we say the words quickly or slowly? Should we all say them together like we've been doing in the chorus or should one person say them on their own? Could you do any actions to accompany you when you read this part? What might you do? Once you have some ideas, try them out by performing as a group. Model how to follow the text using 1:1 correspondence by finger pointing to the words as you read them as a group
- Now turn the page and once again, read as normally as possible, without using any vocal effects to convey meaning. Do you think we should read this the same way as we did with the last pages? Discuss the ways that you might use your voices and bodies to show what is happening on this page. Once you have some ideas, try them out by performing as a group. Model how to follow the text using 1:1 correspondence by finger pointing to the words as you read them as a group
- Now have a go at reading both spreads together, conveying the change in energy between the two spreads in your performance.
- Have available different small world play areas in the classroom and outdoor areas, put large scale plastic wild animals in different 'habitats' in the outdoor area and use farm, jungle or other habitat inspired play sets inside the classroom to encourage children to use words to represent the sounds they make as they have seen in this part of the text; '*quack quack, oink oink, COCK-A-DOODLE-DOO!*' This type of activity is a fantastic way of working with all the muscles that contract when we form sounds. Children will be working with the whole range of muscles in their chests, throat and mouth in order to form these words, developing their ability to enunciate speech sounds.

### Reading Aloud and Re-Reading:

- Before this session, gather back together the laminated illustration props ready to use in this session.
- Re-introduce the props to the children, ensuring they can recall the name of each animal. Distribute these amongst the children, keeping the kangaroo and caterpillar to yourself so that you can model the activity for the children. You may wish to select props for children related to how well they have mastered syllabification up to this point. For example, a child who is very confident in this area may be given the *'tiny little hairy spider'* and a child consolidating their learning may have the *'fox'* or *'zebra'*.
- Read the first part of the story aloud, encouraging children to join in with the refrain when it occurs. When you come to your animals, show them how to break up the syllables in the word as you vocally beat it out, e.g. hold up your kangaroo to demonstrate orally breaking up the word kan-ga-roo and your caterpillar to demonstrate orally breaking up the word ca-ter-pi-llar (you'll notice in the book that caterpillar is broken up into cat-er-pil-lar, which is a good aid for spelling, but the syllables fall on ca-ter-pi-llar).
- Now read the whole story through, inviting the children to raise their animal in the air each time they hear it mentioned and orally beat back their animal's name to you e.g. *ti-ger, chee-tah, ti-ger, chee-tah, pan-da, po-lar bear*.
- All join in the chorus every time it arises, and act out the pages practised in the Performance Reading session.
- Leave the book and props in the reading area so that children can continue to revisit and re-read the text to themselves as part of the continuous provision.

### Book Talk:

- Re-read the whole story from start to finish. Do the children think they could read it faster? Have a go!
- Discuss the book more widely, collecting children's responses at a deeper level. Start by asking them to tell you what they liked/disliked about the story, and any questions they have about it.
- Now connect to children's personal experiences, by asking questions such as; Do you play an instrument? What is your favourite music? Have you ever been sleepy? Excited? What do you do at bedtime? How do you show when you're excited or you have lots of energy?
- You could scribe what children say about the book in speech bubbles around a large copy of the front cover on the working wall or in the shared journal.

### Alliteration:

- Read the whole book again for pleasure with the children joining in at will. Ensure they follow along with the text by finger pointing so they can follow the reading.
- Collect together the laminated animal cards. Say the names slowly through. Can the children hear any animals that start with the same sound? If they don't register this at first, demonstrate this orally for them, e.g. dingo, duck, emphasising the initial sound as you read.

- Ask the children if they can find another animal that starts with the sound 'd' and see if the children recognise the donkey has the same initial sound.
- Continue looking for other groups of animals that start with the same phoneme. Be aware that some children who can recognise words by sight may have moved to thinking about words that start with the same letter, e.g. armadillo and alligator. In this case show them the shape of the word, recognising that they do start with the same letter, but say the words aloud to enable them to hear the difference in starting sounds, the 'ar' in armadillo and the 'a' in alligator.
- Leave the laminated animals out for the children to continue to explore in the continuous provision.

### Oral blending and segmenting:

- Tell the children they are going to help you play a game. You have a selection of the animals they have seen in the story and you are going to pick one and keep it a secret. You are going to sound out the name of the animal and they will have to tell you which animal you have hidden away.
- Model first with an easier CVC word like duck. Orally segment the word into its constituent speech sounds, d-u-ck and see if the children can help you blend this together to say the word 'duck'. When they get it right reveal the picture and blu-tac it to the board so they can see how many they did. Use animals whose names are phonically regular and contain 2, 3 or 4 sounds to make this manageable, like:  
b-a-t bat  
y-a-k yak  
o-x ox  
d-u-ck duck  
f-o-x fox  
p-i-g pig
- You could then see if the children can take the pictures, say the name and segment the word out for you to guess.
- You could make a book based pairs game to leave in the continuous provision, where the children try to match pairs of the animal's name and their picture.

### Exploring and Enriching Knowledge Beyond the Text:

- Come back to the knowledge and questions grid completed at the start of the sequence. Is there an animal in the story you'd like to find out more about?
- Show the children how to start to find out more about things they are interested in. You could model this by saying; 'I really liked the big blue whale, I'd like to find out more about them, I wonder how I could do that?' Think this through with the children, investigating the different places you might be able to find information. Model this by reading books such as *Big Blue Whale* by Nicola Davies and *Is a Blue Whale the Biggest Thing There Is?* by Robert E Wells, watching

videos of blue whales in their natural environment or looking at a simple website such as:

<https://www.activewild.com/blue-whale-facts-kids/>

- Model how to make a simple origami book (see: <https://www.clpe.org.uk/powerofpictures/creative-approaches/bookmaking>) or pre-make a large scale one using flipchart paper for you and smaller ones, using A3 paper for the children. Model how to write simple sentences about blue whales and draw pictures to make a simple information book.
- Linked to Understanding the World support and encourage the children in various ways to make their own books during continuous provision. Provide access to adults who can find and read books about their animals, help them find videos so that they can see and learn about their animals and find and read web pages.
- Display the made books prominently in the reading environment and celebrate these by allowing children to read them aloud at shared or group times.

### Other ideas for Continuous and Cross-curricular Provision:

#### **PSED:**

Talk about what it's like to feel tired, happy, excited. What do you like to do when you feel like this? We know Tanka and Skunk like to play the drums. Allow children time and space to talk about things they like to do. Encourage them to bring in photographs or draw pictures of them doing their favourite things to create a class display.

#### **Physical Development:**

Watch videos of the animals. Practise moving like different animals; do they walk, crawl, slide?

#### **Mathematics:**

Talk about animal characteristics, count numbers of legs, sort animals by size or weight.

#### **Understanding the World:**

Find out more about the different animals, what they look like, their habitats, where in the world they can be found, what they eat.

#### **Expressive Arts and Design:**

Use photographs and models to give the children the chance to draw, paint or make models of animals.

#### **Water, Sand and Mud Play:**

Create habitats for different groups of animal models and play with them in their 'natural environments'.

#### **Rhyme and Song:**

Create a bank of song and rhyme cards for different animal songs and rhymes such as: One Elephant Went Out to Play, Five Little Ducks, Down in the Jungle, Itsy Bitsy Spider, Cows in the Kitchen etc.

**Small World Play:**

Provide large and small scale animal models, allow children to create habitats in tuff spot trays and using the natural environment outdoors.