



Primary Times

formerly **LANG Primary**



**March 2007
Issue 26**



From strength to strength!

A special warm welcome to all our readers. We are sure that you will have immediately noticed several changes on the front page of this issue!

The **LANG Edizioni** catalogue is now part of the **Pearson Education Group**. This international educational group includes companies such as Penguin, Reuters, the Financial Times as well as **Pearson Longman**.

As from 1 January 2007 all our new English language publications for the Italian primary sector will be co-branded and will carry both the **LANG Edizioni** and **Pearson Longman** trademarks.

The **LANG-Pearson Longman** 2007 catalogue for the Italian primary sector will include the new 2007 co-branded publications as well as English language courses and supplementary materials previously published by both **LANG Edizioni** and **Pearson Longman**.

To this exciting joint venture **Pearson Longman** are contributing their international publishing experience and research and development resources; **LANG** are bringing their experience and understanding of the Italian primary school sector which is reflected in the incredible success of the **LANG** catalogue.

For the new scholastic year we are offering two new but quite different English language projects specifically designed for the Italian primary school, **English Roundabout** and **Footprints**. This issue is being posted together with two pamphlets presenting these new projects which we are sure the teacher will find both innovative and exciting.

Most of the articles and worksheets in this issue have been designed to be used in the later years of English classes in the Primary school.

Ideas for practising the speaking and writing skills together with suggestions for preparing the children to work in pairs are discussed and linked to some of the photocopiable worksheets.



Index

Speaking tricks	p. 2
The right way to write	p. 4
The pair work task	p. 6
Worksheet – Speaking	p. 8
Kids' Corner	p. 9
What a creative holiday!	p. 13
Worksheet – At the seaside	p. 14
Worksheet – My favourite animal	p. 15
... and Culture as well?	p. 16
Worksheet – Spot the difference	p. 18
Class project	p. 19

IN CASO DI MANCATO RECAPITO INVIARE AL CMP/CPO DI ROSERIO VIA C. BELGIOIOSO, 165/11 MILANO PER LA RESTITUZIONE AL MITTENTE PREVIO PAGAMENTO RESI



Speaking tricks



Maxine Jones

As doing speaking activities can be noisy and a little chaotic at first, read Joanna Carter's article on *Management of pair and group-work* in the **Lang Primary** December 2006 bumper edition for some great hints on how to make it work. When doing speaking activities, establish a sign which indicates that students must finish what they are doing and look at the teacher, in case you need to help them out or clarify something in the middle of the exercise. For example, the teacher can explain to students that when they see the teacher put her hand up, they must finish what they are doing, put their hand up too, and be silent. This means the teacher doesn't have to shout to get their attention!

Flashcard Game – Get a full set – politely!

Choose a number of items – e.g. 8 – from a lexical set to be revised (e.g. vegetables, food etc). In the following example of the game the set 'fruit' has been used.

Get each student (or pair of students who act as a team) to make a set of mini flashcards with these items. Make these flashcards on white cardboard as they will last longer than paper and students can keep them in a little box, to use in further activities. This also means students can't see through the paper when you use the cards for activities like this flashcard game, memory and Pelman pairs etc. (They always try to do this, in my experience!)

Students can draw the items themselves, cut them from magazines (cooking magazines are a great resource for food) or you can provide a photocopied page with pictures which the students can cut out, colour in and glue to the cardboard. The cut-out activities in **Lang Primary Resources** provide many ready-to-use, photocopiable pages containing clear illustrations of lexical sets such as food, clothes and furniture, as does the *Word Album* which opens each unit in **New Come Along**.

Show students your own set of flashcards (provided in **Lang Primary Resources**) and go over the words and pronunciation.

Use at least three ways to practise the words, so students feel confident before they begin the speaking exercise. For example you can "say the word" silently, and students must guess the word by looking at your mouth. Then ask students to come to the teacher's desk, choose a card and do the same. This is a fun way to get students to practise saying the word: the repetition and the choral aspect aids learning for those who may not remember the vocabulary. Tell the students to put their cards face down in one pile on a desk in the middle of the classroom. You can put two desks together so the cards don't fall off! Then mix them up, and tell each student – or pair of students – to take the number you have established as the set (e.g. 8).

Explain to the children that the aim of the game is to get a full set. As students randomly take cards they may have, for example, 2 apples, 2 oranges, 2 bananas, a peach, a strawberry and no cherries.

Explain how you can find the cards you haven't got. Present students with a dialogue model they must follow. Make the dialogue very simple, or more challenging. This task is a good way to get students to practise *social English*; **please** and **thank you** are absolute musts!

To practise the dialogue, choose a student and demonstrate with him/her how it works. Then ask two volunteers to practise in front of the class. After students have received sufficient aural input, you can then write the dialogue models on the board.

Students must get up, walk around the classroom and follow a model like this one. (Remember: the expressions can change to suit the level of the children.)

• Have you got a card with a peach?

If the student has this card they must say:

- **Yes I have.**

To obtain the card, they must then ask:

- **Can I have it please?**

The student with the card says:

- **Yes, OK, you can.**

And of course, on receiving the card students must say:

- **Thank you very much!**

Or, if they ask someone and they don't have the card they are looking for, the dialogue could be as follows:

- **Have you got a card with cherries?**

- **No, I haven't. I'm sorry.**

- **That's OK. Never mind.**

The winner is the first student who gets a full set, and must then say:

- **I've got a full set. I'm the winner!**

To finish, the teacher can check if the winner has all the cards asking:

- **Have you got a banana?** and so on.

Alternatively, to reduce teacher talking time and increase students' talking time, you can get the students to check the winner's cards off the original set. One student asks:

- **Have you got a card with cherries?**

Another asks:

- **Have you got an apple?** and so on.

As with any activity, the language content can be adapted to make it more challenging, e.g.

- **Have you got a picture of a girl in a pink dress with blonde hair?**

After playing this game several times, using different mini flashcards, students will never forget how to ask for something politely!

It's Saturday evening – Let's get a pizza!

