

# The Den

## Before reading

- Ask the children to tell you what a den is. Talk about dens they might have made, under tables or in their gardens.
- Look through the pictures briefly to find out where the children make a den in this story.

## During reading

- Encourage the children to re-read a sentence if they miss a word, or if it does not seem to make sense.
- Praise them for using phonemes and the sense of the sentence to work out new words.
- Talk about the story with the child, to make sure that he or she has understood what happened.

### Observing

Check that the children:

- automatically blend consonants such as "st", "tw", "str" when reading.
- check for sense by re-reading sentences.

## Group and independent reading activities

### Text level work

#### Objective

To use phonological, contextual, grammatical and graphic knowledge to work out, predict and check the meaning of unfamiliar words, and to make sense of what they read.

- Demonstrate how you would work out a word such as "straw", using phonemes, the picture and the sense of the story.
- Ask the children to choose a word that they think other children might find hard to read, e.g. "stream", "idea", "found".
- Ask each child to explain how to read the word they chose. Praise them for using as many clues as possible.

## Observing

Notice whether children are aware of the variety of approaches to decoding new words.

### Sentence level work

**Objective** To expect reading to make sense and check if it does not.

**You will need** some “post-it” notes

- Cover some words in the story with “post-it” notes and substitute other words that look similar but will not make sense, e.g. on page 44, cover “by” and write “be” on the “post-it” note.
- Ask a different child to read each page. Ask them to say what is wrong with the sentence. Ask them to suggest what the real word should be. Peel away the “post-it” note to check.

## Observing

Were the children immediately aware that the sentence did not make sense? Could they suggest a word that would put it right?

### Word level work

**Objective** To recognise the critical features of words, e.g. words within words.

- Look at the title. Ask the children: *Can you find a word inside the word “the”?* Praise them for finding “he”.
- Go through the story page by page. On each page ask the children to put their hands up when they see a small word inside a longer one, e.g. on page 44-① there is child (children), we (were), am (stream).
- Let the child who found the first word name the child to find the next one.

## Observing

Did the children locate shorter words inside longer ones?

### Speaking and listening activities

**Objective** Listen and follow instructions accurately.

- Give each child a pencil and paper and tell them that you are going to give them instructions for drawing the den in the story.

- Tell them what to do step by step. *Draw a long stick with a fork at the top. Draw two more long sticks leaning against this stick.*
- Continue with the instructions, following the sequence of building the den in the story.
- Finish with: *Draw a swan on a nest in the den.*
- Let the children take turns, one child giving the others instructions on, e.g. "How to draw a house", "How to draw a man", "How to draw a face" etc.

### Observing

Do the children follow the verbal instructions? Do they need the instructions repeated? Do they need help in carrying them out?

## Writing

**Objective** To use some of the elements of known stories to structure their own writing.

- Talk about the story with the children. Make a list of the main points: Wilf's idea, making the den, the rain, the swan.
- Ask the children to think of something they might make with their friends, e.g. a camp, a circuit for their bikes or skates.
- Ask the children to imagine that there is a reason why they do not go back to it for some time, e.g. they go on holiday, it rains, or snows, or they are unwell.
- Ask them to think of something that might have happened in the meantime, e.g. other children using it for something else, builders moving in and taking over.
- Ask the children: *How do you think the story will end?*
- Either write the story as a group, with the adult scribing, or ask each child to write their own story.

### Cross-curricular link



Science: Birds and nests