

Animal Descriptions: an Entry level listening and speaking game.

First used in an E2-E3 literacy group at Abingdon & Witney College, this warm-up activity was designed to reinforce previous work on adjectives, and develop listening and speaking skills.

Teaching notes

- Print in colour, laminate pages 2-3 and cut each page horizontally into cards. Give one card to each student. Picture not to be revealed to other learners.

To play:

- Each student to describe their picture without saying the animal's name. Allow five minutes preparation time. Encourage students to make short notes on individual whiteboards.
- Model the process first using one of the cards. For example, the cat could be described as: medium sized, friendly, makes many people feel happy, soft, green staring eyes, quivering whiskers, padded paws, beautiful patterned fur, etc. Avoid descriptions that reveal the identity immediately. E.g. a very common pet that purrs. (This rule may be hard for students to follow and can certainly be ignored by Entry 1 students.)
- Encourage students to talk for as long as possible. (A timer may be useful – allow at least one minute's talking time). Other students should not interrupt or call out the name but can jot down their thoughts on individual whiteboards.
- When speaker has finished other students can reveal their 'guesses' on small whiteboards or discuss as a group. Speaker then reveals picture.

Differentiation

- Remove or ignore writing on right hand side of cards and use as a simple question and answer guessing game for **Milestone 8 and Entry 1**.
- As students are describing their animals write the adjectives they use on the class whiteboard or flipchart. Use these as a word bank for spelling work or for later discussion. For example: Were some adjectives used by more than one student? Which ones? Do some adjectives describe both looks and feelings? (Terrible, bright, blue, fierce, funny). **Levels 1 and 2**.
- Do some words, often verbs, give the game away immediately because they are so specific? E.g. purring, roaring, slithering, fluttering. **Levels 1 and 2**.
- Blank wheels on page 5 (example on page 4) can be used to organise thoughts. At **Levels 1 and 2** you might want to stipulate that students only fill wheels with adjectives (or adverbs).
- Students to reflect on their descriptions. Were they clear? Could they have given the information in a different order or used different adjectives / words. If two students had been asked to describe the same animal would their descriptions have been different? Why? (Different feelings about the animal, previous experience of animal, etc.). **Entry 3 upwards**.
- Follow up with some short writing activities. For example:

Guess who I am.	A day in the life of a tortoise / butterfly.
Why I love lions / penguins / robins.	Lost pet ad for a lamp post (snake / cat).
- For more adjective resources visit the Entry 2 literacy section of our site at: <http://www.skillsworkshop.org/e2lit.htm> (note that many resources in this section are also suitable for higher level learners).



Describe me without saying my name!

- What do I look like?
- What do I sound like?
- What would I feel like?
- How do I move?
- How would I make you feel?



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- What do I sound like?
- What would I feel like?
- How do I move?
- How would I make you feel?



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Description Wheels

a) Use the wheels to plan your description.

<p>A central box labeled 'looks' is connected to five surrounding boxes: 'stripes' (top), 'fluffy' (top-right), 'friendly' (bottom-right), 'wise' (bottom), and 'alooof' (bottom-left). A separate box labeled 'brown - grey' is also connected to the 'looks' wheel.</p>	<p>A photograph of a tabby cat with stripes, lying down on a light-colored surface in front of a brick wall.</p>	<p>A central box labeled 'sounds' is connected to five surrounding boxes: 'swishing (tail)' (top), 'quiet' (top-right), 'silent' (bottom-right), 'scratching (claws)' (bottom), and 'purring' (bottom-left). A separate box labeled 'rumbling' is also connected to the 'sounds' wheel.</p>
<h3>CAT</h3>		
<p>A central box labeled 'human emotions' is connected to five surrounding boxes: 'love' (top), 'happy' (top-right), 'companion' (bottom-right), 'a friend' (bottom), and 'fun' (bottom-left). A separate box labeled 'affection' is also connected to the 'human emotions' wheel.</p>	<p>A central box labeled 'feels' is connected to five surrounding boxes: 'soft' (top), 'furry' (top-right), 'silky' (bottom-right), 'content' (bottom), and 'tense' (bottom-left). A separate box labeled 'smooth' is also connected to the 'feels' wheel.</p>	<p>A central box labeled 'features' is connected to five surrounding boxes: 'pointed ears' (top), 'whiskers' (top-right), 'four legs' (bottom-right), 'green eyes' (bottom), and 'tail' (bottom-left). A separate box labeled 'claws' is also connected to the 'features' wheel.</p>

Description Wheels

a) Use the wheels to plan your description.

<p>A central box labeled 'looks' is connected to six surrounding empty boxes, arranged in two columns of three.</p>	<p>An empty description wheel with a central box and six surrounding empty boxes.</p>	<p>A central box labeled 'sounds' is connected to six surrounding empty boxes, arranged in two columns of three.</p>
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I am describing a _____.

<p>A central box labeled 'human emotions' is connected to six surrounding empty boxes, arranged in two columns of three.</p>	<p>An empty description wheel with a central box and six surrounding empty boxes.</p>	<p>A central box labeled 'features' is connected to six surrounding empty boxes, arranged in two columns of three.</p>
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