

## Sharing books...

# Archie's Holiday

by **Domenica More Gordon** (Bloomsbury, 2013)



**T**his delightful picture book is about a dog called Archie who is packing to go on holiday. While Archie is looking forward to his holiday with a friend, he is a bit of a worrier, so packs for every eventuality. Soon his suitcase is piled high, and despite he and his friend's best efforts to shut it, the case bursts open and everything tumbles out. Undeterred, they adopt a strategy that will be familiar to anyone who has taken a budget airline; they wear layers of clothes.

### A GOOD CHOICE

This picture book is unusual in that it lacks the usual narrative; instead the story is related largely through the illustrations and Archie's thoughts about what to pack.

Children aged three to six are likely to enjoy the story and pick up on the detailed pictures. As it has few words, children can look at this book independently and make up their own version of the story.

It is also a useful book for children whose home language is not English. If the book is shared in English in the setting, then in the home language with parents, this will help to develop children's vocabulary in both languages.

### SHARING THIS BOOK

This is a book which is packed with possibilities.

- As the story has few words, familiarise yourself with both the text and pictures before sharing it with children. This will help you guide children through the storyline by talking about each of the pictures.
- As there is no conventional text, this book needs to be shared slowly. This will allow younger children to look at the detail in the pictures. With children who are talking well, it is worth

seeing whether they can interpret what is happening, so that together you work out the storyline.

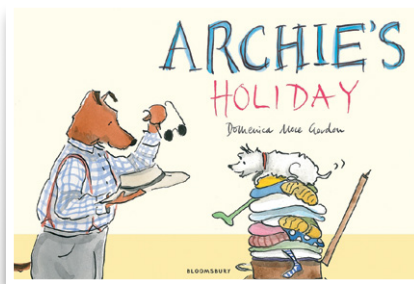
- Look out also for the double-page spread in the book where the suitcase explodes, and allow the children time to look at everything that has been thrown into the air.
- For younger children, it will be worth naming each item, while with older children it will be worth seeing if they can link the item to its purpose.
- After finishing the book, offer to share it again, as this will help children consolidate the story. You may find that they start to join in with the narration and may want to fast-track onto their favourite pages.

### SUPPORTING LEARNING Mathematics

It may be worth bringing in a suitcase filled with a range of objects and clothes and seeing if children can sort them out into different piles based on Archie's thoughts – for example, items for hot weather and clothing if it rains.

Some children may also like to see how many items they can pack into the suitcase. Adults can extend children's learning by drawing children's attention to the correlation between size and thickness of each item and the quantity that can be packed.

You could also create a washing line that has a range of holiday clothing on it. Children could peg up the items with an adult and then count how many there are. This could then be compared to how many items were drawn in the book when the suitcase exploded.



### ABOUT THIS SERIES

Over the course of this monthly series on sharing books with children, **Penny Tassoni** will look at a range of fiction and non-fiction titles, from rhyming books for babies to picture books that adults and children can explore together.

### Personal, social and emotional development

As well as this book being fun for children, there are opportunities for children to explore what Archie is thinking and how his thoughts affect his actions. This book could also be used as a starting point to help individual children talk about being worried and how this feels. While Archie is worried about going on holiday, some children may be worried about starting school or moving house.

### Literacy

There are many opportunities to encourage mark-making. Children may also want to help Archie pack by writing a list of things that he should take on holiday. You may also like to send a postcard to the children from Archie and see if anyone would like to reply.

### Role play

Consider bringing in a suitcase and a range of items that featured in the book, as this may prompt a range of interesting role plays. You may also want to add in some holiday brochures and other props that might stimulate writing, such as passport forms.

Finally, not all children have the chance to go on holiday. If this is the case, you may like to create your own beach in the setting by putting sand onto a tarpaulin sheet.

Add props such as buckets and spades, and at meal times put out menus and serve cocktails! ■

