

TAKE the LEAD

TEACHER'S AND PRESENTER'S GUIDE

Educational support materials devised by



In partnership with

**Farmers
Guardian**



National Sheep Association

“Take the Lead” Teacher’s/Presenter’s Guide

Introduction

Sheep worrying is something we hear about occasionally through the media but we don't usually know much about it or even take much notice. Yet sheep worrying has a devastating effect not only on the animals but also on the farmers who care for them.

"Take the Lead" provides a package of educational information and activities so that pupils can learn more about sheep and their important role and use some of the fun resources before being introduced to the topic of sheep worrying. We hope that in this way children will become ambassadors for “Take the Lead”, spreading the message to friends and family of the importance of keeping dogs on the lead when out walking near sheep in the countryside.

The package is flexible and can be adapted according to different requirements such as pupils' ages and abilities, time available in the curriculum and whether it will be used in conjunction with a farm visit. Teachers/presenters can use as much or as little of the materials as they wish. However, we advise engaging pupils more widely in a topic about sheep before tackling the subject of sheep worrying.

“Take the Lead” comprises

- A PowerPoint presentation to help build children's knowledge about sheep farming
- Teacher’s/presenter’s notes suggesting ways of using the PowerPoint presentation and with links to a variety of other sheep-related activities to create a whole topic for class use.

PowerPoint presentation

You can switch around the order of the slides if you wish to approach the topic in a different way.

The Quiz Slides 2-5

The quiz can be used as a starting point to find out how much your pupils know about sheep. Alternatively, you can use the questions in the quiz to test children's knowledge at the end of the topic. Or you might like to offer some of the questions as research activities either in class or as homework tasks. The questions are graded so they are easier at the start.

Presentation for assemblies/class use > Quiz Answers

Question	Answer	Additional info for the teacher
How do mother sheep (ewes) talk to their lambs?	By bleating/baaing	Every ewe and lamb has a slightly different bleat so they can find each other in a large field with lots of other sheep.
How many lambs does a mother sheep (ewe) usually have?	Two	Most ewes have two lambs, but singles (one) and triples (three) are possible, and quads (four) and quins (five) are sometimes born.
What do adult sheep eat for most of the time?	Grass	Sheep are called 'ruminants' so, unlike humans, they can eat grass.
What do baby lambs eat?	Milk	Mother sheep (ewes) have an udder with two teats to feed their babies.
What is a group of sheep called?	A flock	Sheep are flock animals and like to stay together in groups.
Does a sheep's wool keep it warm or cool?	Both	Wool is amazing! Fleeces keep sheep warm in the winter and cool in the summer.
What is a male sheep called?	A ram (or a tup)	Male sheep are usually bigger than females.
Are there more sheep or more people in the UK?	More people	There are twice as many people in the UK as sheep, but there are more sheep than people in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
The UK is the fourth biggest producer of lamb for people's dinners. Can you name one of the countries that produces more?	China, Australia and New Zealand	The UK may be a tiny country but we are a world leader when it comes to sheep farming.
How many stomachs does a sheep have?	Four	That's why they can eat grass when humans can't.
Can you name one thing that sheep produce that is useful for humans?	Lamb to eat, mutton to eat, milk and dairy products to eat, wool for clothing, sheepskin for clothing and shoes	Wool was the most valuable output from sheep hundreds of years ago, but now it is lamb for people to eat.

Sheep have their fleeces taken off once a year in summer. What is this highly skilled job called?	Shearing	The UK has a reputation for having some of the best shearers in the world. It takes several years to learn and the very best can shear more than 500 in a day.
Which sheep have horns: male, female or both?	Both	Only some breeds of sheep have horns, but for those breeds both males and females can grow them.
There are more than 90 different types of sheep in the UK. True or false	True	This includes different breeds and different crosses and is believed to be more than any other country in the world.
What is the name for the type of dog that sheep farmers use on their farms?	Sheepdog	There are several different types of sheepdog and they are claimed to be the cleverest dog because they understand instructions from the farmer and can control sheep without biting them.

