

Footsteps

Trod, tread, trudge, traipse and tramp
stagger, step, scamper, stump and stamp;

Hike, skip, jog, march and amble;
stroll, strut, shuffle, stride and ramble;
Saunter, lope, dawdle, plod and toddle;
potter, run, wander, walk and waddle.

There are many ways of
moving along on foot
and just as many ways the matter can be put.

"Footsteps"

Discussion

Points

- ◆ What ways of moving does the poem describe?
- ◆ Which words tell us about moving slowly or quickly?
- ◆ Which words are words we sometimes use to describe animals moving? Which words for which animals?
- ◆ What other words can you think of to describe the way humans move?
- ◆ In what ways do plants, animals or insects move?
- ◆ Look at some non-living objects – can you think of words to describe the way that these move?
- ◆ How do non-living objects move?
- ◆ Where do animals, including humans, get their energy to move? How is this different to objects such as toy cars and elastic bands?

Science

Background

- ◆ Teachers often talk about healthy living and eating and discuss diet, exercise and drugs with children but rarely mention feet. Yet many adult ailments have their origin in childhood where neglect of the feet can lead to poor posture. This may result in problems in other parts of the body such as the legs and the back.
- ◆ Young feet are soft. Inadequate foot care and poorly fitting shoes can lead to pressure on the foot and deformities in the first years of life. This is particularly important since children's feet can grow to half their adult foot size during the first year. Later in life adults may suffer problems because of lack of foot care in the early years and also from shoes that have been purchased because they are cheap, or to follow the latest fashion trend; they are not always chosen for the best fit and comfort.
- ◆ In the human foot there are at least 26 bones, plus ligaments, muscles, blood vessels and nerves. It is a complex part of the body and important because the feet carry the entire weight of the body for the lifetime of most people.
- ◆ The instep has five elongated bones that join the ankles. The ends of the bones form the ball of the foot. There are also ligaments that form the arches of the feet and are the stable spring base for human feet.
- ◆ Not all animals have the same feet for movement. Some animals have adapted the basic five toes. The horse, for example, has only one toe which has a hoof; the hoof is the equivalent of a human toenail.

Key

Ideas

- ◆ Know that animals need to move to stay alive, for example, to catch food.
- ◆ Know about the skeleton and bones in the legs and feet.
- ◆ Know the role of muscles in movement.
- ◆ Know about using energy to move.

Science

Skills

Children should be able to :

- ◆ suggest ideas;
- ◆ recognise a fair test;
- ◆ explore using senses;
- ◆ communicate what happened during their work;
- ◆ make comparisons;
- ◆ try to explain what they have found out;
- ◆ cooperate with others.

Key Activities

Let children try travelling in all the different ways mentioned in the poem. What parts of their feet or body are in contact with the floor? Can they speed up or slow down all of the actions? Why? Why not?

Cover the soles of the children's feet with talcum powder and let the children walk across a strip of black paper in talc covered feet.

- Do they all walk in the same way?
- What part of the foot is used most?
- Who has the biggest stride?
- Who puts the smallest area of their feet down?
- How could the children find out?
- Compare the footprints of a run to a jump.

Younger children can listen to a tape recording of people walking. See how many footsteps sounds they

can identify and if they can distinguish footsteps walking on different surfaces. Use the descriptions in the poem as a prompt.

Consider other animals. Look at pictures of them. Does what they look like give any clues to the way they move?

Using real animals (pets or a video) look at the way they move. Do they have legs? Do they walk on two or four legs? Are their forelimbs used for other things as well as walking?

Safety : Be aware of asthmatics when using talcum powder.

See ASE publication *Be Safe!* for information on all aspects of safety in school science.

Numeracy

Skills

Children should be able to :

- ◆ measure and calculate the area of different shapes, for example, footprints.
- ◆ find different ways to calculate the area of a shape;
- ◆ find the perimeter of a shape, for example, a footprint.

Literacy

Skills

Children should be able to :

- ◆ understand where to use commas;
- ◆ use rhythm and rhyme;
- ◆ use descriptive language;
- ◆ understand alliterative use of language;
- ◆ extend vocabulary by using a thesaurus;
- ◆ identify adjectives in a piece of writing.