

SALLY & POSSUM

TEACHING NOTES & SUPPORT MATERIALS.

SEASON
ONE



Introduction:

In these notes and support materials, we provide information about the Little Books and worksheets, general connections to the Australian Curriculum, and detailed suggestions for teaching for each of the programs.

Each of the *Sally & Possum* programs is aimed at a particular concept or a contrast of two concepts, but the teaching materials take you and your class beyond establishing basic concepts, signs and vocabulary to support early development of attitudes, knowledge and skills. This teaching goes across much of the curriculum, but targets early literacy especially. Each of the programs is designed to be an enjoyable learning experience in itself and will generate opportunities for teachers to lead discussions and to try the same or similar things to what Sally and Possum do. For example, in *Possum wants a Pet*, Possum and Sally make a collage of an underwater scene using colourful materials that illustrate the ideas of hard and soft. Your class could make a similar collage as a class, or do several in groups, or even do them individually. Children would enjoy making a hot chocolate drink like the one Sally and Possum make in *A Cold Day* - though perhaps with a bit less chocolate!

The Teaching Notes provide suggestions for using the programs in these ways, but go more specifically into activities designed to build early literacy and informational skills. These planning ideas come with support materials such as printable worksheets. A special feature is a set of printable books where children undertake activities to complete their own individual books that will provide valuable continuing reading experiences and give many opportunities for discussion and further learning. The Little Book concept is explained in the next section of these notes.

The programs and support materials have been shown to foster enjoyment and engagement. Don't let the activities drag on and become tiresome. Do be selective, but we strongly recommend that you make a point of using many ideas and developing more of your own to extend the pleasure and value of the series of programs.

Sally & Possum Teaching Notes written by Dr Geoff Ward

Sally & Possum Little Books written and developed by Cherry Ward.

Sally & Possum Little Books

Most teachers know all too well the experience of having their students love a particular activity and then being very reluctant to engage in related learning activities. This should not happen with Sally & Possum. One of the ways to avoid that is through the pleasure for children of having their own little book to go with each of the programs in Series 1. The books are designed to add to the enjoyment, as well as to provide strong learning experiences.

The concept of individual little books has a very strong theoretical basis from Context Support Approaches, particularly Language Experience Approaches and the support materials of Shared Book Experience. As originally formulated by Ronald Morris (1971) in *Success and Failure in Learning to Read*, the Context Support principles are:

1. The message should already be in the mind of the reader.
2. Individual words are identified only in the context that has already been given.
3. Teaching begins by providing full context support and gradually diminishing it.

The *Sally & Possum Little Books* activities utilise each of these principles.

For any literacy learning to be effective, the books used have to be interesting and readable. The interest often comes from their being related to real experiences of the students or to their vicarious experiences. When used well, these individual books often arise out of on-going thematic studies that give the young readers the conceptual base to engage with the ideas and vocabulary in the books. In this version of the approach, the children will already know the message and the ideas because they relate to a particular *Sally & Possum* program. The books offer additional depth to studies. Though Language Experience approaches usually are very valuable, the activities sometimes seem to end as soon as the Experience Chart is completed, or they may culminate in a class book that is rarely revisited, so students do not receive all the advantages that the approach provides. The Little Book concept means that each child gets a personal copy of the book capturing some of the ideas and information that has been experienced and embedding some of the new language structures, ideas and vocabulary in a familiar structure along with a considerable amount of repetition of high frequency or heavy-duty vocabulary. This means that they will experience

repetition of the most needed words but will also readily learn vocabulary that arises from the connection with the programs.

When children already know the ideas of a book and have experience with the clear and familiar structures of basic informational writing or narrative or recount genres, there is a strong likelihood that they will read the book successfully. Sight words are easily learnt when they come in such formats and learning phonemic structures is made very much easier with meaningful and engaging material.

The *Sally & Possum* series provides a great opportunity to make this approach effective in many classrooms with comparatively little expense and effort from teachers, though, obviously, the more teachers understand the teaching possibilities the more effective their use of the books will be.

Each of the episodes is supported by a *Sally & Possum Little Book* of 8 pages designed so that teachers can easily construct them from one sheet of double-sided A4 printing. The books are prepared with masters for printing and written so that the students' role in their construction will vary. In some cases, the text is supplied and ready to print with the students' task being to add the illustrations to show comprehension of the ideas and to support their own comprehension when later reading the book independently. In other cases, the illustrations are provided and the students select the provided sentences and glue them in place to complete the text. And in other cases, students add in key words to complete the provided text, or add details to illustrations to show comprehension. Teachers could support some books with versions that were individualised to the specific child. Children will gain considerable 'ownership' of their books.

The books can be read individually, in groups or as a class, but a key idea of the approach is that each student has an individual Little Book Box (e.g., a plastic ice cream container) to hold his or her set of books for later reading. Don Holdaway, particularly in *Foundations of Literacy*, wrote extensively about the "favourite book syndrome" which characterises the experience of most children who get off to a flying start with reading. Such early readers usually engage with particular books that they enjoy repeatedly, quickly learning how the text and illustrations work and therefore becoming more

able to attend to print details and learn skills that will transfer to other texts. Sylvia Ashton-Warner (Teacher) emphasised the impact of words that interest the learners and go beyond the reduction of language to a few letter-sound combinations, and Bill Martin jnr (Instant Readers) highlighted the value of on-going engagement with texts that were repetitive, readable and interesting. The *Sally & Possum* episodes have demonstrated with young children in trials that they lead to a great interest in seeing programs again and again. *The Little Books* will enable this interest in the programs to sustain on-going, in-depth engagement with literacy.

Making the Little Books

Every follow-up activity file for each episode has three pages, except for "Playing with Possum", which has only two.

We recommend that you have the books ready for the children to work in by printing and stapling the two pages for a book before the activity. They will enjoy the activity better if the books are already cut, folded and stapled, so that all children have to do is the cut-and-paste activity, and of course, the reading and discussing.

Printing the books

Each book is designed so that the order of the pages will be correct when you print double-sided. You do not have to work out what order to print pages in.

On the printer, select the number of copies you require.

Select Pages 1 and 2. The cut-and-paste sheets should be printed separately to avoid the cost of having a blank back printed.

If your printer has a scaling selection, select 100% (i.e., not "Scale to fit page") as this gives better margins and a more attractive result.

Select two-sided, choosing the long-edge binding so that the top of the front is directly behind the top of the back.

When you have printed the set, place the sheet (or a set of however many sheets you can cut accurately at one time) with the side comprising the cover and pages 7, 5 and 2, face down.

Cut across the middle along the dotted lines with a paper cutter.

Place the Page 3 and Page 4 half over the Page 1 and Page 6 half.

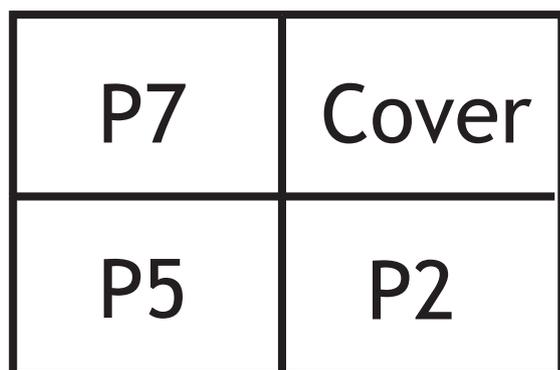
Put at least two staples down the middle. (Children will use the book for reading many times after making it, so two or more staples will keep it strong.)

Fold down the middle of each book, (or fold down the middle then staple).

