

## HUMPTY'S NEW WALL an introduction for families

'Humpty's New Wall' was written originally for our grandchildren and their friends, who at that time ranged in age from 3-7 years. We all enjoyed nursery rhymes and fairy stories and quite often our thoughts would turn to 'What happened next?' The story tells what happened after Humpty fell off the wall. When Grandad decided to build a raised dahlia bed in the garden it was natural that it would be seen as Humpty's Wall—and of course the children would need to help to build it! As far as the children were concerned, Humpty's New Wall was simply a story.



But, the story tries to show how much children can learn from ordinary family activities. They learn easily and with enthusiasm as they work alongside adults and older children, from whom they gain an awareness of how things are done and what skills are used. They learn positive attitudes and develop the confidence that comes from success. Building activities are more likely, in most families, to be undertaken by dads, granddads and uncles and are a wonderful opportunity for them to share experiences with their children and contribute to their learning.

We all know how much children enjoy playing and how shopping, mending and cleaning cars, gardening, playing house and looking after pets are favourite activities, especially of young children. Learning through play is a well established tradition in playgroups, nurseries and infant schools. 'Humpty's New Wall' can be used as a starting point for activities across many areas of learning. Dads reading the story with their children will be pleased to know, I am sure, that, bedded into the story are ideas and activities that are included in the early years and infant school curriculum. (You might like to think about what these are when you are reading the story).



You can see the enjoyment and imagination that has gone into this Lego activity. You can also see how building Humpty's Wall using model terracotta bricks develops further the knowledge, understanding and skills that are part of construction.



The value to children of working on a real project with an adult, using 'proper' materials is easily recognised. These 7 year olds constructed Humpty's Wall in their school's garden with professional builders. At home, do your children help you with cooking, shopping and mending things? Do you involve them in any gardening and constructing that you do? If you haven't, try it, you'll be surprised how rewarding and enjoyable it is for you and your children. And you can be confident that they will be learning from all these activities.