Presentation for assemblies/class use > Benefits of sheep

Slides 6-8

Suggested activity:

Divide the class into small groups made up of two or three pupils. Give each group one of the statements. Their task is to present the fact to the rest of the class. According to their age and ability, they can research additional information or simply provide illustrations to highlight the statement.

When everyone has completed their work, the pupils present their statements. Their work can be used as part of a display or scanned to computer to incorporate into a class presentation which they might like to offer to other classes or to an assembly.

Sheep produce lots of things that humans use. This includes: healthy and nutritious lamb and mutton to eat; milk, cheese and dairy products to eat; wool for clothing, insulation and soft furnishings; and sheepskins for clothing and shoes.

Eating lamb is good for a healthy, balanced diet, as you don't have to eat lots of it to get plenty of nutrients, including protein, iron, folates and B vitamins.

Only 40% of land in the UK can grow vegetables and cereals that humans can eat. The rest of the land grows grass, so we need sheep and cattle to turn that grass into something humans can eat.

Grass is a 'carbon sink'. That means grass that is never ploughed up (permanent pasture) keeps lots of carbon in the soil rather than in the atmosphere.

Tourists come from all over the world to see the UK countryside with its green patchwork fields, hedges, stone walls and beautiful views. All our iconic landscapes are manmade, through centuries of farmers and shepherds looking after their sheep and the countryside. People in the UK like to spend time in the countryside too – it's good for the body and the mind to get outside in the fresh air.

More than 40% of sheep live in the uplands of the UK (in the hills and mountains). They continually graze the land so scrub and coarse vegetation cannot grow, which is good for many types of plant, small mammals and ground nesting birds.

Heather is a plant that grows in the UK but not many other countries around the world. It is more rare than rainforests! Sheep are essential to help manage heather moorland and keep the plant healthy and growing.

Sheep poo is amazing! It contains lots of nutrients that are important for the soil. Wherever there are sheep there is poo, which is good for the soil and everything beneath our feet.

There are believed to be more types of sheep in the UK than any other country in the world. Even in New Zealand and Australia, where there are more sheep than people, the sheep you find there originated in the UK. Different farmers have different breeds of sheep depending on their farm (the type of land, weather patterns, history and tradition) but it is important that UK farmers work with all these different types of sheep so we don't lose the genetic diversity we have.

Sheep farmers and shepherds have lots of unique skills, like knowing what medicine to give a sheep to stop it getting poorly, how to handle a sheep and use a sheepdog without scaring the sheep, how to remove wool from a sheep without hurting it (shearing), and lots of other things. These skills have been passed down within families for hundreds of years and it is important we do not lose them.

If there were no sheep in rural areas, there would be no farmers or farming families. This would mean businesses, village shops and schools would close down, affecting other families who make a living indirectly from sheep farming.

Sheep help the UK economy, as lots of people like to eat lamb in the UK and around the world. The UK sells lots of lamb to other countries, nearly 40% of production every year.

Presentation for assemblies/class use > Sheep lifecycles Slides 9-11

Suggested activities:

You might also like to use "A sheep's year" presentation:

<http://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources/1195>

Use the facts below to develop children's understanding of the similarities and differences between sheep and human lifecycles. For younger pupils it might be appropriate to source images to compare e.g. a maternity ward and a lambing shed; bottle feeding a lamb and bottle feeding a human baby etc.

