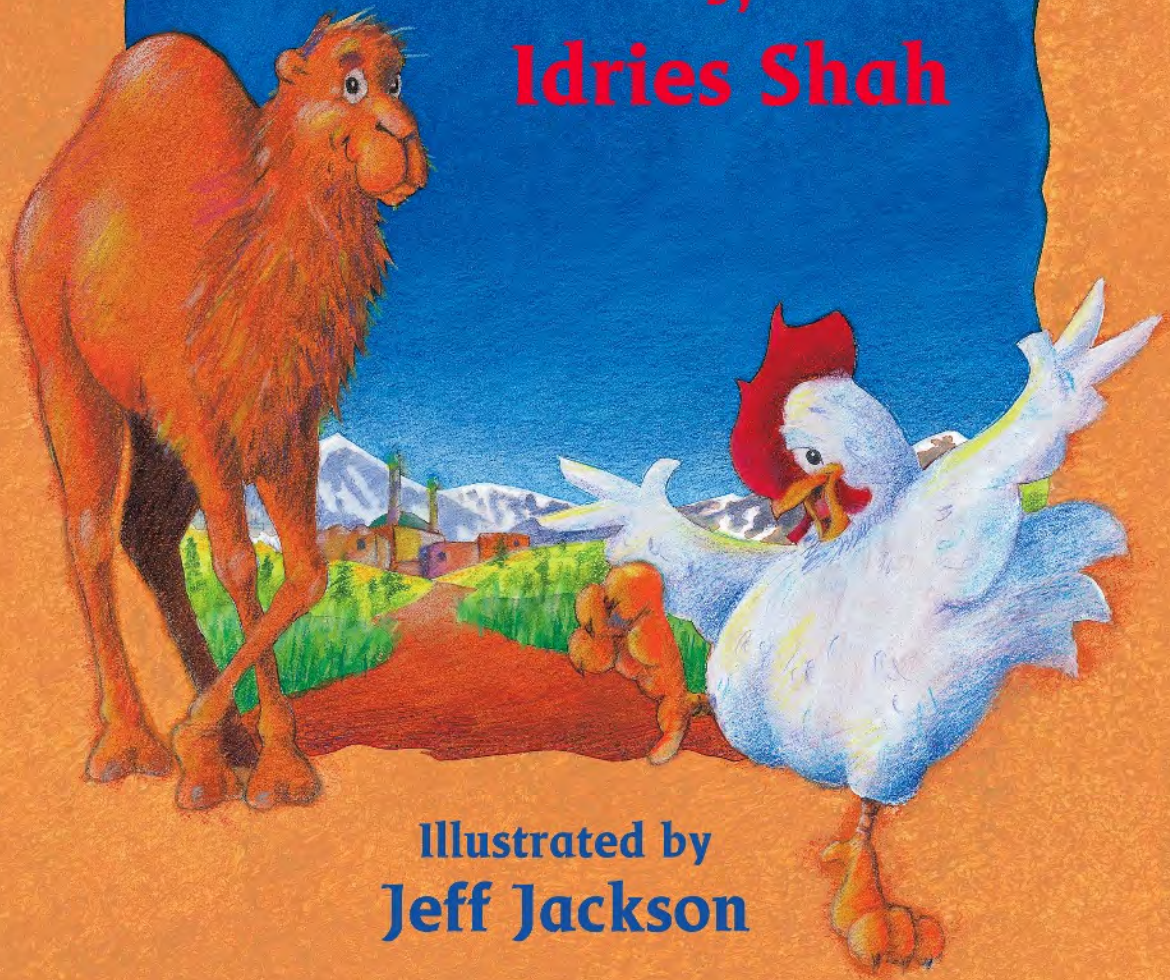


# The Silly Chicken

by  
**Idries Shah**



Illustrated by  
**Jeff Jackson**



**HOOPOE EARLY LITERACY CURRICULUM  
TEACHER'S ACTIVITY GUIDE**

Teaching-Stories™: Learning that Lasts  
**Grades PreK - 1**





# Hoopoe Early Literacy Curriculum ***Teaching-Stories: Learning That Lasts***



**A Teacher's Activity Guide for  
Pre-K – 1<sup>st</sup> Grade**

## The Silly Chicken

by

Idries Shah

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***Writers***

**Laurie R. Noe, EdD**, Director of Early Childhood Education,  
Housatonic Community College, Bridgeport, CT

**Susan Josephs**, Education Consultant, ISHK

***Editor***

**Denise Nessel, PhD**, Early Education Program Director for Hoopoe Books/ISHK.

Senior Consultant and Director of Publications, National Urban  
Alliance for Effective Education



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**WORKSHEETS:** The worksheets included in this guide can be used for many of the activities. Worksheets include: color pictures for dramatic play, matching, and more; chicken figures to use for art and writing activities.



### ***Standards***

#### **Other Symbols Used in this Guide:**

- ◇ National Standards for Arts Education K-4
- ◇◇ National Standards for English Language Arts K-12
- ◆ National Head Start Child Outcomes PreK
- ◆◆ National Principles and Standards for School Mathematics PreK-K
- ^ National Science Education Standards K-4
- ^^ National Geography Standards K-12
- % National Head Start Program Standards
- %% National Association for Sport and Physical Education

## **OTHER HOOPOE BOOKS**

**The Boy Without a Name**  
**The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal**  
**The Farmer's Wife**  
**Fatima the Spinner and the Tent**  
**The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water**  
**The Magic Horse**  
**The Man and the Fox**  
**The Man with Bad Manners**  
**Neem the Half-Boy**  
**The Old Woman and the Eagle**

### **Other Teacher's Activity Guides**

#### **Activity Guides for PreK-1**

**The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal**  
**The Farmer's Wife**  
**The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water**  
**The Man and the Fox**  
**The Man with Bad Manners**  
**The Old Woman and the Eagle**

#### **Lesson Plans for Grades 1 – 2**

**The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal**  
**The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water**  
**The Man with Bad Manners**  
**The Man and the Fox**  
**The Old Woman and the Eagle**  
**The Silly Chicken**

#### **Lesson Plans for Grades 3 – 5**

**The Boy Without a Name**  
**Fatima the Spinner and the Tent**  
**The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water**  
**The Magic Horse**  
**Neem the Half-Boy**  
**The Old Woman and the Eagle**

For information about these and other educational materials,  
please visit

**Hoopoe Books at [www.hoopoekids.com](http://www.hoopoekids.com)**



*NEA TODAY- The Magazine of the National Education Association*

Where schools for children are rare, education comes primarily from stories. For many, many centuries, the peoples of Afghanistan, Central Asia, and the Middle East have told stories among themselves and to their children. Idries Shah, who came from Paghman, Afghanistan, spent 30 years of his life collecting, selecting, and translating stories from this tradition. Those he selected were Teaching-Stories created specifically to help people of all ages better understand themselves and their world. Reading or telling these stories, even today, offers much more than entertainment – though, of course, they are entertaining – and much more than a simple moral.

Children will take what they can from each tale according to their stage of cognitive development. At first, a child may respond only to one character or event in a story, or may understand only the most obvious meaning, but he or she will grasp a little more each time, bit by bit finding more meanings, concepts, and insights.

Teacher's Activity Guide for *The Silly Chicken* – Pre-K – 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

### USING THE TEACHING-STORIES

You will be able to accomplish many things by using the Hoopoe Books Teaching-Stories in your classroom including:

- ★ To allow and encourage children to absorb each Teaching-Story so that it can help them understand and prepare for analogous situations in their own lives.
- ★ To encourage children to enjoy and appreciate stories from the cultures of Afghanistan and other parts of Central Asia and the Middle East that have been told for many generations.
- ★ To guide discussions of the stories in ways that each story will help children learn to think more effectively.
- ★ To use the language patterns and vocabulary of the stories in ways that will help children learn to read and use language effectively themselves.
- ★ To give children opportunities to think about the meanings of the stories in ways that will enrich their lives.

### HOW THIS GUIDE CAN HELP YOU

This guide gives you many activities to do with *The Silly Chicken*. Children will get the most out of this story if you remember these points:

- ★ Children need to hear this story several times in order to become familiar with it and begin to understand its meanings. This guide will give you ideas for reading and rereading the stories to children in order to have them learn the stories.
- ★ Children understand and remember a story better if they discuss it with you and their classmates and relate it to their own experiences. This guide will give you ideas for engaging children in discussions so that they can express the meanings the stories have for them.
- ★ Children enjoy a story more if they are able to respond to it in interesting ways such as drawing a scene, retelling the story, acting the story out, or writing in response to the story. This guide will give you ideas for enjoyable activities that are connected to the story.
- ★ Children enjoy making a story their own by engaging in different types of activities that relate to the story. This guide will give you ideas for using center activities that will help children better understand the story.
- ★ Children will enjoy the stories even more if they share what they are learning with their families. This guide will give you ideas for having children share the stories and what they are learning at school with their families.

