

Teaching notes

BOOK 1

The Green Cross Code (Level 2 text)

Contained in: Book 1 (page 4)
Source: Department for Transport

Genre: Information / instructions

Introduction

This is a non-chronological information and advice text aimed specifically at children. It exhibits clear-cut layout and formatting with aids to retrieval of information, including numbered paragraphs with inset sub-headings in bold coloured print. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

You might also give the children some further background information, as follows. First introduced in 1971, the Green Cross Code procedure was designed to help pedestrians to cross streets safely. The campaign that launched the code was targeted specifically at children; at that time, half of all casualties on the road were children. Following the launch of the Code, the number of casualties dropped by 11 per cent. Sadly the rate rose again after six months, highlighting the need for road safety messages to be given a high profile at all times.

Answers

1. sight, sound
2. 'where drivers can see you'
3. *the distance from one side of the road to the other is shorter if you go straight across; it lessens the danger from vehicles suddenly appearing; it is easier for drivers to predict your movements* (allow for child's own wording and interpretation as long as the answer is logical)
4. between parked cars; on sharp bends; close to the top of a hill
5. (any three from:) subway, zebra/puffin/pelican/toucan crossing, footbridge, island, patrolled crossing
6. back from the edge
7. (either or both:) *can't see approaching traffic; drivers can't see you*.

Further activities

- Challenge the children to create a poster, including key advice from the text. Suggest that they display this advice in speech bubbles, thought bubbles or call-out stars. They could make the poster by hand or using a word-processing or dtp program.
- Encourage the children to improvise and act out a scene that demonstrates use of the Green Cross Code.
- Invite the children to research other government safety documents and websites, such as the Countryside Code, the Beach Safety Code and the Sea Safety Code.
- Ask the children to write a Classroom Code, looking at safety, tidiness, behaviour and consideration to others, when to speak and when to listen.
- Hold a class discussion on whether it is ever safe to run across a road, asking the children to explain the rationale behind their views.

Games glossary (Level 2 text)

Contained in: Book 1 (page 6)
Source: You Can Do It! Games

Genre: Glossary
Author: Kirk Bizley

Introduction This Glossary from the book *You Can Do It! Games* by Kirk Bizley gives children the chance to practise their knowledge of alphabetic organisation of texts and highlights its usefulness in retrieval of information. The combined use of bold and regular fonts enhances the layout for practical purposes. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Answers 1. dictionary 2. True 3a. after 'overarm pass' and before 'ring' 3b. after 'hamstring' and before 'hitting T' 4. first two letters are the same, third letter 'c' (in backstop) comes before third letter 't' (in bat) 5. forehand (stroke) 6. hamstring 7. basketball 8. (two of:) 'cool-down', 'warm-up', 'stretching' 9. verbs: definitions contain verbs (hitting, catching, throwing).

- Further activities**
- Discuss the purpose of a glossary and whereabouts in a book readers would expect to find one. Ask, 'What genre of book would contain a glossary?' (Non-fiction or, possibly, fiction in outmoded language where archaic words might not be understood.)
 - Use this extract as a model for the children to create glossaries for other information texts that they read or create.
 - List further ballsport-related words (such as baseline, racquet, shuttlecock) and challenge the children to write definitions and position them correctly.
 -  Challenge individual children to deliver a short description of game rules or a report on a specific game, that incorporates related words from this Glossary.

The baby of the family (Level 3 text)

Contained in: Book 1 (page 8)

Genre: Poem

Author: Wendy Cope

Introduction This poem, by the widely published poet Wendy Cope, will strike a chord with any child who has a younger brother or sister. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Answers 1. older sibling 2. jealous 3a. too young; too tired to walk 3b. important, centre of attention; successful 4. 'short' or 'sweet' 5. better/calmer, as she is venting her feelings and releasing her pent-up emotion 6. the child's spoiling and babyhood; the baby will grow older and be less 'sweet' 7. 'pie' and 'toys'.

