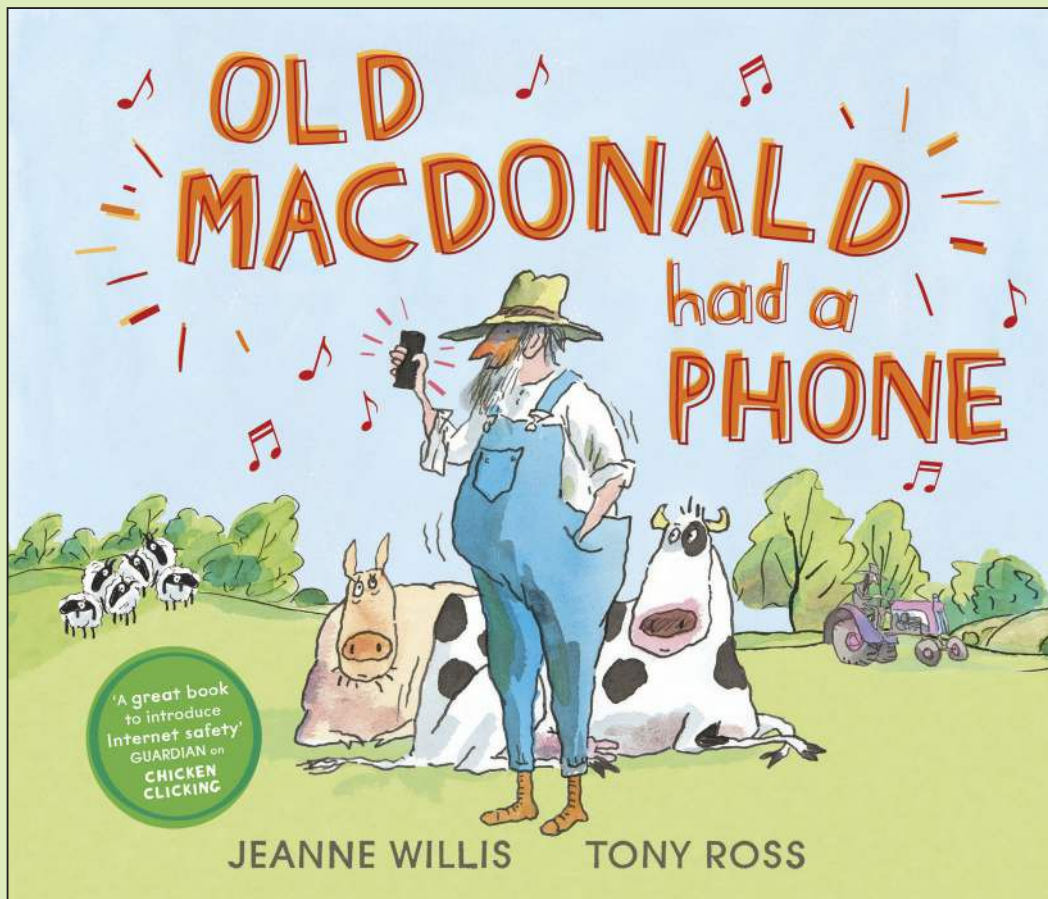


# TEACHING NOTES FOR SAFER INTERNET DAY

# OLD MACDONALD had a PHONE

BY JEANNE WILLIS & TONY ROSS



## RESOURCES CREATED BY CLPE

**Suggested age range for these activities: 7-11**

(Teachers will need to read both the book and teaching notes before exploring with their class and use and adapt the suggested activities as necessary to meet the ages and development of the children they are working with.)

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## OVERVIEW OF TEXT

*Old Macdonald loves his phone: it helps him organise his farm. But when the animals each get one of their own, they are soon on their phones all day--Here a tweet, there a chat, WhatsApping the farm cat--and before they know it, no work is getting done!*



## SESSION 1

- Before introducing the title or cover of the book, share the illustration on the first page in which Farmer Macdonald is removing his new phone from the packaging. If possible, cover the text on the page so that children can focus on making predictions and developing inference from the details they might draw out of Tony Ross' illustration as well as from any connections they make to their own experiences or other texts.
- Give children time to discuss and jot down what they notice in the illustration. *What can they see? Who do they think the person in the illustration is? What makes them think this? Is there anything that surprises them? What might be happening in the illustration? Why might these characters be in the same space together? Is the man aware of the animals surrounding him? What makes you think that? What might the different characters be thinking or feeling?* Children might be given scraps of paper with which they can make speech or thought bubbles to add to the image and share their ideas.

