

What's happening in the news this week?



Let's have a look at this week's poster!

6th - 12th July 2026



**What makes
something popular?**





Let's look at this week's story

Squishy dumpling toys have become popular with many children in recent months. Videos showing people squeezing, collecting, and opening the toys have helped them spread quickly online. As more people have bought these types of toys, Trading Standards officers have been called in to carry out safety checks on some of the products being sold in shops and online.



Learn more about this week's story [here](#).
Watch this week's useful video [here](#).
This week's Virtual Picture News [here](#).



How does it make me feel?



sad

despondent
disconsolate
dismal
doleful
downhearted
forlorn
gloomy
melancholic
miserable
woeful
wretched

angry

aggrieved
annoyed
discontented
disgruntled
distressed
exasperated
frustrated
indignant
offended
outraged
resentful
vexed

happy

beaming
buoyant
cheery
contented
delighted
enraptured
gleeful
glowing
joyful

confused

addled
baffled
bemused
bewildered
disorientated
indistinct
muddled
mystified
perplexed
puzzled

excited

animated
elevated
enlivened
enthusiastic
exhilarated
exuberant
thrilled

worried

agitated
anxious
apprehensive
concerned
disquieted
distraught
distressed
disturbed
fretful
perturbed
troubled
uneasy

overwhelmed

engulfed
inundated
overburdened
overloaded
saturated
submerged
swamped

afraid

alarmed
apprehensive
daunted
fearful
frantic
horrified
petrified
terrified

guilty

ashamed
compunctious
contrite
culpable
penitent
responsible
rueful

jealous

bitter
covetous
desirous
envious
envying
resentful
wary

thankful

appreciative
grateful
gratified
indebted
obliged
relieved

shocked

astonished
astounded
disconcerted
distressed
dumbfounded
horrified
staggered
startled
stunned
surprised

disgusted

affronted
appalled
horrified
repelled
repulsed
revolted
sickened

inspired

activated
encouraged
exhilarated
galvanised
influenced
motivated

embarrassed

ashamed
awkward
chagrined
demeaned
discomposd
humiliated
self-conscious
uncomfortable
uneasy
unsettled

interested

absorbed
captivated
curious
engaged
enthralled
fascinated
gripped
intrigued
riveted

This week's story looks at events related to ...





Read the information below all about dumpling squishies and ensuring that they are safe. Who do you think is responsible for ensuring that toys are safe?

Squishy Craze!

What are dumpling squishies?

Dumpling squishies are small, soft toys that can be squeezed and stretched. Many people enjoy playing with them because they feel satisfying to hold and squish.

Why are they so popular?

Squishy dumpling toys have become popular with children and adults around the world.

Videos showing people squeezing, collecting, and opening the toy's boxes have been viewed by millions online. Some people enjoy collecting different colours and designs.



Why are they in the news?

Some squishy dumpling toys were recently taken out of shops because they did not meet safety rules. People have also been reminded to use toys safely, check safety labels, and be careful when copying things they see online.



What other sensory toys are there?

Pop-it toys



Stress balls



Fidget spinners



Slime



Sensory putty



Textured balls



Source: Chris Western

Sensory toys come in many different shapes and sizes. Some are designed to be squeezed, twisted, stretched, or popped.

People enjoy different sensory toys for a variety of reasons. Some children like the way they feel, while others enjoy keeping their hands busy.



Look at the resource below, which shows different reasons why a toy might become popular.

What makes lots of children want the same toy?



My friend has one and it's really cool!



I want to collect them.



Look at the resource below, which explores sensory toys in more detail.

Sensory toys are toys or objects that use one or more of our senses. They might be interesting to look at, listen to, touch, smell and some to safely chew. People may use them for fun, while others use them to feel calm, focus or explore different textures, sounds and movements.

Have you seen or used any of these toys or objects before?

Can you match the toys to the sense(s) they are most linked to?

Could some toys fit into more than one group? Be ready to explain your ideas.



Sight



Touch



Taste



Smell



Hearing

How might each toy be used?
Why might this be useful for someone?

Which senses do these toys use?





**What makes
something popular?**



Reflection



Popularity can help ideas and toys spread quickly, but it is our own experiences and preferences that help us decide what we enjoy.