- Further activities**
- Ask the children to look for the effective use of strong verbs in the poem: for example, 'grabs', 'bellows', 'stamps'. Compare possible synonyms, such as 'takes', 'shouts', 'taps'. Discuss how verbs can be used emotively to influence the reader to share the writer's viewpoint and paint a vivid picture.
 -  Discuss how the baby of the family will be feeling. Ask, 'Is the baby aware of his older sibling's presence and feelings?' 'Would the baby's father notice?'
 -  Use the poem as a springboard for discussion about feelings such as jealousy, anger, resentment, and relationships within families. Ask the children, in pairs, to take turns to describe a time when they felt very upset or jealous, angry or hurt. Tell all the children to listen carefully to their partners. Suggest that their partner ask questions beginning 'what', 'why' and 'where'.
 - Encourage the children to turn their own stories into poems about their feelings.

Invasion (Level 3 text)

Contained in: Book 1 (page 10)

Source: *I'm Telling You They're Aliens*

Genre: Fiction

Author: Jeremy Strong

Introduction

This extract from *I'm Telling You They're Aliens*, by Jeremy Strong, is written in the first person. It includes the use of rhetorical questions and, in contrast to older classic children's literature, a number of colloquialisms. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Answers

1. the first person
2. 'I decided to keep quiet'
3. (any one of:) 'So who do you tell?', 'Do you go to the police?', 'Do you tell the kids in your class?'
4. *to enter by force and completely take over*
5. *a close neighbour or friend nearby; from a nearby house*
6. *all ready to put into action*
7. *wild*
8. *digressing*
9. *for emphasis, added drama*.

Further activities

- Make sure that the children understand the use of the word 'alien' to mean 'a creature from another planet'.
- Discuss how the use of language makes this text read as if the character were speaking directly to the reader. Ask the children to list examples of everyday, idiomatic phrases ('The trouble is'; 'if you go round saying'; 'keep a low profile', etc.).
- Invite the children to imagine that they have a new child in the class, whom they think is strangely non-human in some way – a robot, a pixie, an angel, a time-traveller or a living statue, for example. What is odd about the child's behaviour? Is there a special reason why this child has joined their class? Ask them to write a description of the new boy or girl, using conversational and colloquial language. Stress that the children need to use their imagination and make sure that they do not pick on a real child who is currently in the class.
-  Organise a class debate in which the children discuss whether they think aliens exist or not.

Octocure (Level 3 text)

Contained in: Book 1 (page 12)

Author: Alison Chisholm

Genre: Comic poem

Introduction

The word-play in this humorous poem by Alison Chisholm allows children to practise their phonic skills by decoding rhyming nonsense words and recognising the root words from which they are constructed and which point to their meaning. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Answers

1. funny, rhyming
2. 'octopus'
3. 'chickenpoctopus'
4. spots
5. 'doctor' and 'octopus'
6. chocolate
7. Olly
8. 'knocktopus'.

Further activities

- Challenge the children to use the poem as a model for a poem of their own which focuses on a different creature, such as Eleanor the elephant or Benjamin the baboon. They will need to build up appropriate nonsense words to use in their poem, for example: 'telephant', 'jellephant', 'spellephant'; 'bablunch', 'babath', 'babook'.

-  Find further word-play poems, such as Causley's 'Good morning, Mr Croco-doco-dile', and discuss how nonsense words can be created in a way that still conveys meaning. Ask for volunteers to read the poems aloud.
- Invite the children to investigate and collect words whose prefix indicates number, for example: 'uni', 'bi'/'duo', 'tri', 'quad', 'penta', 'hexa', 'sept', 'octo', 'centi', 'milli'.