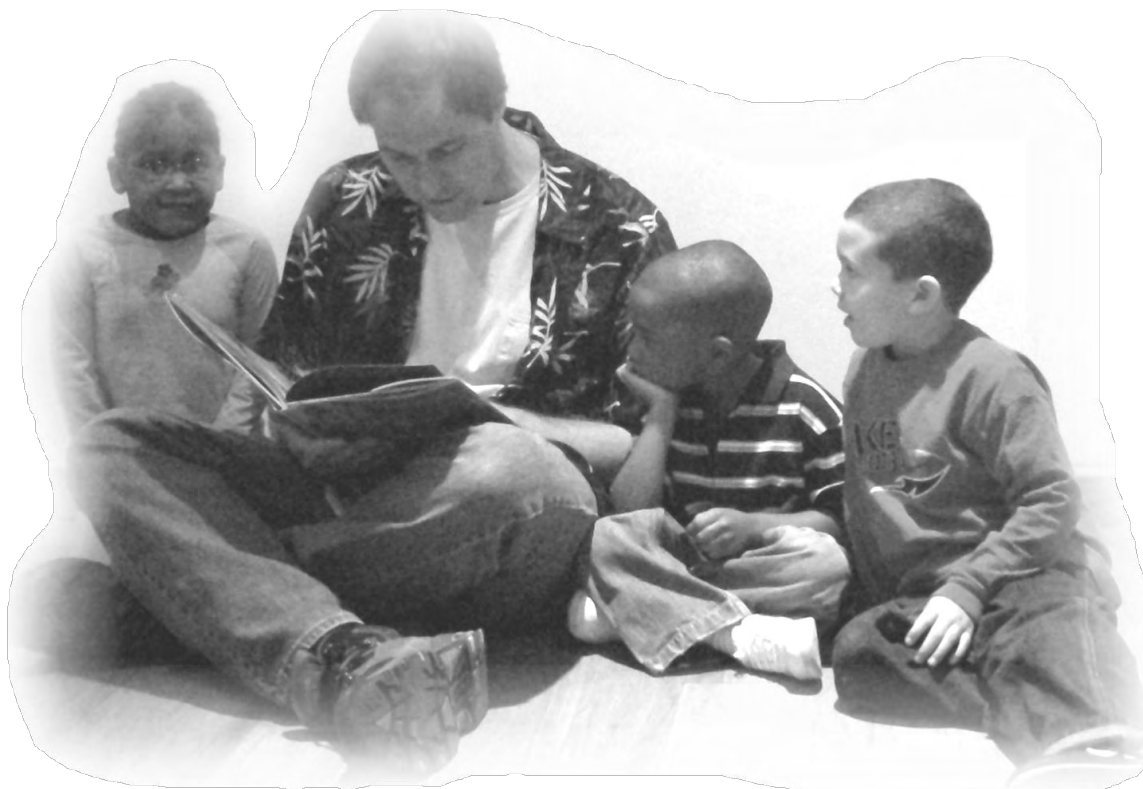


### ACTIVITY GUIDE FOR USING THE STORIES IN THE CLASSROOM

The activity guide is designed to help you get the most from working with Teaching-Stories. This guide is organized into group activities, center activities, and activities that build home/school connections. All of the activities in this guide are tied to national education standards for PreK-1st grade.

You may have a few things to prepare for each lesson. A day or two before you use an activity, look over the plan to make sure you understand the steps and make any necessary preparations.

For more information on the Teaching-Story and its use as an educational instrument, please download the free booklet *Teaching-Stories: Learning that Lasts* from our website [www.hoopoekids.com](http://www.hoopoekids.com).



*“These Teaching-Stories can be experienced on many levels. A child may simply enjoy hearing them; an adult may analyze them in a more sophisticated way. Both may eventually benefit from the lessons within.”*

Lynn Neary “*All Things Considered*,” NPR News, Washington  
(An audio version of this entire program can be heard on [www.hoopoekids.com](http://www.hoopoekids.com))

## I. GROUP ACTIVITIES



### Story Synopsis



### *The Silly Chicken*

A chicken is taught to speak by a man who, the story tells us, is “clever” – but is he? The chicken proclaims that a disaster is about to happen. Highly anxious, the townspeople run frantically to escape. When nothing happens, they find out that the chicken didn’t know what it was talking about. At first they are angry, then amused at how easily they were fooled. In the end they laugh at the chicken because, as they now assume, this chicken – and all other chickens – are simply silly.

In an entertaining way, this story illustrates, among other things, what can happen when people do not think critically about what they do and hear. It reminds us that not everything that is said or read is true.



### A. READ ALOUD

Reading books aloud to children is one of the most important things you can do. When done with skill and on a regular basis, reading stimulates development in all areas of language and literacy: listening, speaking, reading and writing. This easy-to-do activity builds a range of important cognitive and communication skills. This basic activity

addresses numerous standards and objectives. Reading together is also a social activity, creating a bond between the child and the reader.

## Repetition Deepens Understanding

Children love to hear Teaching-Stories again and again. With each reading, children learn what they can in accordance with their understanding. At first, a child may respond only to one character or event in the story, or understand only the most basic meaning. But with each rereading, he or she will find more meanings and insights.



### Standards\*

Children will:

- ★ demonstrate increasing ability to attend to and understand conversations and stories.♦
- ★ show growing interest and involvement in listening to and discussing a variety of fiction and nonfiction books and poetry.♦
- ★ demonstrate progress in abilities to retell and dictate stories from books and experiences, to act out stories in dramatic play, and to predict what will happen next in a story.♦
- ★ progress in learning how to handle and care for books, knowing to view one page at a time in sequence from front to back, and understanding that a book has a title, author and illustrator.♦
- ★ begin to understand and share opinions about artistic products and experiences.♦
- ★ progress in understanding similarities and respecting differences among people, such as gender, race, special needs, culture, language, and family structures.♦
- ★ read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience. ♦♦
- ★ understand there are different responses to specific artworks.♦

\*See legend on Table of Contents page for description of symbols.

## ACTIVITIES

1. Practice reading the story aloud a few times to perfect fluency and inflection.
2. Choose a prop, such as a chicken puppet, to focus the children's attention and trigger prior knowledge to help comprehension. (You may want to download simple paper bag and finger puppet directions as well as directions for felt-boards and characters on [www.hoopoekids.com](http://www.hoopoekids.com).)



## I. Group Activities

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3. Introduce the book by telling about the story, the “title,” “author” and the “illustrator” which are important vocabulary words.
4. Read with expression, enjoyment, and enthusiasm! Remember, your enthusiasm is infectious – your own enjoyment tells the children that they will enjoy reading, too.
5. After reading the story, have children choose an illustration in the book and explain why they like the picture and tell something that they think the illustrator did that was different or especially interesting to them.

## ASSESSMENT

Ask questions and encourage the children to ask questions before, during and after the story. See some discussion-starter questions in the following Discussion section. Invite children to recall and retell the story.



## B. DISCUSSION

A discussion is more than just questions and answers. It is a back and forth sharing of thoughts and ideas. However, questions are a great way to start a discussion. Remember to listen and respond to whatever children have to say. Add to their thoughts with extension ideas, vocabulary, and genuine interest.

We need to ask questions that engage the child in making her/his own assessment of a situation and that encourage analogical thought (i.e., using the characters and events of the story to identify with and respond by thinking “if this were me”). With Teaching-Stories, in particular, open-ended questions encourage analogical thinking and leave the door open for deeper levels of understanding.

### Use “Wait Time” When Asking Questions

“Wait Time” refers to the amount of time you allow to elapse between the time you ask a question and the time a child begins to speak or the time you speak again. When you wait patiently and quietly, you encourage children to think before they respond. The number and quality of responses you get is likely to increase when students have time to think and formulate an answer.

Use wait times of 5 seconds or more after asking any question and after children answer questions. Remind the children that this is because you are paying close attention and thinking carefully about what they have said and that you want to be sure they have time to think and explain their views. Model and encourage this behavior in discussion between the children.



## Standards\*

Children will:

- ★ apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They will draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features.◊◊
- ★ use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes.◊◊
- ★ use an increasingly complex and varied spoken vocabulary.◆
- ★ develop increasing ability to find more than one solution to a question, task, or problem.◆
- ★ progress in responding sympathetically to peers who are in need, upset, hurt, or angry; and in expressing empathy or caring for others.◆

\*See legend on Table of Contents page for description of symbols.