Media Literacy

**I know that not everything
I see or hear is true.**



Explanation: Let's think about whether everything we see, hear or read is true, and how we can check if information is trustworthy before we believe it.



Analyse



Evaluate



Research



Act

Questions to Discuss

- Should we trust everything we see, hear or read in adverts? Why?
- Why might some adverts be misleading or not fully true?
- Why is it important to check information before we believe it?
- What clues can help us decide if information is trustworthy?

Activity

Read the news story about squishy dumpling toys.

One side of the room is labelled 'I trust this' and the other side is labelled 'I need more evidence'.

Read each statement and decide where you should stand:

- An advert says the toy is safe.
- A video online says the toy is genuine.
- Trading Standards have tested the toy and said it is safe.
- Lots of people are buying them.

Think about: Should we believe something just because we see it online or because lots of people are buying a product? Why? What can we do to check what we read, see or hear?



I Really Do Matter!



Which British value do you think this week's story highlights?



The story highlights **Rule of Law** because safety officers use official rules and laws to protect people and make sure shops are selling things that are safe.

People have the freedom to buy the toys they choose and the right to know the potential risks. This is part of our **Individual Liberty**.



Do you agree with either person, or think something different?

Protected Characteristics



Which protected characteristic do you think this week's story highlights?



No matter a person's **sex**, everyone should have the freedom to play with any toy they choose.

Share your thoughts. Do you agree?



Sex



Who People Love



Age



Disability



Being Yourself



Marriage and Civil Partnership



Pregnancy and Maternity



Race



Religion or Belief



UN Rights of the Child



Adults must always do what is best for children. Trading Standards officers are checking squishy dumpling toys to make sure they are safe, helping to protect children and support their right to be safe and healthy.



Useful Vocabulary



Craze

Something that is very popular, usually for a short time.

Discuss how toys can become a **craze** through friends, advertising, films, television, and social media.

Popular

Someone or something that is liked or known by a lot of people.

Squishy dumpling toys have become **popular** with many children in recent months.

Satisfying

The good, happy feeling you experience when you get what you needed or wanted.

Many people enjoy playing with them because they feel **satisfying** to hold and squish.

Sensory

Anything to do with our five main senses – sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell – and how our body uses them to understand the world around us.

Sensory toys come in many different shapes and sizes.

Trend

A gradual change or direction that shows what is becoming popular, common, or happening more often over time.

What is a **trend**?

Trading Standards

A service in the United Kingdom that protects shoppers, checks toys and products are safe, and makes sure businesses follow the rules.

Trading Standards officers have been called in to carry out safety checks on some of the products being sold in shops and online.

Can you use them in a conversation this week?

Picture News



What makes something popular?

Squishy dumpling toys have become popular with many children in recent months. Videos showing people squeezing, collecting, and opening the toys have helped them spread quickly online. As more people have bought these types of toys, Trading Standards officers have been called in to carry out safety checks on some of the products being sold in shops and online.



- Look at the poster image and talk about your own experiences of squishy toys.
- Introduce the news story about the popularity of squishy dumpling toys. What are they for? What are the pros and cons of these types of toys?
- Share when and where you think that squishy toys should be used. E.g., at home, at break time, before bed etc.
- Read the information on the **Assembly Resource** and watch the useful video all about dumpling squishies and ensuring that they are safe. Who do you think is responsible for ensuring that toys are safe?
- Talk about what you think we mean by the word popular. What is a trend?
- Discuss how toys can become a craze through friends, advertising, films, television, and social media.
- Can you think about the different influences that affect your choices and share some of your favourite toys?
- Are all our favourite toys the same? Talk about how we enjoy different toys, games, and hobbies.
- Do you believe that something needs to be popular for people to enjoy it? Talk about how it is okay for people to have different preferences with toys.

Reflection

Popularity can help ideas and toys spread quickly, but it is our own experiences and preferences that help us decide what we enjoy.

Picture News



KS1 focus

What makes a toy popular?



