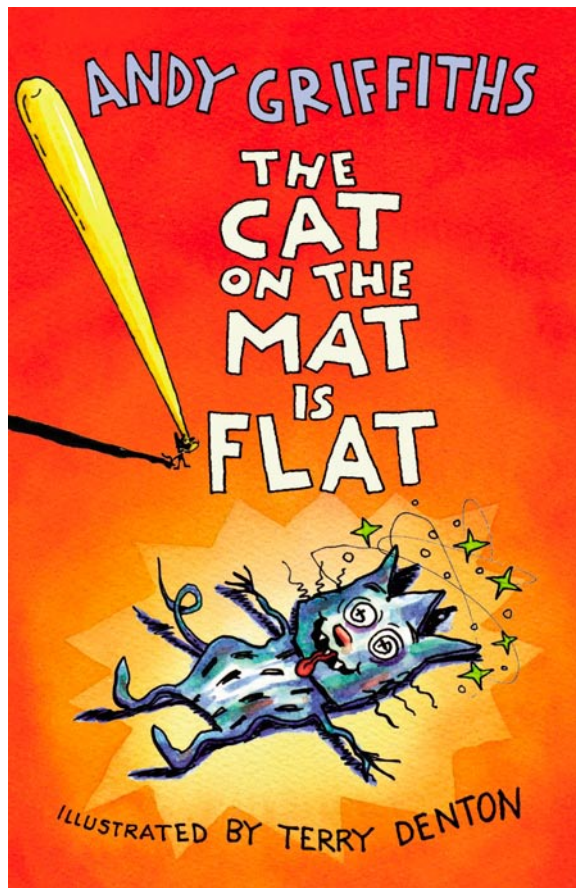




# The Cat on the Mat is Flat

## Andy Griffiths

### Teachers' Notes



This set of teachers' notes aims to provide a 'way in' for primary school children and to give students the opportunity to use their imagination.

Each set of notes, begins with a short comprehension activity and then provides opportunity for students to act, discuss, draw and write.

All activities are quick and simple and teachers should be encouraged to springboard from the suggestions into further work with which the class will identify and enjoy. Teachers should feel comfortable to simplify, modify and extend any activities to suit the needs and interests of their class.

Many of the activities present opportunities for students to engage in thinking skills and certainly there is plenty of room to extend. The sky is the limit!

Lastly, the most important thing is to encourage students to use storytelling and writing as a tool to explore their imaginations and creativity, just as Andy Griffiths and Terry Denton do (very well!). The end product of each writing experience should not be the sole focus; the experience of students engaging with literature in their own special way is more important.

# THE CAT, THE MAT, THE RAT, AND THE BASEBALL BAT

## QUIZ

Put the events of the story in the correct order

- 1 The rat gets a baseball bat
- 2 The cat sees the rat
- 3 The cat is too flat to chase the rat
- 4 The cat sits on the mat
- 5 The cat chases the rat
- 6 The rat chases the cat

## BRAINSTORM AND WRITE

Andy Griffiths writes this story in rhyme. Make a list of all the rhyming words you can find in the story.

Try writing your own story similar to this one. Begin by drawing an enormous bubble in the middle of your page. Inside write the word 'dog', 'pig' or 'cow'.

Spend two minutes brainstorming as many words you can think of that rhyme with the animal you have chosen.

*(HINT – the aim is quantity not quality – brainstorm first, judge later)*

Now attempt to write your own rhyming story using 'The Cat, The Mat, The Rat and the Baseball Bat' as a model.

## WRITE

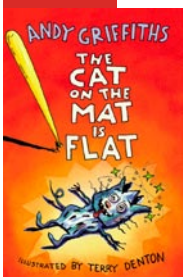
In this story, the cat begins by chasing the rat. The rat returns with a baseball bat and then the rat chases the cat with the baseball bat until . . . Kersplat! The cat is flattened.

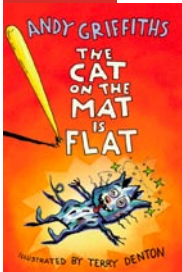
You might know the song 'This is the song that never ends . . .'. Imagine that this is 'The story that never ends'. Imagine that the cat isn't flattened but instead 'goes and gets a . . .' and begins chasing the rat. Then the rat 'goes and gets a . . .' and so on and so on.