- Discuss the sort of story that this moment could be a part of. *What might happen next? What type of story might this be? Where might it take place? Does it remind you of any characters or stories that you already know?*
- After children have had an opportunity to share and discuss all of their ideas, introduce them to the front cover of the book and the title. Give them some time to share their initial response to the cover and how it relates to their previous discussion. *Are there any details on the cover that might support them in making further predictions about the book that they're about to read?* In addition to the title and their potential knowledge of the original nursery rhyme, they might also respond to the setting, the facial expressions, and the body language of Old Macdonald himself. They might also have certain expectations of the text based on existing knowledge of the author or illustrator, or from reading the Guardian newspaper's quote referring to another text by this team that has been included in the cover design.
- Ask children to share their familiarity with the original nursery rhyme and any memories they have of singing it at home or at school, if applicable. Spend a short time singing through the original nursery rhyme, adding verses based on any suggestions children make as to the animals that Macdonald might have on his farm and the sounds they are likely to make. Children might be encouraged to draw on their knowledge of letter patterns and common grapheme/phoneme correspondences to suggest how such onomatopoeic words might be written down.
- After refreshing their memory by singing through the rhyme, discuss how they think this book might differ from the rhyme, particularly as the nursery rhyme doesn't have many features of a narrative text – there are few characters, no character development and no significant events take place on Old Macdonald's farm beyond the noises made by the animals. *Are there any elements from the original rhyme that they think the author might retain?*
- Using the children's ideas and drawing on the title of the book to guide them, use shared writing to create a new version of the rhyme starting with the title, for example:

**Old MacDonald had a *phone***

**E-I-E-I-O**

**And on that *phone* he *spoke to friends***

**E-I-E-I-O**

**With a *chat, chat* here**

**And a *chat, chat* there**

**Here a *chat*, There a *chat***

**Everywhere a *chat, chat***

**Old MacDonald had a *phone***

**E-I-E-I-O**

**And on that *phone* he *took a pic***

**E-I-E-I-O**

**With a *snap snap* here**

**And a *snap snap* there**

**Here a *snap*, There a *snap***

**Everywhere a *snap snap***

- After generating a few verses together, ask children to work in groups to share and jot down all of the possible uses for a modern smart phone. Once they have had sufficient time working in their groups, come back together as a class to compile all of their ideas, which might include accessing social media, browsing the internet, searching for information, editing photographs, making short films, playing games, solving puzzles, reading and replying to emails, setting alarms and reminders, maintaining a calendar, listening to music, watching videos, downloading apps, shopping, making payments, storing loyalty cards, etc.

- Working either independently or in pairs, give children time to use these ideas to draft further verses for their updated version of Old Macdonald. As before, remind them to think carefully about the sounds that might be associated with the different actions and then to decide how to invent spellings, drawing on analogy and phonemic knowledge, to represent these onomatopoeic words. Encourage them to keep reading their work aloud to hear how it sounds and check that it fits with the rhythm and meter of the original rhyme – particularly the action in the third line which won't allow for too many extra syllables.