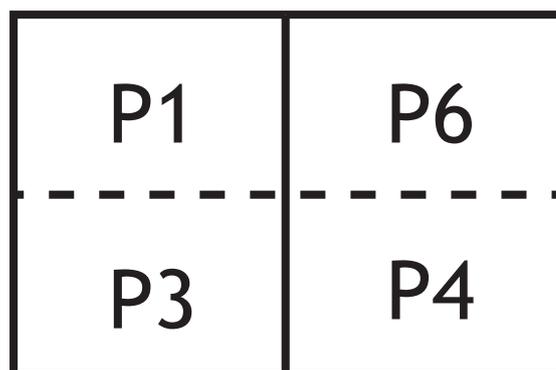
Before printing the cut-and-paste sheets, change the printer setting to single-sided.

Ways to use the *Sally & Possum Little Books* are included in the supporting teaching notes that follow. You will find that they fit in with the worksheets and other instructional support.

Facing Down



Facing Up



Australian Curriculum - English Foundation Level

Some aspects of focus for the Sally & Possum Series 1:

Visual language: How images work in texts to communicate meanings, especially in conjunction with other elements such as print and sound.

- i) Explore the different contribution of words and images to meaning in stories and informative texts.
- ii) Compare different kinds of images in narrative and informative texts and discuss how they contribute to meaning.

Vocabulary: The meanings of words including everyday and specialist meanings and how words take their meanings from the context of the text.

- i) Understand the use of vocabulary in familiar contexts related to everyday experiences, personal interests and topics being taught at school.

Purpose, audience and structures of different types of texts:

- i) Understand that texts can take many forms, can be very short (e.g., an exit sign) or quite long (e.g., an information book or film) and that stories and informative texts have different purposes.

Punctuation:

- i) Understand that punctuation is a feature of written text different from letters;
- ii) Recognise how capital letters are used for names, and that capital letters and full stops signal the beginning and end of sentences.

Concepts of print and screen:

- i) Understand concepts about print and screen, including how books, film and simple digital texts work, and know some features of print, for example directionality.

Using the series effectively

Making the *Sally & Possum* programs was a challenging, uplifting and very enjoyable experience. We hope that the depth of thinking, the enjoyment and sense of purpose that drove us will come through to you and your class and give you a great deal of pleasure and exciting opportunities for teaching and learning.

The episodes will show you a great deal of expert work in signing with Auslan that should enable deaf children to feel valued and hearing children to find another dimension to their lives. By using a character acting as a young possum along with an adult who has a zest for life and a lot of skills, we were able to model a great relationship of mutual caring and openness. Possum is enthusiastic. He wants to know things and he is always willing to ask questions and to learn. He brings a wonderful, playful attitude to the programs. We developed the storylines to highlight particular concepts that are important, but the learning experience is much wider than just those concepts. Our aim is to give you opportunities to have a great time with your students - to learn playfully and with engagement. Our experience is that children enjoy watching each episode many times. They will learn from watching, but they will learn more by engaging in activities that take them further into the concepts and give them a chance to express their deepening understanding and interests.

Vocabulary - whether it is expressed in words or in signs - is extremely important in learning. Those children who experience fewer words and signs and who experience those words and signs used for a more limited range of purposes have a hard time catching up. Indeed, in most cases they don't catch up to those whose life abounds in language used for many purposes. As a teacher, you will undoubtedly want to make a difference in this part of their learning. You can only do that if you extend the children's opportunities to use words or signs to express real meanings. They cannot make great gains just by hearing the words or seeing the message signed. So, please enjoy the benefits that these programs will give you to engage your students in lots of language for purposes that are interesting and meaningful to them.

The teaching notes will give you a good base to launch from. You will find usable ideas and principles spread through the teaching guide.

Some of the ideas described for use with one episode will serve you well in others, so do make a point of extending the way you apply the ideas that are here and the ones that you already employ in your teaching.

The programs and the activities will be appropriate for a range of levels and ages, but they are particularly aimed at Kindergarten/Pre-prep through to Year 1. You should feel free to adapt the activities to meet the varying needs of your class and to expand and extend the ideas as the class shows its range of interests. Jerome Bruner in *The Process of Education* (1960: pp. 11-16) established much of the basis for modern curriculum understandings. That understanding helps us as teachers to take a practical approach to teaching and learning, rather than simply focusing on the mastery of facts and techniques. If earlier learning is to help later learning to happen more easily, it must provide a general picture in terms of which the relations between things encountered earlier and later are made apparent and not just serve as bits of information to add to later on. There is a danger of wasting learning opportunities by postponing the teaching of important areas because they are deemed 'too difficult'.

Bruner famously stated: "We begin with the hypothesis that any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development" (1960: p 33). So, you will find *Sally & Possum* touching on ideas that are complex, but serve a spiral curriculum in which basic ideas are returned to repeatedly, building on the levels of knowledge and understanding from earlier visits to the ideas. We don't often learn anything in one go!

Interest in the material to be learned is the best stimulus to learning, so we hope that you will find great opportunities to arouse your students' interest in what there is to be learned from these programs and the diverse associated activities.

1. Too Sticky

Episode 1 highlights the concept of *sticky*.

Teaching ideas

- **POST IT.** One of the most effective “sticky ideas” ever is 3M’s “Post-it Notes” in their many different forms. Sally gives Possum her version with her notice to remind him, “Don’t get honey on the door!” There are many ways that you can use these with children (and adults). Take advantage of the way in which you can have learners place their label in relation to others’ labels. For example, you could have children colour them and then do a ranking of lightest to darkest, letting children put their own in position and then discussing examples and readjusting them. As a planned side effect, this would give children feedback about the important skill of learning to colour-in strongly. Explore ways of grouping and regrouping labels. Have students draw on a label a “mystery number” (perhaps up to five) of an object they choose and get them to place their label in the appropriate group on a wall. Then check by counting the objects. Regroup to match labels by the object instead of the number, or by the colour. These activities can quickly involve all the class and generate lots of talk and thinking.
- **JOINING.** List ways of joining things together. This activity generates remarkable depth of discussion at any level. Think of cloth, paper, wood, metal, etc. How many ways are they joined and why do we have different ways? Think of things that need to be joined one on top of the other. What about things that overlap? How do we join things side-by-side? As you are discussing, use play blocks and other materials to let children show the ideas in action. With these, and many other discussion topics, there is great value in starting some charts to record the ideas. You can, of course, just do this and leave it at that, but the value and retention of learning is greater when you keep the charts “alive” and add other ideas even weeks later as they come up. You may have some of your favourite teaching moments when you - or even better, one of your students - suddenly notices a different way in which things have been joined and you add it to your list. At this level, the listing benefits from having sketches to illustrate the method of joining as well as words. NOTE: You’ll see joining in other episodes - in the tying of a knot and the nailing of wood, for example - so take those opportunities to check your list and add to it.
- **MOVE IT.** We have found that children watching the ‘sticky’ episode immediately want to join in with *Sally & Possum’s* sticky honey walk. In the classroom, it may not be convenient to have them emulate these movements as you watch the program, but do take the time to explore different ways of moving when you are all pretending to be in sticky stuff. It is a lot of fun and has to be good for us!
- **HAVE A BALL.** Don’t just have a ball - make some! The episode gives instructions for how to make a papier mâché ball by gluing strips of paper over an inflated balloon. These make great decorations when painted by the children. You may need adults to help inflate and tie off the balloons.
- **HOW STICKY IS IT?** You might want to leave this as a ‘mind experiment’, but how could you test how sticky something is? Obviously, you won’t get into testing superglue and other powerful adhesives with children, but talking about how scientists would work out which glues were strongest would make an interesting discussion.

