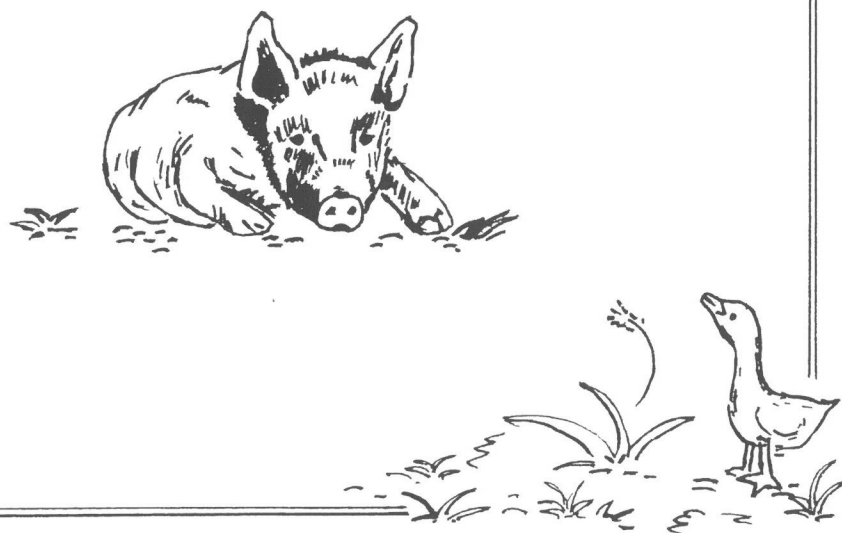




The Sheep-Pig

by Dick King-Smith

A literature based programme
for the middle to upper primary school



About the Programme:

The Sheep-Pig (now published as Babe) by author Dick King-Smith follows a little pig's life journey as he learns to herd sheep, thereby saving himself from becoming the family's roast dinner!

Our literature programme, based on this warm and funny novel has been designed to:

1. Enhance childrens' literary insight and appreciation by engaging the reader in a number of literary experiences that elicit both cognitive and creative responses; And
2. To promote a better understanding of the broader theme 'Farm Life'

The programme also presents teachers with some guidelines for:
Research / Project ideas
and
Exploration of a human-relationships issue/concept.



Responding to Text

- Did you enjoy the book? Why? Discuss
 - Reread favourite passages.
 - What parts of the book made you happy, sad, angry?...
 - Could you identify with Babe?
 - How did Babe feel when he first arrived at Hogget's Farm?
- Write a poem that describes Babe's feelings at this time.

Drama

Fly thinks sheep are stupid.
The sheep think dogs are 'wolves',
"treat you like dirt they do, bite you as soon as look at you," p38.



Character Profile

What sort of a man was Mr Hogget?
Compile a character profile on Mr Hogget
- include an illustration showing favourite clothing, 'build', does he smoke a pipe? wear boots? Describe other characteristics focussing on mannerisms, speech patterns and personality traits.

Language

Discuss literary devices the author uses; irony? realism?
Explore characterization - how 'life-like' are the animals
Locate homonyms - ewe + you; how is this used to create humour?

p34

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Science

- Animals & animal behaviour "cats scratch and hens peck"
- Farm animals - Food chains
- Animals & their young - Life cycles

Social Science

- Explore day-to-day life on a farm. Use the text for clues:
Include - daily activities, routines, rules & rituals, and 'special' events & traditions eg sheep-trials



Story Map

Record the story's main events on sentence strips and illustrate (or use attached activity sheet)

Debate

Farm animals are often raised to be killed & eaten.
How do you feel about this?
What alternative is there?

Debate

Excursion

- Visit to venue that displays sheep-shearing (In Qld "The Wool Shed")
- Observe 'Sheep-trials' at Royal Show.

Literary Interview

In pairs - as T.V reporter interview Fly. Discuss Babe's arrival and 'settling-in' time; Describe your relationship.

Prepare questions / answers
Present to group.