## SESSION 2

- Start the session by sharing the cover again and recapping some of the predictions that were made in the previous session. These might have been jotted down and captured on the working wall, the interactive whiteboard or in a reading journal so that they can easily be revisited. *What might this book be about? What might happen in it? Why/how might the phone be important to the plot?*
- Based on what they've seen in the illustrations so far, do they think life on Old Macdonald's farm will be better or worse after the introduction of a new smart phone? What makes them think that?
- Expand their thinking by considering the idea more broadly: have smart phones improved life for people who use them? You might choose to explore the history of the smart phone and how the children imagine life has been impacted by their, now, almost universal usage in many countries.
- After briefly asking some children to share their initial responses to the question and what makes them feel that way, set up a decision line for the class. A decision line can be a real drawn line (perhaps in chalk across the playground) or an imaginary one across the classroom. Tell children to position themselves on the line depending on how much they agree or disagree that *increased use of smart phones have made life better*. If children feel that they definitely have then that would lead to them standing at one end of the line, whereas a pupil who feels that smartphones have definitely not made life easier should stand at the other end, with all scales of emotional/intellectual response in between.
- Talk to children about their reasoning. *Why have they chosen to stand there? After listening to a few of their peers' reasons, do any of the children want to change their positions? Why? What have they heard to change their mind?*
- It is possible that, at this stage, most children will stand at the 'agree' end of the line, in which case you might discuss as a class briefly whether there are any downsides at all.
- Before discussing the idea much further, read the opening of the story aloud, sharing the illustrations, as far as page 8 (pausing at "*The sheepdog lost the lambs*"). When reading aloud, it is possible to read the whole book to the tune and rhythm of the Old Macdonald nursery rhyme. Be aware though, that a slower than normal tempo may be required initially to fit in all the words! When children are more familiar with the book, they might enjoy the challenge of trying to sing Jeanne Willis' adapted lyrics.
- Discuss their response to the opening section of the book, how it compared with their predictions and expectations and the immediate impact of the introduction of all these smart phones on life and work around the farm. Ask the children to summarise those effects and why they think that might have happened.
- After they have shared their initial response, ask children to work collaboratively in small groups to make two lists: *the potential positive and the negative effects of smart phones*. Encourage them to draw on the list of uses that was created in the previous session, as well as their discussions around the decision line and the start of the book. They might also have seen posters, adverts, videos, TV shows, etc. that have explored ideas relating to this issue that they could draw on in drafting their lists.

- Once the groups have had time to generate a few ideas for each column, ask them to look back over their lists and select what they consider to be the strongest example of a negative or positive impact of smart phone technology. Then, explain that an envoy from each group can move to another one of the groups to share those two ideas and to compare them with the ideas that the visited group have developed. After a few minutes, they can return to their original group and use what they have discussed to prompt further debate.
- Draw children back together and discuss their lists as a class, adding these to the working wall or the class journal. Decide as a class whether it might be possible for them to reach a consensus about the impact of smart phones, or whether it might need more give and take (i.e. overall, they're positive,... but only if.... ; or they're negative, but....).
- Bearing in mind all of the ideas that have been discussed and debated so far, finish the session by considering the dilemma for Old Macdonald. *Having introduced the phones to his farmyard, what do they think the farmer should do? Why do they think that? And what impact might that decision have as the story continues?*

## SESSION 3

- Start the session by re-reading the story from the beginning, this time continuing to read on up to page 14 when the animals react to him taking the phones away (as far as *"The bull refused to sweep / His manure in a heap..."*).
- Discuss the way in which the story has developed, sharing their initial responses as well as comparing the farmer's decision and its impact with the solutions that they had come up with for Old Macdonald at the end of the previous session. *Why did the farmer choose to take away all of the phones? Why have the animals responded in the ways depicted in the text and the illustrations? Why are the sheep left unprotected, the rooster asleep and the bull refusing to do his chores? What do they think Macdonald was hoping the response would be? Was his solution effective? Why/why not?*
- Encourage children to empathise with the animals who have had their phone privileges taken away as well as with Old Macdonald who was struggling to keep his business going. You might choose to use the decision line from the previous sessions to explore children's opinions and ideas about who was in the right in this situation and what makes them think that.
- Children might choose to use this opportunity to share personal stories, anecdotes or memories from their own lives when they were given a particular privilege only to have it taken away, or be faced with the possibility of it being taken away. *How did it feel? How did they respond? Was their response effective in having those privileges reinstated?*
- In their groups, ask children to debate whether they think the farmer has been fair in the decisions he has made and the actions he has taken. When they feed back to the class, encourage each group to expand on the ways in which his actions could be considered fair or unfair. Jot these down on the working wall.
- Help the class consider Old Macdonald's point of view further by creating a role on the wall for the character. On the flipchart or whiteboard, draw an outline to represent the farmer. In the space outside of the outline, write down what children notice about his external characteristics – what the character does, how he appears, what he says. Within the outline, write down words and phrases to describe the internal characteristics: words to describe his personality, as well as any thoughts and feelings that they have inferred. Give children the opportunity to verbalise why they believe Macdonald might be thinking or feeling those things, thereby explicitly making the link between the external and internal behaviours and responses – *how does what a character might do or say inform us about what he might be thinking or feeling and vice versa?*

