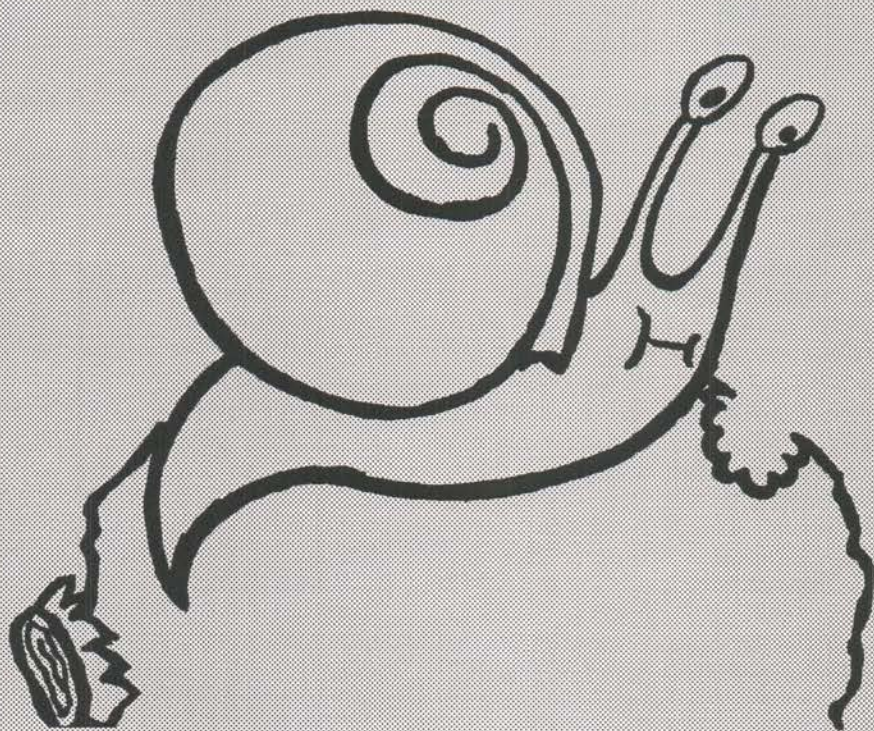


Lenny

the Lonely Land Snail



Story by Isobel Bonnell
Illustrations by Bernard Ryan

Introduction

*'In the end,
we will only conserve what we love,
we will only love what we know,
we will only know what we are taught.'*

(Baba Dioum)

Story sessions provide a framework within which early-years children can be introduced to a number of unfamiliar animals all of whom are often misinterpreted as unpleasant in some way. The story aims to develop a sense of sympathy for and empathy with the animals whilst illustrating that all animals are unique and special.

The story is based around Lenny our heroic, but nevertheless lonely, land-snail and his need to find a friend. During the session the children join Lenny and the story-teller on an epic journey in search of potential friends. Every time an animal is encountered it is brought out and examined. The decision as to whether each animal could be Lenny's friend or not is left up to the children who have to compare Lenny to the new animal to see if they're the same. This encourages observation and hypothesis forming whilst allowing the session to be tailored to your particular topic. For example, particular emphasis can be given to how they move, what colour they are, etc. (alternatively, leave it up to the kids, it's often more fun!).

This pack is designed to allow you the teacher to use the Nursery Special Session to its full capacity and to help us tailor each session to your personal requirements. It contains:

a copy of the story.

photocopy friendly copies of the pictures from the story

The whole session should take no more than 45 minutes from start to finish.

The Story...



Once upon a time there was a land snail called Lenny. He was lonely and bored because he had no one to share his lettuce with. Every day he searched and searched his lettuce patch but there was never any one there.

Almost at the point of staying in his shell forever, Lenny was seen by some children playing near his lettuce patch. Feeling sorry for him they went to see what was wrong.



When they asked Lenny if he was O.K. He sighed... A Big, Heavy, Sad, Sigh; 'Oh children,' he said, 'I have no one to share my lettuce, what shall I do?'