## ACTIVITIES & ASSESSMENT

Reading, writing, speaking and listening are all linked literacy activities. You might wish to use some of the following questions as group-writing prompts as well as prompts for oral discussion. (See "Group Writing" section on page 9.)

### 1. Before Reading - Prediction Questions

Prediction questions **activate children's prior knowledge**. This story was designed to help improve children's thinking and comprehension. It has distinct patterns of language and events that invite participatory listening and that lead to predictions about what will happen next. Before you begin reading the book, you might point to the picture on the cover and ask:

*What do you think might be silly about a chicken?*

*What might a silly chicken do?*

*What do you think the people have to do with the story?*

*How do you think the chicken is feeling?*

Now turn to the title page and ask:

*What do you think the chicken is doing?*

*What do you think the camel is doing?*

### 2. During Reading

As you are reading the story, you might stop at critical junctures and ask children what they think will happen next. Here are some suggestions for places to stop and invite predictions:



## I. Group Activities

When the chicken, at last, learns to speak:

It took him quite a long time, but in the end, the chicken could speak perfectly well, just like you and me.

*What do you think the chicken will do now that it knows how to speak?*

When the people have run every which way and still cannot escape:

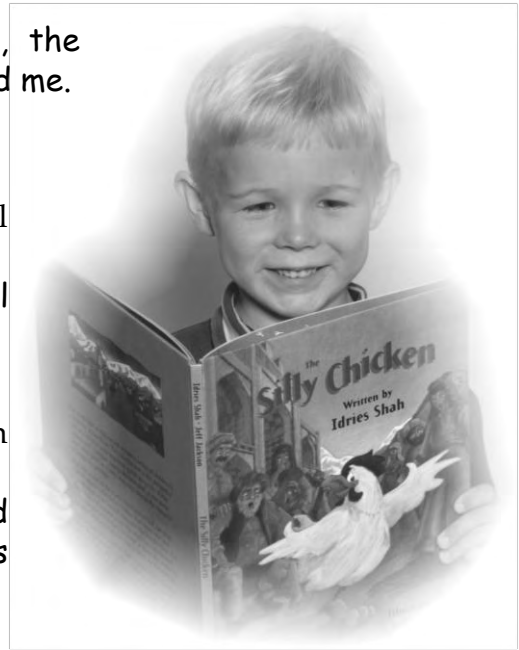
They ran in every possible direction. But they still couldn't get away from the earth.

*What do you think the people will do now?*

When the people tell the chicken off for leading them astray:

"You made us run in every possible direction! And all the while we thought you knew the earth was going to swallow us up!"

*What do you think the chicken will say to the people?*



### 3. After Reading - Developing Comprehension

Discussing the story after reading enables children to deepen their understanding of the characters and events. Here are some questions you may want to ask to help children develop their comprehension of the story. Choose the questions you wish to use. You do not have to use all of them.

*What did the clever man try to do at the beginning of the story?*

*Did the clever man succeed in talking like a chicken?*

*Did the clever man succeed in understanding chicken language?*

*What did the silly chicken say to the village people when he learned how to talk?*

*Why were the people so scared?*

*Is it really possible to run away from the earth?*

*Where did the people end up after they ran in every possible direction?*

*Did the chicken know what he was saying?*

*How did the people feel when they learned that the chicken didn't know what he was saying?*

### 4. After Reading - Reflecting on the Story

Invite children to reflect on and interpret events in the story with questions like the ones below. Again, you do not have to use all of them, but choose some that will initiate discussion and reflection.

*What was your favorite part of this story? Why? What was your favorite picture? Why?*

*Do you agree that the clever man was clever? Why or why not?*

*The clever man taught the chicken to speak as we do. But do you think the clever man believed that the chicken understood what he was saying? Why or why not?*

*Can one really run in every possible direction?*

*Is it really possible for the earth to swallow you up?*

*Why do you think the people believed the chicken?*

*The chicken really didn't know what it was talking about. How can you tell when people don't really know what they are talking about?*

*Can people sometimes say silly things and sometimes wise things? How can you tell the difference?*

*Do you agree that the chicken was silly - even at the end of the story? Why or why not?*

### **5. After Reading – Exploring Analogies**

Invite children to relate events, characters and situations in the story to themselves, to similar elements in other stories and to elements in the world around them. Thinking analogically in this way helps children better understand themselves and others. Here are some suggestions for questions to stimulate this kind of thinking:

*Do you think that sometimes people say things that they think are true, but they are mistaken? How can we tell whether what they say is true or not?*

*If someone told you something scary, would you believe him or her?*

*If someone told you something scary, what would you do?*

*Does being scared make you feel like the people in our story?*

*Do you think they behaved sensibly when they were afraid?*

*What would you have done if the chicken had told you “The earth is going to swallow us up!”?*

*Did you ever get so excited that you acted like the people in the town when they ran all around?*

*What made you so excited? What happened when the excitement went away?*

*Have you ever known anyone who acted silly? What did you do when he/she acted that way?*

*Do we all act silly sometimes? Why do you think that is?*

*What was the silliest thing you ever did? Why was it silly?*

*What was the silliest thing you ever saw someone do? Why was it silly?*



### C. GROUP WRITING

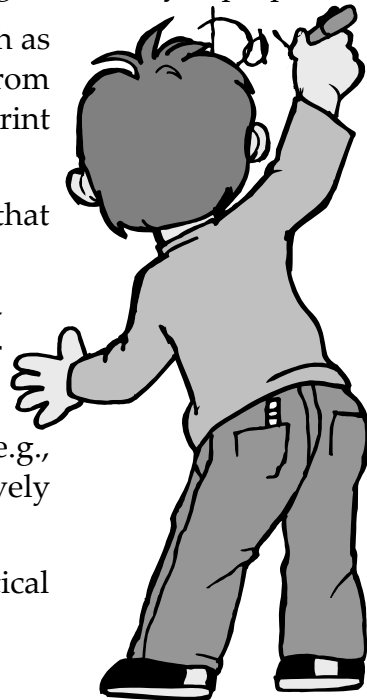
Writing with children draws attention to print, introduces the alphabet, models directionality of print, and sharpens communication skills. Use large print, repeat what you write, and involve the children in listening, speaking, writing and reading throughout the activity.



#### Standards\*

Children will:

- ★ develop increasing abilities to understand and use language to communicate information, experiences, ideas, feelings, opinions, questions, needs; and for other purposes.♦
- ★ progress in abilities to initiate and respond appropriately in conversation and discussions with peers and adults.♦
- ★ develop understanding that writing is a way of communicating for a variety of purposes.♦
- ★ demonstrate increasing awareness of concepts of print, such as that reading in English moves from top to bottom and from left to right, that speech can be written down, and that print conveys a message.♦
- ★ associate sounds with written words such as awareness that different words begin with the same sound.♦
- ★ progress from using scribbles, shapes, or pictures to represent ideas, to using letter-like symbols, to copying or writing familiar words such as their own name.♦
- ★ adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.◊◊
- ★ participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.◊◊



\*See legend on Table of Contents page for description of symbols.

### ACTIVITIES & ASSESSMENT

1. Use chart paper to list each child's response to any of the questions in the Discussion section. Let children watch as you write their words and reread them. Encourage the child to write his/her own name near his/her quote and to point to the words as each child reads it back.

2. Have children suggest words from the story they want to see written. Place them on a chart and let the child who suggested the word draw an image next to the word to identify it. These pages can be turned into books and placed on shelves with other “published” books for children to read.

**3. Name the silly chicken:** Children can think of names that have something to do with the way the chicken behaves or what he does in the story. Write the names on the board so the children can see them. They can explain their choices as a speaking activity.

4. Tell children the joke: Q: *Why did the chicken cross the road?* A: *To get to the other side.* Then have children write (or dictate) their own responses to the question of why the chicken crossed the road. Or, they can create their own silly chicken joke with the same format, such as: Q: *Why did the chicken cross the playground?* A: *To get to the other slide!*



## D. SOUNDS OF LANGUAGE

The basis for advanced language skills lies in the ability to discriminate the sounds of language and to manipulate those sounds.



### Standards\*

Children will:

- ★ show increasing ability to discriminate and identify sounds in spoken language.♦
- ★ show growing awareness of beginning and ending sounds of words.♦
- ★ show growing ability to hear and discriminate separate syllables in words.♦
- ★ associate sounds with written words, such as awareness that different words begin with the same sound.♦

\*See legend on Table of Contents page for description of symbols.

