



The Big Carrot (Reception/P1)

Synopsis

This is a modern retelling of *The Giant Turnip*. A boy called Tom discovers a big carrot in his garden. It is so big that he needs the help of a woman, a boy, a girl, a dog, a cat and eventually a little mouse to help pull it up.

Comprehension

- Before listening: Show carrots of different sizes, with green leafy tops if possible. Talk about how they grow. Explain that this story is about a huge carrot. Use your hands to show the size.
- Encourage the children to listen for the names of the characters and to perform the actions and sounds associated with each of them.
- Pause to predict whether the mouse will be able to help. Ask: *What do you think will happen next? What might Tom do with the carrot if they pull it up?*
- Ask: *Why couldn't Tom pull up the carrot? How did his friends help him?*
- Discuss the ending. Ask: *Why was it surprising that the mouse helped? Why was 'even the littlest bit of help' important? What might have happened if the mouse had not helped?*



Activities

- Help the children to recall the sequence of events in the story by asking: *How did the story start? Who came to help first? Who came next?* Use toys with name cards or a sequence of pictures to represent the characters and place them in the correct order.
- Retell the story using some of the children's names rather than those in the original story. Let these children choose their own sound and action.
- Repeat the activity in small groups so the children can act out the story with themselves as characters. Encourage them to use the repeated phrases and actions.
- Draw pictures to show events in the story. Take children's suggestions and write appropriate captions, e.g. 'It was a big carrot.' 'Tug, tug, tug.' 'But the carrot did not come up.'
- Ask children to draw the final group of characters who pulled up the carrot and add name labels to them.
- With the children's input, write thank-you notes from Tom to those who helped him.
- Look at some carrots. Ask: *Which part of the carrot grows above the ground? What else grows under the ground, apart from the actual carrot?*
- Look at some carrot seeds and talk about how to help them grow into large carrots. Sow them in a container, water them and watch them grow.
- Make carrot soup like Tom does at the end of the story. Discuss what else Tom could have made with the carrot: steamed carrots, carrot mash, carrot cake. Talk about the processes and tools that you'd need.
- Sort different vegetables into sizes: small (pea), medium (potato) and large (marrow).