Worksheet/Literacy Activity

Making a sign or notice. The worksheet has large words to be cut out and assembled - by gluing in place to make two signs: “Don’t get honey on the door”; (Letters to be drawn ‘hollow’ so children can colour them in before cutting out the words and assembling the notice.) This is a good basis for teaching about letters in one-to-one interactions. E.g. “You have made a nice job of filling in the ‘d’”. Now see if you can make the ‘h’ look better.”

This is a good opportunity to create appropriate additional signs for your own classroom situation. E.g. “The scissors go in here.” “Please close the door quietly.” Signs are not simply labels, and providing a message is much more valuable for vocabulary development than just putting ‘Scissors’, for example.

Make a point with each of the books of modelling reading aloud with expression. Exclamation marks are a good start for young children in getting more expression in their reading. This book has enlarged

print to emphasise the word in on one page. Try different ways of reading the “Mmmmm.” With slight changes of intonation you can make the meaning shift from something like a warning that the honey is going to make a mess to more of a celebration of how good it will taste. Do be aware that as children progress through developmental stages in their reading they may start to read isolated words with an emphasis that shows they are using the cues available on the page, but, as long as you don’t rush them through that good sign of progress, make a point of seeking fluent expressive reading rather than word-by-word stilted reading.

A Sally & Possum Little Book

Title: **Sticky honey!**

- p1. Sally likes honey.
- p2. Possum likes honey, too.
- p3. Mmmm. Sticky, sticky honey.
- p4. Sally and Possum are in sticky honey!
- p5. Sally has sticky feet and Possum has sticky feet!
- p6. Sally has sticky hands and Possum has sticky hands!
- p7. Now have a wash, Sally and Possum!

There is a printable little book with a related worksheet activity to complete for each episode. Children will enjoy having their own set of books. That will provide a very substantial set of reading experiences. However, you may wish to make further little books to extend the reading, by writing more books yourself or preferably by joint construction where you involve the children in making some of the decisions.

Here is an example of a text that relates to the provided book, which you could make into a book for some or all of the class. You will note that it stays with the ideas of the episode and keeps a similar vocabulary.

My Sally & Possum Book

Title: **Sticky Stuff.**

- p2. Possum got honey on the door.
The door was sticky.
- p3. Possum washed the door.
- p4. Good! Now the door is not sticky.
- p5. Possum got jam on his hands.
His hands were sticky.

- p6. Possum washed his hands.
- p7. Good! Now his hands are not sticky.
- p8. The glue is sticky.
Be careful, Possum!

2. A Very Hot Day

Episode 2 highlights the concept of *hot*.

Teaching Ideas.

How hot is it?

When do we measure temperatures? If you can, record the temperature on a daily basis – perhaps more than once a day but at regular times – and graph the results. Many young children become quite fascinated by graphs and by observable, recordable data like temperature. If you are not into such things yourself, you can still appoint some children to take responsibility for checking the temperature. Don't be surprised if some get really interested and you may find your own interest rises with theirs.

Cooling off.

Children in the episode demonstrate what they like to do on a hot day. What do your students like to do when it is hot? Which of them could be done as part of a school day? There are lots of learning experiences like this where making a list can be done quickly and effectively. The list may support later reading and/or writing experiences.

Don't touch!

Identify things that get too hot to touch when they are in use and discuss safety issues. You could extend this to consider how we have to find different ways to test things so we stay safe. You can't test the sharpness of a blade by running your finger down it, or how sticky super glue is by putting some between two fingers, or how fast you would hit the ground if you fell from different heights. The ability to make and test hypotheses is a key aspect of human thinking.

Worksheet/Literacy Activity

A sheet is provided with a set of pictures of objects with separate labels. Each of the things that Possum gathered to take to the beach is on the sheet along with some other choices. Students cut out and sort objects into three sets and glue them in place with labels. [Note: If you want to differentiate, you could make this at two levels with and without the additional items.]

Pictures and separately placed words for:

Towel, beach ball, sun umbrella, bucket and spade, ice cream (picture of cone ice cream already dripping), **saw, winter coat, pot plant,**

sunscreen bottle, wide-brimmed hat (label just says 'hat'), **water bottle.**

Headings to glue on page:

Going to the Beach.

Things Possum got ready.

More things to take.

Things to not take.

The Sally & Possum Book: "To the Beach" goes with this episode.

Title: **To the beach**

- p1. Does Possum need a bucket and spade?
Yes, he does.
- p2. Does he need a sun umbrella?
Yes, he does.
- p3. Does Possum need a pot plant?
No, he does not.
- p4. Does he need a sun hat?
Yes, he does.
- p5. Does Possum need a water bottle?
Yes, he does.
- p6. Does Possum need sunscreen?
Yes, he does.
- p7. Does Possum need a saw and a winter coat?
No, he does not!

You should find that your class very quickly grasps the Question and Answer format of this book. One way to increase the amount of practice they get in reading is to have them read in different groups. If half the class reads the questions and the other half the answers, and then you flip the groups you will have got two readings in next to no time. Then they could try doing the same thing with a partner. When children read the last line with intonation that shows they grasp that it is meant to seem silly, you get a simple and very effective indication of comprehension. Ask the students to come up with some other final lines. "What else would be a funny idea to end with?" Once you have got that far, it would be quite easy to compose another book text from things that are or are not needed for a different activity. "Possum is getting ready for bed. Does he need his toothbrush?" Etc.

3. Let the paint dry.

Episode 3 highlights the concept of dry.

Teaching Ideas.

Possum is fascinated by the way a sponge works in this episode and it is interesting to see how effective a sponge can be. Get a few sponges and try a relay race to see which group can move a measure of water from one tray to another by using a sponge, passing the sponge to the next member of the team to get the next load until it is all moved. You and your class can make up the rules. In a similar challenge, how many sponge loads does it take to move a cupful of water from one tray to another?

Try some different types of sponges and compare their effectiveness. It would be interesting to see whether you and the class can predict which ones are more effective from the way they look and feel. Are lots of small holes better or worse than fewer bigger holes?

The episode refers only to the artificial sponges used for cleaning and you might find it unnecessary to go into the science of the many kinds of natural sponges, but you should at least make sure that your class sees some picture of a natural sponge and understand that artificial sponges are made to replace using the natural ones.

Possum had to let the paint dry before he touched it (and Sally shouldn't have sat on wet paint). What else has to dry? The washing is a starting point for your list. It is not necessary to start using the more technical term evaporation, but once you start noticing things getting dry - like puddles after rain - you may find that your students can become quite fluent in discussing their observations. Just looking at two puddles and predicting which one will take longer to disappear is a very useful development in scientific observation.

Worksheet/Literacy Activity

This can be used as a worksheet activity as well as a Sally & Possum Book.

Words to be cut off the bottom for gluing in to complete sentences.

Title: Dry Things

- p1. The paint is wet.
Possum has to let it

- p2. Now Possum can it!
p3. The garden is dry.
p4. It needs
Now the plants are
The farm is dry.
It needs
Now the are happy.
Possum is dry.
He needs a
Mmmm! Now Possum is!

Words to cut off and glue in place: **dry, water, water, drink, touch, happy, cows, happy.**

This text has a repetitive structure focused on time and problem-solution (one of the key structures of expository texts). The illustrations are important to the meaning as they show the actual solution each time. As you are going through the text with the class, discuss what is shown and how each episode "works". You do not need to explain everything, but it is effective to model the "Aha!" experience of seeing that each part has a structure of 1) This is the situation; 2) This is what is needed; 3) Doing what is needed to solve the problem (shown in the illustration, but can be put into words or signs by you and the class); 4) This is the resolved situation. Try writing another episode with the class by asking questions about what the problem would be and how it should be solved. Notice that while this is an informational text-type, it helps develop a sense of narrative structure and sequencing too.