## ACTIVITIES

1. Have children listen to the sound that the chicken made at the beginning of the story. Say “*Tuck, tuck, tuck*” several times. Have pictures (or toys) of a truck, duck, a camel, a person, and a car. Then ask: Which of these words rhyme with the sound “tuck”?

2. Have a basket of toys and items that begin with the /ch/ sound such as cheese, chalk, chips, church, cherries, chicken, and chocolate. Talk to the children about each item introducing the words that they might not know. Include other objects and demonstrate how

## I. Group Activities

to categorize the objects into /ch/ words and other words. Have the basket available for children to work with during center activities.

3. Encourage children to make silly (nonsense) rhymes with the word *chicken*.

### 4. Every Possible Direction!

- a. Have children clap the syllables in the positional words that are found in the story such as: *through, into, across, up, down, around*.
- b. Think of other positional words such as: *above, below, beside, behind, over, under, near, in, out, beneath, on*. Clap the syllables and listen to the initial sounds. Which ones start with the same sounds?

/b/ - below   beneath   beside   behind

/uh/ - across   above   around   up   under

## ASSESSMENT

Notice whether children can choose rhyming words. Notice whether children repeat or emphasize the /ch/ or the /b/ beginning sound when they play with and sort the items. Listen as children segment and blend syllables.



## E. MUSIC



### Standards\*

Children will:

- ★ participate with increasing interest and enjoyment in a variety of music activities, including listening, singing, finger plays, games, and performances.♦
- ★ express through movement and dancing what is felt and heard in various musical tempos and styles.♦
- ★ show growth in moving in time to different patterns of beat and rhythm in music.♦
- ★ build an increasing understanding of directionality, order, and positions of objects, and words such as *up, down, over, under, top, bottom, outside, in front* and *behind* ♦

\*See legend on Table of Contents page for description of symbols.



## ACTIVITIES & ASSESSMENT

### 1. Finger Play - Up and Down and All Around

Up and down, around and around (*draw circles in the air*),  
Put your fingers on the ground.  
Over (*hold hands above lap*), under (*below legs*), in between (*hide hands in between legs*).  
Now my fingers can't be seen!

Hands in front, hands behind,  
Now my hands I cannot find.  
Here's my left hand, here's my right,  
Hands and fingers back in sight (*wriggle fingers*).

2. Have children listen to different music (just instrumental) and talk about how they think the composer was feeling when he wrote the music. Can they find any music that they think is "silly"? Have them do a "silly" dance to the "silly" music.

3. Listen to the "Chicken Dance." Three versions can be found at the link below.  
<http://www.whydidthechickencrosstheroad.com/sounds/chicken-dances/>

The movements to the dance go as follows:

- a. When the music starts, hold your hands out in front of you and open and close them like a chicken beak four times.
- b. Put your thumbs in your armpits and flap your wings four times.
- c. Place your arms and hands like the tail feathers of a chicken and wiggle down to the floor four times.
- d. Clap four times.
- e. Repeat steps 1-4 four times.
- f. After the fourth time, take the hands of the people on either side of you and everyone move in a circle.
- g. When you get dizzy, switch directions.

4. Have children learn the song and movements to "This is the Way" song.

**This is the Way** (*familiar tune, with chicken words*)

This is the way a chicken talks (*hand at mouth opening and closing as a beak*)

"Cluck, cluck, cluck" and "tuck, tuck, tuck." (*chicken noises*)

This is the way a chicken talks

"Cluck, cluck, cluck" and "tuck, tuck, tuck."

If you hear him say "Oh HEY!" (*shout last word*)

The earth will swallow you up today."

You just say "You are so silly, (*hands on hips, with heads shaking NO*)

I will not run away."



## F. MATH/SCIENCE



### Standards\*

Children will:

- ★ begin to participate in simple investigations to test observations, discuss and draw conclusions, and form generalizations.♦
- ★ develop understanding of scientific inquiry and of the properties of objects and materials.^
- ★ sort and classify objects according to their attributes and organize data about the objects; represent data using concrete objects, pictures, and graphs.♦♦
- ★ develop and evaluate inferences and predictions that are based on data.♦♦

\*See legend on Table of Contents page for description of symbols.

## ACTIVITIES

1. Have children talk about and draw a picture of their favorite animal. Then help the children to create a chart displaying all their animals. Organize the chart into categories such as: birds, fish, mammals, reptiles, insects, other. Discuss what appears to be any unusual elements about these animals, e.g., long noses, big feet, feathers, baldness, big ears, small tails, no tails, etc. After children have chosen their animal, you may want to introduce other animals for consideration such as chameleons, sea horses, crabs, walking sticks, ostriches, manatees, etc.

2. After creating a long list of favorite animals, have children sort them in a variety of ways. Think of categories that look at different traits: (1) Feet/No Feet; (2) Fly/ Walk/Swim; (3) Feathers/Scales/Shells/Fur/Hair. Chart the children's responses. Use a Venn diagram to show how any one of these animals compares and contrasts to the silly chicken.

3. You may use this opportunity to have children explore that animals look the way they do because of adaptation:

*Why does a camel have a hump?*

*Why does the kangaroo have a pouch?*

*Why does the cow have such a big udder?*

*Why does the bull have horns?*

#### 4. Play “What My Senses Tell Me” Game

- a. Gather several items with different properties: flat things (such as a paper clip), round things (a ball or an eraser), bumpy things (like a jack), scented things (like soap), hard things (such as a block), soft things (such as a feather), mechanical things (like a toy car), etc. Place each object inside a cereal or oat box, and seal the boxes up so the children cannot tell what’s inside. Set the boxes out in the Math/Science Center and have a chart next to each box on which you can write children’s observations.
- b. Have the children handle a box, shake it, listen to it, smell it. Then have them tell you what they sense, e.g., “a rattling sound,” “a sliding sound,” “a soapy smell,” “a very soft sound,” “round rolling feel,” and so on.
- c. Have this experiment in the center for several days, until all the children have a chance to experiment with the boxes. Then say, *“Let’s open the boxes so we can tell how much our ears, touch, and smell helped us learn about what’s inside.”* Point out how each description on the chart describes the item in the box.

Children do not have to guess what’s inside. The object of the game is to learn how to recognize what something is by using the sense of hearing, touch (feeling), and smell.

### ASSESSMENT

Note whether children can substantiate their reasoning for classifying an animal or object in a particular category. Note whether children can identify specific properties of various animals or objects.

# II. CENTER ACTIVITIES



## A. LISTENING CENTER



### Standards\*

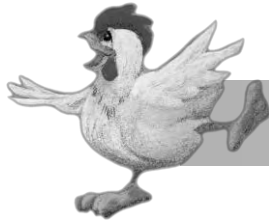
Children will:

- ★ demonstrate increasing ability to attend to and understand conversations, stories, songs, and poems.♦
- ★ show growing interest and involvement in listening to and discussing a variety of fiction and nonfiction books and poetry.♦
- ★ show progress in recognizing the association between spoken and written words by following print as it is read aloud.♦
- ★ learn to use mental maps to organize information about people, places, and environments.^
- ★ build an increasing understanding of directionality, order, and positions of objects, and words such as *up, down, over, under, top, bottom, outside, in front* and *behind*. ♦

\*See legend on Table of Contents page for description of symbols.

## ACTIVITIES & ASSESSMENT

1. Introduce the idea of listening to the story with the equipment in the Listening Center. Make sure children know how to use the equipment and that it is set up to make use as easy as possible. A simple green dot on the play button and a red dot on the stop button may be all that is needed to remind children which is which. Have the CD with page-turn signals and the book together so children can listen to the story whenever they want.
2. Have the Listening Center available as often as possible and note which children choose to participate in this activity.
3. In a game resembling "Simon Says," let one child begin by being the chicken and give positional instructions to the "townspeople" such as: chicken says: stand *up*; chicken says: sit *down*; chicken says: walk all *around* or *across* the room.
4. If they each have a toy (possibly a ball to represent the earth), they can go "under" the world and "over" the world. They can be asked to put the world "next to" them or "in front" or "behind" them.



## B. DRAMATIC PLAY CENTER



### Standards\*

Children will:

- ★ participate in a variety of dramatic play activities that become more extended and complex.♦
- ★ show growing creativity and imagination in using materials and in assuming different roles in dramatic play situations.♦
- ★ understand how culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.^
- ★ use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information). ♦♦

\*See legend on Table of Contents page for description of symbols.

## ACTIVITIES

1. Have materials in the dramatic play center that encourage children to explore the different roles and actions in the story. Some possible props are headwear, caftans, puppets, and a camel and chicken mask. (See next activity for easy masks.)