1. Start with a brainstorming activity, asking students what kind of toppings you can have on a pizza. Prepare a set of flashcards with the possible ingredients so they can be shown to the whole class. Chips and spicy sausage are always the favourites, so the children can be asked what their parents like, to elicit words such as spinach and courgette! The aim of the brainstorming activity is to come up with as many ingredients as possible.
2. Form 5 groups (approx. 5-6 students per group).
3. Each group must draw 2 copies of the ingredients. Paper is fine to use here, and it's important to colour them. Alternatively, you can provide each group with sets of toppings from pictures cut from magazines. They must also draw 2 pizzas with no toppings.
4. Ask each group to write the toppings for 2 different pizzas on 2 pieces of paper, choosing the toppings from those you came up with in the brainstorming activity. You can decide on the number of toppings according to how challenging you want the activity to be, and how long you can play. Then take the pieces of paper and shuffle them.
5. Appoint 2 *pizza makers* from each group. The remaining students are the customers. You need 2 *customers* (so that everyone gets the opportunity to participate), depending on numbers you can pair up students who act as one customer. Give each *customer* a piece of paper with the description of the pizza toppings. Then take away some of the ingredients from each group of *pizza makers*.
6. Customers must visit each "pizzeria", trying to find one which has all the ingredients on their piece of paper. The *pizza makers* stick the ingredients to the pizza, but only if the pizza is "complete".

As in the first activity, the teacher provides a model for the dialogue between *customers* and *pizza makers*. Some useful expressions:

- **Are there chips?**
- **Have you got chips?**
- **Can I have chips?** – all the variations on yes and no answers
- **How much is it?**

When students find a "pizzeria" with all their toppings, ask them to stick the pizza in the copybook and write the descriptions.

This activity can be adapted for shopping, clothes, toys, Christmas presents, groceries... and the kids have great fun!





The Right Way to Write



Joanna Carter



Writing is arguably the most difficult and problematic skill for teachers to teach and primary children to master in the English language. This may, to some extent, be due to

the fact that the English language is introduced by first concentrating on the receptive skills followed by the productive skills. The logical order then quite rightly becomes listening then speaking followed by reading with writing bringing up the rear. The fact that writing is introduced last may mean that, within the teaching framework, there is less time to dedicate to this skill and so less thought goes into how it should be taught.

Furthermore there is the added problem that English, unlike Italian, is not a phonological language, i.e. the written letters and words do not correspond with the sounds we make when we speak. The English spelling system is seemingly illogical and notoriously difficult and is not at all easy for young children to learn. (If it is any comfort to the foreign language learner, native English children have problems when it comes to writing correctly and may be up to six months behind their Spanish, French or Italian counterparts at primary level.)

The result of these complications and the lack of emphasis on this skill may mean that teachers may worry about how and when to introduce writing, what and how much to get their learners to write and even whether it's necessary to teach it at all. This article aims to provide some support for teachers and general guidance in introducing this skill to the primary classroom.

LEARNING TO WRITE IN L1

Understanding what mother tongue children can do in terms of writing at different ages and developmental stages is an important consideration as it means teachers will not make unrealistic demands on their learners when asking them to write in a foreign language.

Let's consider English native speaker children.

Experts have identified several distinctive steps that they go through when learning to write. In the 'preparatory stage' the child acquires the basic mechanisms of hand writing and spelling which for most children becomes automatic after about two years. For example they learn how to hold a pencil and position the paper. They learn the name and sounds of letters and learn the difference between lower case and upper case. Initially they deal exclusively with letters but then move onto writing words. This involves making uniform letter sizes, regulating the spacing of letters within words and dealing for the first time with spelling.

From about the age of seven, children reach the 'consolidation stage'. They write about personal things and context bound situations (i.e. only things they know about). They begin to write simple sentences and so deal with capitalisation, punctuation and the choice and order of words. At this stage, English children will change letter shapes and spelling but will not otherwise edit their work.

In the final stage, the 'differentiation stage', that happens from about nine years onwards, children begin to understand the idea of audience and that good writing depends on communicating effectively. They become aware of different text types and have some idea about structuring and ordering a story.

LEARNING TO WRITE IN L2

The stages of writing in a foreign language basically mirror those of writing in L1, but it is very important to remember that how well a child can write at any age or level in their mother tongue will dictate how well they write in a second language. Other principles that can be applied when thinking about introducing writing with younger children could be for the teacher to ask themselves if their learners really need to be able to write in English at this stage and will the English spelling system interfere seriously with what they are learning in their own language. On the other hand, teachers can also ask themselves if the children seem to want to write and are



interested in writing. Visual and kinaesthetic learners, for example, can benefit from seeing what they are learning and respond well to the shapes of words and patterns of letter strings. A general and important principle for all ages and levels is that children should only be asked to write what they can say in English.

Let's now look at activities that can be used with different levels and age groups to practise writing in the English language classroom.

THE FIRST TWO YEARS

Many teachers and publishers feel that teaching any form of writing in the first year should be avoided as children have to learn to write in their mother tongue and mustn't be overloaded or confused. However, I believe that introducing letters and the English alphabet by the end of year one could be complimentary and helpful as long as this is done at the same speed of learning in Italian. After all there are only a couple of extra letters and many of the consonants sound very similar to Italian.

Children can trace letters on paper or be asked to draw them in the air or on each others backs and guess which one is being written. They can also learn alphabet songs or fill in the missing letters in an alphabet chain. Teachers could even have a special 'letter day' where children bring in things that begin in English with that particular letter.

A great idea to use in year two, when children are learning to spell words, is to have letters of the alphabet written separately on small pieces of card (or if possible invest in the plastic letters available from Early Learning Centres in Britain). When teachers have covered a lexical set, they can put the children into teams and ask them to spell out words as a competition, using their letter sets. Students of this age can also be encouraged to make very easy picture books about lexical sets or festivities. Each picture can have a one sentence caption that is repetitive and only the last word changes to match the picture; e.g. This is an Easter egg, This is a chick, This is an Easter bunny etc. There are examples of this type of book on www.enchantedlearning.com.

YEAR THREE AND UPWARDS

Year three should be moving into being able to form short written sentences. To help children do this, teachers can give them activities such as putting words in the correct order to make a sentence, matching up sentence halves, gap filling using visuals or writing captions for pictures and speech bubbles.

