

# Snail Fact Finder

# Talk to Writing

An activity to scaffold factual descriptive writing developed by Steve Cooke in 2011. We wanted to increase amount of to-ing and fro-ing between talk and writing. Although this one is about snails, it can, like many other collaborative activities, be used as a template for describing any mollusc, or animal or..... so we have included a blank sequence chart for your choice of beast or bird.

The cards need to be printed with the numbers on the back. It is best to keep the cards as they are but to enlarge the chart to A3. Children work in two pairs. They have two charts and two sets of numbered cards (there are two sets on the sheet provided). They place the cards face down on the table. They take turns to throw a die. If they throw a three they can pick either the 3 card or the 6 card. if they throw a four they can pick a four or an 8 and so on. They then have an answer, which they have to fit onto the correct question on their chart. After the game they can use the cards to choose the best order in which to present a description which can become notes for for an oral presentation or a draft for a written text. They can add to the bare facts provided by devising and researching more questions. e. g. How far do they travel in the night? How fast do they grow? etc and adding this informaton in the best places in their description.

<http://www.collaborativelearning.org/snailfactfinder.pdf>

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## COLLABORATIVE LEARNING PROJECT

Project Director: Stuart Scott

We support a network of teaching professionals to develop and disseminate accessible talk-for-learning activities in all subject areas and for all ages.

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## BRIEF SUMMARY OF BASIC PRINCIPLES BEHIND OUR TEACHING ACTIVITIES:

The project is a teacher network, and a non-profit making educational trust. Our main aim is to develop and disseminate classroom tested examples of effective group strategies that promote talk across all phases and subjects. We hope they will inspire you to develop and use similar strategies in other topics and curriculum areas. We want to encourage you to change them and adapt them to your classroom and students. We run teacher workshops, swapshops and conferences throughout the European Union. The project posts online many activities in all subject areas. An online newsletter is also updated regularly.

\*These activities are influenced by current thinking about the role of language in learning. They are designed to help children learn through talk and active learning in small groups. They work best in non selective classes where children in need of language or learning support are integrated. They are well suited for the development of oracy. They provide teachers opportunities for assessment of talk.

\*They support differentiation by placing a high value on what children can offer to each other on a particular topic, and also give children the chance to respect each other's views and formulate shared opinions which they can disseminate to peers. By helping them to take ideas and abstract concepts, discuss, paraphrase and move them about physically, they help to develop thinking skills.

\*They give children the opportunity to participate in their own words and language in their own time without pressure. Many activities can be tried out in pupils' first languages and afterwards in English. A growing number of activities are available in more than one language, not translated, but mixed, so that you may need more than one language to complete the activity.

\*They encourage study skills in context, and should therefore be used with a range of appropriate information books which are preferably within reach in the classroom.

\*They are generally adaptable over a wide age range because children can bring their own knowledge to an activity and refer to books at an appropriate level. The activities work like catalysts.

\*All project activities were planned and developed by teachers working together, and the main reason they are disseminated is to encourage teachers to work more effectively with each other inside and outside the classroom. They have made it possible for mainstream and language and learning support teachers to share an equal role in curriculum delivery. They should be adapted to local conditions. In order to help us keep pace with curriculum changes, please send any new or revised activities back to the project, so that we can add them to our lists of materials.

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# Snail Fact Finder - cards

Snails are molluscs.	They live in damp shady places in gardens and forests.	They eat plants and rotting leaves.	They don't have legs.
They have soft, slimy bodies. They have a shell that protects their bodies.	Birds, frogs and snakes eat snails.	They lay their eggs in a nest under the ground. They lay about 80 eggs in the nest.	Their tongues have tiny rows of teeth on them.
They can live for about ten years.	Their eyes are on the end of long tentacles.	They have four tentacles on their heads. Two of them are long and two of them are short.	In dry weather snails go into their shells. They seal the entrance with a sticky liquid.
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Snail Fact Finder - numbers to print on back of snail fact cards

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# Snail Fact Finder