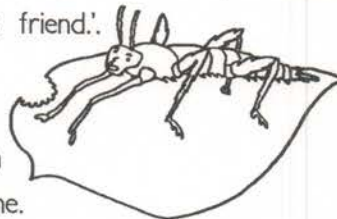
On hearing this, the children felt very sad. Suddenly one of them said, 'I know, lets help Lenny find a friend!'

The others thought this was a brilliant idea. They all ran to ask their Mums if they could help find Lenny a friend. Their Mums all said... 'Okay, but don't forget to take...'



As soon as they were all ready, they picked up Lenny and set off. The first place they came to was a huge, dark forest with huge, dark trees. Sitting on a leaf in one of these huge, dark trees was a strange looking creature. She looked just like the leaves she was eating!

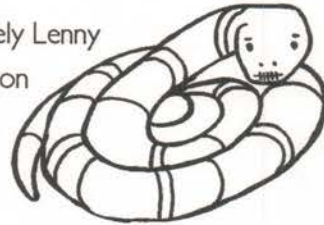
When the children asked her if she would be Lenny's friend, she said 'I only eat leaves on trees, I don't like lettuce, I can't be Lenny's friend.' Disappointed, the children turned away.



At the bottom of another tree they found an even stranger animal. Even bigger and darker than the first one.

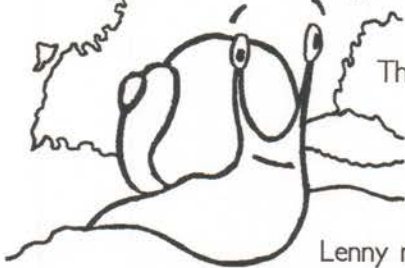
Before they could say anything, he spoke in a slow, thorny voice: 'Go away, I'm busy eating. Lenny can't live here, he would cover my tree in slime. I can't be Lenny's friend.'

Feeling rather worried, the children carried a sad and lonely Lenny over a river, where they found some rocks. Sun-bathing on these rocks was a long, smooth beast with a long, flickering tongue.



When they asked if he would like to be Lenny's friend, he replied 'Sssilly children, Lenny would get too hot and dry on my rocksss. I can't be Lenny'sssss friend.'

In despair, they left. Eventually they came across another creature, slowly munching on some lettuce leaves. As they approached, she quickly hid in her shell.



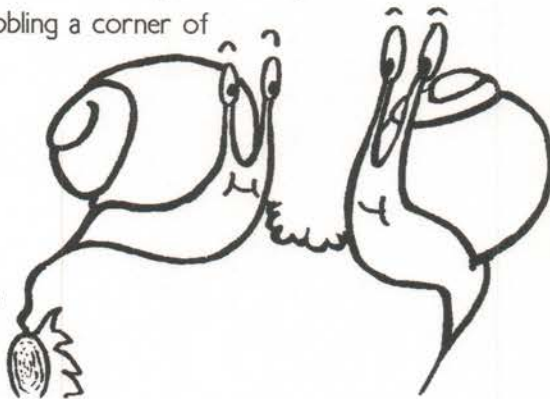
The children, peeking into her shell called, 'Excuse me, do you know anyone who is looking for a friend to share lunch with?'

At this she peeked out, to see Lenny nibbling a corner of her lettuce.

'Why yes!' She said, sliding forward. 'I am!'

When the children saw the two snails happily munching on lettuce leaves together, they said goodbye

to Lenny and his new friend, and left them to live happily ever after!



Back at camp the children had a huge supper by the fire. Gradually they all fell sound asleep, exhausted after their adventurous day!

The End.