Year four and five should be more or less at the stage where they are aware of the idea of audience and writing for a specific context. They should also be learning to put together simple connected text. They can be encouraged to write short letters, for example to Santa Claus or a character in a book. They could also compile a class news book where news is written very simply as a class effort and illustrated. Other ideas are invitations, daily diaries and text messages.

To finish with, this is an idea to help learners create a short descriptive text. It works in conjunction with the 'My Favourite Animal' worksheet on page 15.

The teacher tells the learners to look at the empty bubbles in the 'spider gram'. They must write their answers to each of the following questions in the appropriate box.

Box 1: What's your favourite animal?

Box 2: What colour(s) is your animal?

Box 3: What does your animal look like? (two, four legs, a beak, long neck etc)

Box 4: Where does it live? (in the sea, mountains, on a farm etc)

Box 5: What does it eat?

Box 6: How does it move? (jumps, crawls, runs, swims etc)

Box 7: Why do you like it? (because it's sweet, intelligent, friendly, fierce, strong etc).

The teacher can monitor and help provide vocabulary, then the students use the bubbles to complete the sentence prompts and make a text.

Primary Times

keeping the teacher informed



The pair work task

Tim Priesack



Up until the early 1980s the teaching of English as a foreign language was primarily concerned with the structure of the language as opposed to its functional uses for communication.

Then a revolution took place.

A new generation of text books appeared indicating an innovative objective to English language teaching. Language was no longer considered to be a series of grammar rules but an instrument of communication and this was reflected not only in the syllabus design of the text books, but also in the framework of the exercises used in the classroom to practise the English language. The most evident differences were in the type of activities used to practise the speaking skill.

If the students were being asked to learn English as an instrument of communication, speaking activities in the classroom could no longer be confined to dialogue between the teacher and the students. There were too many students in a class to give each person enough practice in the communicative speaking tasks during a lesson.

Working with a partner

In order to give students the maximum opportunity to use the language as a means of communication, the students were asked to work with a partner and complete oral language tasks, under the continual guidance of the teacher. The question forms of language were introduced earlier than previously as without the ability to ask questions a communicative act is difficult to simulate.

People do not normally produce language spontaneously but use language to react to a stimulus, very often a question, although this stimulus can also be something a person has seen or read.

There are many different types of pair work activities such as:

- Question/answer using models supplied by the teacher. Very often the number of options are increased by visual stimulus so that, while this exercise has similarities to the second type of exercise described above, by increasing the number of possible

similar questions and answers and asking the children themselves to form and respond to utterances, the learners have far more opportunity to communicate with another, practising and consolidating usage of the English language. This type of exercise is very popular in the early years of second language learning and an example can be found on page 8.

- Task based pair work gives the learners the opportunity to communicate to complete a language task. **Successful completion of the language task tells the teacher that communication has taken place.** An example of a task based pair work exercise is on page 18 of this issue of **Primary Times**. Although an alternative methodology is suggested, imagine a class divided into pairs sitting back to back. In each pair, one is holding picture A and the other picture B. The students ask questions about and describe their pictures making a list of the 13 differences. When the task is completed, providing the teacher has ensured that no Italian has been used by the learners, the teacher can be sure that a communicative act using the English language has taken place within the pair.
- Milling activities are when the learners have to complete a task which involves the whole class or a group of learners and have to speak in pairs with each student. The easiest way to organise these activities is to get all the students to stand up, with pens and paper if needed to record information, and mill or walk around the classroom asking and answering questions. On a simplistic level, this is how the learners would have to work if they were asked to make a list of all their classmates surnames in alphabetical order or collect statistics on the favourite food, drink or hobbies amongst their classmates.

The Primary class and communication

Today, communicative pair work exercises are an essential part of second language learning, especially in the Primary School, where learners have very little or no opportunity to meet the English language outside the school. The contact the children have with the English language is limited exclusively to between the classroom walls and therefore the teacher should give learners the opportunity to use English as a communicative tool during lessons in simulated communicative activities.

Setting up a pair work task

From the first time the children are asked to work in pairs, this exercise should be treated as unique. After explaining to the children the importance of speaking to each other to practise English, use the opportunity of the uniqueness of the exercise to move the children from their usual places to sit near others. The teacher can use this moment to move linguistically stronger children together or mix the seating so that weaker children work with those who can help them. Ideally, when the teacher announces a pair work activity, the children should expect instructions as to where they have to sit.

The setting up of a pair work exercise should be organised in steps:

- dividing the children into pairs
- checking that they have everything they are going to need when they begin the task such as books, pens and paper, if they have to record information
- letting them watch two children in front of the classroom completing the exercise as a model, so that when they are asked to begin they know *exactly* what they have to say and what they can expect to hear. Very often pair work tasks are unsuccessful simply because when the children begin they are not absolutely sure of what is expected from them
- if the exercise is collecting information, such as completing a table, it is often useful to give children a time limit for the exercise.

Changing pair partners

There are a variety of ways of changing pairs of students in the classroom to give them the opportunity to practise the same exercise more than once without boredom setting in. In a typical class of twenty-four, the children sit behind desks in rows with corridors between the rows so that the teacher and the children have access to the front of the room. During pair work activities, ask the children to move their desks so that the corridors are closed. Alternatively, ask children to move only their chairs to close the corridors. A typical classroom layout during pair work is illustrated. Teachers can modify this to reflect their own classrooms. Ideally there will be an even number of rows.

a1	a2	e1	e2	i1	i2	row 4
b1	b2	f1	f2	j1	j2	row 3
c1	c2	g1	g2	k1	k2	row 2
d1	d2	h1	h2	l1	l2	row 1

teacher
blackboard

Pairs

1. Students with same letter work together.
2. Students in rows 1 and 3 turn round and work with those sitting behind them.
3. Students in rows 1 and 3 turn round and work with those sitting behind on their right (example b1 works with a2).

	a2	e1	e2	i1	i2	row 4
b1	b2	f1	f2	j1	j2	row 3
c1	c2	g1	g2	k1	k2	row 2
d1	d2	h1	h2	l1	l2	a1 row 1

teacher
blackboard

4. Ask student a1 to sit in a chair next to student l2. All the pairs will automatically change.

In conclusion, all English language teachers should be using pair work exercises during lessons to ensure that children have the opportunity to practise the second language they are learning as an instrument of communication which will be of great use to them in



Speaking

WORKSHEET

This is a Chatter Chums exercise from the new **LANG-Pearson Longman** project **ENGLISH ROUNDABOUT**. The exercises in this section encourage the children to communicate orally in pairs. Although the language the children have to use is controlled by the illustrations, the complexity of these exercises increases as the course progresses. This extract is from **English Roundabout** Student's Book 3.

