The Animal ABC uses a mixture of:
- words that are only found in Scots, e.g. birlin, drookit, dub
- words that are the Scots equivalents of familiar English words, e.g. draigon, moose, pentin, washin
- names for exotic animals that are the same in Scots and English, e.g. crocodile, flamingo, jaguar, narwhal

Each of the phrases in the Animal ABC uses alliteration, meaning that most of the words start with the same letter of the alphabet. Alliteration was a favourite technique of Scots poets in the past. Here is a brilliant example by the 15th-century poet, Robert Henryson, in his description of winter:

Thir dalis deip with dubbis drounit is,
Baith hill and holt heillit with frostis hair,
And bewis bene ar bethit bair off blis
Be wickit windis off the winter wair.
(from ‘The Preaching of the Swallow’ in Morall Fabillis).

Some Ideas for Using the Animal ABC with your class

Ask pupils to:
- draw their own pictures for the phrases in the book
- invent a new alliterative phrase and draw a picture, e.g. blue baboons blawin balloons. See who can make up the longest one!
- guess each other’s phrases from these pictures
- make up Scots rhyming phrases, too, e.g. wabbit (or crabbit!) rabbit, string o mingin ingans

Try choosing a different theme for making ABC phrases, e.g. Jungle ABC, Ferm ABC, Ooter-Space ABC, Seaside ABC, My Body ABC, Dinosaur ABC, Food ABC.

Encourage bairns to use a mixture of Scots and English in their phrases, or (if they are multilingual), Scots and another language, e.g. snakes on skateboards sookin samosas.

A good way to extend your use of Scots is to add the Scots participle ending -in (instead of the English -ing) to a verb that you know in English, e.g. bungee-jumpin, emailin, parachutin, rollerbladin, see-sawin, skateboardin, trampolinin.
If you or your class don’t know many Scots words, try using some from the list below. You can mix them with the words already in the Animal ABC to make new phrases.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nouns</th>
<th>Adjectives</th>
<th>Present participles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aipple, airieplane, arra</td>
<td>barkit, bilin, bleck, bonnie, bowfin, braid, bricht, broon</td>
<td>argy-bargyin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bairn, bananie, baw, boony-castle, brae, brambles, breeks, brig, bunnet</td>
<td>cannie, cauld, crinchie</td>
<td>bizzin, blawin, bletherin, booncin, breengin</td>
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<tr>
<td>caird, cairt, claih, clodd, cloot, close, coo, corbie, cowp</td>
<td>dreich</td>
<td>cairrin, cairtin, champin, chawin, chappin, cleekin, cooryin, cowpin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daud, denner, dug</td>
<td>dreich</td>
<td>danderin, dichtin, dirlin, dookin, dunlin</td>
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<tr>
<td>elbae</td>
<td>fantoosh, foostie</td>
<td>ettin</td>
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<tr>
<td>fit, flooer</td>
<td>gallus, gowden</td>
<td>fleelin, fleeggin, footerin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gairden, glasses, goonie, gowdfish, gress, gutties</td>
<td>heich</td>
<td>gabbin, gawkin, girim, guddlin</td>
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<tr>
<td>heid, hoose</td>
<td>heich</td>
<td>heezin, hingin, hirplin, hotchin, humphin</td>
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<tr>
<td>jaikit, jeelie, jeeliefish, jotter</td>
<td>licht, lood</td>
<td>jinin, jeeglin, joukin</td>
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<tr>
<td>lichthouse, lum</td>
<td>mawkit, mingin</td>
<td>leelin</td>
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<tr>
<td>mooth</td>
<td>nippy</td>
<td>makkin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neep, nicht</td>
<td>pecht-oot, peeliewallie, puggelt</td>
<td>nippin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oobit, oxter</td>
<td>pecht-oot, peeliewallie, puggelt</td>
<td>pechin, pittin, plaisterin, plowterin, poorin, pouin, prentlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>party, pent, perk, piece, piecebox, pillae, pincil, poke</td>
<td>pecht-oot, peeliewallie, puggelt</td>
<td>raivellin, reddin, rowin, rummlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rammy</td>
<td>pecht-oot, peeliewallie, puggelt</td>
<td>scarlin, shauchlin, shooglin, skailin, skelpin, skirlin, skitin, skitterin, skooshin, slaisterin, smoorin, sookin, staundin, sweemin, switherin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scuil, shae, shoddier, stookie, sweeties</td>
<td>pecht-oot, peeliewallie, puggelt</td>
<td>thrawin, traipsin, travaillin, trauchlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taes, tatties, thrapple</td>
<td>thrawn, ticht, tousie</td>
<td>wheechin</td>
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<tr>
<td>watter, waw</td>
<td>weet</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Encourage the bairns to use Scots adverbs, conjunctions and prepositions in their phrases. Mind, they don’t always have to start with the same letter as the rest of the phrase. Here are some you could try (listed with their English equivalents and example phrase):

- **ablow** = below: **tousie toucan ablow a tree**
- **aboot** = about: **racoons rinnin aboot the room**
- **abuin** = above: **hoolets hootin abuin a hoose**
- **afore** = before, in front of: **stork staundin afore a statue**
- **ahint** = behind: **bear on a bicycle ahint a bus**
- **alang** = along: **dug danderin alang a dyke**
- **an** = and: **pelicans an penguins plowterin**
- **aroond** = around: **bee bizzin aroond a bustop**
- **ben** = inside: **brontosaurus ben a bungalow**
- **doon** = down: **seal skitin doon the stair**
- **efter** = after: **shark sweemin efter a ship**
- **fae** = from: **parrot parachutin fae a plane**
- **intae** = into: **dolphin duntin intae a door**
- **o** = of: **a clanjamfrie o clams**
- **ontae** = onto: **leopard lowpin ontae a lorry**
- **oot** = out: **wasps wheechin oot a windae**
- **ootside** = outside: **chimpanzee ootside a chip-shop**
- **ower** = over: **baboon booncin ower a brae**
- **roond** = round: **centipede cyclin roond in circles**
- **throu** = through: **tyrannosaurus traipsin throu a tunnel**
- **unner** = under: **crab coorin unner the covers**
- **wi** = with: **turtles wi tartan troosers**
- **wioot** (or **wihoot**) = without: **monkey wioot (or wihoot) a macintosh**

**MIND** Words like **o** and **wi** are spelled without apostrophes in Itchy Coo books. Modern Scots tends not to use apostrophes, although you will find them in older texts. Encourage children not to use them if possible.

Further ideas for using the Animal ABC in other areas of the curriculum:

- **play charades where teams act out and guess each other’s phrases**
- **make up songs using alliterative phrases**
- **make a class calendar with ABC phrases for each month, eg shiverin sheep in September, freezin flamingo in February**
- **ask older pupils to make up a wee story about one of the creatures illustrated in the Animal ABC. Ask them to think about what might have happened to the creatures before the picture (eg who is pelting the crocodile with tomatoes, how did the octopus get into outer-space), or what might happen to them afterwards (eg will the zebras get out the maze, will the moose escape from the jaguar, where are the foxes going with their saxophones).**

Send us pictures, stories or poems your class have made for our web gallery (Itchy Cool Ideas) at [www.itchy-coo.com](http://www.itchy-coo.com).