Y Stori



Amser maith yn nol roedd malwoden o'r enw Lenny. Roedd hi'n unig a diflas achos doedd neb gyda hi i rannu ei letys. Pob dydd roedd hi'n chwilio ei darn o ardd ond doedd neb byth yna. Roedd hi bron yn barod i aros yn ei chragen am byth pan welwyd hi gan rai plant

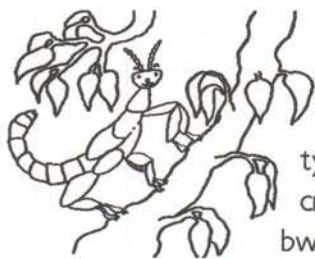
oedd yn chwarae gyferbyn a'i gardd letys. Gan eu bod nhw'n teimlo'n flin amdani aethon nhw i weld beth oedd yn bod.



Pan ofynnodd i Lenny a oedd hi'n iawn ochneidiodd...Ochenaid mawr, trwm, trist 'o blant meddai'. Does gen i neb i rannu fy letys beth wna?

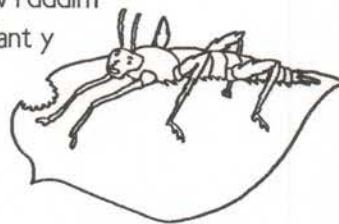
Wrth glywed hyn teimlodd y plant yn drist iawn. Yn sydyn meddai un ohonyn 'Rydw i'n gwybod. Awn ni i helpu Lenny i ffeindio ffrind.

Meddywodd y lleill bod hwn yn syniad gwych. Rhedon nhw i gyd i ofyn i'w mamau a allen nhw helpu Dwmplan i ffeindio ffrind. Dywedodd eu mamau i gyd..."iawn ond peidiwch anghofio cymryd Bwyd, cot, diod, fflach lamp, bag, tedi, map, het, menig, esgidiau trwm."



Cyn gynted ag yr roedden nhw i gyd yn barod aethon nhw a Lenny a dechrau at eu taith. Y lle cyntaf daethon nhw iddo oed coedwig fawr dywyll gyda choed mawr tywyll. Yn eistedd ar un o'r coed mawr tywyll roedd creadur od ei olwg. Edrychai e yn union fel y dail roedd e'n bwyta.

Pan ofynnodd y plant iddo a byddai e'n ffrind i Lenny dywedodd e "dydw dim ond yn bwyta dail ar goed. Dydw i ddim yn hoffi letys. Dydw i ddim yn gallu bod yn ffrind i Lenny." Yn siomedig trodd y plant y ffwrdd.



Ar waelod coeden arall ffeinon nhw anifail hyd yn oed mwyod. Hyd yn oed yn mwy a thywyllach na'r un cyntaf. Cyn i ddyn nhw ddweud unrhywbeth siaradodd mewn llais araf, trwchus "Ewch i ffwrdd rydw i'n brysur yn bwyta. Dydy Lenny ddim yn gallu byw uma. Byddai hi'n gorchuddio fy nghoeden a llaid. Dydw i ddim un gallu bod yn ffrind i Lenny.



Yn teimlo'n eitha drist cariodd y plant Lenny yn drist ac unig unig dros yr afon lle ffeindon nhw gerrig. Yn torheulo ar y cerrig roedd bwystfil hir ac esmyth gyda thafod hir symudol.

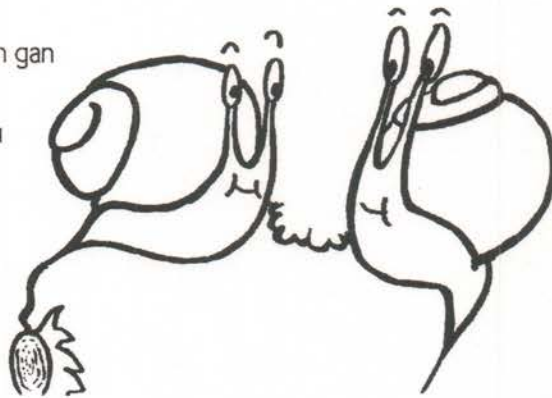
Pan ofynon nhw a fyddai fe'n hoffi bod yn ffrind i Lenny atebodd e 'Blant dwi! Byddai Dwmplan yn rhy boeth a sych ar fy ngherrig. Dydw i ddim yn gallu bod yn ffrind i Lenny.