Chatter Chums

UNIT 4

35 8. Listen.



36 9. Listen and repeat.



10. Ask and answer.



Kids' Corner

Giulia Abbiati

As Easter approaches children will enjoy making small craft objects for their families and friends. However, the closer the days are to spring, the more difficult it is to keep the children's attention in class.

Keeping pupils' minds focused on school and studying when flowers are blooming, the sun is shining and birds are singing becomes harder and harder.

When spring comes, children only seem to be interested in playing outside the classroom and teachers need to invent new ways of motivating the children to work inside.

Most of the activities in this Kids' Corner are dedicated to constructing objects which the children can either use themselves or give as presents to others.

Children will have fun revising some of the vocabulary taught during the first years of primary school and at the same time decorating all their school books, copybooks and diaries.



Bird basket

What you do

1. Copy the template onto the yellow cardboard.
2. Fold the sides and glue the flaps.
3. Cut out the wings and the tail from the yellow cardboard and cut out the beak from the orange cardboard.
4. Glue the pieces onto the basket and draw the eyes of the chick with a black felt-tip pen.
5. Cut out the handle from the yellow cardboard and glue it onto the basket.

Nest basket

What you do

1. Copy the template onto the brown cardboard.
2. With a dark brown felt-tip pen and a black felt-tip pen draw small branches on the basket.
3. Fold the sides and glue the flaps.
4. Cut out leaves from the green cardboard or draw and colour different leaves on the white paper.
5. Cut out the handle from the brown cardboard and glue the leaves onto it.
6. Glue the handle onto the basket.

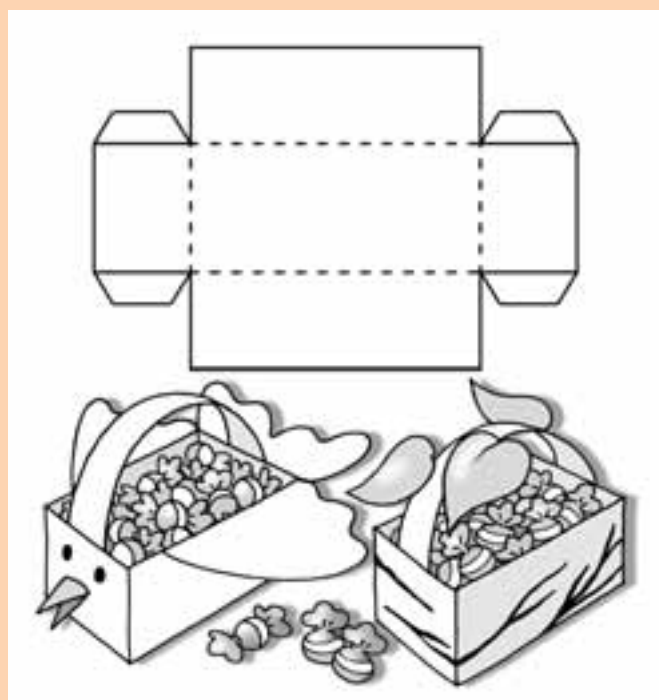
Kids' Corner is a special section dedicated to very young learners.



ACTIVITY 1: Easter baskets

What you need:

one photocopy of template for each child
coloured cardboard (yellow, orange, brown, green)
white paper
felt-tip pens
scissors
glue





Grass basket

What you do

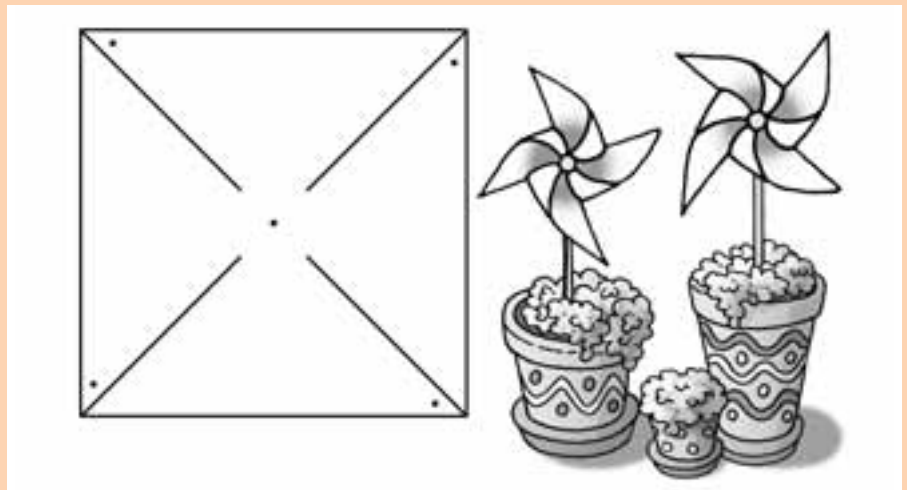
1. Copy the template onto the green cardboard.
2. Make many small cuts about 1 cm below the top edges of the basket.
3. Fold the sides and glue the flaps.
4. Draw and colour bright flowers onto the white paper and cut them out.
5. Cut out the handle from the green cardboard and glue the flowers onto it.
6. Glue the handle on the basket.