- Next, consider the response and the feelings of the animals. Ask each group to choose one of the animals that they have seen either using a phone in the book or responding to having it taken away. *What would you like to ask them? What would you like to find out?* Children might ask questions relating to how the animals felt and the decisions they made before, during and after they had access to their own phones, as well as looking forward to what they might hope from the future. After the groups have had sufficient time to generate and note down their questions, encourage them to review the questions that they've compiled and decide which of their questions will be most effective in finding out something new, something that they didn't know already, or something that they might have suspected but would like to have confirmed. *How do they imagine the animal will respond to their line of questioning? How have they phrased their questions? Is it sensitive to their current feelings and does it avoid judging any behaviour?*
- Allow each group some time to hot-seat their chosen animal. One or two children from the group might take it in turns to answer questions raised by the rest of their group, which may develop into a short dialogue. After they've had time to conduct their hot-seating, the groups might report back to the class on what they found out, or some groups might volunteer to recreate and share their hot-seated conversation for the rest of the class to watch and discuss.
- Finish the session, by challenging children to write a letter in role as an animal of their choosing. They should write to Farmer Macdonald in an effort to persuade him to return their phone – or perhaps offering an alternate solution to the dilemma. Encourage children to draw on their understanding of Old Macdonald, referring to the role on the wall, to make their letter more effective: *what does Macdonald want? What is he worried about? How will you reassure him that things will be better this time?* They can also refer back to any displayed notes about phone use from Session 1 and 2 to allow them to remind Macdonald of the many advantages of having access to their own phone as well as reassuring the farmer of how any disadvantages might be avoided.
- When all children have written their letters, they could be collected in and then redistributed so that each child can read one of the letters imagining that they were Old Macdonald and then offer his response.

## SESSION 4

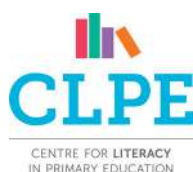
- Start the session by working with the children to summarise the story so far and recap all of their proposed solutions for Old Macdonald's dilemma, including those ideas that they had included in their letter writing at the end of Session 3 or that had been raised previously during their discussion of the book and as part of the hot-seating activity.
- Then, re-read the book from the start, continuing this time up to page 16 (pausing halfway down the page after the text says *"And promised to give back the phones / If they obeyed these rules"*). It would be useful to share the accompanying illustration of the characters seated in conference around the table, but – if possible – cover the remaining text.
- Continuing to draw on the discussions that have taken place so far, work with the class to clarify what the main reasons might be that the farmer took away all of the phones.
- If the children aren't already using it in relation to the story, introduce the term '**screen time**'. *Have any of the children come across the phrase before? If so, in what context? What do they think it means? What is it referring to? Do they think 'screen time' has positive or negative connotations? What makes them think that?* [Note that most online dictionaries now have two definitions listed for this phrase, so if they look it up, children will need to use their judgement as to which definition is most pertinent to this context].