- A female sheep (ewe) becomes pregnant in the autumn. She is pregnant for five months and is very special because she can survive outside in the wet and cold of winter. Her fleece keeps her warm and the farmer will provide extra food when the grass is not growing or is covered in snow.
- Just like human mothers when they are pregnant, ewes have a scan to look at the baby growing inside them. This is find out how many babies (lambs) the ewe will have and, therefore, how much food she needs.
- Some sheep stay outside all year round and their lambs are born in the open air. Some farmers and shepherds bring the mother sheep into a shed just before they give birth. This is like a maternity ward in a hospital and allows the farmer to keep a close eye on everything that is happening and give the mother extra food so she is strong enough to look after her babies when they are born.
- Mother sheep usually have two lambs each, because they have an udder with two teats and can feed two babies. If she has triplets (three), quads (four) or quins (five) the farmer usually gives the extra lambs to a ewe that does not have any babies or only had one of her own.
- The lambs will drink lots of milk to grow strong. After just one month they will also be eating grass and learning to graze like their mothers.
- Different lambs have different jobs and the farmer has to be very skilled to know which are best at which jobs.
 - A female lamb might grow up to be a mother (ewe) herself, if she is strong and has the right characteristics for the flock. The farmer might keep her for his own flock or sell her to another farmer who needs more sheep.
 - A male lamb might grow up to be a father (a ram or tup), if he is strong and has the right characteristics for the breed. The farmer will help the male lamb grow and then sell him to another farmer.
 - Other male and female lambs might be best for the food chain to be a delicious lamb chop or Sunday roast. The farmer will help them grow to the right size before selling them to a market, butcher, processor or supermarket.
 - Some farmers, particularly on farms in the hills and uplands where the grass does not grow all year round, might have male and female lambs suitable for the food chain but not enough food for them to grow large enough. The farmer would sell these 'store' lambs to a different farmer.
- Once the mothers finish looking after their lambs, they will spend the summer months getting ready to have more babies the next spring. The farmer will make sure they have any medicines they need to stay healthy, are still strong on their feet, have a healthy udder and are not too fat

or too thin. They will be sheared (have their fleece removed) so new wool can grow before the next winter.

- Each year the farmer will have older ewes that will not be able to have another year of rearing lambs. They might be sold to another farm that has more food and better weather, so they can have more lambs, or they might be sold into the food chain. Older sheep that go into the food chain are not lamb – their meat is sold as mutton and is very tasty in stews and curries.

Presentation for assemblies/class use > How we care for sheep

Slides 12-13

Suggested activity

After viewing the presentation slides, the pupils again divide into groups. Each group is given a different topic (the titles of slides xxx to xxx e.g. Constant Monitoring; Shearing etc.) and they talk about what they recall and practise making notes. They can then compare what they have talked about with how we care for humans: what are the similarities and differences?

- **Constant monitoring:** Sheep have to be checked by the farmer, shepherd or someone the farmer trusts every day. This is to make sure they are healthy and alert, have not escaped from their field and have plenty to eat and drink. Food is nearly always in the form of grass, apart from in the winter when hay, silage or special sheep feed might be provided. Fresh, clean water must always be available. At some times of the year, sheep can get stuck on their backs (cast) and cannot get up. If you see a sheep that is stuck before the farmer sees it, just give it a gentle push to help it get back on its feet.
- **Shearing:** Sheep have wool on their backs to keep them warm in winter and cool in summer, but the fleece will keep growing and growing until it is very heavy and uncomfortable and attracts a lot of annoying flies and insects. Every year (usually in May or June) the fleece will be removed by a very skilled shearer. The shearer can clip off the wool without hurting the sheep, with the fleece sent away to be made into clothes, carpets or even insulation for your house. Shearers work incredibly hard and the very best can shear several hundred in a day.
- **Medicines:** Adult sheep (ewes and rams) and young sheep (lambs) need different types of medicine to keep them healthy. Just like human children, they are given vaccines when they are very young to stop them getting common illnesses. They will receive 'booster' injections as they get older and, if they go on to become mothers themselves, will have extra vaccines to keep themselves and their babies healthy. Because sheep live outside, there are lots of nasty insects and parasites to avoid. The farmer knows what to look out for and will give them medicine to stop them getting poorly, or to help them get better when they are ill. There are very strict rules in place for farmers using medicine in their sheep, to make sure they cannot harm the sheep, or the environment, or people who enjoy eating lamb.
- **Lambing:** Spring is a very busy time of year on sheep farms and sheep need lots of extra attention when baby lambs are being born. It is important the mother sheep (ewes) get enough food to stay healthy and produce lots of milk to keep their babies healthy. The very first milk produced is called 'colostrum', which is packed with antibodies to boost the immune system of baby lambs and stop them getting poorly. The farmer will also put a special medicine on the baby lamb's naval (what we call the belly button in humans) to stop any bugs making it poorly.
- **Protection:** It is difficult to always protect sheep, but farmers will keep an eye out for animals that attack baby lambs, such as bigger birds, foxes and badgers. Another problem can be people allowing their dogs to chase or bite sheep. It is against the law to let this happen, which is why anyone walking their dog in an area where there are sheep should always keep the dog on a lead.

