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Example:



The Blank Language Scheme

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Aims of the training

- To have an understanding of the 4 levels of questions within the Blank Language Scheme.
- To practice using the levels of questions.
- To think about how the Blank Language Scheme can be used within the school setting
 - Subjects
 - Playground
 - Behaviour Management



A child has fallen over in the playground.
Write down 5 questions you would ask.

Blank Language Scheme

Background

- Based on the work by Blank, Rose & Berlin (1978)
- There are four levels of questioning which move from simple, concrete questions to more difficult, abstract questions.

Year 1 Science – Seasonal Changes

Pictures from [Twinkl.co.uk](https://www.twinkl.co.uk)



Level 1 Matching Perception

Language matches
objects in front of the
child.



Level 1 Questions



Questions

Matching objects

- *Find another one like this (point at one of the trees)*

Naming objects

- *What is this? (pointing at the snowman)*

Point to an object

- *Show me the dog*
- *Find a snowball*

Level 2 Selective Analysis

Language focuses on
parts of the objects in
front of the child

- * Function
- * Describing
- * Sorting & categorising



Level 2 Questions



Questions

Function

- Find something you can throw

Things that go together

- What goes with a hat? (gloves)

Sentence completion

- You put your hat on your.....

Describing a scene

- Tell me what is happening

Level 2 Questions



Questions

Linguistic Concepts

- Find something pink
- Find two trees

Categories

- Find an animal
- Tell me the name of another animal

Who/What/Where

The boy was sledding in the park.

- Who was sledding?
- What was he doing?
- Where was he?

Level 3

Reordering Perception

Language does not directly match objects in front of the child.

Child needs to think about the object in its context.



Level 3 Questions



Questions

Following instructions

- *Find 3 stones, a scarf and some sticks for the snowman.*

Sequencing

- *Arrange pictures in correct order (e.g., building a snowman)*

Telling a story/Describing an event

- *Tell me how to build a snowman*

Level 3 Questions



Questions

Prediction

- *What might happen next? (point at the girl with the snowball)*

What does a character say?

- *What is the little girl saying to her Mum?*

How does a character feel?

- *How is the boy feeling? (point at the boy on the sledge)*

Define a word

- *The trees are bare. What does bare mean?*

Level 4 Reasoning

- Problem solving at a
higher level
- * Justification
 - * Problem Solving
 - * Inference



Level 4 Questions



Questions

Inference

- How can we tell it is winter?

Explain why something can't be done

- Why can't we go sledding in the summer?

Solving a problem

- You can't find any stones for the snowman's eyes/buttons. What could you do?

Identifying a cause

- What makes it snow?

Level 4 Questions



Questions

Justify

- Why don't the trees have any leaves on them?

Explain the logic of compound words

- Why is it called a snowman?

Explanations

- How can you tell the girl is happy? (point at the girl with the snowball)

Percentage of children able to respond at different language for learning levels

Level I	Naming things	60% of 3 year olds understand at level I and level II
Level II	Describing things Who? What? Where?	
Level III	Talking about stories and events	65% of 5 year olds understand at level III and level IV
Level IV	Solving problems and answering Why?	