- What toys do you enjoy playing with at the moment? What do you like about them?
- Look at **Resource 1**, which shows different reasons why a toy might become popular. What toys can you see? Do you recognise any of them?
- Which toy on the resource would you most like to play with? Why?
- Have you ever wanted a toy because a friend had one? What happened?
- Why might seeing a friend enjoy a toy make us interested in it too?
- Have you ever seen a toy in a video, advert or programme and thought it looked fun? How might watching someone play with, open or collect a toy make other people want one too?
- Some toys become popular because a well-known person, character or celebrity has one or talks about one. Why might this make people interested?
- Some toys are popular because children like to collect them. Have you ever collected anything? What made you want more?
- Do you think everyone always likes the same toys? Why might different people enjoy different things?
- If lots of people want the same toy, does that mean it is the best toy? Why?
- What should adults think about before buying a toy for a child?

Reflection

Toys can become popular for different reasons. We can listen to others, but we can also choose what we enjoy.

Picture News



KS2 focus

What are sensory toys and how are they used?



- What do you think the word sensory means? Which senses might a sensory toy be designed to use?
- Read through **Resource 2** to learn more about sensory toys. What toys or objects can you see? Have you seen or used any of them before?
- Some toys are designed to be squeezed, stretched, spun, clicked, chewed safely, held or moved. Why might these actions feel calming, enjoyable or satisfying?
- How might a sensory toy be used differently by different people? For example, as a toy, a fidget item, a calming tool, a focus aid or something to explore.
- How might sensory toys or objects help someone at school, at home or in a busy place?
- Different people may use sensory toys or objects for different reasons, and not all needs are easy to see. Why is it important to be respectful if someone uses something that helps them?
- Can something be useful and fun at the same time? Explain your thinking.
- If a toy or sensory object is being sold for children to use, what might adults need to check before buying it?
- What responsibilities do companies and shops have when they sell products for children?

Reflection

Sensory toys can help people in different ways. They may be used for fun, focus, calm or comfort. Not everyone's needs are easy to see, so it is important to be respectful and make careful, safe choices.



KS2 follow-up ideas

Option 1

Think about: Have you ever had a favourite toy? What did you like about it? In your opinion, what makes someone want a toy?

Choose a toy you are familiar with. Write a short review of the toy including:

- What it looks like.
- What it is made of.
- How someone would play with it.
- What is good about it.
- What could be improved.
- Whether or not you would recommend it.

Option 2

Think about: Have you ever looked at the packaging of a toy before opening it? Why do you think toys have age labels and warning symbols?

Explain that toy packaging gives us important safety information to help make sure toys are used by the right age group and in the right way.

Show some examples of toy packaging which includes one of the following:

Age rating e.g., 3+, 7+, 12+.

Warning symbols e.g., small parts, choking hazards, CE/UKCA mark.

In pairs, look at one of the toy's packaging and consider:

- Who is this toy suitable for? Why?
- Would it be safe for a younger child such as a toddler? Why?
- What safety feature is most important on this toy? Why?
- Is there a warning on the packaging? If so, why do you think this warning is needed?
- Why is it important to check for safety standard marks?



KS1 follow-up ideas

Option 1

Show the children a few familiar toys (or pictures).

Think about: What do you like about this toy? What can it do? Who might play with it? What would make you want to buy this toy?

Ask the children to design their own toy, drawing it and giving it a name.

Then, have them write a simple advert. They may wish to consider using the following sentence starters:

- My toy is called...
- It can...
- It is good for...
- You will love playing with it because...

Invite the children to present their toy to the class in the style of a television advert, showing their drawing and explaining why people should buy their toy.

Option 2

Display pictures of 5–6 different toys. Ask everyone to vote for their favourite toy.

As a class, create a tally chart and record the votes, adding the tally marks correctly.

Count the totals for each toy.

Think about: Which toy is the most/least popular? How many votes did the most/least popular toy get? How many more votes did the most popular toy get than the least popular toy?



This week's useful websites

This week's news story

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/czj89nlgz3vo>

This week's useful video

<http://www.bbc.com/news/videos/cddle067j0mo>

This week's Virtual Picture News

www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss

This week's vocabulary

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TAKEHOME



In the news this week

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Things to talk about at home ...

