

Level 1	
Suitable for:	young learners who have completed up to 50 hours of study in English
Type of English:	American
Headwords:	200
Key words:	5 (see pages 2 and 4 of these Teacher's Notes)
Key grammar:	present simple, adjectives, Wh- questions

Summary of the story

Dumbo is a baby elephant with big ears. He lives with his mother in a traveling circus. When some boys make fun of him, Mommy Elephant gets angry and runs at the boys. The Boss of the circus locks her up.

Dumbo becomes a clown in the circus. He has to jump from a tall building. He is very scared but a mouse becomes his friend.

A bird gives Dumbo a magic feather. When Dumbo holds the feather, he can fly. Then Dumbo flies in the circus. He drops the feather... but he flaps his ears and he can still fly! Everyone is amazed. At last Dumbo can be with his mother again.

Summary of the film: *Dumbo*

The stork brings Dumbo to Mrs. Jumbo on the train of a traveling circus. She loves her baby, but the other elephants reject him because of his huge ears. When a group of boys tease Dumbo, Mrs. Jumbo goes wild and is locked up.

Dumbo takes part in the elephant circus tricks, but everything goes wrong. The ringmaster decides that he must become a clown and jump from a tall building into a pie. Dumbo feels lonely and very frightened. Timothy Mouse becomes his friend and

tries to help him. They meet some friendly crows who give him a magic feather – with it Dumbo can fly!

Back at the circus, Dumbo has to jump from a burning building. As Dumbo jumps he loses the feather, but he flaps his ears and realizes that he can fly without the feather. Dumbo becomes the star of the circus. Mrs. Jumbo is freed and they can be together at last.

Background information

Dumbo was released by Walt Disney Studios in 1941. It was the fourth full-length animated Disney movie. It was the most successful Disney film of the 1940s.

Dumbo won the Academy Award® in 1941 for the Best Original Music Score. The film included the popular songs, *Pink Elephants on Parade* and *When I See an Elephant Fly*.

Later at the Cannes Film Festival in 1947, *Dumbo* won the award for Best Animation Design.

Did you know ... ?

- *Dumbo* is one of the shortest Disney animated movies. It is 64 minutes long.
- Dumbo never speaks in the movie!

The characters

Dumbo is a baby elephant. He has big ears.

Mommy Elephant is a big elephant. She works in a circus. She loves her baby, Dumbo.

The Boss tells the elephants what to do in the circus.

Topics and themes

Accepting differences Dumbo is treated badly by others because of his big ears. How does this make Dumbo feel? Explain to the students that we should accept other people's differences. Often these differences are strengths (such as when Dumbo uses his ears to fly).

Circuses Have any of the students been to a circus? What happens at a circus? What kind of animals can you find in a circus? What other performers are there? The students could draw a picture of a circus and label the animals and performers. (See also Activity 4 on page 3 of these Teacher's Notes.)

Elephants What do the students already know about elephants? Did they know that elephants are the biggest land animals in the world? Where do they live? What do they eat? What types of elephants are there? (You could find out some interesting facts about elephants for the students before the session, and download some photos of elephants from the internet.)

Feelings Dumbo feels sad without Mommy Elephant. What other feelings does Dumbo have in the story? What feelings do the students have sometimes? When do they have these feelings?

Friendship Dumbo has one good friend in the circus – Timothy Mouse. Talk with the students about what makes a good friend. They could draw a picture of Dumbo and Timothy Mouse and talk about friendship.

Beliefs Dumbo believes the feather is magic. He thinks that without it he wouldn't be able to fly. In reality, he can fly without the feather. What do

Key words

(see page 4 of these Teacher's Notes for the Key words in context)

circus (n)	magic feather (n)
fly (v)	scared (adj)
jump (v & n)	

the students think about this? What things do the students believe in? Do they believe in magic?

Family Dumbo's only family is his mother. Explain to the students that families can take many forms. Ask the children about their families. Who do they get along with best in their family? Who do they feel closest to?

