

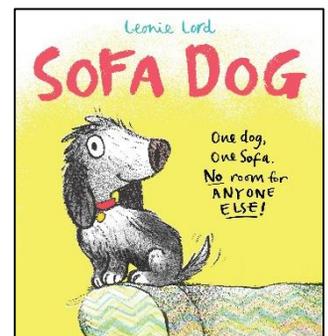


Sofa Dog

Written and illustrated by Leonie Lord

1 – Introducing the book

- Start by asking children if they have any pets, and what is special about them. Do they have any particular habits? Introduce the book and ask children to predict why they think the main character is called 'Sofa Dog'? Do they think he has always been called Sofa Dog, or do they think he has another name too? What might his other name be?
- Sofa Dog clearly enjoys lying on the sofa with his human, Sophie. Ask children to share what they like to do when they want to relax and feel cosy. Do they like company, or do they like some time on their own?
- Make a list of all the characters in the story who come round, and talk about how the list gets more and more unusual and outlandish as the story progresses. Brainstorm what other weird and wonderful characters (human and animal) could turn up to sit on Sofa Dog's sofa. You could then act this out, with children taking it in turns to wait outside the classroom door and then knock to be let in. When the door opens they can announce who they have brought with them. How many are on the sofa now? Keep a running total. If they have included animals, you could also count how many legs – how many legs on three cats? four budgies? two spiders?



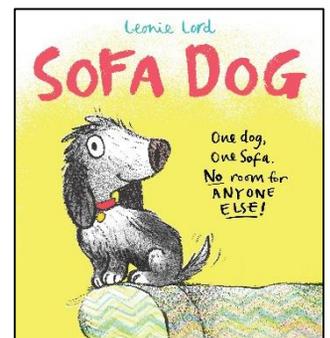


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1 – Introducing the book

- Children could bring in their own toys from home and put them on a classroom sofa to listen to stories. They could use chairs and sofas in the classroom as the basis for creating 'dens'.
- Use dice dipped in paint to set out some simple sums to show how many people join (or leave) the sofa. They could print them on strips of paper and then pass them to a friend to answer. Can they put the addition, subtraction and equals signs in the right places?



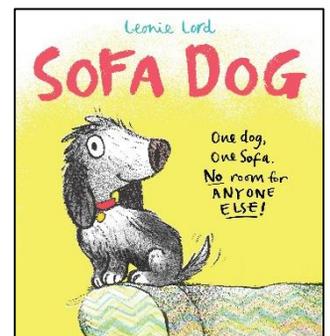


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2 – Home sweet home

- Sofa Dog's favourite place to be is right at home on the sofa. Have some pictures of a range of animals and their habitats. Can children match the right animal picture to the place where they live? This activity could be developed to look at animals that are native to this country, and animals that live in different climates. Where in the world might you find a tiger? a polar bear? a kangaroo?
- Talk about how Sofa Dog's sofa could be made even more appealing with the addition of some more cushions. Children could use fabric paints or dyes to decorate plain pillowcases for this purpose.





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3 – Getting up off the sofa

- Perhaps Sofa Dog spends too much time on the sofa, and needs to be a bit more active! Talk about the importance of getting regular exercise to keep our bodies working well. Create a ‘work out trail’ for Sofa Dog on the playground. A bit like hop scotch, draw symbols out in a sequence on the ground using large chalks to indicate different activities. For example, draw arrows going round in a circle to show him chasing his tail, draw doggy footprints to show that he should jump up and down, and create other equivalent symbols for running forwards and backwards, rolling over etc. Children could then pretend to be Sofa Dog and try out the trail.
- Print simple shapes in a sequence on strips of paper. Each shape could represent a different movement, for example, circle could be a clap, a triangle could be a stamp, a square could be a jump and a rectangle could be a hop. Children could lay the strips out in a line and then challenge others to follow the sequence. Can they repeat going faster?

