

Teacher Guide for this cross-curricular story

Part 1: Introducing Toby, our Digital Detective



This topic 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

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)

Inspiring children for their future

Every Cherry Court mystery introduces children to people who make a valuable

contribution to their community.

The purpose is not to persuade children to choose a particular career. Instead, it is to help them recognise that successful communities depend on people with many different talents and skills.

As you discuss the story, encourage children to think beyond the mystery itself.

Ask questions such as:

- Who helped solve today's problem?
- What skills did they need?
- What personal qualities made them successful?
- How do they help other people?
- Could you imagine yourself enjoying work like this one day?

Children often hear a great deal about university and academic success. Cherry Court also celebrates practical skills, apprenticeships, crafts, public service, business, creativity and caring professions.

Every child has different strengths. Our aim is to help children discover that there are many worthwhile paths into adult life, and that whatever their talents, they have something valuable to contribute to their community.

About this story

In this story we meet Gran, who has finally acquired something she has always wanted — a much larger garden. Instead of feeling excited, however, she feels rather overwhelmed. She knows she wants a beautiful garden but is unsure where to begin.

This immediately introduces an important citizenship theme. Children begin to appreciate that older people may sometimes need encouragement, practical help and someone willing to listen.

Rather than taking over, the children work alongside Gran. They ask questions, listen carefully to her ideas and gradually help her decide what she really wants from her new garden.

The story also introduces planning and creative thinking. Different layouts are considered, including winding paths, seating areas and planting schemes designed to provide interest throughout the year.

As the planning develops, children naturally begin to think about the changing seasons, wildlife habitats and the needs of different plants. They discover that a successful garden is planned carefully rather than simply filled with flowers.

Financial literacy also appears naturally within the story. Gran cannot afford to buy everything immediately, so the children explore sensible ways of achieving their aims

within a limited budget. They learn that careful planning, patience and good decision-making are often more important than spending large amounts of money.

Perhaps most importantly, children see that by working together they can make a genuine difference to somebody else's life. The story finishes with a practical improvement that benefits both Gran and the wider environment, reinforcing the idea that citizenship is about positive action within our own communities.

Opportunities across the curriculum

Citizenship

Children explore why trust, reliability and responsibility are important in the world of work. They consider how skilled trades contribute to the community and why reputation matters.

English

The mystery encourages prediction, discussion and inference. Children explain how Toby reaches his conclusions and justify their opinions using evidence from the story.

Design and Technology

Children investigate the purpose of fences, the properties of timber, simple construction methods and why careful measuring and accurate workmanship are important.

Careers and Enterprise

Children discover that there are many successful career pathways. They learn about apprenticeships, practical training and the importance of developing skills through experience.

PSHE

The story encourages children to recognise their own strengths and interests, appreciate the talents of others and understand that different people succeed in different kinds of work.

Before you begin

Ask the children:

- Have you ever watched somebody who is really good at making or repairing something?
- What qualities would you want if someone was working on your home?
- Why do people recommend some tradespeople to their friends?
- Do you think practical skills are just as important as academic skills? Why?

After watching

Ask children:

- Why did Mr Moxem recommend Jack and Olly?
- What made them successful?
- Why are teamwork and good communication important in practical jobs?
- What does Toby learn about trust and reputation?
- What practical skills would you like to learn one day?
- Why do you think people continue to recommend good tradespeople?

Extending the learning

Invite children to become "**Skills Detectives.**"

Ask them to think of different jobs that require practical skills, for example:

- carpenter
- plumber
- electrician
- bricklayer
- mechanic
- gardener

For each one discuss:

- What skills are needed?
- What tools might they use?
- How do they help the community?
- Why is it important that they do careful work?

Finish by asking children to think about **their own strengths.**

What are they already good at?

What would they enjoy becoming really skilled at in the future?

This story provides an opportunity to discuss skilled trades and apprenticeships. Jack and Olly show that success comes through careful workmanship, reliability, teamwork and pride in doing a job well. Children who enjoy practical activities may recognise that careers involving making, repairing and building are just as valuable as more academic professions.