Transportation The circus in the story travels by train. What other transportation could the circus use? What transportation do the students use (e.g. to go to school, to go on vacation)? Which is their favorite? Why?

Notes on the photocopiable activities

Page 4: Students could paste the list of Key words into a notebook. You could ask students to learn this vocabulary as homework and then test them on it.

Pages 5–6: While-reading activities, **Activity 1** Students draw lines from the words to the relevant parts of Dumbo's body. **Activity 4** Students cut out the sentences and the pictures. They glue the sentences to the correct pictures. Then they stick the pictures in order onto a separate sheet of paper. They can then retell the story in their own words.

Pages 7–9: After-reading activities, **Activity 1** Once students have written the names and cut out the cards, they can do a variety of activities with them such as play games with partners or groups such as concentration (pelmanism), charades, or Which one's missing? **Activity 3** Encourage the students to correct the 'no' answers. **Activity 4** Encourage the students to use the colors used in the reader.

Class Activities (After Reading)

Here are some activities to do with your class after reading *Dumbo*.

1. Animal charades

Materials: pictures of animals; including an elephant; a mouse, and a bird

- Before the session, prepare some picture flashcards of animals the children know including the ones from the story.
- Quickly present the vocabulary to the students using the flashcards.
- Ask a volunteer to choose an animal flashcard without showing the other students. The volunteer mimes the animal and the other students guess what it is.
- The first student to guess the animal then chooses a flashcard.
- Continue until all or most of the students have had a turn.

2. Clown faces

Materials: simple outline of a blank face copied for each student; sheets of paper in a range of colors; safety scissors; glue; wool in different colors (for hair)

- Before the session, make up a clown face to show the students. Talk about the face. For example, *Look at the clown's face. He's got small eyes, a big nose, red hair, and a big mouth.*
- Give the materials to the students.
- Help the students to draw the facial features before they cut them out. Help also with cutting the wool, if necessary.
- When the students have completed their faces, they can show them to the class and talk about them.

3. Flying elephants

Materials: gray card or construction paper; brass fasteners (split pins); safety scissors; clothes hangers (optional)

- Before the session, draw a simple outline of an elephant's body with a head large enough to attach two large ears. Transfer the drawing to the gray card / construction paper and cut out one shape for each student.
- Give out the elephant shapes to each student, plus a small sheet of gray card / construction paper, two brass fasteners and a pair of scissors.
- Ask the students to make ears for the elephants and to cut them out.
- Help the students to attach the ears to the head with the brass fasteners.
- Tell the children to move their elephant's ears and make their elephants fly. (Encourage them to talk in English about doing this.)
- The elephants could be attached to clothes hangers and suspended to make elephant mobiles.

4. Circus acts

Materials: pictures of circus acts downloaded from the internet and / or clips of circus acts

- Talk with the students about the different acts you can find in a circus, such as jugglers, tightrope-walkers, fire-eaters, trapeze artists, clowns, unicyclists, etc.
- Show the students some pictures or clips of circus acts and tell them the names of some of them in English.
- Divide the students into groups of 3 or 4. Ask them to create their own circus acts. You could provide some props, if desired, such as hoops, balls, jump ropes, etc.
- When everyone has prepared their act, pretend you're the ringmaster and direct the various groups to perform. You could give a simple commentary in English on the performances.

Key words



circus..... Dumbo is in the circus now. (p. 6)

fly..... Dumbo flies! (p. 12)

jump Dumbo jumps! (p. 11)
This is the big jump. (p. 10)

magic feather..... Dumbo has the magic feather! (p. 9)

scared He is scared. (p. 6)