ACTIVITY 2: Potted pinwheels

What you need:

white paper
pencil
ruler
hole punch
coloured felt-tip pens
scissors
paper fasteners
straw
tape
terracotta pot



What you do

1. Cut a square of white paper.
2. Use the pencil and the ruler to draw two lines between the opposite corners of the square (see template).
3. Cut along the lines, starting from each corner of the square and stopping 1 cm before the centre of it.
4. Punch a hole through every other corner and through the centre of the square. Do not punch holes too close to the edge of the paper to avoid tearing.
5. Colour the square as desired, draw small animals or shapes on it or write your name and your best friends' names on the four flaps.
6. Fold the corners with holes into the centre of the square. Push the paper fastener through the holes and through the central hole and secure it on the back.
7. Use tape to fix the straw on the back of the pinwheel.
8. Stick the pinwheel into a coloured terracotta pot and you'll have a great Easter gift!

Note for the teacher: if terracotta pots are not available in class, ask the children stick the pinwheels into pots at home.

ACTIVITY 3: Small animal secret diaries

What you need:

thick copybook
coloured sheets of paper
cardboard in different colours
glue
tape
string
felt-tip pens
beads



What you do

1. Cover the copybook with coloured paper and use the tape to fix it on the inside cover.
2. Draw a small animal, like a bee or a snail, onto the coloured cardboard. Cut it out and glue it onto the front cover of the copybook.
3. Fix with tape or glue one end of the string onto the back of the copybook, then tie a bead on the other end of the string.
4. Use the small animal on the front cover as a button and roll the string up around it.



ACTIVITY 4: Coloured book covers

What you need:

white paper
paint in different colours
a big paintbrush
tape
highlighter, glue and
felt-tip pens' caps

What you do

1. Choose a dark colour and paint the white paper.
2. Use the tape or the glue, highlighter and felt-tip pens' caps and rotate them on the fresh paint to make different size spiral shapes.
3. Let the paint dry.
4. Cover the books with the prepared coloured paper and use tape to fix the paper inside the cover of the books.





ACTIVITY 5: Glow-in-the-dark journals

What you need:

spiral-bound journal
glow-in-the-dark stickers in
different shapes

What you do

1. Stick the glow-in-the-dark shapes onto the front and back cover of the journal.
2. Turn off the lights and enjoy your glowing journal!



ACTIVITY 6: Pocketful of friends

What you need:

coloured cardboard
scissors
small photos of yourself and
your friends
stickers
felt-tip pens
tape

What you do

1. Draw the children's shapes onto the cardboard and cut them out.
2. Use tape to join the hands of the children's shapes together.
3. Cut small pockets of coloured cardboard and glue them onto a piece of cardboard leaving the tops open.
4. Draw pictures of your friends and insert them in the pockets. Write their names on the pockets.
5. Use tape to join the children's shapes to the edge of the rectangular cardboard and fold them over to make a cover for the cardboard with pockets.



ACTIVITY 7: Pet bookmarks

What you need:

coloured cardboard
pencil
scissors
black felt-tip pen

What you do

1. Draw the shape of your favourite pet onto the cardboard. Make sure you draw long legs.
2. Cut out the shape.
3. Use the black felt-tip pen to draw the eyes.
4. Use the long legs of your pet as a bookmark and enjoy reading!





What a creative holiday!

Ideas to use before, during and after the holidays!



Cecilia Perillo

During the summer break many children travel both within their own countries as well as abroad and this can be a starting point to talk about the 'child's experience' of travelling. It raises awareness of how much English there is around the world and how the children can use their English outside the classroom.

Stimulating Curiosity

Using a globe, talk about far away places and show the children that the blue represents the sea and the other areas are land.

- How can you travel across the sea? (Geography: Continents And Oceans page 4, Around the World page 6, in the **Kids' Club** Across the Curriculum Series levels 4/5.)
- Where is English spoken?
Use a torch and shine it on the globe to show that people are going to bed in Australia when others are getting up on the other side of the world.
Find a country where children have friends or relatives and stick a photo on that country.
- Which language do they speak?
Fly a toy plane (two crossed ice cream sticks) all around the world to another country. Focus on means of transport and prepositions. (**Kids' Club** – Curriculum Extension Series - Vocabulary Build-Up 4/5; In the street, pages 6 and 7, **English Worlds** - Test your knowledge about Great Britain/USA pages 90, 91.)

A better environment!

The more we encourage our children to be curious and teach them how to appreciate the world and the *natural world* and respect for other living things, the more we can look forward to a *better environment*. Children can learn to nurture their environment such as the garden, the street and the park (**Kids' Club** – Curriculum Extension Series - Across the Curriculum 4/5 - Geographical Features, page 5) and learn the difference between paper, glass, aluminium and plastic and therefore place rubbish into categories and recycle materials and understand that everything can be used again by making new things out of old things. Teachers can ask their students to collect materials during the holidays and bring them back for recycling. This awareness should make their world a better place to live in before and during the holidays!

The concept that mountains, forests, trees, rivers and seas are special places which we must love, save and keep clean can be portrayed through songs and rhymes, an excellent way to help children remember vocabulary. Examples of songs and rhymes can be found in: **New Summer Fun 4**, **Sing Along** and **Kids' Club** – Curriculum Extension Series - Vocabulary Build-up 4/5.

Don't forget the holidays!

Get the children to use opportunities outside the classroom to

improve their knowledge of the language and collect examples of English texts they find in names of shops, films, food wrappers, titles of songs and instructions etc. Learners can extend their personal vocabulary by exploring subjects which they find interesting and relevant through the following activities

Before the holidays

- Encourage the children to think of a topic in which they are interested, e.g. the seaside.
- Get them to draw a picture in pairs/individually.
- Ask them to list words associated with this topic (using L1 when necessary) or show pictures/flashcards with words like dinghy, flippers, buoy, rubber ring, pedal-boat, deck chair, beach umbrella, diving mask, spade, bucket, sand, seashell, starfish, crab, fish, shark, jellyfish, lobster, whale, dolphin, seagull, octopus etc. (see **Kids' Club** – Curriculum Extension Series Vocabulary Build-Up pages 12 and 13 and **New Summer Fun 3** Animals at the seaside page 32).
- Get the children to present the work as a poster.
Skills: ability to draw, knowledge of English vocabulary for describing the seaside, the ability to use a dictionary, clear handwriting, speaking skills. There are different tasks which require different types and levels of skills. It is important that all the children are involved in this activity.