4. Possum wants a Pet

Episode 4 highlights the concepts of hard and soft.

Teaching Ideas.

The storyline of this episode shows Possum appreciating how well Sally cares for him. Teachers play an extraordinarily important role in helping children to feel cared for, perhaps especially at the times we find it hardest to show that caring. Caring for each other, showing respect and support for the social and emotional aspects of children is a crucial part of the classroom atmosphere to foster learning in its wider senses. Don't neglect the discussion possibilities that may arise, just because there are some basic concepts like hard and soft to explore. (Don't think that means you have to talk about having a soft or hard heart!) You might like to identify what pets children have and what other pets they are familiar with before viewing the episode, because that may not remain as strong a focus later.

How hard is it?

There is a scientific scale of hardness and while this will not be a major focus at this level, your class will find it interesting to do some basic experimenting to compare how hard different things are. You can devise whatever test you like, but it is good for children to get an early start to understanding how to test accurately. For example, if you test by dropping a weight it needs to be done with the same object from the same height. These kinds of activities can make a lasting impression (we couldn't resist that pun) on young minds. Do think through any safety issues, but this should not need to be complicated or to take very long.

And what else?

What goes with being hard or soft? Things that are hard are usually rigid - they don't bend or are less likely to bend. Indeed, hard things are often brittle. On the other hand, things that are soft are less likely to be rigid and are less breakable. You might compare twigs with grass-like plants and consider what vegetables are more flexible than others. You can make an interesting comparison when you bend a fresh stick of celery and one that should have been eaten already. You could illustrate another interesting aspect of hardness and softness with your class by pumping up a soft bicycle tyre and checking the pressure by touch and pressure gauge.

Worksheet/Literacy Activity

Sorting activity, preferably after some testing of hardness. Worksheet has pictures of: **nail, cotton wool, car, sponge (soaking kind, not the cake), jelly, teddy bear, window, hammer, wood, lettuce, door, cup, chocolate.**

Headings:

What is soft? What is hard?

Students glue or copy headings onto a sheet. Children sort the pictures into correct column and add the words underneath each.

A Sally & Possum Little Book.

Title : **What is hard?**

- p.1: A hammer is hard. A nail is hard too.
- p.2: Wood is hard, but it is not as hard as a nail.
- p.3: A window is hard, but it can break.
- p.4: A jelly is not hard. It can wobble.
- p.5: A teddy bear is soft. It is cuddly.
- p.6: Cotton wool is soft and a bun is soft.
- p.7: Chocolate is hard, but not out in the sun!

Examples of Literacy Teaching.

We don't give a full range of suggestions for any of the books, but here are some sample ideas for specific use with this one that you can adapt with others. You can always explore the words and letters and letter-sound relationships with a text. While the emphasis in using the Sally & Possum Books is on enjoying the meaning, we can look at an example of explorations for early readers if the text is displayed as a whole. Display the text on an interactive whiteboard or use another technology. This activity would be very valuable if you wrote the text on separate cards and displayed it in a pocket chart. Read the text as a whole and then reconstruct it in the pockets. You could do this by having the children each have some of the word cards and come up to put their word in the right place as you work through the text.

Notice that each page or line of text has two ideas. Line 1 lists a thing that is hard. Then it adds another in a separate sentence. Line 6 does a similar thing with soft, but within one sentence. Line 2 lists two hard things, but does so with but

to signal a comparison. Line 3 uses but to establish a condition or limitation. Line 7 does a similar thing, but with a line designed to provide a closing impact. You should see that it would not work to exchange lines 3 and 7. (If we wanted to exchange those lines, so Line 3 was the ending, we would have to have Possum breaking the window and we have deliberately kept Possum from doing such a thing in the program.) Lines 4 and 5 have similar structures giving support for the main idea in a second sentence, but one does it with a negative and the other with a positive form. This clearly is a higher level of literary analysis than is appropriate for early readers and we are not suggesting that you try to explain it all. However, when you see this yourself, it informs the expression in your reading to and with the children. You are then modelling what you understand, not explaining it.

Use word cards, or click and drag on the smartboard to match words that start with the same letter. List the words starting with the same letter one under the other so they can be compared more easily. How do we tell which one is wood and which one is wool? Adjust your teaching for the level of the children, but if you use frequent meetings with letter details, that are comfortable rather than intense, you will build their confidence effectively.

How many times is hard used? How many times is soft used? Try reading through with special attention to particular words. For example, try to make the feelings of hard and soft clear and extend that to cuddly and wobble. Read through to get just the right emphasis on each not. When you read for expression in different ways, you can justify multiple readings with the associated gains in fluency and comprehension and word recognition.

5. How does your garden grow?

Episode 5 highlights the concept of wet.

Teaching Ideas.

This topic connects strongly with Episode 3 and what you study about dry. In that episode, we focused more on drying things and letting paint dry. Plants need water and so do we. The concept of wet is closely linked to water and rain. Other liquids besides water can cause things to be wet and it can be difficult with young children to clearly differentiate signs and words for these concepts. We suggest that you leave the differences open rather than overcomplicating your explanations. As long as children get the idea that things can be made wet by water and that water is not the only wetting agent, they will have a useful idea.

Growing.

Sally shows Possum how to grow mustard and other seeds and makes a little “caterpillar” seed bed. Sprouting seeds is a fun activity and generates good opportunities to observe and record changes. Follow the same procedure to make caterpillars or other shapes, or simply sprout them in a saucer with something like cotton wool to retain some moisture. Talk about the shoots, the stem and the roots that they will observe. The science of growing things and the other requirements for seeds to grow into plants can be touched on, but do not need to be explored in depth at this stage. Do encourage careful observation. Children are usually excited by the emergence of shoots from sprouting seeds. If you have never tried it yourself, this would be a great time to explore the health benefits of green sprouts for salads by growing some at home or in the classroom.

Worksheet/Literacy Activity

The worksheet has seven sentences for sequencing to match the storyline of the episode. After reading each sentence as a class, students individually cut out each sentence (as a complete strip) and sort them into the sequence of events, before gluing them in books or on a sheet of paper. (The teacher or an aide could lead them through this in groups and the procedure could be followed one step at a time for those needing more support.) Sequencing is a very important part of literacy learning. The text provided does not burden the young learners with the connectives and sequencing words, like

first, then, after that and so on. However, you should use this language in your teaching. “What happened first?” “Where was Possum when you saw him at the beginning?” “Why did Possum think he would not get wet?” Note that you can give children time to answer this and still reword the question to extend their understanding. So, you could get a good answer, and still ask another student, “Why did Possum think he would stay dry?” You do not need to explain that this is another way of asking about the same issue, but you help powerfully to develop language skills when you probe in different terms.

TEACHING NOTE: It is very important not to rush into rewording a question with children from a Non-English Speaking Background. When we don’t get an answer straight away, we are often tempted to reword the question, thinking that this makes it easier. From the teachers’ point of view, we can see that we are really just making the question easier, but a learner who doesn’t have English as a first language is likely to be still processing the question. Instead of thinking, “Good. That’s the same question in an easier form,” the learner, in effect, is likely to abandon trying to work out an answer to our first question and start from scratch on the new one. Give children time to work out what to say, and encourage them to be comfortable to tell you that they didn’t hear what you said, or see your signing clearly, or didn’t understand what you were asking. We all tend to overestimate our ability to see what others are thinking. As teachers we should be able to recognise when the problem is that we are not clear enough, but we don’t always get our messages clear, whether speaking or listening.

So, with activities like this sequencing one, it is a major achievement when we get everyone to have a clear understanding of the way in which the sentences are intended to show what actually happened in the order that they happened. Work at achieving that comprehension and recall of the events sequence, rather than seeing the task as to test whether the students know it.