Mewn anobaith aethon nhw. O'r diwedd daethon nhw ar draws creadur arall yn bwyta dail letys yn araf. Pan gryraeddon nhw cuddiodd e yn gloi yn ei gragen.

Edrychodd y plant tu fewn i'r gragen gan alw "Esgusodwch fi wyt ti'n nabod rhywun sy'n chwilio am ffrind i rannu cinio?"

Edrychodd e allan i weld Lenny yn cnoi cornel o'i letys "Wel ydw i" meddai fan lusgo ymlaen, "a fi!"



Pan welodd y plant y ddwy falwoden un bwyta dail letys yn hapus gyda 'i gilydd dywedon nhw' Hwyl Fawr' wrth Lenny e'i ffrind newydd a gadawon nhw i fyw yn hapus byth wedyn.



Nol yn y gwerysll cafodd y plant swper enfawr ar bwys y tan. Yn araf deg cywmpnon nhw i gysgu yn flinedig ar ol eu diwrnod cyffrous.

The Cast...

Lenny & Friend: 'African Giant Land Snail' (*Achatina fulica*.)



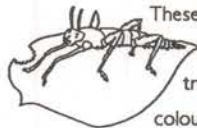
These giant snails can reach up to 15cm in size. They range from Guinea to Nigeria and are considered a delicacy to some! Instead of chewing food as we do they have a file-like tongue with which they rasp away at their food, which consists of a range of vegetation. Lacking legs, they move about using their large, muscular, foot, using secreted slime to ease their passage over the ground. They are one of the most fecund animals in the world (a single animal can produce literally millions of eggs in it's lifetime). Like all snails they are hermaphrodite: possessing both male and female bits. Attempts to farm them have caused immense environmental damage in a number of countries as escapees from the farms have devastated both native vegetation and cash crops in countries where there are no natural predators (attempts to introduce predators have caused even more damage!).

1st Stick Insect: 'Maclay's Spectre Stick' (*Extatosoma tiaratum*.)



These insects are from Australia. They live in the canopy layer of rainforests eating the vegetation they live within and relying on the camouflage of their bodies to protect them. If threatened, the juveniles and adult females flick their tail over their body to mimic a scorpion (adult males possess a pair of wings which prevent them from arching their backs in this way). When they first hatch the young look very similar to Australian red ants which can give a painful sting, this too provides excellent protection.

2nd Stick Insect: 'Giant Spiny Stick' (*Eurycanthus horridum*.)



These black thorny insects are from Papua New Guinea and Australia. The adults are about 10 to 15cm long and dark brown. They tend to live near the ground, often in holes at the base of trees. Their hard outer shell offers excellent protection for this life style, as does their colouration. They live exclusively on the leaves of the forest trees. The female has a pointed ovipositor which she uses to lay eggs, pushing them just below the surface level. The male has powerful defensive spikes on his hind legs which he is capable of sticking into anything that's bothering him. They live for about 2 years. The young nymphs resemble the adults, except that they are green and live in the canopy layer of the trees.

The Snake: Royal Python (*Python regis*.)



From the W African forests, these snakes are often called Ball Pythons because of their habit of rolling into a ball if threatened. In the wild they eat small mammals and other snakes, we feed ours between 1 and 2 mice a week. They are passive, friendly snakes, unlikely to bite unless severely provoked!

The most interesting thing about these snakes is the way they catch their prey. Notice their markings: ideal camouflage for living in trees and waiting for dinner to come along! Lacking a nose their tongue is constantly active, flicking in and out very rapidly to taste and smell the air. Eyes on the side of their head give them all round vision, so they can see what's creeping up behind them without having to move and ruin their camouflage. Finally, infrared pits at the front of their face allow them to see warm blooded animals at night (can spot a small rodent at 1m distance in pitch blackness).

Having caught their prey they wrap their body around it, using suffocation to kill it. They swallow their prey whole (snakes can't chew) and lie quietly and digest their meal - taking some 2.5 days to do so.