### 2. Make a Chicken or Camel Mask

a. Punch holes on either side of a white paper plate (use the thinner paper plates, not the sturdy cardboard type).

b. Loop pieces of yarn through the holes and secure to make ties for the mask.

c. Allow the children to draw and color their mask how they would like it. They can also glue or tape on felt for the chicken's comb or waddle, construction paper cutouts for beak, eyes, feathers (a feather duster provides good feathers to glue around the edge of the mask). For the camel, make a "hump": stuff a brown grocery bag with newspapers, cut a slit on either side of bag, string through a piece of rope or strip of cloth long enough to tie around a child's middle. Tape shut the bag and roughly shape the bag into a rounded shape. Tie the hump on a child's back. **Children may need assistance with cutting.**



3. **Body Language:** Prepare the color cards of the silly chicken, the people and the camel in this guide. Turn the cards over so that picture side is down. Mix them up. Have a child draw a card and mimic the poses of the chicken/person/camel shown on the card.



## II. Center Activities

Questions you might ask: *“What do you think the chicken was thinking when he was standing on one foot...or shaking his head...or shouting?” “What do you think that person is doing? Why do you think so?”* or *“Do you think the chicken (person, camel) was scared (mad, glad, happy...) when he(she) was doing that?”* and so on.

### ASSESSMENT

Note which children participate in these activities and at what level they are involved. Over time, note whether children demonstrate, through dramatic play, a higher level of understanding and a greater complexity of role-playing.



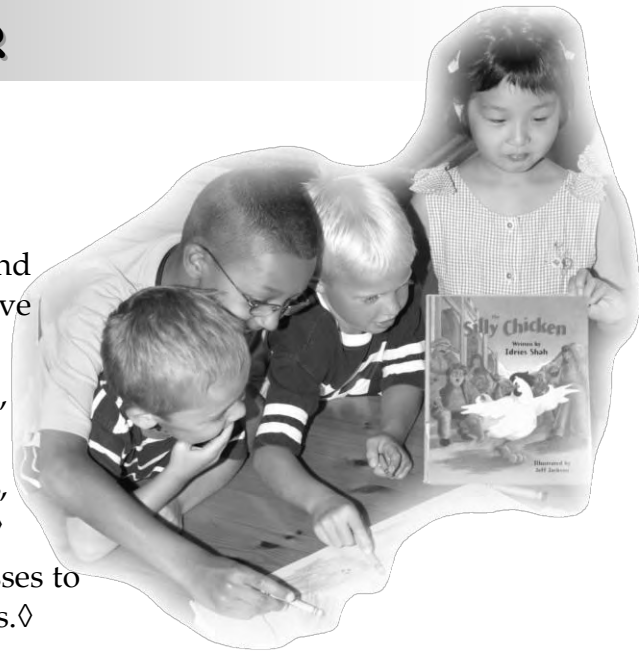
### C. ART CENTER



#### Standards\*

Children will:

- ★ gain ability in using different art media and materials in a variety of ways for creative expression and representation.♦
- ★ know the differences between materials, techniques, and processes.♦
- ★ describe how different materials, techniques, and processes can cause different responses.♦
- ★ use different media, techniques, and processes to communicate ideas, experiences, and stories.♦
- ★ use art materials and tools in a safe and responsible manner.♦
- ★ know and understand the characteristics and spatial distribution of ecosystems on Earth's surface ^^



\*See legend on Table of Contents page for description of symbols.

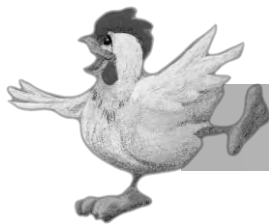
### ACTIVITIES

1. Have children draw, paint, sculpt, or collage the silliest thing they ever saw or heard.
2. Have children draw, paint, sculpt, or collage the silly chicken.
3. Have children draw, paint, sculpt, or collage their favorite scene in the story.
4. Put feathers in the art center and encourage children to use them in their collages and to paint with them (both using the tips and the feather).

5. Use several images of fields, woods, meadows, and mountains including the ones found in the illustrations of the book and encourage children to draw, paint, sculpt, or collage their own interpretation of one of those places.

### ASSESSMENT

Have children talk about their artwork – how they created it, what materials they chose and why, what tools and techniques they used and why, what meanings were they trying to convey and why.



### D. WRITING CENTER



#### Standards\*

Children will:

- ★ develop understanding that writing is a way of communicating for a variety of purposes.♦
- ★ begin to represent stories and experiences through pictures, dictation, and play.♦
- ★ experiment with a growing variety of writing tools and materials, such as pencils, crayons, and computers.♦
- ★ progress from using scribbles, shapes, or pictures to represent ideas, to using letter-like symbols, to copying or writing familiar words such as their own name.♦

\*See legend on Table of Contents page for description of symbols.

### ACTIVITIES

1. **Vocabulary:** Create word cards with key words from the story such as **silly, swallow, over, under, around, in, out** or other words as suggested by the children so that they may use them in creating their own pictures, stories and books.
2. Have children draw what they think happens after the end of the story.
3. Use the black and white drawings in the back of this guide, or download more from [www.hoopoekids.com](http://www.hoopoekids.com), and have children pick one drawing and color it. While they are drawing ask them to think of something else silly that the chicken in their picture tells the townspeople.
4. Have children listen to the following poem about another silly animal.

## II. Center Activities

### A Silly Camel

When the chicken said "Run away.  
The earth will swallow you up today!"  
A silly camel with a hump  
Started to run and hide and jump.  
So, when you hear a camel shout  
"Run! Scram! Hide! Get out!"  
Don't go running willy, nilly  
'Cause that camel is very silly.

5. Encourage the children to "rewrite" the poem by substituting what the silly animal might say or do. Then have them illustrate their new poems. Make a classroom book of the illustrated poems. For example:

When the chicken said "Run away,  
The earth will swallow you up today!"  
A silly *dog* with a bone  
Went running home all alone.  
So when you hear a dog shout  
"Run! Scram! Hide! Get out!"  
Don't go running willy nilly  
'Cause the dog is very silly.

## ASSESSMENT

Ask children if they would like to dictate their story for you to write down. Note which children use the word cards in their work. Ask those children to "read" their words back to you. This may be done from an "Author's Chair" in large or small group time or individually. An Author's Chair can be a specially decorated seat used exclusively for authors to read their works to an audience of any size. Parents, administrators and other "special people" can be invited to special author events or children can read to their classmates during regular play. Note whether children choose the class-made book to read.



## E. BLOCK CENTER



### Standards\*

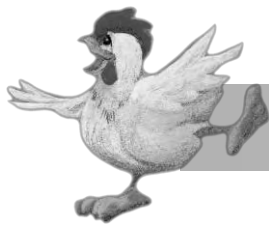
Children will:

- ★ begin to describe and discuss predictions, explanations, and generalizations based on past experiences.♦

- ★ show growth in matching, sorting, putting in a series, and regrouping objects according to one or two attributes such as color, shape, or size.♦
- ★ build an increasing understanding of directionality, order, and positions of objects, and words such as *up, down, over, under, top, bottom, outside, in front and behind*.♦

### ACTIVITIES & ASSESSMENT

1. Provide globes, maps, toy chickens, and dolls in the block area. Observe as children use the items and see if any of the themes from the story are replayed in the block play.
2. Have parquetry blocks available in the block area. See if children can create designs such as those on the buildings in the town on the first pages.



### F. MATCHING, SORTING & ORDERING



#### Standards\*

Children will:

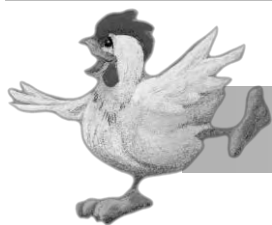
- ★ show growth in matching, sorting, putting in a series, and regrouping objects according to one or two attributes such as color, shape, or size.♦
- ★ show growing capacity to maintain concentration over time on a task, question, set of directions or interactions, despite distractions and interruptions. ♦
- ★ understand numbers, ways of representing numbers, relationships among numbers, and number systems.♦♦

\*See legend on Table of Contents page for description of symbols.

### ACTIVITIES & ASSESSMENT

1. Create several picture cards of chickens of varying sizes. Have children work together in small groups to arrange the chickens in order of size (**see cards included in this guide**).
2. Create a matching game of pictures of the silly chicken in a variety of poses (**see color cards included in this guide**). Then have children work independently or in small groups to match the chicken pictures that are the same.
3. Using the people, chickens and camel cards in this guide, have children group them into animals or people; standing or running; happy or scared; and other comparisons.

