



# P4C on a Farm – What is farming?

Session by Gina Parker (Mullarkey) of Little Chatters



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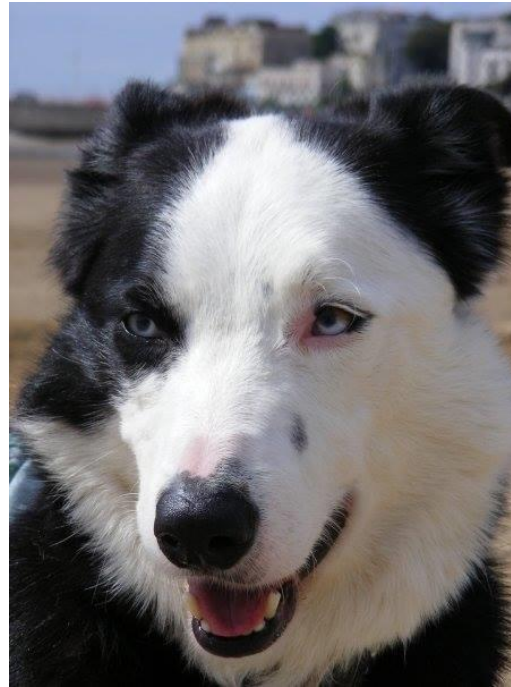


# Activity 1: Puzzling P4C (Warm up part 1)



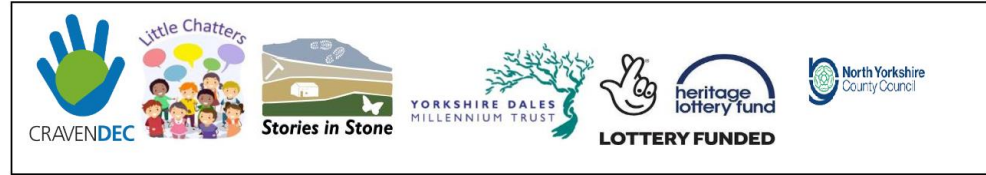
1. The letters that make up the word 'Philosophy' are hidden. (For larger groups multiple sets can be made in different colours)
2. The group must find all of the letters (this involves the group working collaboratively to establish a way to ensure that all are found and that everyone has at least one or a partner who is holding one).
3. Keeping hold of their letter they must order themselves to make up a word
4. What do they think this word means?

# Activity 2: Animal Orchestra (Warm up part 2)



1. Ask the children what animals might they see at the farm?
2. Choose 3 or 4 animals.
3. Hold up the image of that animal and ask the children to make that noise, slowly at first and then more quickly and in no order.
4. Lay the images on the floor and instead of asking the children to make the sound of the animal that you hold up, ask them to make the sound of the animal before in the sequence.

