Meadow Farm has a secret. Behind the scenes, some of the animals are very musical. Robbie Robin wants them to form a band, but one animal feels so left out…How can Robbie put things right? The Meadow Farm Band’ teaches children the value of Inclusion and can be used as an early anti-bullying intervention at school, nursery and in the home. It is an ideal book for using as part of a ‘Farm’ topic.

**Overall Learning Aims**

* To respond to both illustrations and text and talk confidently about their ideas.
* To make predictions, ask questions and link story ideas to their own experiences.
* To develop empathy for story characters e.g. imagine how Felix Fox feels when he is left out of the band.
* To use role play and art to extend and explore story ideas.
* To become more aware of children around them e.g. Does anyone appear to be left out? How can they help to include others in their own play?
* To identify different farm animals, musical instruments and familiar wildflowers.
* To write for meaning and purpose in a variety of narrative and non-narrative forms.

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| **Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework** | |
| **Communication and Language**  *Listening and Attention*   * Listen attentively in a range of situations. * Listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. * Give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity.   *Understanding*   * Follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. * Answer ’how’ or ‘why’ questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.   *Speaking*   * Express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners’ needs. * Use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future. * Develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.   **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**  *Making Relationships*   * Play co-operatively, taking turns with others. * Take account of one another’s ideas about how to organise their activity. * Show sensitivity to others’ needs and feelings. * Form positive relationships with adults and other children.   *Self-confidence and self-awareness*   * Be confident to speak in a familiar group and talk about their ideas.   *Managing feelings and behaviour*   * Talk about how they and others show feelings. * Talk about their own and others’ behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable. | **Literacy**  *Reading*   * Read and understand simple sentences. * Use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. * Read some common irregular words. * Demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.   *Writing*   * Use phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. * Write some irregular common words. * Write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. * Spell some words correctly and others are phonetically plausible.   **Understanding the World**  *People and communities*   * Know about similarities and difference between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.   *The World*   * Make observations of animals and plants and explain why some things occur and talk about changes.   **Expressive Arts and Design**  *Exploring and using media and materials*   * Sing songs, make music and dance and experiment with ways of changing them.   *Being imaginative*   * Represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through design and technology, art, music, dance, roleplay and stories. |

**Ideas for the Classroom**

* Make a display of farm related books, both fiction and non-fiction.
* Include an interactive farm small world.
* Plan a trip to a local farm or a walk near fields and farming.
* Prepare a blank class farm journal out of sugar paper to collect examples of children’s work throughout the topic.

**Ongoing Activities with Cross Curricular Links** *Small World Play*-children sort farm and zoo animals into sets: act out own farm story; match animal model to the correct animal name *Role Play-*Children use story character headbands and act out The Meadow Farm Band in their own way. *Farm Journal*-Take photos of children at work, examples of drawing and writing and display in farm journal. *Music Making-*Give children a range of percussion instruments. They make up their own band. Sing songs related to farms e.g. Old McDonald, The farmer’s in his den. *Drawing*-Show drawings of story characters. Show children how to do a step by step drawing, encourage gradual independence on this. *Mark making/writing*- Children use story related flashcards and name cards to practise their writing and label their drawings. *Reading*- Children match pictures of real animals or musical instruments/ to the correct animal/musical instrument name. Phonics\_ Children use phonic knowledge to read story character **name labels** using alliteration i.e. Felix Fox, Chuck Chick, Carlene Cow, Robbie Robin, Peter Pig.

**Developing Reading Skills**

*Here are some suggestions for questions to prompt children to read the illustrations for extra story details. They are then encouraged to share their ideas linked both to the story and to their own life experiences. These questions should not all be asked during one reading, but over several readings, once children are familiar with the story.*

Share ‘The Meadow Farm Band’ [Kindle Edition](file:///C:\Users\Owner\Desktop\Liz\Lesson%20Plans%20for%20Meadow%20Farm%20Band\the%20meadow%20farm%20band) with the children on the interactive whiteboard or [paperback copy](https://www.silverwoodbooks.co.uk/product/9781781328736/the-meadow-farm-band) with small group of children. Encourage the children to read the illustrations for extra story detail e.g. What do they see that is unusual on the farm on the first double page spread? Do they recognise any instruments? Which farm animals can they identify?