Farmer Story

Slide 14

Suggested activity:

<http://www.whyfarmingmatters.co.uk/using-the-videos#sheep>

Watch the short video and use the questions on the page

Presentation for assemblies/class use > Purpose of a trained sheepdog

Slides 15-16

Suggested activity:

Download the Sheep and Wool e-booklet at

<http://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources/1196>

Get the children active using the Sheepdog activity on pages 6-7. Remember to download in advance the sheep and collie ears templates!

- Sheepdogs are incredibly clever animals and can learn and understand hundreds of commands. They have sharp ears and sharp eyes, so they never miss anything and love to learn new skills.
- Sheepdogs want to round things up, even when they are puppies. They are born with an instinct for it – but they still need lots of training to turn into experts.
- A sheepdog never bites sheep to hurt them, never chases sheep for fun and never runs into the middle of a flock of sheep to scatter them in several directions. Biting and chasing are incredibly stressful for sheep and, when lambs are very young, can cause them to be split up from their mothers. This is why you must always keep your dog on a lead if you are walking it around sheep.
- A trained sheepdog can help the farmer or shepherd move the sheep from one field to another field, or from a field into the farmyard when sheep need to be given medicine or split into different groups. Sheepdogs can run much faster than a person and can cope with rough and rocky hillsides where quad bikes cannot be used.
- When going around a large field or a large piece of ground on a hill or mountain, a trained sheepdog will find every sheep and never leave one behind.
- The farmer or shepherd will use different sounding whistles or instructions to tell a sheepdog to go left or right, speed up or slow down. Different instructions will be used in a large open space compared to in the farmyard.
- Just like there are lots of different breeds of sheep, there are different breeds of sheepdog too. The Border Collie and Welsh Sheepdog have been popular in the UK for many decades, but two breeds from overseas are now commonly seen on farms here too. They are Kelpies and Huntaways.

Teacher's/Presenter's Guide > Fast facts

Slide 17

- Sheep are incredibly resilient and different breeds can thrive on mountains, pastures, salt marshes and other marginal areas. They can produce a product for humans to eat off ground that cannot be cultivated for food crops.
- Sheep have four stomachs, which is why they can eat grass and humans can't.
- Lamb and mutton is tasty, nutritious and full of protein, iron and vitamins.
- Wool is the most environmentally friendly fibre in the world, produced by little more than solar power and grass.
- Sheep support wildlife and biodiversity, as they stop scrub and coarse vegetation growing in areas where plants, small mammals and ground nesting birds like to live.
- In one summer, 13 species of grasshopper, four species of snail and 133 plant species were found 'hitching a lift' in the wool and feet of one sheep.
- Adult female sheep are called ewes, and adult male sheep are called rams or tups. Young sheep are called lambs, but once they get towards one year of age there are lots of different names used in different parts of the UK. These include hogg, hogget and teg.
- There are more than 90 different breeds of sheep, cross-breeds and hybrids found in the UK.
- You will find British sheep breeds in nearly every sheep-producing country in the world.
- Both male and female sheep can grow horns – it depends on the breed, not the sex.
- Sheep fleeces can be white, brown or black, and nearly every shade in between. Different breeds have different textures of wool. Fine wool is used for clothing and fabrics, while rougher wool is used for carpets and insulation.
- Sheep have excellent peripheral vision and can see behind themselves without turning their heads! This is so they can keep an eye out for sudden attack by predators.
- The world record for shearing a sheep (removing its fleece) is 37.9 seconds. The world record for the most sheep shorn by one person in a day is more than 700.