- After children have shared their initial understanding of the term, you might choose to share the video 'Screen Time: How Much is Too Much?' from Above the Noise and Common Sense Education. It provides a definition of 'screen time' as well as comparing some of the ways in which the term might be used in headlines and other media with the findings from a number of research projects: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fVAlEerZpd4>
- Once they have seen the video, give the children time to share their response: *What did they find out? What did they find most interesting? Did anything surprise them? Do they have any questions? What more would they like to know? What ideas raised in this short film might be most relevant to the situation in the story?*
- In small groups, give the children time to discuss further the difference between active and passive screen time. *Is there a way to classify the different ways in which a smart phone or device might be used as either active or passive? Are some activities easier to place than others? Why might that be?* Children may benefit from referring back to the lists they made in Session 1 about all of the different uses of the smart phone.
- Explain to the class that you are all going to work together to create your own version of the meeting depicted in the illustration on page 16 in which Old Macdonald is pointing at the agreed rules for ongoing safe and responsible phone use on the farm. Decide which roles everyone is going to play – it would be useful to have the teacher in role as Old Macdonald to raise questions or challenge potential rules from within the meeting. Before the whole class meeting starts, children might benefit from time in smaller groups to discuss and jot down ideas for rules, persuasive arguments for phone use of the farm and how it will support the work that gets done, etc. Once they've had time to consider some potential ideas, draw the class together and, in role as Macdonald, welcome them and start by reviewing why they have had to gather together today and reach a consensus as to the intended aims and outcomes of the meeting. You might also generate guidelines for the how the discussion will be managed effectively so that all voices are heard fairly. Work together until a list of rules has been drafted, refined and agreed upon.
- After the meeting is over, step out of role and review the list of rules as a class. *Do they think all of these rules are fair for responsible and safe mobile phone use? Why/why not? Are there any rules that they feel are more important than others? If so, why?*

## SESSION 5

- Re-read the book from the beginning again and all the way through to the end.
- Discuss the children's responses to the end of the story. *Were they satisfied with the way in which Old Macdonald and his farm animals resolved their problems around phone use on the farm? What did they like about the ending? What more would they like to know? Where could the story go from here?*
- Teachers might need to be aware that the popular social media acronym YOLO with which the story ends is also the name of a popular app by the company responsible for SnapChat in which users invite followers to comment anonymously on their stories and posts. Although the age limit for SnapChat and therefore for YOLO is 13+ some children may choose to share their experiences with the app or have questions related to it. The website Internet Matters has a summary of the app, how it can be used and any concerns raised in relation to cyber-bullying: <https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/guidance/parents-guide-what-is-yolo-app-and-is-it-safe/>
- You could then use this as a springboard for discussing and confirming the different age limits for other popular social media sites. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and Youtube all have a minimum age of 13. WhatsApp has its minimum age set at 16. Further details and information can be found at <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/>. *Why do you think these age limits have been set?* Make a note of the children's ideas and pick up on any misconceptions or learning points as necessary, in line with your school's acceptable internet use policy and guidance for children.

- Discuss the decision by the story's creators to draw on this nursery rhyme. *Why do you think the creators chose this nursery rhyme to explore these issues or worries?* If they don't already know them, you might also choose to read aloud or recommend the other three books in this series to compare.
- Explore, initially as a class, and then in smaller groups, what other safe/responsible technology use issues might warrant a story; and then what nursery rhymes or fairy tales might be selected and adapted to communicate those ideas. In selecting ideas that might inspire stories, children can refer to the notes made and responses to the book and discussions throughout these sessions: *what are the positive and negative things about smart phones – and how can we get the most, safely, from this technology? What other concerns are associated with mobile phones that perhaps aren't reflected in this particular story?* These might include sharing of personal information; miscommunication; bullying; spending money accidentally...
- Many of these aspects of responsible smart phone use and online safety could be addressed in further PSHE activities and there are many organisations which provide a wealth of resources that teachers might review and choose to draw upon to support those discussions, including the following:
  - <https://www.childnet.com/resources/being-smart-with-your-smartphone>
  - <https://schools.beano.com/lesson-plans/responsible-use-of-mobile-phones/>
  - <https://www.outofyourhands.com/online-safety/your-mobile-phone/>
  - <https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools/resources/social-media-year6-lesson-plan-pack>
  - <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/mobile-phone-safety/>
- After discussing the issues which most concern them, children might be given the opportunity to spend time creating posters or leaflets or preparing oral or recorded presentations promoting safe use of phones, including successfully managing screen time. Presentations could be given to other classes in the school or recorded for the school website or social media feed – in line with school online safety policies. Alternatively, if children have identified a familiar traditional tale, fairy story or nursery rhyme that would allow them to explore a key online safety issue, they might be given the time required to shape and refine their story, either independently or collaboratively, and create their own narrative which could culminate in bookmaking, storytelling, or other oral/performance outcomes.



These resources were created in partnership with CLPE.

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