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A Cloze Activity

Read the passage carefully and select an appropriate word to fill each of the spaces.

"What's trials?"

Every _____ after that, of course, Babe went the rounds with Farmer _____ and Fly. At _____ the farmer worried _____ using the pig to _____ the sheep, not because it was a strange and _____ thing to do _____ people might laugh _____ - he _____ not care about that - but because he was _____ it might upset Fly and put her _____ out of joint. However, it _____ not seem to _____ so.

He could _____ spared himself the _____ if he had been able to _____ to their conversation.

"That _____ fun!" _____ Babe to Fly that evening. "I _____ if the boss will _____ me do some more work?"

"I'm sure he _____, dear. You did it _____ well. It was almost as _____ the sheep knew exactly what it was you _____ them to do."

"But that's just _____! I asked them..."

"No use asking sheep _____, dear," interrupted Fly. "You have to _____ them do what you want, I've told you _____."

"Yes, Mum. _____ will you mind, if _____ boss uses me _____ of you, sometimes?"

"Mind?" _____ Fly. "You bet your trotters I won't!"

.....

"Cats scratch and hens peck" and people "eat stupid animals." That's just the way things are!



[But] Should Babe have 'stepped out' of his 'role' or should he have just accepted things the way they are?

Food for Thought
When piglet Babe learns to herd sheep he alters his destiny as the Hoggetts' Sunday dinner.

Will he be killed for food anyway?
Should we challenge our 'roles' in life?
Should women be in the workforce?
Do we need a 'class' system? Do we challenge our 'stations' in life?

Without 'role' rules is there anarchy?

The following programme of ideas/strategies has been designed for older children to explore and challenge their understanding of The Way Things Are.

Select a pop-song that has a connection to this theme/Issue.

Make a class feelings/reactions mural - words, poems, illustrations, colours etc.

Watch the movie "Babe"

The Way Things Are

Make connections with other literature. Eg Can The Sheep-Pig be related to Charlotte's Web at all?

Build up a 'theme' collage for this issue.

Explore feelings about the issue through roleplay.

Debate the issue

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A story sequencing activity

Place the following events in order as they occur in the story, then illustrate.