During the holidays

- During the holidays children can do the same activity on a different topic by following the model presented in class. The children can be asked to collect realia or pictures/examples of language related to the topic they have chosen.

After the holidays

After the holidays the children can be asked to present the materials they have collected to the rest of the class.

This idea can be used as a basis for 'brainstorming' vocabulary. An article in **Lang Primary** Issue 25 suggests that brainstorming activities encourage children to:

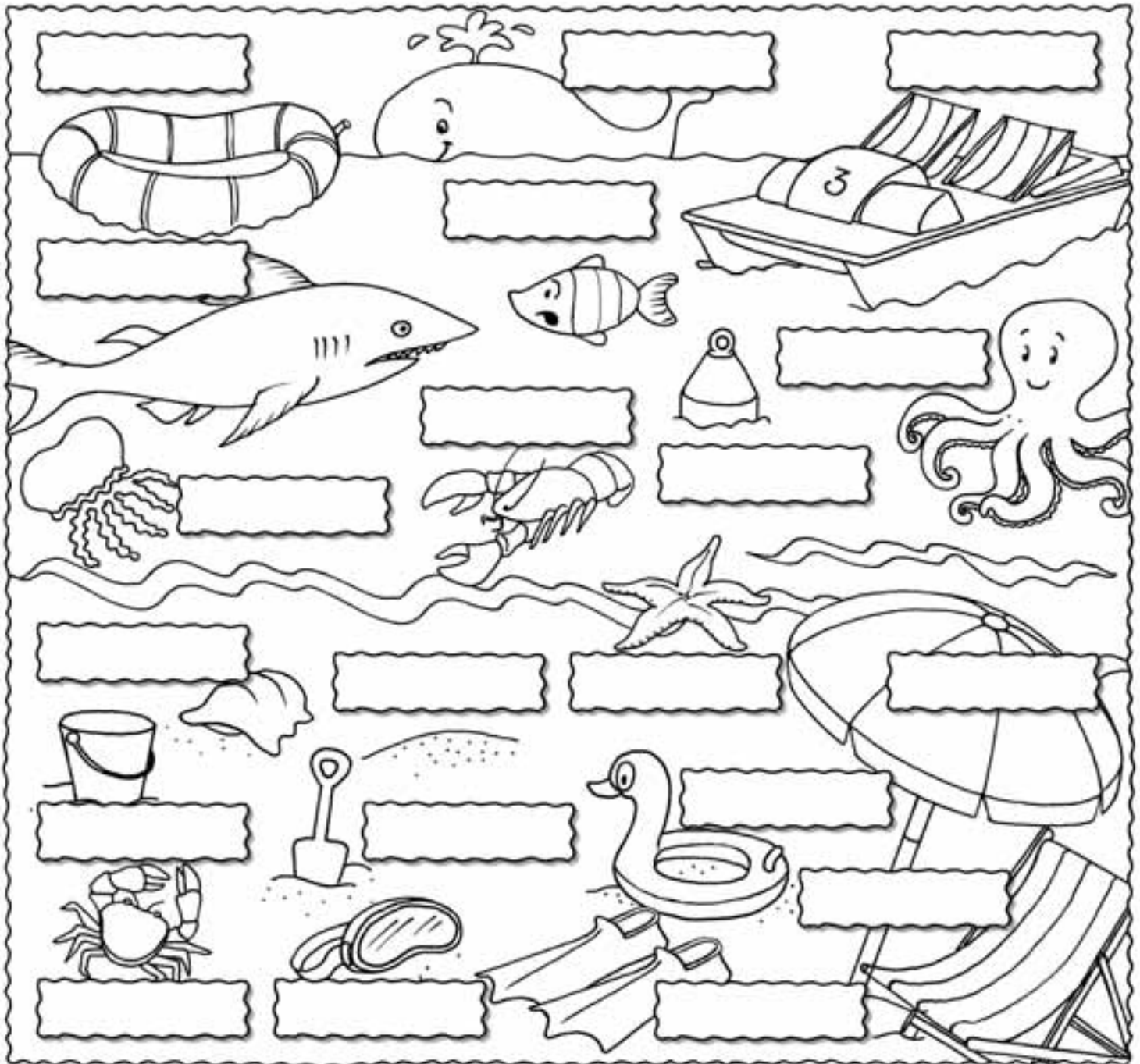
- listen and understand when other children speak,
- write lists of words/expressions in English,
- improve interpersonal relationships as they work within a group,
- teach each other,
- motivate learning through competition between groups,
- teach children to organise themselves to work within a time frame.

The activities which have been presented here provide opportunities for meaningful language practice and provide a way to ensure continuity between what has been done at school and the long holiday break!

AT THE SEASIDE

WORKSHEET

Look at the pictures, choose and write the correct words from the list.