Understanding sequences and causes is a very significant part of higher literacy levels, so don’t skimp on building a good foundation here. Try doing a review of your day with the class. “What did

we do first? Then what?" Young children often ask "Why?" and giving full answers to their interest in causation is a powerful tool for skill development and leads to them giving good answers too.

Sentences:

Sally dried Possum.

The leaf got very wet.

It started to rain.

Possum got wet.

Sally said, "You will get wet!"

Possum got under a leaf.

The water fell on Possum.

This is also a *Sally & Possum Little Book*. As the students already have a text activity, this book task is to cut out the speech pieces and put them into speech bubbles in the book to complete the story.

Title: Possum gets wet

p1. It started to rain.

p2. Possum got under a leaf.

The leaf got wet.

p3. Sally said, "You will get wet!"

p4. Possum said, "I will keep dry."

p5. Oh no! The water fell on Possum.

Possum got wet.

p6. Sally dried Possum.

p7. Possum said, "Thank you, Sally."

6. Possum's Door needs fixing.

Episode 6 highlights the concept of sharp.

Teaching Ideas.

- **SAFETY FIRST.** We do want to have children cutting out and exploring shapes physically, but teaching about being safe is a key part of any such study. Barry Lane and Gretchen Bernabei wrote a clever book on Persuasive Writing, called *Why we must run with scissors*. Perhaps you don't want to go as far as they did by writing the flipside of normal rules, but you will realise that their idea was to get students actually thinking about why we do some things and do not do others. Young children benefit from understanding rules about safety, not just having them imposed. We leave you to do it your way, but aim to bring the children with you on the safety journey. You might cover some basic first aid, but aim not to need to use it.
- **CUTTING.** Why do we cut things? What happens? Explore the general idea with your class. For example, we may cut a cake or something else into smaller pieces to share it or make it last longer. Often we have to match the number of pieces with the number of people or categories to divide for. We may cut something to a particular size so that it will fit. We may be cutting for convenience to make something manageable or to make it look better. We may be trimming off an excess length or making a piece to add on. Cutting makes something shorter or smaller. Fractions come later than this in the Mathematics curriculum, but careful use of the ideas of sharing and dividing can lay a good foundation now for later studies.
- **TOOLS.** What do we cut with? As with many classroom activities, this question lends itself to listing and sorting. As teachers with a class to lead and control, we often find ourselves trying to keep everyone's attention while few children are getting the chance to contribute. You might try getting small groups of your class to come up with as many ideas as they can about things that are used to cut. While they may not be ready to write all the words they could sketch an example on a small piece of paper or a post-it label so that these can be collated after a few minutes. You might then see which examples came up most often and which more rarely.
- **CUTS AND HOLES.** We cut things in different ways; we make different kinds of cuts;

and we cut different kinds of things. These differences are often related. It would be good for children to see a person who was handy with tools demonstrate the use of a saw (of different types), a plane and a spokeshave, for example. What do we cut paper with? Scissors come with different kinds of cutters. What about nail clippers versus nail scissors? And, so far, all of this has been about cutting, but there are sharp things that make holes instead of cuts. Is a hole a kind of cut? Let's go back and check whether we have covered all the tools that make holes instead of cutting things. Did we consider things that cut to a particular shape - such as cookie cutters? Is it true to say that things that cut have a sharp edge and things that make a hole have a sharp point? (No - that oversimplifies it, because you can have a circular edge that cuts out a hole!)

- **TELL A STORY.** Tell your class the story of the king (feel free to make that a queen) who is riding through his forest one day and stops to watch a woodman chopping down a tree. The man is swinging his axe hard, but he is making slow progress because the axe is very blunt. "My good man," says the king, "why don't you stop and sharpen your axe? Then you will cut the tree much faster." The woodman replies, "I am in a hurry, your majesty. I don't have time to sharpen my axe."

You don't have to explore the moral of the story in detail, but it is often productive and interesting to find how children form generalisations or express the main idea of such tales. The story usually ends at that point, but you could together write a resolution. For example, the king (or the queen!) might climb down and sharpen the axe to show how much faster the tree would be cut down.

Both the kinds of cutting and the tools for cutting can be explored well in miming or acting out the movements. You could have individual children demonstrate use of a particular tool or cutting a particular kind of material while the rest of the class try to identify their mime, or do the activity with groups who then share with the rest of the class. You can engage in a wide range of cutting and sharp activities safely with mime and other forms of drama.

Worksheet/Literacy Activity

Making a Sally & Possum Little Book, "What is Sharp?"

Worksheet: Illustrations of: chair, claws, nail, needle, ball, pencil, teeth, book, scissors, cup, spoon, teddy bear. Cut out and group under headings "Sharp" and "Not Sharp".

With the book and the worksheet, be careful that you are exploring sharp rather than just what can cut. Needles, pencils and nails can be seen as having a sharp point, rather than being things that cut. However, don't be in a hurry to establish this right away. It would be good if it emerged in the discussion, but if the discussion stays on things that cut, you could wait for a while before asking whether, for example, a needle is sharp. Your students are likely to identify Amanda's plane and saw as things that are sharp. They do feature in the episode and you could well add pictures and the words to your listing. The difficulty for young learners can be that plane has an obvious very different meaning that children will be more familiar with and we use saw as a past tense verb more often than as a tool. Hearing people may not always realise that deaf people can have an advantage because the Auslan signs are quite different and homophones are not an issue for them.

Sally & Possum Book

Title: What is sharp?

- p1. A needle is sharp,
- p2. but a ball is not sharp.
- p3. A pencil is sharp,
- p4. but a cup is not sharp.
- p5. My scissors are sharp,
- p6. and a nail is sharp.
- p7. My teeth are sharp, too.

7. A Surprise for Sally

Episode 7 highlights the concepts of rough and smooth.

Teaching Ideas.

As with several other episodes, this one presents a contrast of ideas. Smoothness and roughness are relative concepts and feeling lots of surfaces and ranking them from smoothest to roughest will be an interesting experience. You will find interesting issues as you explore this concept. Sally shows Possum that she thinks his fur is smooth when rubbed in one direction, but rough when rubbed the other way. Some leaves will look bumpy, but have a glossy smoothness to them as well. What about a turtle shell? Some things, such as pavements, have smooth sections separated by rougher sections. There is an interesting contrast between this idea and patterned material where the texture doesn't change but the visual pattern does. Making pictures with textures from rubbing is an interesting exploration of this. The texture is different underneath the paper, but the representation will be smoother, even though the difference may be visible. Find lots of different surfaces around the school, place a sheet of paper over some and rub with a crayon or pencil. Doing this over engraved texts gets striking effects. Some of the rubbings of rough surfaces could be cut up and assembled into interesting collages. You may find a person in your class community who has a collection of rubbings gathered from interesting visits who could show them to the class.

Worksheet/Literacy Activity

Large open letters spelling the words rough and smooth. (Probably a separate A4 piece for each to make a suitable size.) Teachers supply a collection of items including plastic, foil, cloth, etc., for children to sort in groups into rough and smooth textures and then cut up into small pieces to make a mosaic picture filling in the letters to complete a rough rough and a smooth smooth.

Sally & Possum Little Book.

Title: **Rough and Smooth**

- p2. "Oh, no! This road is rough," said Possum.
Bump, bump, bump.
- p3. "This ice is smooth," said Possum.
- p4. "This garden is rough," said Sally.
- p5. "This garden is smooth," said Possum.

p6. "This icing is rough," said Sally.

p7. "Now it is smooth," said Possum.

p8. "Mmm!" said Sally. "Mmm-mmmm!" said Possum.

