

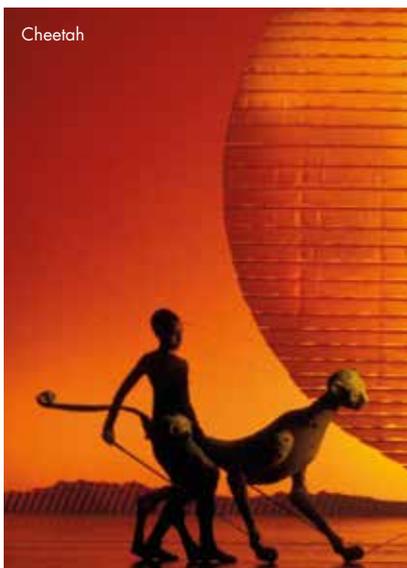
**'The Lion King' spectacularly builds on the dramatic device of anthropomorphism, creating 'creatures' which tell a very human story while retaining their animal characteristics. This lesson will prepare students for this convention.**



## BEHAVING LIKE ANIMALS

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understanding anthropomorphism and its importance in literature and theatre
- Understanding an author's craft (character, setting, mood) and describe in terms of anthropomorphism how animals are often represented by particular human qualities
- Exploring and discussing characterisation, narrative devices and figurative language



To learn more view  
**THE LION KING  
BEHIND THE SCENES**

**EPISODE 1** - FROM SCREEN TO STAGE  
**EPISODE 3** - MEET THE CHARACTERS  
**EPISODE 10** - DANCE & MOVEMENT

### PREPARATION

**Photocopy the project sheet (Secondary 2) for each student.**

### LESSON OUTLINE

Start by talking about different animals – their rich variety in type, size, geographic location and degree of approachability. The discussion will cover categories such as pets, domestic, farm, British wild, jungle and Arctic. Ask students to describe the animals. Characteristics to consider include their size, the sounds they make and their movements.

Choose students to act out animal actions, leading to interaction between two different animals, for example act a sheepdog with a sheep, a cat and a mouse or a tiger stalking an antelope. Ask students to explain how their actions help to represent the animals.

Continue the discussion with the role of animals in literature. Ask students for examples from books they have read. These may include, for example; '101 Dalmatians', 'The Jungle Book' or the White Rabbit in 'Alice in Wonderland'. Discuss how the animals behave as humans. Why do writers choose to write about animals as people? Is it easier? Harder? Why?

Introduce and explain the concept of anthropomorphism – imbuing animals with the attributes, feelings and behaviour of humans.

Point out how species of animals are usually given specific human qualities.

The dog frequently represents loyalty and trust ('Lassie'), yet his cousin the wolf often represents ravenous destruction ('The Three Little Pigs'). The snake is often sneaky and treacherous

('The Jungle Book'), but in certain Eastern traditions the snake is the bringer of wisdom. Pigs personify greed, but what of 'Babe'?

Hand out the project sheet to the class. Students choose a number of different animals and discuss the human qualities and attributes normally ascribed to them. Discuss their ideas as a class.

### PLENARY

Remind students of the ideas explored in the lesson about how animals are often portrayed as having human qualities. Talk about how these could apply to 'The Lion King', and prepare students for the animal characters displaying the full range of human emotions, qualities, and defects.

### ADAPTING THE ACTIVITY FOR YOUNGER STUDENTS

To adapt the activity for younger students you could begin by asking them to list collective nouns for animals (herd, flock), list names for the young of animals (kitten, lamb) and list names for the homes of animals (stable, nest). This would then lead onto discussing similes based on animals as 'wise as an owl' or as 'cunning as a fox'. Ask students to create their own imaginative similes (as wobbly as a wombat) and use this to introduce and discuss the concept of anthropomorphism.

# BEHAVING LIKE ANIMALS

## Choose four different animals.

For each, describe what human feelings or actions they are usually taken to represent (anthropomorphism). Why do you think they were chosen? One example has been done for you.