Fly's puppies leave the farm

Ma is killed by wild dogs

Babe competes at the sheep-dog trials

Babe visits Ma in the stables

Fly puts Babe on a diet

Farmer Hogget wins a piglet

Babe scares away rustlers

Fly speaks to the sheep for the first time

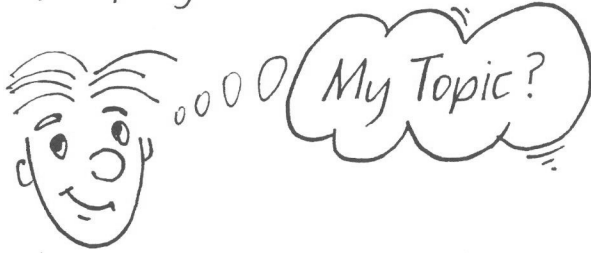
Babe arrives at Hogget's Farm

Mrs Hogget invites Babe into the house

Sheep Farming in Australia

A research / project activity

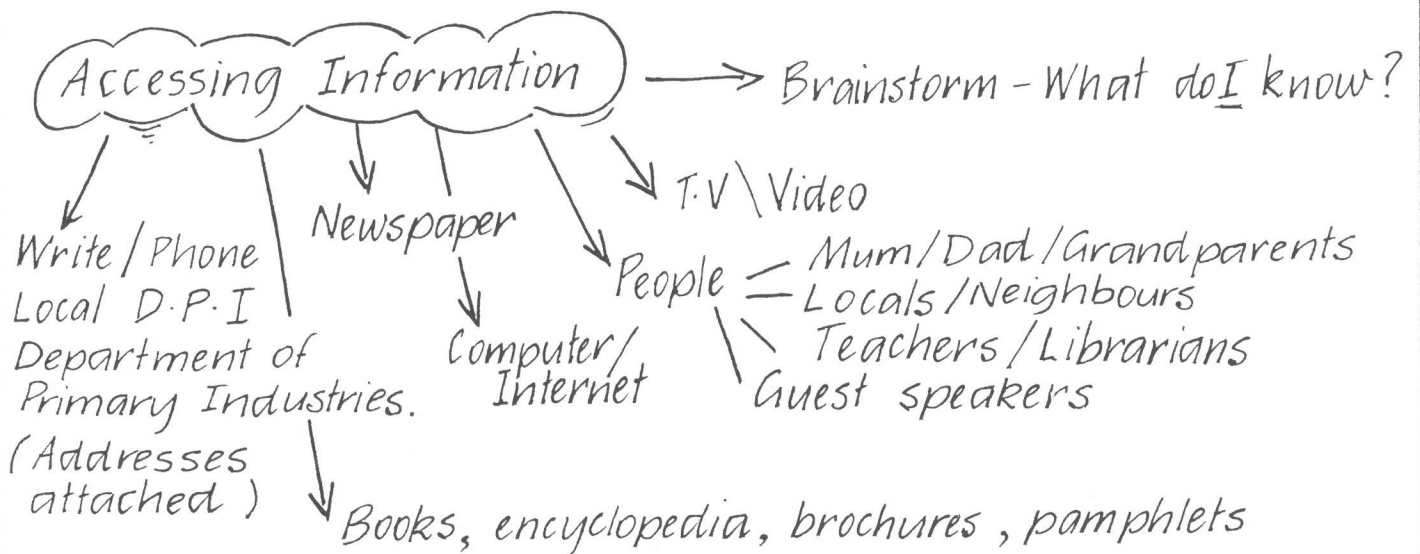
The following plan has been designed to assist students in gathering information to complete individual or group projects.



Use these research ideas to decide on a topic:

Research Ideas

- Sheep grazing - What does it involve? Comment on mustering, shearing etc.
- Sheep dog trials - What are they? Why have them? Where & when do they take place? History?
- The Australian Sheep & Wool Industry - Research centres; exports.
- History of Australian sheep farming - Settlement in Australia; the introduction of sheep to Australia; the beginnings of the wool industry in Australia. Whose idea? Why?
- Sheep farming as an environmental issue - the clearing of land; sheep not native to Australia.
- Sheep farms in Australia - Where are they? Locate & map.



Sheep Farming in Australia

Write to or phone the Queensland Department of Primary Industries for assistance with this project.

They will be able to provide information on the following:

- primary industries
- Sheep and wool industry
- land conservation and strategies

D.P.I. Centres serving Sheep producers:

Brisbane	(07) 322 74 111	Miles	(076) 827 1599
Barcaldine	(076) 251 1390	Millmerran	
Blackall	(076) 257 4800	Mitchell	(076) 823 1335
Charleville	(076) 854 1322	Quilpie	
Chinchilla		Richmond	(077) 641 3411
Cloncurry	(077) 642 1311	Roma	(076) 822 1511
Cunnamulla	(076) 855 1166	St George	(076) 4 253188
Dalby	(076) 86 22322	Toorak Sheep Field Research Station	(077) 646 8430
Goondiwindi	(076) 4711 388	Warwick	(076) 461 1231
Hermitage Research Station	(076) 461 2944	Winton	(076) 257 1666
Hughenden	(077) 641 1155	Animal Research Institute, Brisbane	(07) 3892 9400
Inglewood	(076) 452 1217	Oonoonba Veterinary Laboratory, Townsville	(077) 6782 688
Julia Creek	(077) 646 7146		
Longreach	(076) 258 1333		

- D.P.I Sheep and Wool Branch
Animal Research Institute
665 Fairfield Road
Yeerongpilly Q 4105

- D.P.I Information and Extension Training Branch
9th Floor, Mineral House
Cnr George & Margaret sts.
G.P.O. Box 46
Brisbane Q 4000

* Note: Phone numbers change regularly
We apologize for the inclusion of any numbers, already 'outdated.'