Actually, on the last page, Possum's text just says, "Mmm!" but feel free to add the extra expression when you read it with the class! Work out with the class how to read the "Bump, bump, bump," line. You will be familiar with the term onomatopoeia, which relates to the connection of word sounds and word meanings. It actually goes further than just words like bang, crash and tinkle. So, you could enjoy with the class acting out the bumps and making the way you read rough and smooth sound the way they mean. Of course, if you are signing the words your signs will represent those meanings anyway.

8. The Case of the Missing Fridge

Episode 8 highlights the concepts of light and heavy, particularly in comparison with each other.

Teaching Ideas

You should see that the producers of *Sally & Possum* really enjoyed making this series, and this episode was particularly enjoyable. The script was planned to include someone from outside the deaf community with the idea of demonstrating that someone of good will can communicate quite effectively with people who cannot hear. Even with a class all of whom can hear, you would find it interesting to see how much you can communicate for a while without talking. And, if you do that, a logical extension is to all learn some basic Auslan to communicate with.

Possum appears to do a remarkable job in getting the fridge into his tree. It is not easy to lift a heavy fridge in a box, and of course, Possum and Jay later pretend that the polystyrene packaging is very heavy. You and your children will enjoy pretending that something is very heavy and staggering under the load as you carry it. Try working in small groups where everyone is carrying something and they start swapping packages or adding their package to someone else's so that they walk with a varying load, pretending to carry the different weights.

- **SCALES AND SEE-SAWS.** Weight is not always an easy concept to get across. Young children sometimes assume that things are heavy because of their size and may not consider density. We don't explore comparative weight of different materials in this program. If it does arise, by all means discuss it, but you may find that not all children will understand it at this stage. We tend to focus more on the easily observable dimension of height rather than weight and given the amount of sensitivity that is required about obesity, you might be well advised to not weigh your students. Nevertheless, students will be interested in what things are heavier. Balance scales are introduced more explicitly in Series 2, but we use them here and we use the similar idea of a see-saw in *What goes up must come down*, to visually display relative weight without using units of measurement. You will find that the worksheet and *Sally & Possum Little Book* help explore the light and heavy concepts and you might help children to make some predictions of their own as well as doing the worksheet. You don't need to examine the issue in detail, but at least help students to see that, for example, a

smaller metal object might weigh more than a larger wooden object and that bigger things are heavier than smaller things if they are made of the same stuff. You will notice that the key concepts here are heavy and light, but you will find that you can't avoid talking and signing about the relative terms heavier and lighter. We suggest that you just do this as necessary without trying to explain the ideas of comparatives and superlatives. You can illustrate how a see-saw works with mime, if you haven't got one available.

- **FLOATING.** Jay makes a polystyrene boat with Possum and in the Real Kids segment you will see wonderful boat-making and floating scenes. Children might enjoy Pamela Allen's picture book, *Mr Archimedes' Bath*, which shows something of the science in a very light-hearted way. The issue of displacement and other scientific aspects are not discussed in this episode apart from the idea that the boat is light. You could have a lot of fun and learning from making a variety of similar boats in the classroom.

Worksheet/Literacy Activity

You might like to add your own worksheet to the *Sally & Possum Book* activity. Get students to find and cut out pictures of pairs of things that could be expected to be lighter or heavier than the other to be sorted into the two groups and then put on a simple set of scales (or see-saws) with the heavy one down and the lighter one up. Vary the side that is down. I.e., draw pictures of scales preferably mixed in sequence with two with the left-hand side down and two with the right-hand side down. The pictures are cut out and put in the right place. You could provide cards with light and heavy to be placed in the correct place or even make sentences to be cut out and matched with the pictures. The vocabulary is not words that would all be familiar for reading, but with illustrations they should be accessible to build the concept.

Sally & Possum Book

Title: *What is heavy?*

- p1. Possum is heavy but the frog is light.
- p2. The mouse is light but the elephant is heavy.
- p3. The car is heavy but the balloon is light.

p4. The saw is heavy but the nail is light.

p5. The dinosaur is heavy but the ant is light.

p6. The fridge is heavy.

p7. Possum's little boat is very, very light.

9. The Big Balloon Ride

Episode 9 highlights the concepts of big and small, particularly in relation to each other.

Teaching Ideas

- **RELATIVITY.** As with light and heavy, you will find that the concepts of big and small will almost certainly lead you into comparison and the use of bigger and smaller and quite likely biggest and smallest. You should be very clear yourself that you use the comparative form (bigger, smaller) when comparing two things, but the superlative when you identify the biggest or smallest of three or more things. If you use the words accurately, your class will start to do likewise, but it is probably better not to make too big an issue of it at this stage. What is important is to help children realise that something can be thought of as big compared to one thing and small in comparison to another. A car is bigger than a bike, but smaller than a truck (usually).
- **PERSPECTIVE.** It may seem obvious in real life, but the idea that the same thing can look smaller when it is further away and bigger when it is closer does not always show up in young children's artwork. We are not suggesting that you need to teach perspective drawing, but including the idea that things look different depending on where they are or what they are seen against is interesting and intriguing. An easy idea to get across is that the Sun is much bigger than the Earth, but looks smaller because it is so far away.
- **SERIATION.** Use cut-out pictures of Sally and Possum of different sizes and have students put them in order, with the smallest on the left or the biggest on the left, for example.

Worksheet/Literacy Activity

Worksheet with sentences to cut out and match to pictures and separate words to cut out and insert in the sentences.

Title: **Big and Small.**

A mouse is

An elephant is

An ant is

A dinosaur is

A balloon is

Oh! This balloon is not small.

This balloon is

small, small, small, big, big, BIG

Sentences to match with pictures of big and small things to be added to a *Sally and Possum Book*.

Title: **Big and small.**

p1. A mouse is small.

p2. An elephant is big.

p3. An ant is small.

p4. A dinosaur is big.

p5. A balloon is small.

p6. Oh! This balloon is not small.

p7. This balloon is BIG!

This would easily build into more patterns of comparing big and small things. If you find your class and yourself using bigger and smaller to compare things, then be happy to use those words and to write them. It is better not to make an issue at this stage about the change in spelling from big to bigger, where the g has to be doubled to preserve the short a when -er is added, but smaller doesn't need anything more than the -er. Just do it without any need to justify or explain it.

10. Sally has a Party

Episode 10 highlights the concepts of stretchy and bendy. Without using the term it looks at things that can be flexible.

Teaching Ideas.

Children love a party and you might use this episode as an excuse to have a class party. Teach about the genre of Invitations and invite some people to share in the fun. The theme could be stretchy as it was for Sally's party, or you could choose a different theme if you wanted to fit in with another curriculum idea. We feature making stretchy paper chains, but you could invite the class to identify and make a different kind of decoration for the party. Do make a point of displaying your children's artwork often. This would be a good time to do some work to display as part of the decorations.

Like other great ideas, the slinky (a stretchy present for Sally) was invented by accident or by developing an object that was intended for something else. Get hold of one if you can so you can enjoy playing with it with your class and thinking of words or signs that capture what you see. Watching a slinky 'walk' down steps is great fun. Compare the movement to those of a caterpillar and have the class try doing "slinky" movements.

Worksheet/Literacy Activity

Using the genre of instructions. The teacher reads this set of instructions, which is distinct from the activity for the *Sally & Possum* Book. You can do this as a set of instructions where the task is just to follow them, or you can print these sentences as a worksheet for students to cut out the sentences one at a time and glue them in place to make the text and then follow that as it is read together. If you are inviting people to a class party, you could give them the materials and have the class read the instructions with you in unison or as a piece of Readers' Theatre, so the guests can make a paper chain too.

Instructions.