- > What was your favourite toy when you were younger? How did you first hear about it?
- > Do you believe toys become popular because they are fun, because friends have them, or for another reason?
- > If you could invent a new toy, what would it be like, and how would you make it popular?

What makes something popular?



Please note any interesting thoughts or comments

Share your thoughts and read the opinions of others

www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss



A Clean Sweep!

Japanese football fans have been praised after cleaning up rubbish following a World Cup football match between Japan and the Netherlands. After the game, many fans stayed behind in the stadium to collect litter. They used bags to pick up empty cups, food wrappers, and other rubbish left in the seats and stands. Videos of the clean-up were shared online and watched by people all around the world.



Pictured: Japanese fans cheering!
Source: Canva.



Pictured: A football match. **Source:** Canva.

The Japanese football team also helped by leaving their changing room clean and tidy after the match. Chairs were stacked neatly, rubbish was collected, and equipment was put away before they left. Japanese football fans have been doing this for many years after matches. For them, helping to keep places clean is part of being a good visitor. **Do you think everyone should help to keep public places tidy? Why?**

The Reading Dugout

St Ann's Well Academy was given two dugout seats from the Nottingham Forest's football stadium after the club decided to replace them. The seats were once used by football players and coaches during matches. School staff had the idea to turn them into reading chairs to encourage more children to pick up a book. The chairs now have a special place in the classroom, where pupils can sit and read. The children were excited when the seats arrived. Some were surprised to learn that famous football players had sat in them. Teachers say the chairs have already helped to



Pictured: Children at a primary school in Nottingham enjoying a special new place to read! **Source:** Nottingham Forest Community Trust on Facebook.

encourage reading and have become a favourite part of the school.

Where do you like to read best?
What would your perfect reading seat or space look like?

How does every person count?



We need to include everyone in the census to make sure we have everything we need for everyone.

Raj

Keep Your Eyes on the Pies!

Teams gathered recently for the World Custard Pie Championships, in Maidstone, Kent, where the messy annual competition takes place. The World Custard Pie Championships were first held in 1967 to raise funds for Coxheath Village Hall. Teams of four people get dressed up and compete for the trophy. They stand opposite each other, behind a red line and throw custard pies with their left hands at



Pictured: World Custard Pie Championship.
Source: World Custard Pie Championship on Facebook.

each other. The pies are made of a special blend of flour and water, served on a paper plate, and are designed to fly through the air to cover your opponent! Varying amounts of points are scored by hitting your opponents with custard in different places. One point for an arm, three for the torso etc. Extra points are awarded for technique and costumes! The team with the most points wins. The event now attracts hundreds of visitors to the village recreation ground and has raised lots of money for good causes.

Would you like to be involved in this championship?

Would you prefer to be in the audience?



Pictured: World Custard Pie Trophy.
Source: World Custard Pie Championship on Facebook.

Shell-ebration Time!

Jonathan the Tortoise, the oldest known living terrestrial animal, has been recognised as a Guinness World Record Icon! The award is designed to honour those whose achievements go beyond a single record. Beloved resident of the British Overseas Territory of Saint Helena in the South Atlantic, Jonathan happily eats grass and sunbathes with three other tortoises in the gardens of the Governor's residence. He was granted an official birthday of 4th December, with officials saying that there is a 1/365 chance that it is the correct date! In 2022, local residents arranged three days of celebrations to mark his 190th birthday! As part of the celebrations, Jonathan was given a cake made entirely from his favourite foods! The Saint Helena five-pence coin also has Jonathan depicted on its reverse. The Seychelles giant tortoise



Pictured: Jonathan the Tortoise with his certificate to recognise him as a Guinness World Record ICON!
Source: Governor's Office St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha on Facebook.

was born around 1832, making him older than Tower Bridge in London and the Eiffel Tower in Paris. At an estimated 194 years old, he holds the Guinness World record for the oldest turtle/chelonian and oldest-known terrestrial animal!

Did you know that animals could live this long? Who do you think should be a Guinness World Record Icon?

How does every person count?



I think everyone is important because we are all unique.
Lulu

Let us know what you think about this week's news



picture-news.co.uk/discuss



help@picture-news.co.uk



[/picturenewsprimary/](https://www.instagram.com/picturenewsprimary/)