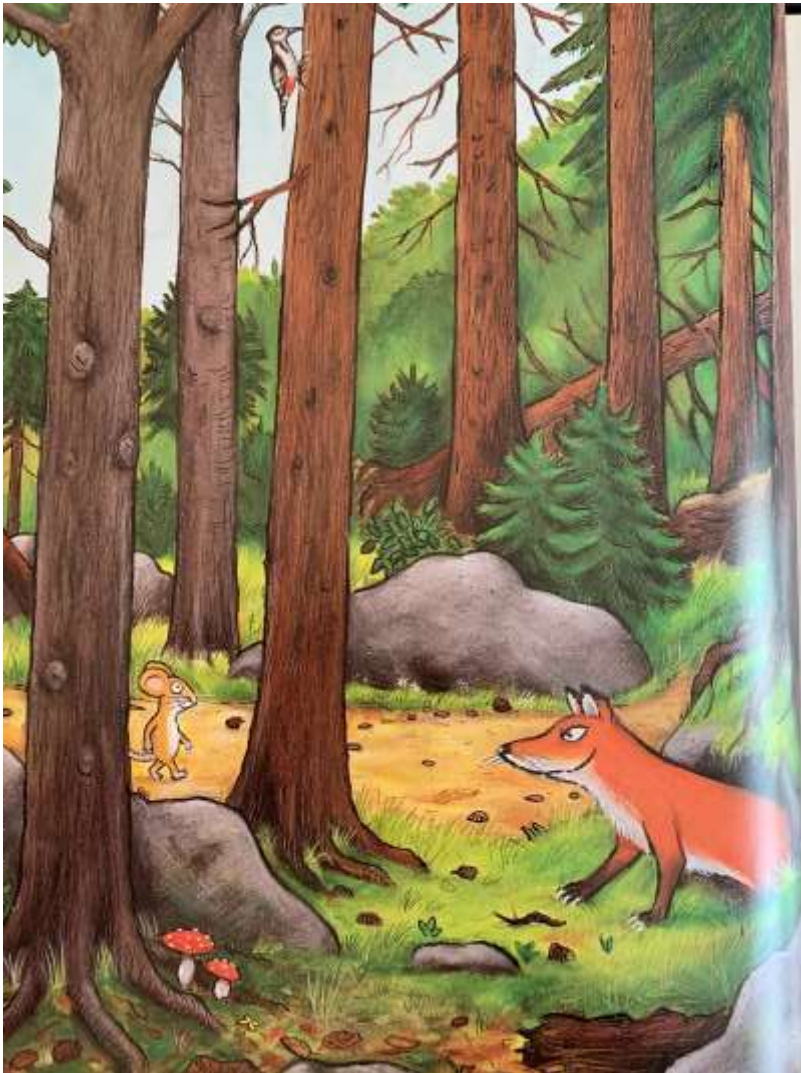


Look at your initial 5 questions.
Write down the Blank level next to each question.
What did you notice?

Your turn!

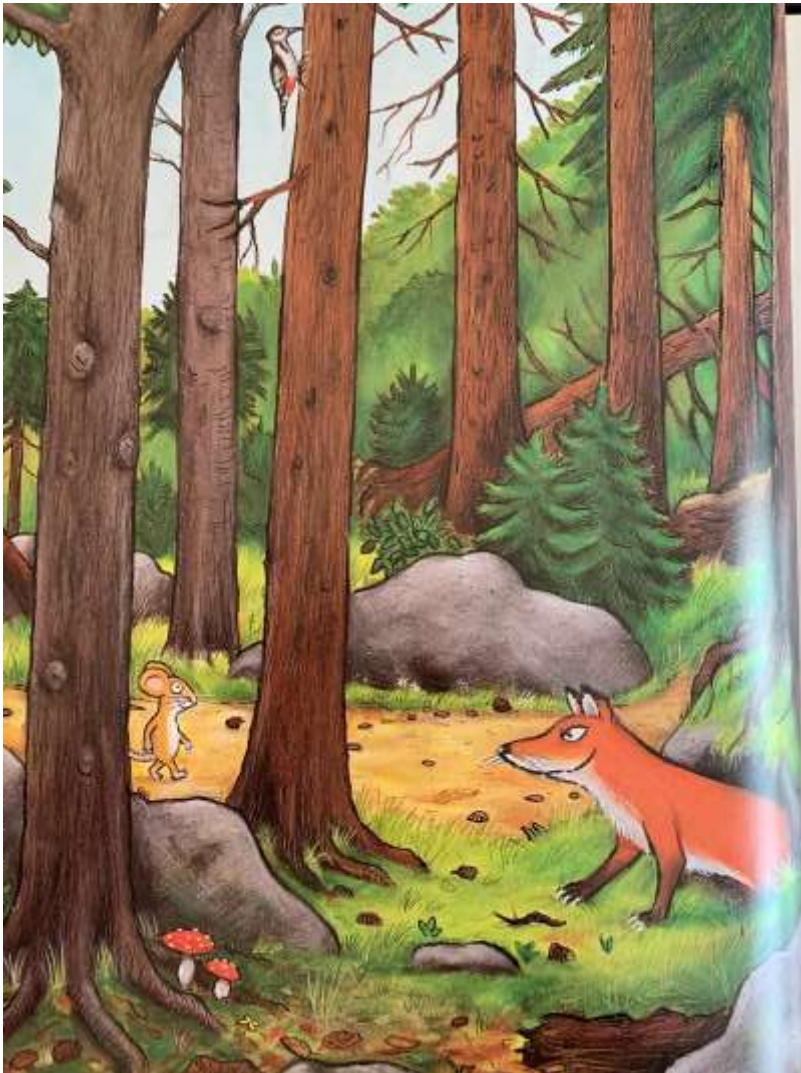
- [The Gruffalo - Read by Alan Mandel - Bing video](#)

What are the Blank Levels for these questions?