- How to make a stretchy paper chain.
 1. Get two sheets of paper of different colours.
 2. Cut the paper into strips.
 3. Make a strip into a ring of paper.
 4. This will be the first link in your chain.
 5. Join the ends with glue or a staple.
 6. Find a strip of paper that is another colour.
 7. Put one end through the first ring.

8. Make this strip into a new ring.
9. Join the ends of the new ring so it is connected to the first ring.
10. Now you have the first two links in a chain.
11. Keep adding more links until it is as long as you want it to be.

You have made a stretchy paper chain that looks great!

Worksheet/Numeracy Activity

Make a worksheet that has ten pictures of paper chains, drawn to show different colours (i.e., plain and shaded) with one ring, two rings, three rings, etc., up to ten rings down the left side of the page. There are ten sentences on the right with dotted lines to show where the student can cut them off. The simplest way would be to glue the complete set of pictures on a piece of paper and then cut out the sentences one at a time and match them with the correct number of pieces. It would be a feasible alternative to leave the sentences in one piece and glue the matching picture in front of each one.

Heading is: **My stretchy paper chain.**

Sentences:

- I made it with 4 pieces.
- I made it with 7 pieces.
- I made it with 10 pieces.
- I made it with 2 pieces.
- I made it with 8 pieces.
- I made it with 3 pieces.
- I made it with 5 pieces.
- I made it with 6 pieces.
- I made it with 9 pieces.
- I made it with 1 piece.

Sally & Possum Book

Title: **Stretchy paper chains**

- p1. Possum made a stretchy paper chain.
I made one, too.
- p2. A blue strip. I had 1.
- p3. A red strip. Now I had 2.
- p4. A green strip. Now I had 3.
- p5. A yellow strip. Now I had 4.
- p6. I made one more strip. I had 5.
- p7. Five pretty strips in a stretchy paper chain!

11. A Very Cold Day

Episode 11 highlights the concept of cold.

Teaching Ideas.

Probably you won't take your class on a field trip to the snow, unless you live where the snow comes to you, but you could find some video clips of people playing in the snow. What ways do people have to keep warm? The northern parts of Australia do not have four clearly different seasons (People there may just think of "the wet" and "the dry".), while southern parts have more distinct seasons. You may show your students what causes the seasons (It's the slanting of the Earth so that for half a year the Northern Hemisphere is angled more towards the sun and for half a year the Southern Hemisphere is.) or you may leave that for later years, but while you are talking about cold you could introduce the idea of Winter and also name the other seasons. Think about ways in which coldness helps us, particularly refrigerators and freezers to preserve our food.

What foods are served cold (and which are served hot)?

Worksheet/Literacy Activity

The worksheet provides text choices to complete the little book, *Possum is cold*. Every time you use a book with your class there are many teaching possibilities. We haven't tried to point out the range of teaching points with each book, but let's explore a few of them here.

The logical structure of linking the cause and effect with *so* is deliberate and at least some of the time you should read the text with a strong emphasis on the *so*. However, there are other ways to read the text with emphasis that clarify other aspects of the meaning. Avoid making the reading sound too stilted, but try various readings with the children to bring out the cohesive and logical connections. For example, page 2, "He has cold feet so he puts on his warm boots," could be read, "He has cold feet, so he puts on his warm boots," to emphasise the causal relationship. Or, "He has cold feet, so he puts on his warm boots," emphasises the link between body part and clothing item. "He has cold feet so he puts on his warm boots," emphasises a different connection by the contrast. Notice that the commas in some of these versions (and the deliberate omission of the comma in the book) help to add clarity to the reading. Where the reading is

being signed rather than spoken, you can help the children to put emphasis on the appropriate signs. Don't underestimate how significant learning to stress the right words in a reading is for developing and demonstrating comprehension.

By the way, you could also read the sentence, " He has cold feet so he puts on his warm boots," and then write *has* and *his* one under the other to show the single letter difference in the spelling and the associated letter-sound relationship. And you could even emphasise the *He* and *his* to deal with the possessive form. Don't turn these simple teaching points into major issues; they should be part of the pleasure of reading, not a burden of concerns. One of the benefits of these varied readings is that they give your class repetitive experiences that will build their word recognition and confidence without you having to make that explicit as you read in different ways.

Words to add to text: cold, boots, coat, scarf, hat, warm.

Sally & Possum Book.

Title: *Possum is cold*

- p1. Possum is cold.
- p2. He has cold feet so he puts on his warm boots.
- p3. He has a cold body so he puts on his warm coat.
- p4. He has a cold neck so he puts on his warm scarf.
- p5. Possum is still cold!
- p6. He has cold ears so he puts on his warm hat.
- p7. Now ALL of Possum is warm!

12. The Great Race

Episode 12 highlights the concepts of fast and slow.

Teaching Ideas.

While it makes sense to talk about fast and slow together, there is a complication from fast having the same form as an adjective and as an adverb, whereas slow is used as an adjective, but the adverbial form is slowly. We can be fast or slow, but we walk fast or slowly. We've avoided that conflict in structuring the *Sally & Possum Little Book*. We suggest that you try to avoid getting caught up in the distinction at this stage and focus mostly on what is fast or slow rather than describing movements. Deaf children may not be able to hear music, but often they can feel the rhythm. (There are some famous deaf percussion players.) Try activities with shakers and drums and clapping different rhythms. Compare fast and slow tempos.

Possum thought Sally was too slow going to the shops and pretended that she walked very slowly. Children will enjoy trying to walk in slow motion and it is good for improving balance. Have them pretend to be Possum mimicking Sally and then showing how fast he is himself and alternate these movements several times.

- **WHAT DOES MOVE FAST?** The class may not know a lot about the animals and other things that move very fast and those that are very slow, but they will have some ideas to start a comparison list. The *Sally & Possum* book adds a few basic ideas and connects to the story. You could construct your own version of the book or just compile a list of comparisons. You would find that many of your class would love to learn to add movement lines to their drawings to convey a sense of fast movement. If you've never done this yourself, then be prepared to find that it is more fun than you anticipated!

Worksheet/Literacy Activity

Students at this stage are not expected to be able to punctuate speech, but it is valuable to draw their attention to speech marks (or quotation marks) as they are used in their reading. It should be a gentle progression from knowing where they occur and why to later being able to place them correctly. You could have some children read the speech and some others add the speech markers ('said Sally' etc.) to help clarify the difference between what is said and how the speaker is identified. With this concept and many other more

complex features of how language is written, you will build familiarity and help students to be aware of the feature well before they need to learn it in any formal sense.

Sally & Possum Little Book

Title: **Fast and Slow**

- p2. "The horse is fast," said Sally.
- p3. "The turtle is slow," said Possum.
- p4. "The jet is fast," said Possum.
- p5. "The balloon is slow," said Sally.
- p6. "I walked fast," said Sally.
- p7. "No! You were slow," said Possum. "I am fast!"

13. What goes up must come down

Episode 13 highlights the concepts of up and down.

Teaching Ideas.

Some of the ideas for this episode relate to those for Episode 8 with its attention to light and heavy. The title of the episode relates to the effect of gravity which is not an easy concept to explain, but without knowing just what gravity is, children will still enjoy throwing balls as high as they can and seeing them come down again. You'll find that many uses of up and down involve using a preposition - up on the table, up in a tree, down in the garden - and that they also relate closely with over and under. We have focused on the idea of goes up and goes down and is up and is down in the book, rather than all the prepositions. Expressions like, "Look it up," or, "What are you up to?" may arise (come up!) but you would be wise to avoid getting too involved with trying to sort out these at this stage. Discuss and list things that we usually have to look up to see and things that we usually have to look down to see.