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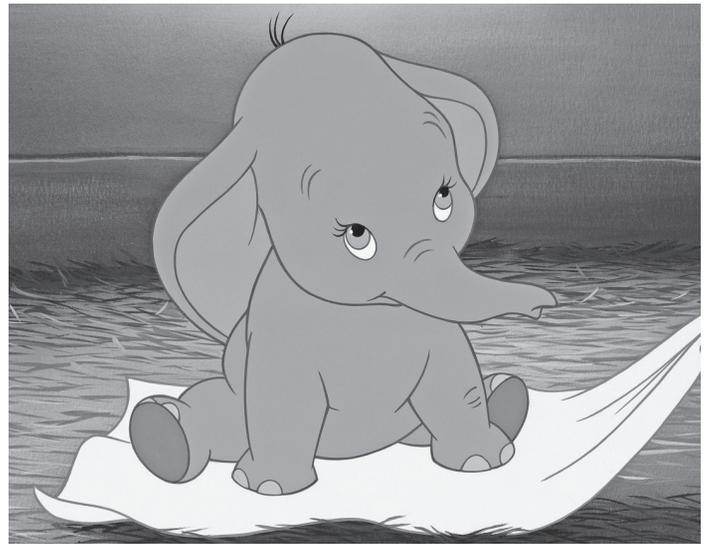
scared He is scared. (p. 6)



While-Reading activities**Activity 1 (pages 1–2)**

Draw lines.

- 1 big ears
- 2 small eyes
- 3 big nose

**Activity 2 (pages 3–6)**

Write.

circus shuts big jumps sad scared

- 1 Mommy Elephant is _____.
- 2 The boys are _____.
- 3 The Boss _____ Mommy Elephant in the train.
- 4 Dumbo is _____. Where is his mommy?
- 5 Dumbo is in the _____ now.
- 6 Dumbo _____.

Activity 3 (pages 7–10)

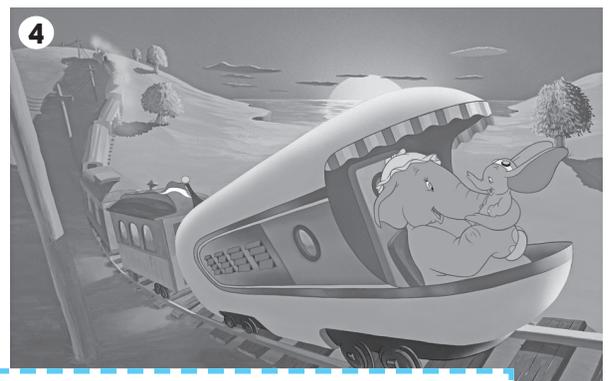
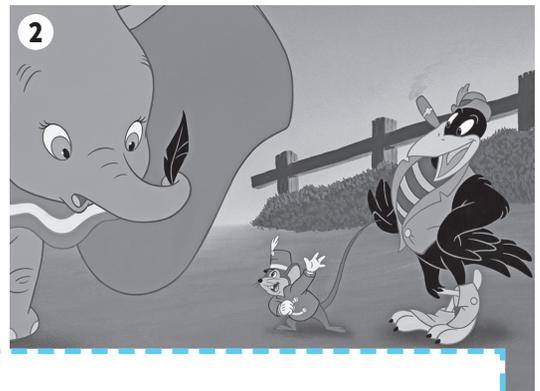
Circle the words.

- 1 Dumbo now has a **friend** / **bird**.
- 2 A bird gives Dumbo a magic **pen** / **feather**.
- 3 Dumbo has the feather ... He **runs** / **flies**.
- 4 The jump is **small** / **big**.
- 5 The house is **tall** / **short**.

Activity 4 (pages 1–14)

Cut and match.

- a** A bird gives Dumbo a magic feather.
- b** Dumbo and Mommy Elephant are happy again.
- c** Ooops! Where is the feather?
- d** Dumbo is in the circus now.