Questions	Blank Level
The mouse is walking on a	
(Point to the pine cone). Find another one like this.	
Why has the tree fallen over?	
How does the fox feel?	

Answers



Questions	Blank Level
The mouse is walking on a	2
(Point to the pine cone). Find another one like this.	1
Why has the tree fallen over?	4
How does the fox feel?	3

What are the Blank Levels for these questions?



Questions	Blank Level
Why does the owl look scared?	
An owl is a type of bird. Tell me another type of bird?	
What has happened in the story so far?	
Show me the flowers.	

Answers



Questions	Blank Level
Why does the owl look scared?	4
An owl is a type of bird. Tell me another type of bird?	2
What has happened in the story so far?	3
Show me the flowers.	1

What are the Blank Levels for these questions?



Questions	Blank Level
Point to the fox, the mouse and the Gruffalo.	
What is this? (point to the rock)	
Why is the fox running away?	
Find something sharp	

Answers



Questions	Blank Level
Point to the fox, the mouse and the Gruffalo.	3
What is this? (point to the rock)	1
Why is the fox running away?	4
Find something sharp	2

What are the Blank Levels for these questions?



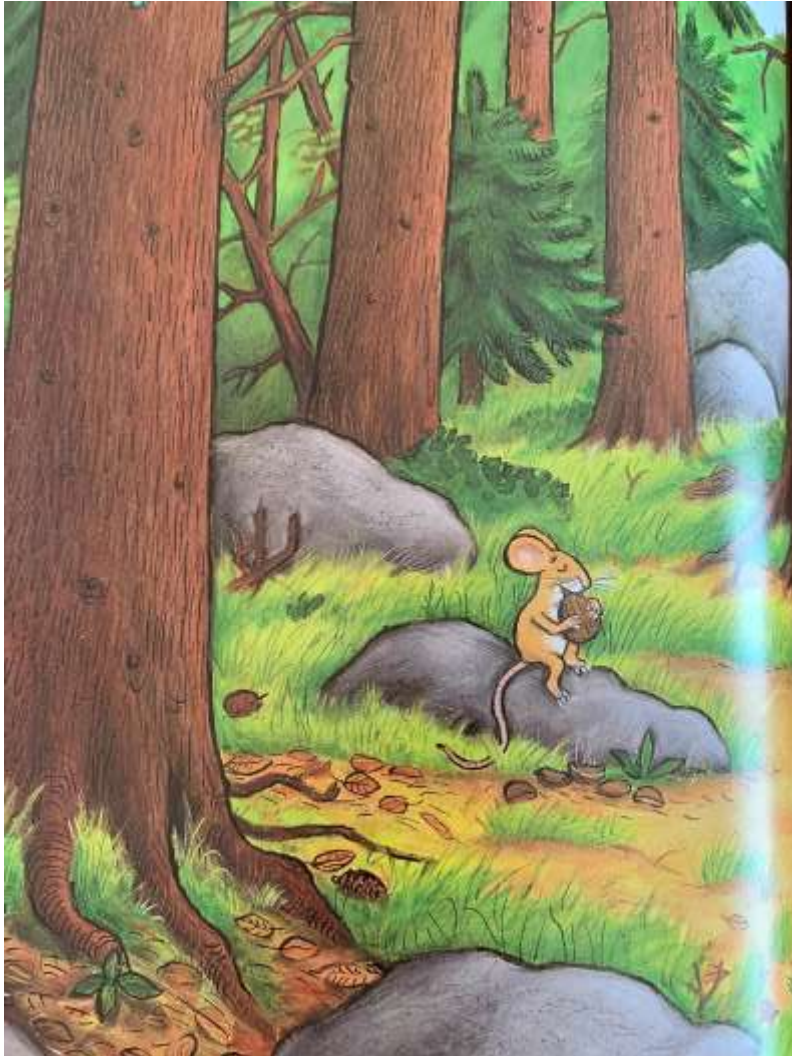
Questions	Blank Level
What is the Gruffalo saying to the mouse?	
What would you do if you ever met a Gruffalo?	
What is happening?	
What is this? (point to the pine cone).	