## II. Center Activities



### 6. OUTDOORS

Remember that outdoors is an extension of the learning environment. You should plan activities that strengthen skills and use the uniqueness of the environment to your advantage.



#### Standards\*

Children will:

- ★ understand that physical activity provides opportunities for enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and social interaction.%%
- ★ grow in eagerness to learn about and discuss a growing range of topics, ideas and tasks.♦
- ★ show growing creativity and imagination in using materials and in assuming different roles in dramatic play situations.♦
- ★ show increasing levels of proficiency, control, and balance in walking, climbing, running, jumping, hopping, skipping, marching, and galloping.♦
- ★ build an increasing understanding of directionality, order, and positions of objects, and words such as *up, down, over, under, top, bottom, outside, in front* and *behind*.♦

\*See legend on Table of Contents page for description of symbols.

### ACTIVITIES

1. Help children make signs that indicate directions, such as “under,” “over,” “through” and “around.” Post these signs around the classroom or outside in the playground and have children follow the directions on them.

2. Set up an obstacle course that reinforces the positional vocabulary that the children have been learning. Remember to talk with the children as they go under, over, around, through, in, out, and near the equipment.

3. Encourage children to act out scenes from the story where the clever man teaches the chicken to talk or the townspeople listen to the chicken say silly things then go running off in different directions. Have the children mimic the scared people as depicted in the book (**or use the color people cards included in this guide**). Ask them “*What do you think the people are thinking in this picture.*”

4. **Signs in the Neighborhood:** While outdoors, if there is a street nearby, point out the street signs. Ask the children if they know what the signs mean. Have the children find street signs during other outdoor events, such as on a field trip to a nearby



park or to the fire station. When back in the classroom, remind the children what they observed, and ask if they can remember some of the signs. Have available several photos or drawings of street signs, such as STOP, SLOW, ONE WAY, WALK, DON'T WALK.

Make up signs such as STOP, ONE WAY, WALK, DON'T WALK, etc., using sturdy drawing paper or cardboard. Make the lettering and shape of the sign as close as possible to the ones used on real streets. Tape these signs onto yardsticks, and place around the playground at various places and have children follow the directions as they come to the sign.

**5. Crossing Guard Game:** You will need the STOP, SLOW, WALK and DON'T WALK street signs on yardsticks. Have the children take turns being the Crossing Guard, while the others are pedestrians and/or tricycle riders. The children will walk or ride a path around until coming to the crossing guard. (If there is no riding path in the playground, make up a path ahead of time with blocks or cones.) The guard will hold up a DON'T WALK sign to pedestrians, or a STOP sign to riders. Once the guard sees it is safe for pedestrians, she/he will hold up the WALK sign. When the way is safe for riders, he/she will hold up the SLOW sign.

## ASSESSMENT

Observe and note as children play with materials, make their own observations, and use the positional vocabulary. How does their play change and grow over time? Note increasing levels of proficiency in gross motor skills such as running, jumping, climbing, hopping, crawling, and in the proper semantic use of the vocabulary words.



## H. FOLLOW-UP

There will be opportunities to recall and use the story with your children. For example, if you notice that one of your children is behaving in an unproductive manner because of something told to them that was inappropriate, inaccurate or untrue, you can remind the student about *The Silly Chicken*.

*Do you remember the story of The Silly Chicken when the people believed what the chicken said, just because he was speaking human language? Do you think something like that happened just now? Why do you think so?*

*Do you always believe what someone tells you? Why is it a good idea to think about what someone tells you? If someone told you to take a shower with your clothes on, would you do it? Why not?*

Go back to the story from time to time, weeks or months later, to see if your students can remember the story. Remember, these stories can be enjoyed and be useful for people of all ages.

## III. HOME/SCHOOL CONNECTION

### Parents are a child's first teachers

They know their child better than anyone, and their involvement in their child's development is critical. The best parent involvement is both ways between teachers and parents. Teachers should seek ways to send home information and activities that will get families involved in learning together. At the same time, encourage families to send to school evidence of those family activities so classes can celebrate the learning that happens at home.



#### Standards\*

These activities can be used to improve parent knowledge and involvement in literacy activities. %

\*See legend on Table of Contents page for description of symbols.



## ACTIVITIES & ASSESSMENT

**A. Host a Parent Night:** Here are some suggested activities for this event:

1. Show "The Magic of Reading" DVD and discuss its contents with the parents. Find out what was new for them, what they liked, what they would like clarified.
2. Give out *The Silly Chicken* books or home literacy kits, and talk about the importance of doing reading activities at home with their children and the importance of returning any questionnaires on the material to you.
3. Display children's artwork and writing at this event.

**B. Parent/Child Reading and Art Activity:** Have children and parents read the book together and draw a picture of a silly thing that the chicken might tell the townspeople next. Ask them to return the pictures for discussion and display.

**C. Family Sing:** Send words to the “Silly Chicken Song” or the children’s poems home so that parents can sing or recite with their children and reinforce the concepts.

**D. Parent Visitor/Speaker:** Invite parents in to tell the children other stories that remind them of this story.

**E. Host a “Pajama Party”:** You might want to host a “Pajama Party,” where children and families come back to school in comfortable, loose clothing, even pajamas for the kids. Here are some suggested activities for this event:

1. Show the DVD “The Magic of Reading” and discuss its contents with the parents. Find out what was new for them, what they liked, what they would like clarified.

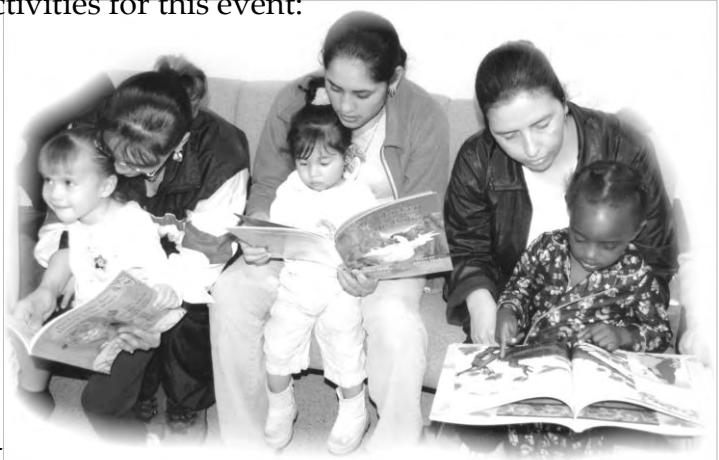
2. Give out *The Silly Chicken* books or the home literacy kits, and have the parents read the story with their children.

3. Encourage the families to do reading activities at home together and explain to the parents the importance of returning any questionnaires on the material to you.

4. Display the children’s art, sculptures or collages, and the children’s writing.

5. Have the families draw a picture of something silly. Ask them to share the artwork with the other children and families. Send these drawings home and suggest that families display them in their homes as you display students’ artwork in your classroom.

6. Have the children sing a song such as the “Silly Chicken Song.”



*The worksheets in the following section can be used with many activities in this guide.*



## Finger-Puppets

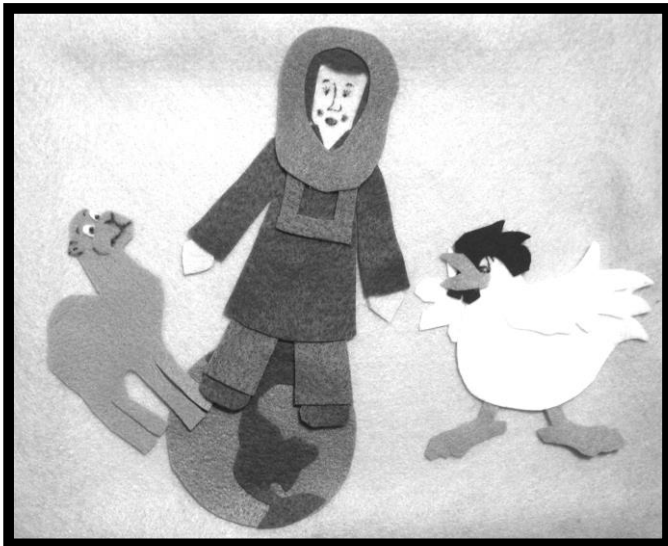
### *The Silly Chicken*

Go to [www.hoopoekids.com](http://www.hoopoekids.com) to download detailed instructions on creating these wonderful props for little fingers. This is a great way to get parents involved and it's **FUN!**