Try and see how ridiculous you can make your story that never ends.

## DISCUSS/ACT OUT

Imagine you are a policeman investigating the death of the cat. What things might the rat say to defend himself? You could act out this interview with a partner or be the rat's defense lawyer writing his defense summation.





## ED AND TED AND TED'S DOG FRED

### QUIZ

Put the events of the story in the correct order

- 1 Ed stops dead
- 2 Ed, Fred and Ted plummet over the cliff
- 3 Fred jumps on Ed's bed
- 4 Ed leaves the shed
- 5 Ted hugs Ed
- 6 They all live happily ever after in their shed
- 7 Ed, Fred and Ted are blown out of the whale
- 8 Ed hugs Fred
- 9 Fred bites Ed's head
- 10 Ted's chases after Ed in the sled
- 11 Ed, Fred and Ted are swallowed by Ned
- 12 Fred hugs Ted
- 13 Ed creates a parachute with his handkerchief

### DRAW AND WRITE

This story is about two friends, Ted and Ed. Think about your best friend. On a large piece of butcher's paper, lie down and, using a marker pen, have someone outline your body onto the paper. (If you don't have butcher's paper, you can draw a simple stick-figure of the person on a sheet of A4.)

Inside the body, write all of the words that describe your best friend (these will be adjectives). Around the outside of the body, note down some of the things you and your best friend have done together – your favourite memories.

Using these adjectives and memories, write a story about your best friend. You may like to begin your story with a paragraph describing your friend and then re-tell the best, funniest, scariest or most unusual memory you have of them.

### TEN MINUTE WRITING

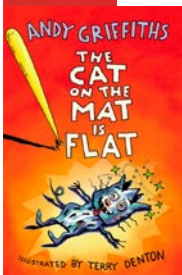
Spend ten minutes writing a fun story about the day your pet (or a pet you know) escaped.

How would he/she escape? Where would he/she go? What adventures would the pet get up to while they were out and about? Why would the pet want to escape in the first place?

Title your story, 'The Great Escape'.

You may also like to create a map of your pet's adventures.

*(HINT – this is about writing as much as you can in ten minutes. Don't worry about being neat and correct, just enjoy writing and try not to lift your pen off the paper!)*



## PINKY PONKY THE SHONKY, WONKY, BONKY DONKEY

### LIST

Make a list of all the things wrong with Pinky Ponky.

### IMAGINE AND DRAW

Imagine you could create a new animal to keep as a pet. What things would you like your animal to be able to do? How would you like it to act/look?

Draw your animal and make up a name for it. Once you have drawn it, make notes around your drawing that explain the features of your new pet. You could even create an advertisement for your pet convincing others to buy one too.

### WRITE

Alliteration is when words begin with the same letter or sound and are put together for effect.

In this story Pinky Ponky is an example of alliteration. Try creating alliteration with your name. For example: Loopy Lucy or Marvellous Michael.

Try to find words which describe your personality and see how long you can make your name. Create an alliterative list for your family or class.

### CLASS CHALLENGE

Play an alliterative version of 'I went to the shops and I bought a . . .' using the alliterated names from the previous exercise. So it might begin with:

Student 1 – 'Naughty Nicole'

Student 2 – 'Naughty Nicole and Fabulous Fred'

Student 3 – 'Naughty Nicole, Fabulous Fred and Charming Chelsea'

And so on . . .

By the end of the circle the last person will need to be able to remember the whole class's alliterative names. Perhaps make your teacher go last!

## FROG ON A LOG IN A BOG

### QUIZ

Draw a line to link the question to the correct answer

- |   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1. What does the frog ride?   | The dog and the frog  |
| 2. What does the dog ride?  | The big fat hairy hog |
| 3. Who challenges the frog to a race around the bog?                        | Jet-rocket log        |
| 4. Who tells the frog and dog that they are not allowed to race on the bog? | Jet rocket cog        |
| 5. Who flew into the air first?   | The dog               |
| 6. Who came down on top of the dog?   | The dog and the frog  |
| 7. Who shared the cog in the end?   | The frog              |

### LANGUAGE, LIST AND POEM

This story contains a lot of *onomatopoeia*. Onomatopoeia is when words sound like they mean. For example: whoosh, zoom and crash.

