

## Tips for using the animated stories in the classroom

### Before using the animated stories on the DVD-ROM

- If the children are to get the most out of the *Cookie's Stories* storytelling experience, it is recommended that the animation of each story is played for the first time after Lesson 4 of each unit. This means that by the time the children come to watch the story, they have a good understanding that, firstly, what they are witnessing *is* a story, and secondly, what that story is about.
- They will also be comfortably familiar with the important key words and phrases used, and will have developed an expectancy of how events will unfold. Both of these things will help to give them confidence while they watch, which means that they can relax and enjoy the animated story in English.
- Just as storytelling with the storycards should be a special time in the English class, storytelling with the DVD-ROM should also be special. If possible, sit the children in the same way for the animated stories as they sit for the stories with the storycards. This will also help to signal to the children that it is story time and the conventions of story time apply, i.e. that it is time to pay attention to the story for a set amount of time without interruption.
- Make sure the children are sitting comfortably. If they are uncomfortable, e.g. too close together with too little space, they may become restless and distract each other. They also need to be able to see and hear the story on the DVD-ROM well in order to concentrate.
- Before you play an animated story, make sure that the children know what they are expected to do while watching the story on the DVD-ROM. It is suggested that the children simply enjoy the story the first time they watch, but in subsequent viewings they are given a viewing task so that they have a specific purpose for watching, e.g. joining in with actions or holding up flashcards when they hear a key word. If you intend for the children to stand up and act out parts of the story during the viewing, tell them in advance. That way, they will be ready to join in when asked. It also means that if they are feeling restless and not in the mood for sitting still, they can look forward to the opportunity to move about coming up!

### While using the animated stories on the DVD-ROM

- The first time the children see the animated story, they are likely to want to watch it all the way through without any interruption. They may well find it frustrating if the teacher pauses the story or interrupts the viewing for any reason. When the children have seen the animation all the way through though, there is certainly scope for the teacher to focus on certain scenes to exploit key language or review words that the children know. To do this, the teacher can simply freeze frame the story and point to images to elicit ideas and vocabulary. In addition, you can pause the story and encourage the children to remember what happens next or which item in a sequence of items appears next.
- With children of this age group, it is important to change activity frequently in order to keep their attention. They may ask to see the animation again and again, but it is advisable to give them a simple task for a second or third viewing, so that they have a purpose for watching and don't become easily distracted.

- Remember too that watching the animated story does not need to be a passive activity. Young children very often do not sit still while watching children's programmes on television at home. Instead they often join in with the action, standing up and moving about, as well as talking or singing with the characters. Providing an opportunity for the children to do this in their English class is likely to make the use of the animated stories as pleasurable and successful as possible.
- No matter how much the children are clearly enjoying the animated story, don't be tempted to play the story for the next unit. A sneak preview will most certainly detract from the magic of the storycards telling of the story in the following unit!

### After using the animated stories on the DVD-ROM

- Do use a Transition marker to move from one dynamic to the next after showing the animation. This will help the children to settle back to a quiet Class Book activity at their tables after TPR activities using the animated stories.
- It is important also to make the link between what the children have seen on the DVD-ROM and what they are going to do in their Class Book activity, e.g. recalling key vocabulary that they have seen in the animation which also appears on their Class Book page. This is to help them see the relationship between different stages of their English lesson.