Worksheet/Literacy Activity

Garden vegetables counting.

Worksheet with vegetables drawn. The worksheet highlights some vegetables. It would help to have some to show the class and talk briefly about how they grow. Possum is fascinated when he realises that some grow below the ground and have to be pulled up and some are already up and have to be taken down from the plant. Read through the worksheet with the class and help them to identify the word labels with each vegetable. It does not matter whether they can all read each word later, but the episode and your teaching should increase their knowledge of vegetables and words. Simple counting and ordinal numbers are also involved.

- The tomatoes are up. Colour four tomatoes red. Colour three tomatoes green.
- The carrots are down. Colour the first and third carrot orange. Colour the second and fourth carrot green.

- The peppers are up. Colour three peppers green. Colour five peppers red.
- The pumpkins are up. Colour the first and fourth pumpkin red. Colour the second and fifth pumpkin green. Colour the third pumpkin orange.
- The sweet potatoes are down. Colour two sweet potatoes brown. Colour three sweet potatoes purple.

Sally & Possum Little Book

Title: See-saw, up and down

- p1. The mouse goes up and the goat goes down.
- p2. The kangaroo goes down and the ant goes up.
- p3. The duck goes up and the zebra goes down.
- p5. The bird goes up and the dog goes down.
- p6. The cow goes down and the chicken goes up.
- p7. Oh no! Possum goes down and the frog goes up, up, up!

14. What can you do with a pumpkin?

Episode 14 highlights the concepts of in and out.

Teaching Ideas.

As well as in and out, the episode features Possum noticing the similar idea of inside and outside. You might like to have a short discussion before viewing the episode, talking about what the class does inside and what it does outside. "We were outside in the playground. Now we are inside the classroom." You are likely to find that you use inside sometimes and in at other times. Then we also use indoors and outdoors. It is easier to just get children used to this than to try to explain it! We should be grateful that much vocabulary and many concepts are learned quite readily in use rather than needing to be thoroughly explained. A key element in using the *Sally & Possum* materials as teaching tools is that Possum can model enthusiasm and interest in simple ideas. Seek to foster your own class's delight in learning new words and ideas.

Concept Development.

We use in and out both singly and in combination in a wide range of ways and they are not always obvious. For example, in running to the left of one pole and to the right of the next, and so on, we might well call this "running in and out" and this would be rather different from running in and out of a doorway. Possum kicking the ball in the goal is not quite the same as putting the pumpkin in the pot. Let these ideas develop over time and enjoy the versatility of the words rather than trying to clarify every example. It would be better to do a lot of putting in and out rather than just talking about it, but making a chart or list of things that go inside something else would be interesting. The children may come to school in a car, but they would ride on a bike. What is the difference? You may find it hard to keep count, but what about trying to list or at least notice all the different ways you talk of in during a day.

Not all children are familiar with a range of vegetables. Several episodes feature healthy food and in this one making pumpkin soup is a significant part of the story. You will find overlaps between this

episode and Episode 13 featuring up and down that will help revise some concepts and extend the talk about different vegetables.

You put your left hand in ...

Surely, you have to do the "Hokey-Pokey" (also known as Hokey-Cokey in some places).

Creative Thinking.

The title of this episode has the structure of one of the classic creative thinking tasks - what can you do with a brick? How many ideas can you come up with for what you can do with a pumpkin? Sally was carrying the pumpkins inside so she could make soup, but found a novel use for them as goalposts. It is never too early to start developing this kind of thinking. What else could you do with a pumpkin? Don't worry if your compiled lists are quite short, but do notice which of your students seem to shine at these activities.

Worksheet/Literacy Activity

Sally & Possum Little Book

Title: **Yummy soup!**

- p2. The vegetables are in the garden.
- p3. The pot is in the cupboard.
- p4. Look at the vegetables!
- p5. The pot is out of the cupboard.
- p6. The vegetables are in the pot.
- p7. The soup is ready!
- p8. Mmmm! Yummy soup!

15. The Obstacle Course

Episode 15 highlights the concepts of over and under.

Teaching Ideas.

View Episode 15.

You are very likely to find that your students want to start making their own Obstacle Course. This can be done in several ways and with increasing complexity, so there are benefits in starting straight away with some simple moves around, over and under in the classroom just for enjoyment, with the idea of more detailed planning and mapping of the courses later.

Concept Development.

Help students to see that if object A is over object B, then B is under A and vice versa. Other words like above and below are used in similar ways and can be shown and discussed too, but the emphasis here should be on going under and going over. There are many applications of the words, including turning things over, and something being over when it is finished. Don't try to cover or explain all the meanings that arise, but accept ideas that students want to raise and then bring the focus back to the simple concepts and establishing a clear understanding. The concepts of around and through are also involved in the episode. The word around is used in the worksheet, because Sally writes it on the plan for the Obstacle Course. Help students to identify the words used and show them how to spell them. They have space on the worksheet to write over, under and around after they have cut out and pasted the printed words in the appropriate spaces on the sheet.

Obstacle Course Planning.

As suggested above, students may have already had a go at creating an Obstacle Course, or following your directions for one, but take the opportunity to develop a more complex one, outside if possible. Use a sheet of chart paper to record the decisions showing how you can make arrows to help indicate the direction and adding labels to indicate how they will go. Focus particularly on over, under and around but don't limit the words to just those if more ideas are suggested. Use through as well, but don't worry too much about spelling it. You may be able to develop several variations on the course.

There are particularly strong advantages in activities that involve designing or planning in the

first stage, then the activity and then reflection on what happened. Recording the activities with photographs of the class, if you have permissions, illustrating over and under and other concepts would enable you to extend the activities. The *Sally & Possum Little Book* uses suitable vocabulary to extend the activity into reading.

Reef Knot.

Sally teaches Possum how to tie a reef knot in the episode. This is a good start to learning the valuable skill of tying knots. The basic steps are to put the left hand end of a cord over the right hand end, and fold it under. The same end is now the right hand end and this is placed over the left hand end and folded under. Do it as "Left over right and under; right over left and under." Actually, it doesn't really matter which order they are done as long as the opposite one follows, but it is good to get into a consistent way of doing the steps.

Follow Up.

In discussions or on class walks, for example, identify things that are over and under other things and practise signing the directions taken. Look for the words and ideas to arise when reading to the class or viewing other programs.

Worksheet/Literacy Activity

Obstacle Course worksheet with labels to cut out and place on map with spaces to write words to match Sally and Possum's obstacle course.

Show students the worksheet with its map of the Obstacle Course as Possum did it. (Note that the map is drawn differently from the way in which Sally drew it so that it shows the directions taken by Possum.) Identify each part of the course from Start to Finish. Briefly discuss how Possum and Sally made the course. Students can add colour and/or detail to the pictures later if time is available. Show students the words to cut off the edge of the sheet and encourage them to point to the spaces where they should be glued. Write the words on the board yourself to model the spelling and show the students where to copy the words themselves after they have glued the words in place.

When the task is finished, have all students trace around the map with their fingers to follow the course signing and/or saying the words.

Sally & Possum Book

Title: *Playing with Possum.*

- p1. Possum went around the tree.
- p2. I go around the tree, too.
- p3. Possum went over the chair.
- p4. I go over the chair, too.
- p5. Possum went under the rug.
- p6. I go under the rug, too.
- p7. Hooray! Here is the finish.

This story has an alternating structure that parallels a great deal of the experience you will have with the series. The students will often do activities that are, in effect, copied off what Possum does. Possum models an enthusiastic learner. Be encouraged by every attempt by your students to emulate the things he does in the programs and take the opportunities to turn these into art, movement and language events that will take the learning into new dimensions and personalise it for you and your students.