Make a list of all the onomatopoeic words you can find in this story.

Try creating a poem using onomatopoeia titled, 'The day my hair caught on fire', 'What happened to my skateboard', 'The real reason I was late for school' or a title of your own.

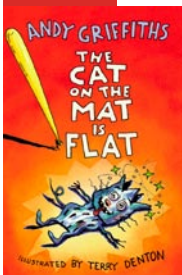
### IMAGINE AND DRAW

In this story the frog rides around on a jet-rocket log. Imagine you could make a flying machine. What would you want your flying machine to be able to do? What would it look like?

Fold a piece of paper into three and create a pamphlet which advertises your flying machine and the features of it. You may use illustrations and persuasive language to 'sell' your flying machine.

P 5  
/ 10

  
PAN



# HARRY BLACK, THE SACK, THE SNACK AND THE SNEAKY SNACK-STEALING YAK CALLED JACK

## QUIZ

Put the events of the story in the correct order

- 1 Jack the Yak asks Harry Black for his snack
- 2 Jack the Yak falls asleep
- 3 Harry Black has a nap
- 4 Harry Black meets Jack the Yak
- 5 Jack the Yak eats Harry Black's snack
- 6 Harry Black refuses
- 7 Jack the Yak flees on horseback
- 8 Jack the Yak threatens Harry
- 9 Harry Black sees a haystack
- 10 Jack the Yak orders Harry to "stay back!"

## THIRTY-SECOND THEATRE

In groups of 3–4 perform this story in thirty seconds. No details should be changed or left out. The aim is to make your performance as true to the story as you can in the thirty seconds.

## IMAGINE AND WRITE

In this story who is the hero and who is the villain? Is Jack the Yak the villain of this story? What might Jack's side of the story be? What could be his defense for stealing the snack?

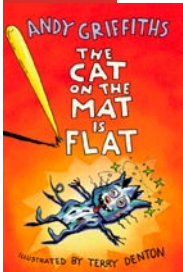
Write the story again, imagining that you are Jack telling the story from his point of view. You could try to make him heroic.

Divide your page in two and make a list of as many heroes you can think of in the first column (they could be living or dead). Now in the other column, list as many villains as you can think of. Think or write about the reasons why you put those people on your list and what makes them a hero/villain.

## WRITE

This story ends by telling us to share our snack should we ever meet Jack the Yak. This is the moral to the story. Think about a story you could write which ends by telling the reader a moral or a lesson. If you are stuck, choose one from this list below:

- That we should share
- That we should respect our parents/teachers
- That we should not litter
- That we should not talk to strangers



## DUCK IN A TRUCK IN THE MUCK

### QUIZ

Draw a line to link the question to the correct answer

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. What type of animal is Chuck?              | Ice cream truck |
| 2. What type of truck does he drive?          | Buck and Chuck  |
| 3. Who owns the muck-sucking truck?           | Buck            |
| 4. Who was sucked up in the truck first?      | Chuck the Duck  |
| 5. Who flew out of the truck last?            | Buck the Duck   |
| 6. Who shares the Ice Cream truck in the end? | Duck            |

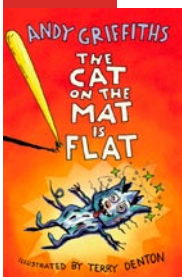
### WRITE AND DRAW

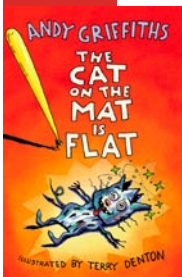
In this story Chuck shares his truck with Buck. Chuck says 'What are friends for?'

Think about that – what do you think friends are for?

Brainstorm the qualities of a good friend. From that, write either a serious or humorous list entitled 'Ten things a friend is good for' or, if you prefer, 'Ten things a friend is NOT good for'. Provide a brief explanation for each point on the list.

Draw a picture of your best friend.





## UNLUCKY LOU, A KIND KANGAROO AND SOME EXTRA-SUPER-FAST-STICKING SUPER ROO GLUE

### QUIZ

Turn your book around and draw a long line which halves the page in two. Along the line, plot the following events in order.