Answers



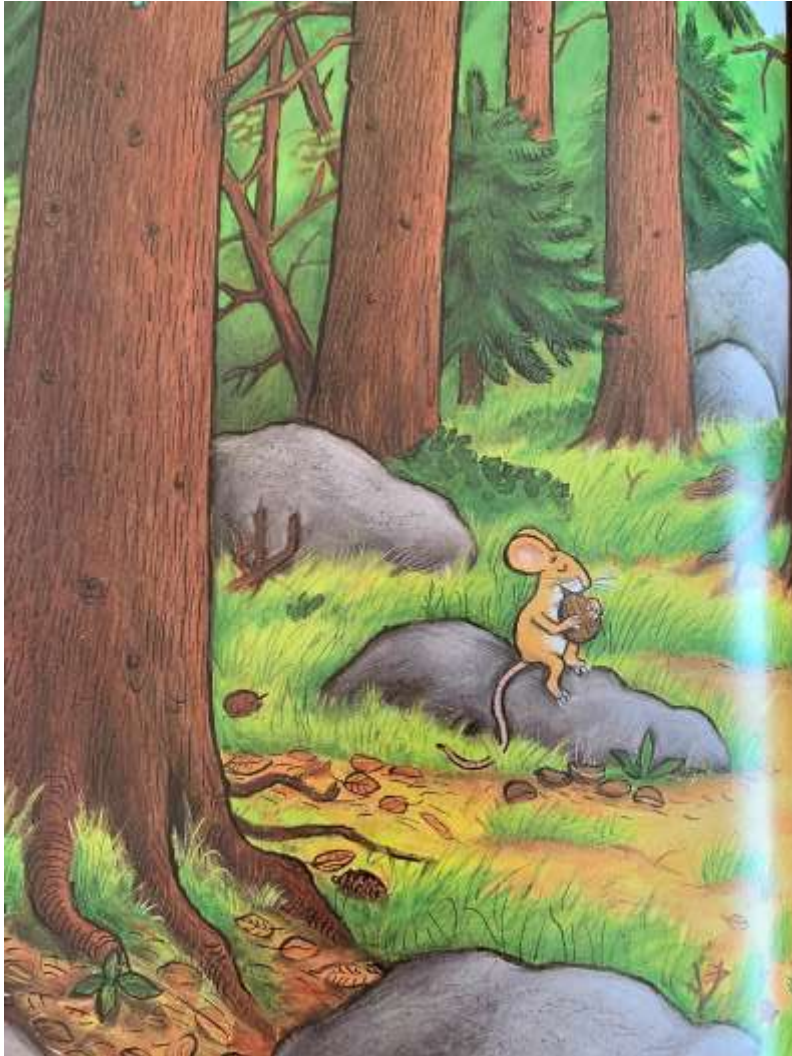
Questions	Blank Level
What is the Gruffalo saying to the mouse?	3
What would you do if you ever met a Gruffalo?	4
What is happening?	2
What is this? (point to the pine cone).	1

What are the Blank Levels for these questions?



Questions	Blank Level
Tell me the story.	
A butterfly can fly. Tell me something else that can fly.	
How can we tell it is day time?	
Show me the acorn.	

Answers



Questions	Blank Level
Tell me the story.	3
A butterfly can fly. Tell me something else that can fly.	2
How can we tell it is day time?	4
Show me the acorn.	1

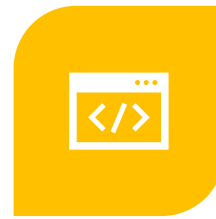
How can Blank Levels be applied to different curriculum areas?



LITERACY



SCIENCE



DESIGN &
TECHNOLOGY



MATHS



PE



PLAYGROUND



LUNCHTIME

Ideas for application

- Guided reading – having a set of Blank level questions for books
- Having space on subject planning sheets for different level Blank questions.
- Target specific areas through activities (e.g., sequencing, identifying feelings, sorting and categorising).
- Lanyards with suggested Blank Level questions.
- Pitch 70% of questions at level the child is working at and 30% at next level (Westby, 2017)

Managing behaviour

- When a child is finding something difficult, language should be kept to a basic level.

For example:

- ***Why did you throw your bag on the floor? (Level 4)***

Could be changed to

- *Where does your bag go? (Level 2)*
- *Put your bag away. (Level 3).*



Useful resources

- Elklan Test of Language Comprehension (TALC)
 - www.elklan.co.uk
- Elklan Language Builders books
 - www.elklan.co.uk
- Twinkl – www.twinkl.co.uk
 - Lots of activities at different Blank levels