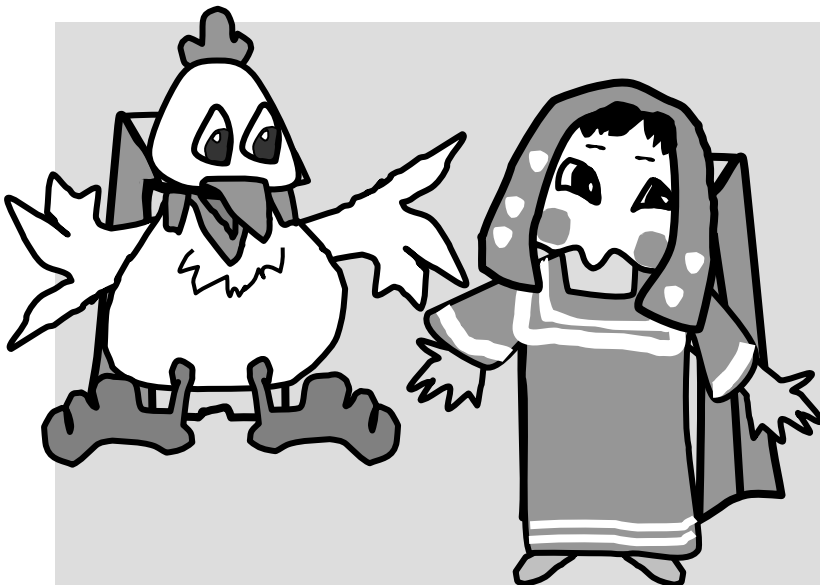


## Felt-Board Characters

### *The Silly Chicken*



Go to [www.hoopoekids.com](http://www.hoopoekids.com) to download detailed instructions on creating these felt-board characters and ideas on making a simple felt-board.



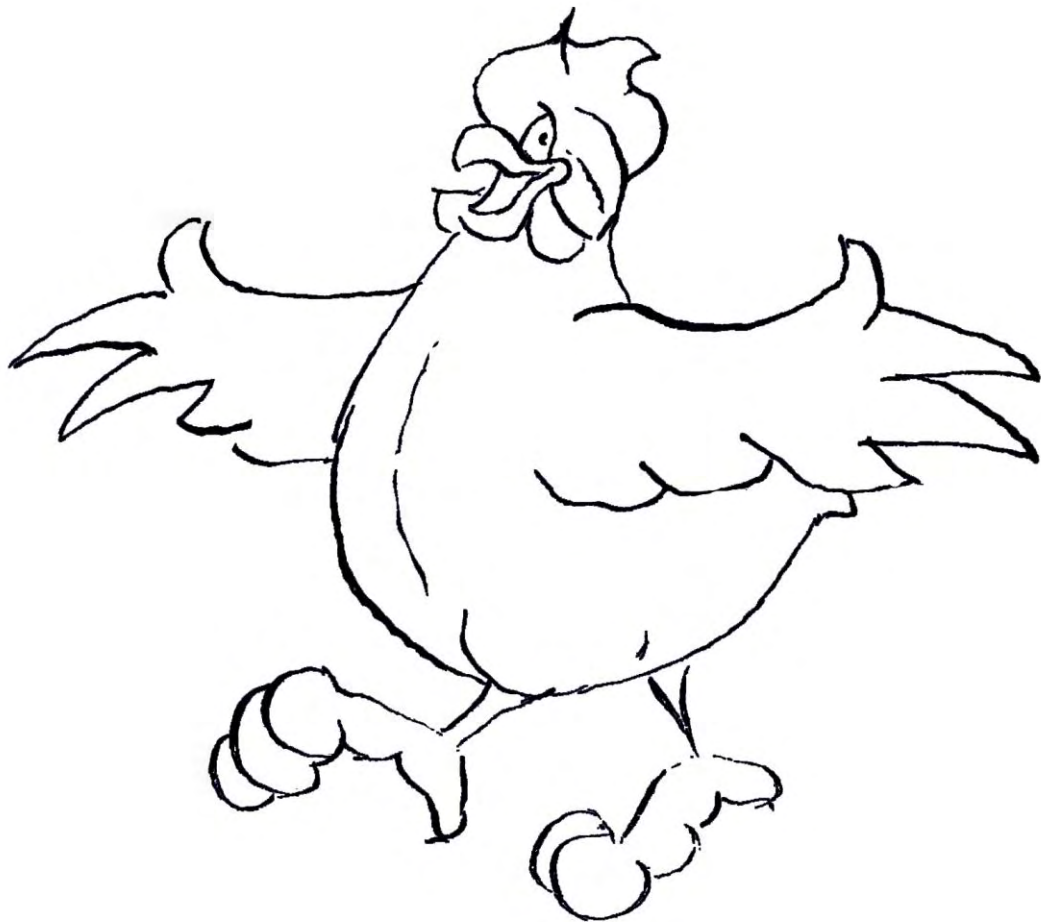
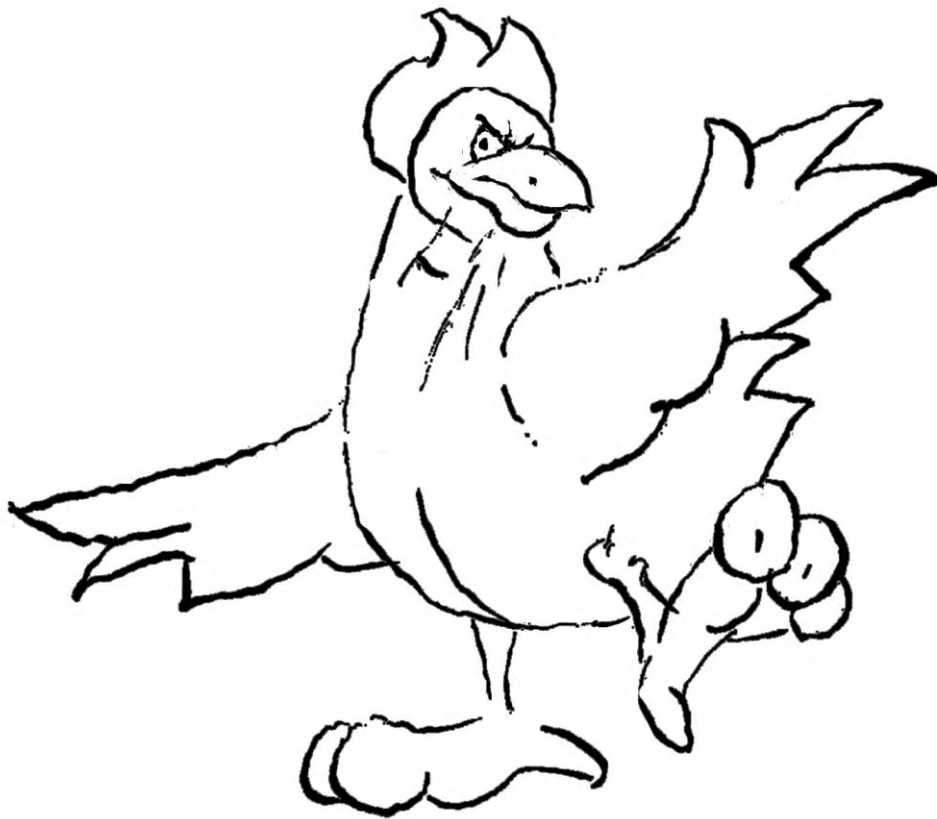
## Paper Bag Puppets

Go to [www.hoopoekids.com](http://www.hoopoekids.com) to download detailed instructions on creating simple paper bag puppets and puppet theaters.

## Writing and Other Activities Cards

Use the images to duplicate and have children choose one to color and dictate their stories for the writing activity. You can download more images from [www.hoopoekids.com](http://www.hoopoekids.com).





