

St Joseph's Pre School
Spring 2 – Animals in Tales

Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Physical Development	Communication and Language	Understanding the World	Literacy	Maths	Expressive Arts and Design	Key Texts
Children will: - Explore emotions such as bravery (<i>The Lion Inside</i>), fear and reassurance (<i>Owl Babies</i>). - Build confidence performing or retelling stories. - Work collaboratively during small-world and role-play activities. - Develop empathy for animals and characters.	Children will: - Develop gross motor skills through animal-themed movement (stomping like bears, creeping like lions, flapping like birds). - Strengthen fine motor skills through cutting, threading, painting and mark-making. - Practise independence in dressing	Children will: - Learn and use vocabulary linked to animals, habitats, movement and sounds. - Retell familiar stories using props, puppets and small-world scenes. - Join in with repeated refrains (<i>Bear Hunt</i>, <i>Brown Bear</i>). - Listen to and discuss stories about bravery, family and adventure.	Children will: - Learn about different animals, their habitats and behaviours. - Explore nocturnal animals through <i>Owl Babies</i>. - Investigate farm animals through <i>Farmyard Hullabaloo</i>. - Learn about zoo animals and why	Children will: - Engage with a wide range of animal stories and poems. - Sequence events from key texts. - Create marks, drawings and early writing linked to animals and Easter. - Recognise and write their	Children will: - Count animals, footprints and objects in small-world play. - Compare sizes, lengths and weights (big bear, small owl, tall giraffe). - Sort animals by type, colour, size or habitat. - Explore patterns using animal prints and Easter colours.	Children will: - Create animal masks, puppets and artwork inspired by the stories. - Explore rhythm and rhyme through poems and songs. - Engage in imaginative role play (zoo, farm, bear hunt, jungle).	lion, bear, owl, chick, farm, zoo, jungle, brave, scared, quiet, loud, stomp, creep, flap, roar, habitat, wild, tame, Easter, new life, spring The Lion Inside by Rachel Bright We're Going on a Bear Hunt –



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- Celebrate Easter as a community, learning about kindness and new beginnings. Key experiences: "How did the lion feel?" discussions. - Comforting the owl babies through role play. - Working together to build animal habitats. - Easter celebrations and shared activities.	for outdoor adventures. - Explore sensory materials linked to stories (mud, grass, water, feathers). Key experiences: - Outdoor <i>Bear Hunt</i> obstacle course. - Animal yoga and movement sessions. - Creating Easter crafts using tools and materials. - Sensory trays inspired by story settings.	- Follow instructions during animal-themed games and Easter activities. Key experiences: - Story retelling with masks and puppets. - Acting out <i>We're Going on a Bear Hunt</i>. - Describing animals from <i>Dear Zoo</i>. - Talking about the feelings of the owl babies.	some animals are wild. - Explore the Easter story and the theme of new life. - Observe signs of spring outdoors. Key experiences: - Creating small-world habitats (forest, farm, jungle). - Watching short clips of real animals. - Exploring feathers, fur, mud and	names on artwork and story maps. - Explore rhyme and rhythm through <i>Farmyard</i> <i>Hullabaloo</i> and <i>Brown Bear</i>. Key experiences: - Story maps for <i>Bear Hunt</i> and <i>The Lion Inside</i>. - Drawing and labelling animals.	- Use positional language during story reenactments. Key experiences: - Sorting zoo animals from <i>Dear Zoo</i>. - Measuring "giant lion roars" or "bear steps". - Creating repeating patterns with animal prints. - Counting animals in <i>Brown Bear</i>.	- Use music and movement to represent different animals. - Create Easter crafts linked to new life and celebration. Key experiences: - Making lion masks and bear claws. - Owl baby collages. - Farm animal paintings. - Easter gardens and crosses.	Michael Rosen Dear Zoo – Rod Campbell Owl Babies – Martin Waddell Farmyard Hullabaloo – Giles Andreae Brown bear, Brown Bear What do you see? – Bill Martin Jr and Eric Carle
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			- natural materials. - Planting seeds linked to new life at Easter.	- Making Easter cards. - Matching animals to repeated phrases in <i>Brown Bear</i>.		Animal movement dance sessions.	
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Curriculum Intent – Animals in Tales and Easter

Our intent for this topic is to immerse children in rich, engaging stories featuring animals, helping them explore emotions, relationships, habitats and the natural world through familiar and well-loved tales. The chosen texts offer opportunities to develop early language, storytelling skills, rhythm and rhyme, and understanding of repeated patterns. Children will learn about different animals, their characteristics and behaviours, while also exploring themes such as courage, family, belonging and curiosity.

The topic also supports children's spiritual development through learning about the Easter story, helping them understand themes of hope, new life and celebration within the St Joseph's community. Through sensory exploration, imaginative play, movement, music and creative activities, children will deepen their understanding of animals, stories and seasonal change while building confidence, empathy and early scientific awareness.

Why This Learning Matters

- Animal stories are instantly engaging**, helping children connect emotionally and imaginatively with characters and events.
- The texts offer strong language patterns**, repetition and rhyme, supporting early reading, memory and phonological awareness.
- Children learn about emotions** such as bravery (*The Lion Inside*), fear and reassurance (*Owl Babies*), curiosity (*Bear Hunt*) and excitement (*Dear Zoo*).



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- **Exploring animals builds early scientific understanding**, including habitats, movement, sounds and characteristics.
- **The Easter story introduces themes of hope, love and new beginnings**, supporting spiritual and moral development.
- **Outdoor learning links naturally**, especially through *Bear Hunt*-style sensory exploration.
- **Creative opportunities are rich and varied**, from animal masks to movement, music, role play and storytelling.
- **The topic supports communication and vocabulary growth**, with children learning descriptive language, animal names, sounds and actions.
- **Children develop empathy and understanding of family relationships**, especially through *Owl Babies*.
- **It builds confidence in retelling stories**, sequencing events and expressing ideas through play, art and early writing.

