



EM6



10-15 minutes

# TALKING TO CANARY BIRD



To understand the meaning of a variety of gestures (greeting, beckoning a friend, offering food, waving goodbye)

To introduce a technique for imitating the actions of a bird

To develop vocal mimicry using a clear, long, drawn-out sound



- ❖ Canary Bird image to make a puppet



- ❖ A chair for Canary Bird to 'sit' on
- ❖ A popsicle stick to make the puppet



**Welcoming and feeding Canary Bird:** Tell your child that you have brought Canary Bird to visit them, a friend of Cockerel, Bird and Golden Cockerel, but if they want to see him they will have to call for him. Ask them how they can do that. Place your hands in front of your mouth to form a loudspeaker and call 'B-i-ird!' using a clear 'ringing' voice, and making sure that the vowel sound is long and drawn out. Ask your child to mimic you and call. Check for a clear, long, drawn-out vowel sound.

Produce the hand puppet slowly, and then have it back away. Explain that Canary Bird is shy and nervous about coming too close, just as Golden Cockerel was. Say that perhaps, if they are very gentle, Canary Bird will come nearer. Ask your child what kind of actions might help them to persuade Canary Bird to come nearer. Agree that they could stretch out a hand gently, palm upwards, and beckon the puppet with their index finger. As you do this, explain that it is very important to look straight at Canary Bird if we want to call him; we always look at our friends when we talk to them.

Encourage your child to copy this gesture several times, and to say expressively, 'Come here please, Canary Bird, come here!' When they have done that, have the puppet approach your child and take a bow. Ask your child why Canary Bird bowed (he wanted to greet us in a polite way and is a bit shy to talk). Ask your child to return the bow; we usually greet people in the same way as they greet us.

Say: *Let's give our guest something to eat. Canary Bird, would you like some grains?* Make the puppet nod. Ask your child if they remember what the nod means. Say: *Yes, Canary Bird says that he wants some grains.* Let your child 'feed' Canary Bird. They will need to 'get' some grains, stretch out their open hand with imaginary grains in it and 'give' them to the bird. Have Canary Bird fly up to your child and 'peck' gently at the grains on their outstretched hand. If they do not want to feed Canary Bird, reassure them that he is very gentle. If they still don't want to, say: *Maybe you can feed him next time.*

**A show for Canary Bird:** Place the Canary Bird puppet carefully on a chair (lean it against the back of the chair) so that it can sit and watch your child. Ask your child to stand up and imagine that they are a little bird. Ask them to pretend their *arms are wings* and to *flap their wings quickly like a small bird*. Repeat several times.

Then 'sing' like Canary Bird (tweet tweet), using a clear, high-pitched tone, emphasising the sound of the vowel. Ask your child to sit down again, and pick up the Canary Bird puppet again. Talk to it, asking if it thinks your child sounded and flew like a little bird. Have the Canary Bird nod in agreement and whisper into your ear, and then tell your child that Canary Bird says 'Yes, the child was excellent - they sounded just like me and flew just like me!'

To end the session, say that Canary Bird has to go now. Ask your child to bow politely to Canary Bird and say 'You are very welcome here. Come to see us again!' Make the puppet nod and then ask your child: *What did Canary Bird just say? ...Yes, Canary Bird agreed to come and see us again!*



Before you start the session, you could search on the internet for a real canary bird singing, to listen to and watch with your child!



Your child can understand and use a variety of communicative gestures (nod, bow, wave, beckon and offer).

Your child can imitate a summoning call (B-i-ird) and bird song (tweet tweet).



KEY TO LEARNING  
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Cut out the picture of Canary Bird and stick it onto a popsicle stick to make a simple puppet.