The cards below can be used for ordering according to size.



chicken



chicken



chicken

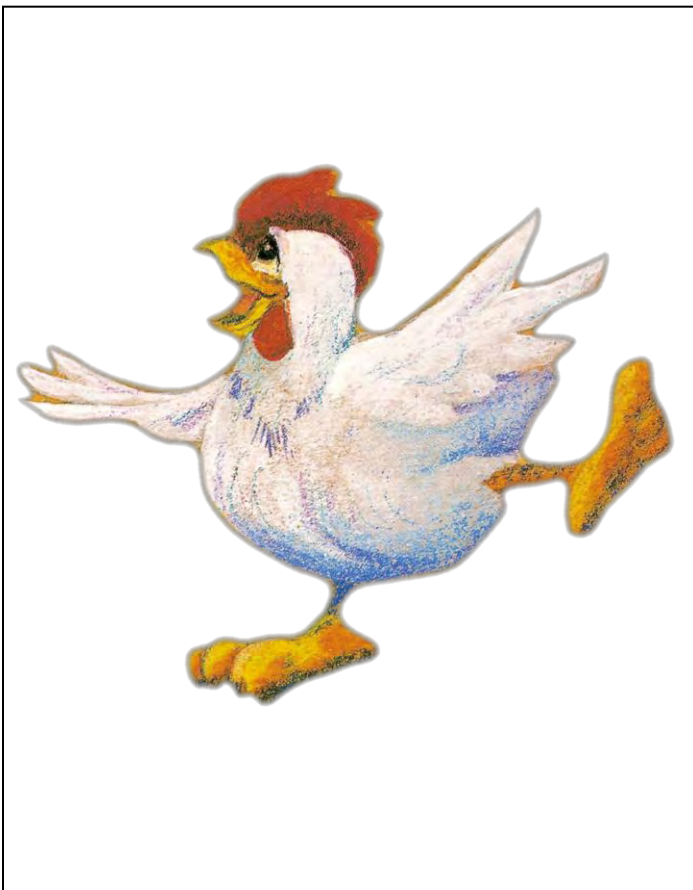
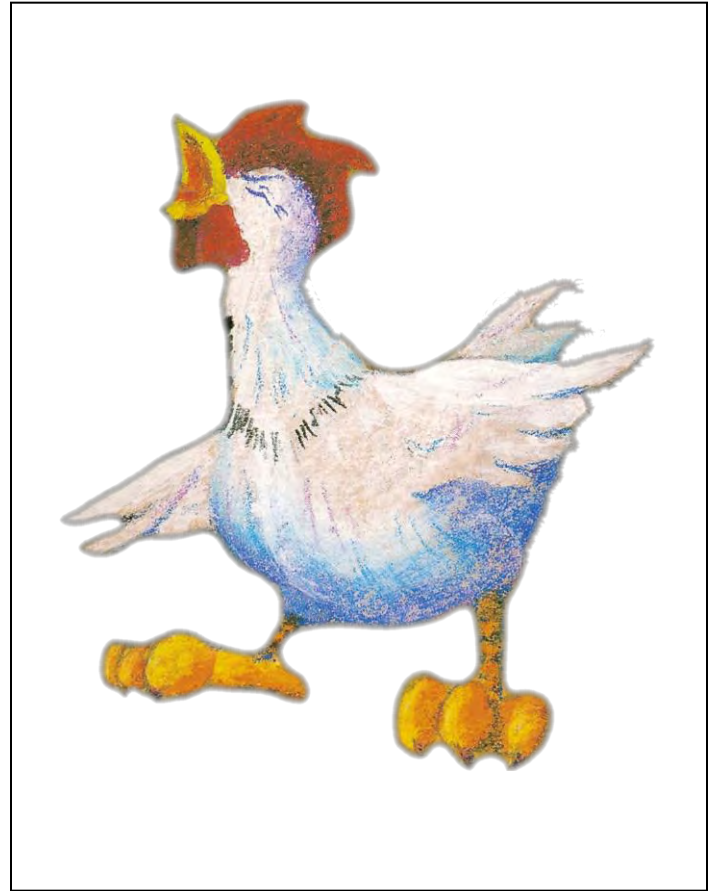


chicken



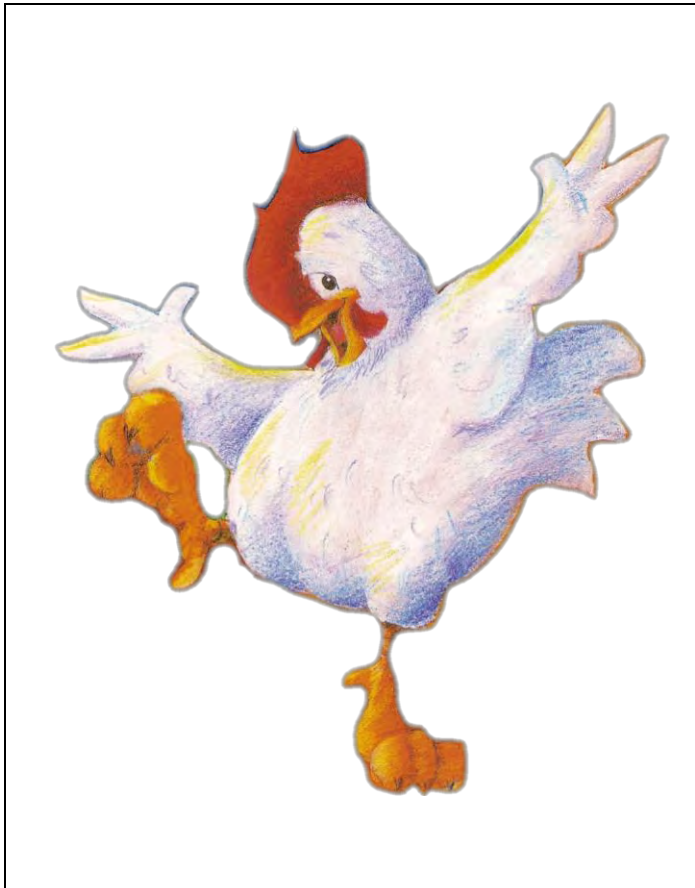
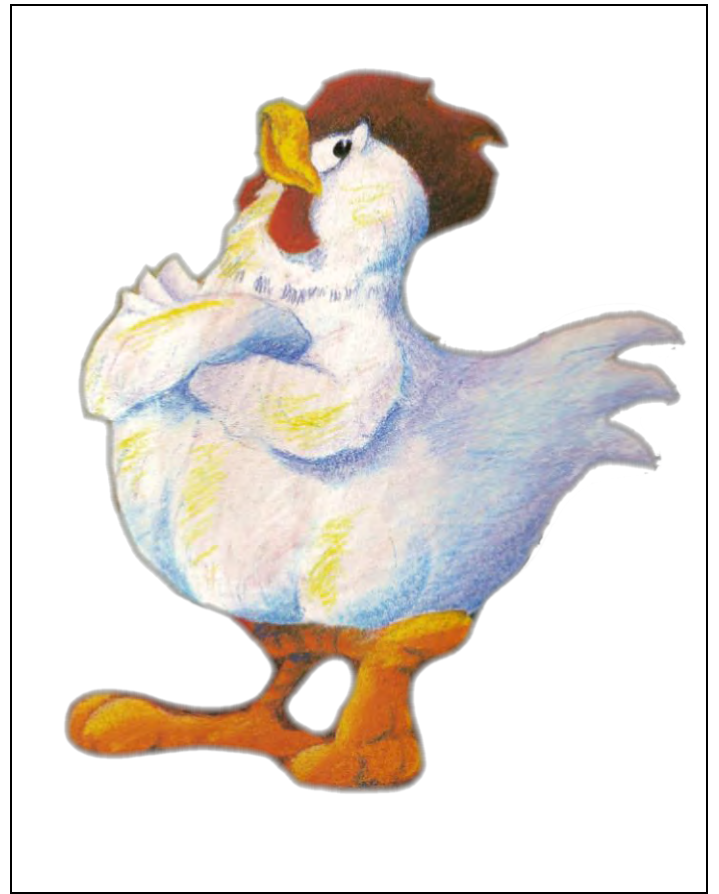
## Dramatic Play, Matching and Other Activities

Make 2 or more sets of the chicken cards for "Matching Game." Duplicate copies do not have to be color. Laminate then cut the cards for all activities.













# Dramatic Play, Sorting and Other Activities

Laminate then cut the cards for all activities.







# **The Silly Chicken**

## **TEACHER'S ACTIVITY GUIDE**

**Grades PreK - 1**

### **ACTIVITIES FOR:**

#### **CIRCLE TIME READ-ALOUDS**

**Read-aloud activities designed to enhance:**  
**Oral language through questions and discussion**  
**Higher-level thinking skills including making analogies**  
**Story comprehension through repetition**  
**Making the story your own, providing learning that lasts**  
**Social-emotional development**

### **ACTIVITY CENTERS**

**Center-based activities designed to provide:**  
**Deeper understanding**  
**Multiple modalities for learning**

### **BUILDING HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

**Parent-involvement activities designed to encourage:**  
**Parents to read aloud at home**  
**Home/school communication**

**ALL activities are tied to Head Start and national performance  
and assessment standards and other national education  
standards for PreK – 1<sup>st</sup> Grades**

**For information about Hoopoe Books,  
additional activity guides and other education materials,  
please visit Hoopoe Books at  
[www.hoopoekids.com](http://www.hoopoekids.com)**