Teacher's/Presenter's Guide > More information

- Find more information about sheep at www.nationalsheep.org.uk/know-your-sheep. You can also contact NSA with questions on 01684 892661 or enquiries@nationalsheep.org.uk.
- NSA has a small number of members willing to go into schools and talk to children about their job. Although we cannot guarantee always being able to find someone, we will gladly fulfil requests where we can.
- You will find a variety of sheep-related resources on Countryside Classroom
 - Why Farming Matters sheep video
<http://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources/1006>
The Why Farming Matters resource includes a growing number of videos about different farming sectors. These are brief and informative introductions to farming. There are accompanying activities which encourage further viewing of the videos to help pupils to think about what farming involves. In this video a sheep farmer explains how he looks after his animals, what the sheep provide for us and what he likes about his job.
 - Livestock Identity Chart
<http://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources/1135>
A booklet with descriptions and photos of many different breeds of livestock – sheep included, of course.
 - 3D Model Farm Animals
<http://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources/658>
Outlines of farm animals including a sheep to colour, cut out, assemble and enjoy.
 - Farm animal senses
<http://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources/1064>
A lesson plan from the RSPCA for very young children looking at how farm animals, including sheep, use their senses.
 - Food and farming posters
<http://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources/737>
Seven, full-colour posters relating to food and farming in Scotland including lamb and wool.
- Search www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk for further resources about sheep. Add your postcode to the Places to Visit section and zoom out to see if there are farms to visit in your area. Alternatively, contact your Farming & Countryside Education Regional Education Co-ordinator for advice about local farms offering school visits. www.face-online.org.uk
- The Countryside Code outlines the responsibilities we all have when visiting the countryside
Read all about it here:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/558112/countryside-code.pdf

- Cornish Mutual have produced some very useful resources for schools including these activities highlighting the Countryside Code.
<http://cornishmutual.azurewebsites.net/farmsafeforschools/the-countryside-code/>

Teacher's/Presenter's Guide > Countryside Code

Slides 18-19

Suggested activity:

Ask the children to create posters highlighting different aspects of the Countryside Code

Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors

- Respect the needs of local people and visitors alike – for example, don't block gateways, driveways or other paths with your vehicle.
- When riding a bike or driving a vehicle, slow down or stop for horses, walkers and farm animals and give them plenty of room. By law, cyclists must give way to walkers and horseriders on bridleways.
- Co-operate with people at work in the countryside. For example, keep out of the way when farm animals are being gathered or moved and follow directions from the farmer.
- Busy traffic on small country roads can be unpleasant and dangerous to local people, visitors and wildlife - so slow down and where possible, leave your vehicle at home, consider sharing lifts and use alternatives such as public transport or cycling.
- Leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths unless wider access is available
- A farmer will normally close gates to keep farm animals in, but may sometimes leave them open so the animals can reach food and water. Leave gates as you find them or follow instructions on signs. When in a group, make sure the last person knows how to leave the gates.
- Follow paths unless wider access is available, such as on open country or registered common land (known as 'Open Access land').
- If you think a sign is illegal or misleading such as a 'Private - No Entry' sign on a public path, contact the local authority.
- Leave machinery and farm animals alone – don't interfere with animals even if you think they're in distress. Try to alert the farmer instead.
- Use gates, stiles or gaps in field boundaries if you can – climbing over walls, hedges and fences can damage them and increase the risk of farm animals escaping.
- Our heritage matters to all of us – be careful not to disturb ruins and historic sites.

Teacher's/Presenter's Guide > Impact of dog attacks

Slide 20

Suggested activity:

Watch the short film together as a class.

Ask the following questions after the video:

How many ewes do the farmers in the film own? (700)

Where is the lambs' home? (the fields and landscape)

What can be stressful for pregnant ewes? (a dog running round)

What might happen if a dog chases or bites the sheep?(pregnant sheep may lose their babies and lambs might get separated from their mothers)

What can you do to keep your dog and the sheep safe? (Keep your dog on a lead).

Teacher's/Presenter's Guide > Walking through cattle

Slide 21

One final but important point about the different reaction needed if chased by cattle when you are with your dog. (Let the dog off the lead as the cattle will chase him and not you).

Teacher's/Presenter's Guide > Summary points

Slide 22

Remind the children – ideally by questioning them – of what they have learnt from “Take the Lead.”

They are now ambassadors for “Take the Lead” and should pass on the message to their friends and family about what to do in the countryside when walking a dog.