# Activity 3: What is farmer?

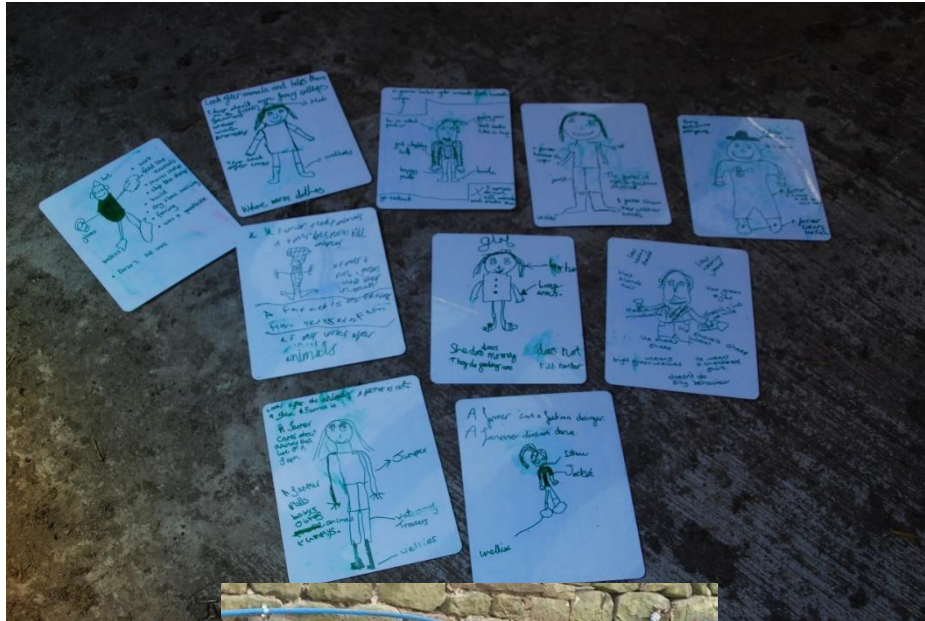


This activity was devised to uncover what pupil's already know about farming and farmers and was used before they met the farmer.

They were encouraged to draw and label a farmer according to what they looked like and did.

We were fortunate to visit Keasden Head Farm, where Sheila the farmer immediately created conflict in many children's thinking as a female farmer.

The session then went onto explore the farmers relationships with animals and the environment.



# Activity 4: Creative Creations



A feeder for pheasants



Sheep clipper



A crow trap

**Sheep clipper** – The children were encouraged to think of creative uses for this item before seeing its real function. Examples included a monster trap and a ride.

**Crow trap** - Crows can peck out lambs' eyes so when the lambs are young the crows are trapped in the fenced 'cage'. They are attracted into it by food but then can't fly out. A philosophical question generated by the children who were upset by seeing the crows flapping about in the trap was 'Are the crows more important than the lambs?'

# Activity 5: Likes and Dislikes



Children have varying reactions and experiences of a farm and their linked animals, so this activity enabled us to uncover these and in some cases change opinions.

After visiting the cows the children lined up according to how much they liked or disliked the cows – this of course involved a lot of discussion and exploring of reasons to see if peers liked/disliked them more or less. Reasons were explored as a collective, which resulted in many individuals moving up or down the line having understood others justifications and responded to them.

This activity could apply to many experiences on the farm or in the outdoors. For example after a mini beast animal choose one of those animals found – e.g. a slug, or consider different environments, outdoor activities etc.

# Activity 6: Environmental change



During the farm visit we considered the role of the farmer in terms of environmental stewardship. At Keasden head farm they have environmental corridors and of course the ‘beauty’ of the landscape itself.

1. Children are provided with empty picture frames and are encouraged to find their perfect picture in the landscape.
2. An image of a wind turbine is provided to super impose on that perfect picture and reactions discussed. Philosophical questions can also be developed from this stimulus.

# Activity 7: Practical action



The children were able to mirror some of the roles of the farmer, planting trees in the environmental corridor and washing a cow for show days.



# Activity 8: Questions and more questions?

Pupil's were invited to develop ask the expert questions to ask the farmer and philosophical questions to take back to school. Examples generated included:



Can animals be friends?

Can animals talk to each other?

Why should we care about trees?

Are the crows more important than lambs?

What is wild?

Does beauty last for ever?

Can animals understand other animals?

Should animals be allowed to go where they like?

# Activity 9: A quick review?



Time was short, so a quick review using the body as a scale to score the day by was used.

Pupils are encouraged to Stretch high in the air on tip toes if they really enjoyed the day, to curled up in a ball on the floor if they didn't, of course they can choose anywhere in between too.

Supporting reasons were of course important to explore.

# Some additional P4C 'Farm' animal activities



*On our farm visit children were asked to look out for other animals. Of course not all animals we saw were what they considered to be 'traditional' 'farm' animals; for example a peacock and of course the many animals found naturally in the environment. Many activities can follow from this including;*

# Sorting images according to whether the animal is a 'farm' animal, a 'wild' animal or a 'pet' – with linked questions such as 'Where does one end and the other start?' What does 'wild', 'farm' or 'pet' mean? Is there a better way to group them?

# Use the spots and stripes film produced by Jason Buckley 'Philosophy Man' to introduce the question 'Would it be good if animals could talk?' <https://vimeo.com/198758372>

#Choosing which animal you would like as a pet

#Choosing which animal you would rather be

#Ordering from the animal you 'like' the most to the animal you 'like' the least