After-Reading activities

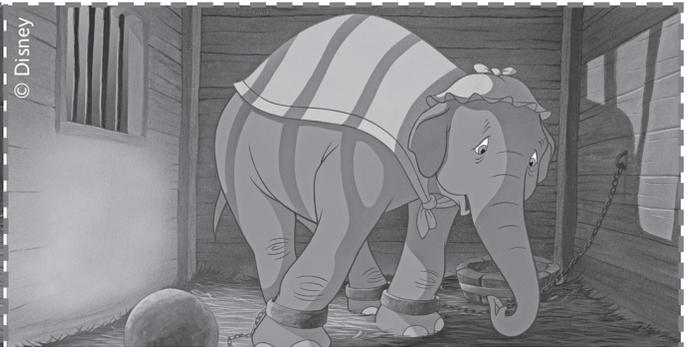
Activity 1

Who are they? Write. Then cut and play.

boys Mommy Elephant The Boss friend bird Dumbo



1



2



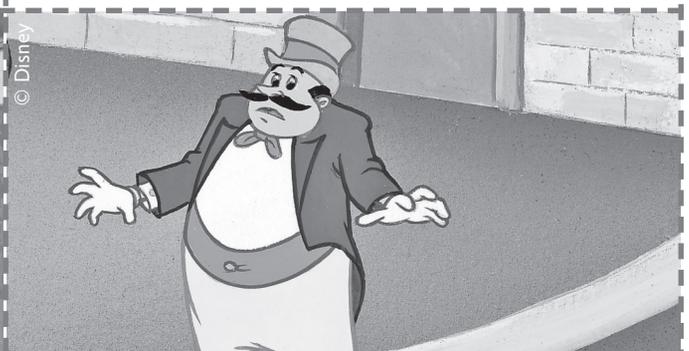
3



4



5



6

Activity 2

Who does it? Write.

Dumbo The Boss A bird

- 1 _____ shuts Mommy Elephant in the train.
- 2 _____ gives Dumbo a magic feather.
- 3 _____ jumps from a tall building.

Activity 3

Write *yes* or *no*.

- 1 Dumbo has a small nose. _____
- 2 Dumbo has big ears. _____
- 3 Mommy Elephant is small. _____
- 4 The house is tall. _____
- 5 Dumbo has the magic feather. _____
- 6 Dumbo and Mommy Elephant are happy again. _____

Activity 4

Color Mommy Elephant and Dumbo.



Answer Key

In the back of the Reader

Before You Read

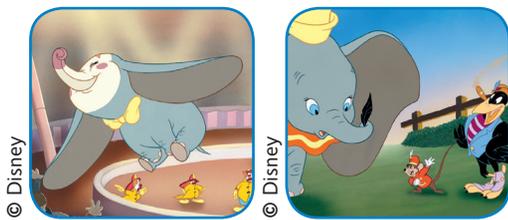


After You Read



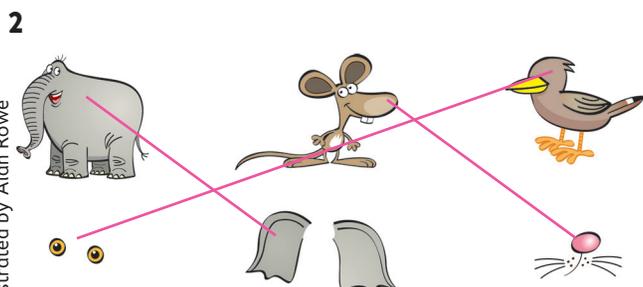
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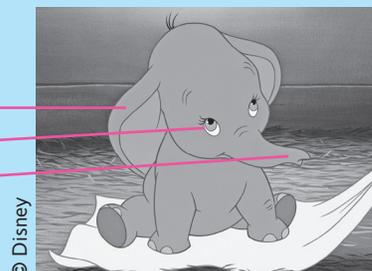
Illustrated by Alan Rowe

In these Teacher's Notes

While-Reading activities

Activity 1

- 1 big ears
- 2 small eyes
- 3 big nose



Activity 2

- 1 big 2 scared 3 shuts 4 sad 5 circus 6 jumps

Activity 3

- 1 friend 2 feather 3 flies 4 big 5 tall

Activity 4

- 1 d 2 a 3 c 4 b

After-Reading activities

Activity 1

- 1 Dumbo 2 Mommy Elephant 3 boys 4 friend
- 5 bird 6 The Boss

Activity 2

- 1 The Boss 2 A bird 3 Dumbo

Activity 3

- 1 no 2 yes 3 no 4 yes 5 yes 6 yes