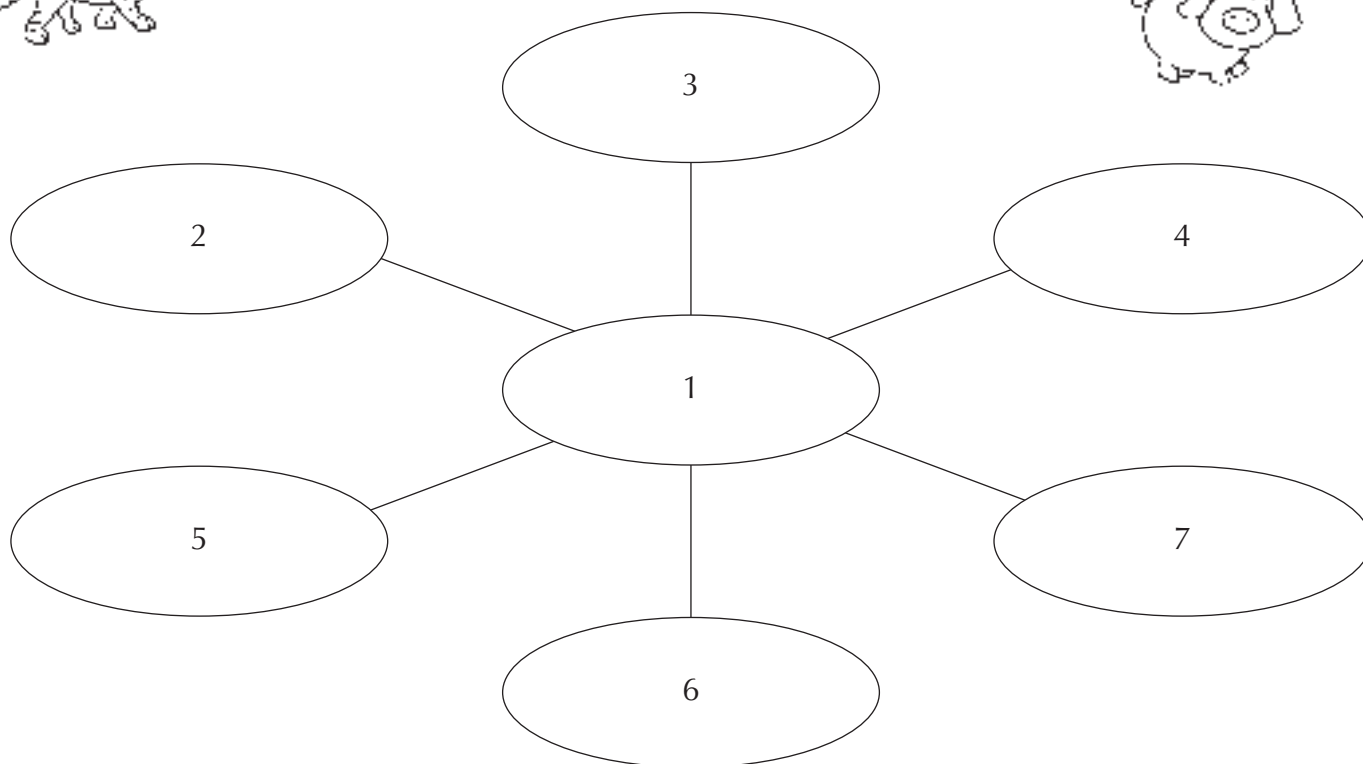
- dinghy
- deck-chair
- sand
- shark
- flippers
- beach umbrella
- seashell
- jellyfish
- buoy
- diving mask
- starfish
- lobster
- rubber ring
- spade
- crab
- whale
- pedal-boat
- bucket
- fish
- octopus

MY FAVOURITE ANIMAL

WORKSHEET



- Listen to the teacher and write in the boxes.
(Teacher: refer to page 5)



- Now write about your animal using the words in the boxes and sentences to help you.

My Favourite Animal



1. My favourite animal is a _____

2. It is _____

3. It has _____

4. It lives in _____

5. It eats _____

6. It can _____ and can also _____

7. I like it because _____





... and Culture as well?



Susannah Reed

Why teach culture

Language and culture are inseparable. Learning a language is more valuable when we understand the customs of the people who speak it. When we understand each other we have more to talk about.

With increasing foreign travel and media communication, our communities are being brought closer together. It is important to increase our awareness of how other people live their lives so that we can become better citizens of a new multi-cultural community.

An understanding of culture helps us avoid cultural misunderstandings in daily life. For example in some cultures it is polite to greet people with a kiss, in others to shake hands, and in others to bow or rub noses!

Finally, by celebrating our similarities and respecting our differences, we can live more happily together.

How to include culture in your English classes

It might seem an unreachable task to bring culture in the primary English lesson but it's not. Start from small things. Use pictures in your English coursebook, postcards or images from the Internet to encourage pupils to compare British and other cultures with their own. This can be organized as discussions in class, projects (such as making a poster, a chart, a survey, etc) or more adventurous activities, such as class fashion shows or cookery projects.

Which cultural elements to choose

1. School - A good start would be to get pupils to compare something they all have in common - their own school - with schools in Britain, or other places around the world.

Pupils can compare the following areas of British school life with their own:

- **School uniforms.** *What clothes are the British children wearing in the pictures? Are they wearing a uniform? How does it compare to the clothes we wear in our own school?*



- **School buildings.** *Is it a big school? What rooms do they have in their school that we don't have? What rooms do we have?*
- **School timetables.** *What days do British children go to school? What time do British children start school in the morning? What time do they finish? Do they have lunch at school? Is this the same as in our country?*



The website www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/ourschool provides more information about a typical British primary school.

2. Festivals - Festivals are a very popular way of introducing children to the traditions of other cultures. Pupils can compare decorations people put up, traditional clothes that are worn, special food that is eaten and any traditional activities.

- Some festivals may also be celebrated in your own country, such as **Christmas** and **Easter**. Here it is interesting to see how the same festival is celebrated in different ways. This allows us to celebrate our similarities while at the same time respecting our differences.
- Some festivals are **multi-cultural events** which celebrate the traditions of ethnic minorities living within Britain, or other countries. For example, the celebrations of Chinese New Year or the Notting Hill Carnival in London.



Discussing multi-cultural festivals will help your pupils respect the ethnic populations in their own country. Pupils who come from a different ethnic population can be encouraged to tell the class about any festivals unique to their culture. They could bring a traditional food to school for the class to try!

The website www.festivals.com has more information about festivals in the USA and around the world and <http://www.learnenglish.org.uk/kids/stories/cnewyear.asp> has simple stories about some important festivals for different cultures. Other websites give information about specific countries, e.g. <http://www.britishcouncil.org/china-aboutuk-scotland-trafestivals.htm>

3. Games and Activities

Exploring the games and activities of another country is another popular topic for young learners.

- Pupils learn about traditional **British races** such as the sack race, the egg and spoon race and the three-legged race. Pupils can compare these activities to those they have in their own sports days. Or you could stage a British School Sports Day and ask pupils and their parents to participate.

The website www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/sport.html has more information about sports played in Britain.



4. A Global Community

Pupils can be encouraged to view themselves as members of a global community by learning how our cultures influence each other.

- For example, pupils can be guided to find **signs and symbols** that have become common to many languages.

