

Teacher Guide for this cross-curricular story

Part 1: Introducing Toby, our Digital Detective



Citizenship makes a feature of Toby. Toby is Cherry Court's young reporter. He uses his phone like a modern digital journalist, recording what happens in his community and sharing the stories he discovers.

Whenever something unusual happens, Toby goes to investigate. He uses his phone to:

- photograph the people, places and events he encounters;
- film short selfie video diary entries explaining what he is thinking;
- Share the story so that others can learn from it.

The finished investigation becomes the video children watch in class and the book they can read afterwards.

This makes the format ideal for classroom investigations. Children do not need to film long video sequences or become expert camera operators. Keeping the technology simple allows the emphasis to remain where it belongs—on careful observation, thoughtful investigation and clear communication.

Toby's phone is not the lesson. It is simply the modern equivalent of a notebook, pencil and camera combined into one device.

Toby's investigations encourage children to look carefully, ask questions, gather

evidence and avoid jumping to conclusions.

By following the same approach, children can use digital technology to investigate their own school, neighbourhood and community, turning everyday observations into thoughtful digital stories.

Part 2: Our approach to Citizenship

Citizenship is a fundamental part of living in a community. Cherry Court citizenship curriculum covers the ground through stories that begin with a mystery.

The mystery is always: why isn't my world working out?

Toby talks directly to children. Children investigate alongside him.

They observe carefully, discuss possible explanations, test ideas and gradually discover the answer for themselves.

In our scheme, as the mystery unfolds, important curriculum ideas appear naturally. And children discover how they can help to solve everyday problems.

By the end of the story, children have not only learned something new, but have also practised the kind of thinking that helps people solve real problems in everyday life.

Part 3: Why our approach matters

Children meet problems every day, but they rarely think about the decisions behind what they see.

Most problems are not obvious. They are embedded in the struggle for life. And in many cases that means the struggle for making a living. So an important part of our Citizenship is preparing for the world of work.

If children are exposed to the world of work in a simple way at an early age, they will be in a much stronger position to succeed later on. We introduce this by allowing Toby and children to get involved in decisions.

A story helps children understand that successful businesses do much more than make good products. They also help customers notice, remember and enjoy what they are buying.

The story introduces enterprise in a positive, accessible way.

And – most important of all – our stories always have positive outcomes (happy endings)

About this story

The Mystery of the Forgotten Bananas

This story explores one of the simplest but most important ideas in business and everyday life: people cannot choose something if they never notice it.

Mr Khan runs a busy little corner shop in Cherry Court. His customers like the fruit he sells, yet every day the bananas are left behind while the apples, oranges and grapes quickly disappear.

At first everyone assumes there must be something wrong with the bananas. But Toby discovers they are fresh, yellow and perfectly good. The real mystery is why customers seem to ignore them.

By carefully watching how people move around the shop, Toby notices that the bananas are hidden away on the lowest shelf near the back. Customers hurry past without seeing them.

Aisha suggests moving the bananas into a basket beside the entrance at face height. Nothing about the bananas changes. Only where people notice them.

The story helps children discover that solving problems often begins by observing carefully rather than making assumptions. Sometimes the simplest solution is simply helping people notice what is already there.

Opportunities across the curriculum

Citizenship

Children discover how local shops serve their communities and how observation, teamwork and good decision-making help businesses succeed. They explore how small changes can reduce waste and improve customer service.

English

The mystery encourages prediction, inference and discussion. Children explain evidence, justify opinions and consider how Toby solves problems by observing carefully.

Mathematics

Children can collect simple data about customer choices, create tally charts and compare which products are noticed most often.

Design and Enterprise

Children investigate product placement, shop layouts, displays and signs. They discover that successful businesses often improve presentation rather than changing the product itself.

Geography

Children explore why local shops remain important parts of communities and compare shopping habits in their own neighbourhood with Cherry Court.

Before you begin

Citizenship works best when people are open-minded. When you can see both points of view.

Ask the children:

- Have you ever thought about shopping from the owner's point of view? After all, they have to make a living, and one day you will be trying to earn a living too. Have you ever thought about local services from the council's point of view?
- Do you think businesses and the council are always bad, or are most run by people trying to make a living while serving the community?

After watching

Ask children:

- Why did the bananas not sell at first?
- Were the bananas poor quality?
- Why did the sign only help a little?
- Why was Aisha's idea better?
- What lesson did Toby learn from solving the mystery?
- Can you think of somewhere else where making something easier to

notice could solve a problem?

Encourage children to explain why they think each answer is correct rather than simply giving the solution.

Extending the learning

Invite children to become "shop detectives."

Choose an ordinary classroom object or picture of a product and ask children to decide where it should be displayed if they wanted everyone to notice it.

Alternatively, ask groups to design a simple shop shelf for:

- fruit
- bread
- drinks
- healthy snacks

Afterwards discuss:

- Which products did you place at eye level?
- Which would you put near the entrance?
- Why?

Finish by returning to Mrs Patel's bakery.

Ask children whether they would:

- move the crusty rolls,
- improve the sign,
- bake them at a different time,
- or think of another solution.