### ANIMAL

**FOX**

### HUMAN QUALITIES

Sly and cunning. The fox slinks quietly round the farm to deceive the farmer and steal the chickens.

1.

2.

3.

4.

Are the anthropomorphic representations really like the actual animals?

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What are the advantages and disadvantages for a writer using anthropomorphism?

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# NATIONAL CURRICULUM LINKS

## LESSON PLAN 2 - BEHAVING LIKE ANIMALS - PRE-SHOW

### ENGLAND

	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
<b>English – Spoken word</b>	speaking confidently and effectively	listening and responding in a variety of different contexts, both formal and informal, and evaluating content, viewpoints, evidence and aspects of presentation
	using Standard English confidently in a range of formal and informal contexts, including classroom discussion	working effectively in groups of different sizes and taking on required roles, including leading and managing discussions, involving others productively, reviewing and summarising, and contributing to meeting goals/deadlines
<b>Drama</b>		apply knowledge and understanding when making, performing and responding to drama
		work collaboratively to generate, develop and communicate ideas

### WALES

	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
<b>English – Oracy</b>	communicate for a range of purposes	communicate for a range of purposes
	speaking and listening individually, in pairs, in groups and as members of a class	speaking and listening individually, in pairs, in groups and as members of a class
	using a variety of methods to present ideas, including ICT, dramatic approaches, discussion and debate	using a variety of methods to present ideas, including ICT, dramatic approaches, discussion and debate
	present, talk and perform in formal and informal contexts	present, talk and perform in formal and informal contexts

### NORTHERN IRELAND

	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
<b>English with Media</b>	expressing meaning, feelings and viewpoints	expressing meaning, feelings and viewpoints
	talking to include debate, role-play, interviews, presentations and group discussions	talking to include debate, role-play, interviews, presentations and group discussions
	participating in a range of drama activities	participating in a range of drama activities
<b>Drama</b>	engage with a range of stimuli to develop critical and creative thinking skills	engage with a range of stimuli to develop critical and creative thinking skills
	take part in improvisation	take part in improvisation

# NATIONAL CURRICULUM LINKS

## LESSON PLAN 2 - BEHAVING LIKE ANIMALS - PRE-SHOW

### SCOTLAND

	<b>Third</b>	<b>Fourth – Senior Phase</b>
<b>Literacy and English – Listening and Talking</b>	When I engage with others, I can make a relevant contribution, encourage others to contribute and acknowledge that they have the right to hold a different opinion	When I engage with others I can make a relevant contribution, ensure that everyone has an opportunity to contribute and encourage them to take account of others' points of view or alternative solutions
	I can independently select ideas and relevant information for different purposes, organise essential information or ideas and any supporting detail in a logical order, and use suitable vocabulary to communicate effectively with my audience	I can independently select ideas and relevant information for different purposes, organise essential information or ideas and any supporting detail in a logical order, and use suitable vocabulary to communicate effectively with my audience
	I can show my understanding of what I listen to or watch by commenting, with evidence, on the content and form of short and extended texts	I can show my understanding of what I listen to or watch by giving detailed, evaluative comments, with evidence, about the content and form of short and extended texts
<b>Expressive arts – Drama</b>	I can create, develop and sustain a realistic or stylised character through the use of voice, movement and language	In response to a variety of stimuli, I can use my understanding of characterisation to create characters using different approaches, making use of voice, movement and language. I can present my work to an audience
	Having developed ideas from a range of stimuli, I can contribute to devising, rehearsing and presenting drama or scripts	I can analyse technical aspects of drama and scripts, make informed judgments and express considered opinions on my own and others' work
	I can respond to the experience of drama by discussing my thoughts and feelings. I can give and accept constructive comment on my own and others' work	Having had opportunities to lead negotiation and decision making, I can work on my own and with others to devise, rehearse and refine dramas and scripts