Pupils can also find out where different everyday objects come from or are made. For example, *how many of their toys are made in China? Do they eat fruits that are grown in the Caribbean? Do they own anything that is made in Britain, etc.*



SPOT THE DIFFERENCES

WORKSHEET

Ideas for using Spot the Differences language tasks were included in **LANG Primary 25**. Here is another set of pictures and a different set-up for the exercise.

There are 13 basic differences between the two pictures. In picture 2 changes have been made to:

the girl's clothes and action, the boy's clothes and action, the pens, the calendar, the weather outside the window, the position of the cat and flowers, the girl on the bench/phone, plus the boy, the sport being played and the hats on the girls on horses.

The exercise recycles prepositions of place, present continuous, weather and there is/are.

- Before showing the pictures revise the language the children will need.
- Divide the class into two groups, A and B, asking them to create a space between the two groups by sitting closer together.
- Ask the children in each group to divide again into groups of 2 or 3. Give all the children in group A a copy of picture 1 and to group B, a copy of picture 2.

- Ask the children to invent sentences to describe all the detail in their pictures without letting the children in the other big group hear what they are saying.
- Unite the small groups within A and B so that the children can compare their sentences.
- When the teacher is satisfied that the children are able to describe their pictures, the time has come to mix the children in groups A and B.
- Ideally the children should sit back to back so that they cannot see their partner's picture.
- Ask them to describe their pictures to each other and write a list of the thirteen differences.
- When the teacher decides to conclude the exercise, all the pictures should be collected.

Ask the children to tell you the differences between the pictures and write them on the blackboard.



PROJECTS FOR
CLASS AND TEACHERPrimary Times Class Project
March 2007

Please pass on our thanks to the record number of children who contributed to the Class Project - Our Favourite River announced in issue 25 of our magazine. The quality of the work we received was very high and will certainly be appreciated by the children who receive the materials in exchange.

The project in this issue could be linked to aspects of both history and geography and is an opportunity for the children to be encouraged to find out about another country and to report back to the class.

The materials the children produce can be in any visually communicative form, from drawings, photographs,

illustrations cut from magazines, to written text either mounted on posters or on sheets of paper. All the written language must be in English and physically written by the children.

Teachers are asked not to correct or re-write the sentences produced by the children.

The children who actively contribute to the creation of the materials for the project will receive a useful set of coloured pencils. The coloured pencils will come in handy when the children have to complete many of the exercises in course books for the Primary school.

CLASS Project – March 2007 – Issue 26

The theme for your children to organise as a class or in smaller groups is:

Scotland: past - present - future

In 2007 the 300th anniversary of the Act of Union between England and Scotland will be celebrated.

This project encourages the children to find out about the traditions, present day realities and the future of Scotland. Thanks to the cross curricular nature of the project, work can also involve teachers of other subjects in the school. Lessons of geography, history and English can be linked to cover all the aspects of Scotland.

When the project is complete, please sign it as work produced by the class and indicate the number of children who have effectively been involved in creating the materials which are being submitted.

The materials submitted will be exchanged by post with those of another Primary school.

Send the project materials together with the completed project form to:

**Primary Times, Class Project – Issue 26,
PBM spa, Corso Trapani 16,
10139 Torino**

The materials should arrive in our offices by 31.05.2007.

We may publish extracts from some of the projects in future issues of **Primary Times**.

All the materials submitted become the property of Paravia Bruno Mondadori Editori and reproduction rights are reserved.

This form must be completed and attached to the front page of the project materials.

26

Name of school _____

Address _____

City _____ CAP _____

E-mail _____ @ _____

Name of teacher _____

Number of children involved in the project _____

Signed by the teacher _____ Date _____

CLASS PROJECTS

We are very pleased to report the continuing success of the Class Projects we promote through our magazine. The October 2006 project **My town - Its history and future** received work prepared by a record number of 1800 children from over 50 Primary schools. At the time of writing, judging by the envelopes we have received for the December 2006 project, we may even beat that number.

Projects give the children the opportunity to discuss topics not necessarily related to the English language and to organise research either with family help or in class groups. The results have to be visualised through drawings or photographs mounted on posters or on sheets of paper.

The children not only get enjoyment from completing a project but should also be told that those who actively participate will also receive a small gift. The class will eventually receive a project completed by a class in a different city so that they will be able to read (and judge!) a project from another school.

The next issue of **Primary Times** will be published in October 2007.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Primary Times is only distributed through a free subscription service and during seminars and conventions for teachers of English.

Primary Times is published three times a year, in March, October and December. Teachers can register subscriptions either on-line at www.langedizioni.com or by using the coupon below.

If you wish to comment on the articles in **Primary Times**, please do not hesitate to write to us.

PBM Editori Spa
corso Trapani, 16 - 10139 Torino
Fax 011 75021510
per informazioni:
uffici di Milano, Tel. 02 74823216
E-mail: info@langedizioni.com
info@longman.it
<http://www.langedizioni.com>
<http://www.longman.it>
<http://www.lang-longman.it>

Contributors to this issue:

Giulia Abbiati
Joanna Carter
Maxine Jones
Cecilia Perillo
Tim Priesack
Susannah Reed

Editor

Tim Priesack

Assistant editors

Giulia Abbiati
Daria Santangelo

Layout and Graphics

APV Vaccani, Milano

Illustrations

Simonetta Baldini
Alessandra Maggioni
Federica Orsi
Alberto Stefani
Fabiola Zardoni

Quality controller

Luca Federico

Printed

Lalitotipo, Settimo Milanese, Milano

CERTIFICAZIONE DI QUALITÀ



26

New subscription ☐

Change of address ☐

Name

Home address

City

CAP

E-mail

@

Telephone no.

School name and address

City

CAP

Course book used

I would like an agent to visit me at school

Yes ☐

No ☐

Ai sensi della Legge 675/96, con la presente vi autorizzo esplicitamente al trattamento dei miei dati personali unicamente ai fini amministrativi per l'invio di materiali scolastici al mio indirizzo.

Signed

Date

Post or fax to: PBM Editori spa - **Primary Times** – Corso Trapani 16 – 10139 Torino – Fax 011 75021 510