- Lou spills her glue
- Lou visits the zoo
- Lou is stuck in the goo
- Kind kangaroo kicks Lou
- Kind kangaroo gives Lou some glue
- Lou flies into a prickly bush
- Lou finds a hole in her shoe

### REFLECT AND WRITE

What other ways might Lou have got out of the glue?

At the end of this story, Lou is thrown into a prickly bush. What are other possible endings?

Imagine Lou becomes the luckiest girl in the world at the end of the story. How could her luck change?

### DISCUSS AND WRITE

Do you believe in luck? Are some people just lucky or do they make positive decisions that make them lucky?

Some people believe that if they drop a mirror, they will have seven years of bad luck. This is called superstition. Are you superstitious? What other superstitions can you think of? Make a list.

Conduct a class discussion based on these ideas. Perhaps you could even write a letter or journal entry which expresses your thoughts on these topics.

### STORY WRITING

Write a good luck/bad luck sequence of events.

- Eg
- Good luck: I found a two dollar coin.
  - Bad luck: It was underneath a drain cover.
  - Good luck: I was carrying a crowbar and got the drain cover off.
  - Bad luck: I got stuck in the drain when I tried to get the money out.
  - Good luck: I like the smell of drains!
  - Bad luck: The drain started to fill up with water etc.

You can flesh this sequence out into a full story, or simply keep developing it. Feel free to create your own sequence too.



## BILL AND PHIL AND THE VERY BIG HILL

### QUIZ

Link the beginning of the sentence to the correct end of the sentence

The two friends are called . . .	Rolling down the hill
They climbed to the top of a very big . . .	Hill
Bill and Phil rolled . . .	III
Bill began to feel . . .	Pigs swill
They landed in a puddle of . . .	Bill and Phil
Bill and Phil are still . . .	Down the hill

### TEN MINUTE WRITING

In the story Bill says to Phil 'I dare you to roll down the hill'

When have you been dared to do something? Have you dared someone else to do something? Spend ten minutes writing on one of the following three topics:

1. The world's biggest dare
2. The day our practical joke backfired
3. It was just a joke until . . .

Remember not to worry about spelling or grammar, just concentrate on not lifting your pen off the paper.

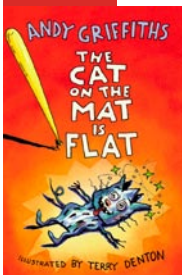
### IMAGINE AND WRITE

At the end of the story, the writer says: 'For all I know, they are doing it still'

What do you think Bill and Phil are doing now?

Imagine it is ten years later. How did Bill and Phil finally finish rolling down the hill? What happened to make them stop?

Write the scene in which Bill and Phil finally stop rolling down the hill.



# ANDY G, TERRY D, THE BRAVE TEA-LADY AND THE EVIL BEE

## DISCUSS AND PERFORM

In a group of 2–3 create five frozen photographs (tableaux) that tell the story of ‘Andy G, Terry D, the Brave Tea-lady and the Evil Bee’. You could present this to your class.

You will need to begin by working out which are the five most important things that happen in the story.

The best way to perform them is by having your class members shut their eyes between each tableau. You should perform the tableaux in silence and you cannot move until the class has shut their eyes.

## PERSPECTIVE WRITING

Try re-writing the story from the bee’s side of the story. Try to be as creative as possible detailing the reasons why the bee wanted to chase Andy G, Terry D and the brave tea-lady. Perhaps make the bee heroic rather than villainous.

## MAKE A LIST AND WRITE A GUIDE

Spend two minutes brainstorming as many ways to catch a bee as possible. The more ridiculous your ideas are, the better.

*(HINT – once again, the aim is quantity not quality.)*

Choose the best idea from this list and write a ‘how to’ guide which could be published in an ‘animal catching manual’. Provide step-by-step instructions for a beginner bee catcher.

## TEN MINUTE WRITING

Spend ten minutes writing a story called: ‘The Revenge of the Evil Bee’.

Write as much as you can and try not to lift your pen off the paper. You may also like to present this in cartoon or comic strip form.

## MOVIE MAKING

Imagine this story was going to be made into a movie and you were in charge of casting the roles from famous actors or your own family.

Copy the following table into your book and fill it out.

Characters in the story	Words to describe their personality	Words to describe their appearance	Famous actor or family member to perform this role
Brave tea-lady	Brave, heroic, smart		
Andy G			
Terry D			
Evil bee			