Who is watching Chuck Chick behind the tree? What do you think the fox is thinking? How do you think Chuck Chick is feeling? Who else can we spot in the story? Why do you think the robin is wearing a tartan cap?

Why do you think Carlene Cow closes her curtains first before she practises her singing and dancing? Who is looking in through the window? How does the fox manage to get up to the high window in the barn? What do you think Robin is thinking? Have you ever pretended to have a microphone when you are singing? How do you feel when you sing in front of an audience? Link with the value of Confidence.

Peter Pig has found learning to play the banjo really difficult and at first, he made a terrible noise. His friends begged him to give up. Peter keeps going though and never gives up. Gradually he is getting better. Are any of the children learning a new skill? Do they ever feel like giving up? Encourage the children to keep practising and look back on the progress they have already made. Link this with the value of Determination.

Who is watching Felix Fox play the violin? What do you think Felix’s wife and children are thinking as they listen to his wonderful music? What do you like about Felix’s home? Who is also listening to Felix Fox playing the violin? Talk about how good Felix Fox is on the violin. What do the children like about their own home? Do they have a favourite room?

Robbie Robin wants the animals to form a band. What can we tell about this meeting by looking at the picture? Why do you think Felix Fox is looking sad? Explain that the animals are visiting Bluebell Wood, but they do not smile at Felix and they do not say hello. They stay in their own friendship group and do not include Felix. Felix Fox feels awkward, left out and alone. Does anyone here ever feel left out at school? At home?

Carlene Cow, Chuck Chick and Peter Pig are happy to form a band, but they don’t want Felix Fox in the band. Why do you think the animals do not want Felix Fox in the band? How do you think Robbie Robin is feeling as he looks down form the tree?

Why does Felix Fox feel so sad? Who wants to help Felix Fox? What do you think Robbie Robin should do? What should Felix Fox do? Have you ever felt left out like this? Do you know anyone that sometimes looks as if they are left out?

Sometimes we need someone to tell us that we are doing the wrong thing. Everyone makes mistakes. Carlene Cow, Peter Pig and Chuck Chick thought the fox would be mean and they didn’t try to get to know him first. What can we do if we make a mistake? We can say sorry and start again.

How do you think Felix Fox feels when the animals say sorry to him? How do his children feel when they see their dad performing in front of others? Saying sorry can make such a difference. Is there anyone you need to say sorry to?

The animals soon became trusted friends. What does the word Trust mean? Who do you trust? Why do you trust them?

Ask the children to name all the characters in the final scene. What are the musical instruments called? What have you learned from the story?

Front end paper-example questions

Whose yellow hat is this? Who wears the bow tie? What is this flower called? Where can you find bluebells in the story?

Back end paper-example questions

What is this musical instrument called? Who plays the guitar in the story? Why do you think Robbie Robin is winking?

**Teaching Ideas and Resources**

***These resources are free to download and can be adapted to suit the needs of your children. Resources highlighted in red are downloadable in the same section as the Teaching Resources.***

* Adult uses step by step drawing instructions to draw Felix Fox on whiteboard. Children share ideas for writing words that describe Felix Fox. Focus especially on feelings when he is left out and when he is accepted in the band. Write phrases to describe what Felix likes and dislikes. Children work in small groups to draw their own Felix Fox and write a simple description of him, using A3 sheet of paper with picture of Felix Fox in the middle to support with drawing and ideas.
* In small groups, children put story sequence pictures in correct order. They retell the story in their own words as they do this.
* Talk about the different Meadow Farm story characters. Ask the children which is their favourite story character. Share reasons for choices. Complete the sentence together as a group. “ I like Chuck Chick best because…..” Children draw and label their favourite story character, using a writing frame and name labels.
* Children make their own story character headbands, using coloured card and story character templates. They imagine being that story character and take part in role play activities.

***I would love to see photos of your results! Please email them to me at*** [***elizabethprice@meadowfarmbooks.net***](mailto:elizabethprice@meadowfarmbooks.net)