Odd girls (Level 3 text)

Contained in: Book 1 (page 14)

Genre: Poem

Author: John Coldwell

Introduction The first part of this poem by the children's poet John Coldwell is made up of rhyming couplets, closing with an ABCB rhyming quatrain, set apart. Its strong rhyme, rhythmic pattern and light tone make it an easy read. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Answers 1a. T 1b. ? 1c. T 1d. ? 1e. F 1f. ? 2. after 3. Mary Minns 4. Zara Good (and/or Joanne Green) 5. 'pals' 6. Sue's 7. to rhyme with 'wood' and 'rock' respectively.

- Further activities**
- List all the different materials referred to in the poem – glass, Plasticine®, wood, straw, rubber (balloon), rock, flesh, bone. Divide the children into groups and see which group can come up with the longest list of further materials.
 - Invite the children to write an 'Odd boys' poem using 'Odd girls' as a model, inviting rhyme-driven couplets and inventive names, such as 'Have you noticed Jacob Draper? His head is screwed up tissue paper'.
 - Ask the children to collect the names from the poem and invent a suitable surname for Sue (Glass? Fragile?). Then challenge them to put the names in alphabetical order, according to surname, as they would appear in their class register.
 -  Sort the children into groups and ask them to plan and practise a performance of the poem, dividing it into parts – perhaps as a choral spoken poem.

Teeth (Level 3 text)

Contained in: Book 1 (page 16)

Genre: Information / explanation

Source: University of Manchester

Children's University website

Introduction A non-chronological information and explanatory text whose layout features include sub-headings in a bold coloured font. It links well with topic work on personal health and hygiene and biological science. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Answers 1. incisors 2. no 3. twenty 4. 'adult teeth' 5. milk (teeth), deciduous (teeth) 6. canines 7. by using sub-headings 8. information, non-fiction.

- Further activities**
- Use this text as a springboard for research on other areas of the human skeleton, such as the bones that form the limbs, with a brief description of each.

- Ask the children to write an additional paragraph on what they know about how to care for teeth, from dietary advice to tips on mouth hygiene and teeth-cleaning.
- Provide a list of different foods and ask the children to describe as vividly as they can someone attacking each food type. Encourage them to use the correct names of the teeth that are best suited to the food. For example, bread: 'He tore off the crust with his canines, and chewed the bread to a pulp with his molars'; celery: 'Her incisors snapped off the end of the stick sharply, so that it left no threads dangling.'
-  Challenge the children to improvise dental care advertisements for TV or radio that point out the importance of cleaning one's teeth and making regular visits to the dentist.

Pelican (Level 3 text)

Contained in: Book 1 (page 18)

Genre: Poem

Author: Celia Warren

Introduction

A contemporary poem displaying many typically English poetic devices including rhyme, rhythm, repetition and the patterned layout of verses. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.  Provide dictionaries for the children to use when answering the comprehension questions.

Answers

1. pelican 2. emphasises subject: the poet's love of words 3. brain/head 4. she liked the sound of them 5. solid 12-sided shape; deciduous tree with winged seeds; sweet-smelling flower with thorny stem; red pepper, often in powdered form; lizard whose colour may change 6. beak only small; its name has two syllables rather than three 7. (expect:) 'Molly' and repetition of 'words'; list of favourites; focus on pelican's name rather than other aspects; final word is 'word'.

Further activities

-  Refer the children to the drawing on page 18. Discuss the real-life function of the pelican's large beak (scooping fish from the water).
- Invite the children to substitute their own favourite words into the middle verse of the poem, matching the syllable count of the existing words to retain the rhythm.
- Ask the children to collect more three-syllable words, such as 'butterfly', 'acrobat' or 'telephone'. Choose one to repeat at the beginning of each verse of their own poem. Include questions of the creature or object as if they were addressing it, for example 'Telephone, telephone, / Why's your bell so loud?'
- Invite the children to write a glossary of any words from the poem whose meaning they don't know.  They may use a dictionary to do this.

Jorvik Viking Centre, Coppergate (Level 3 text)

Contained in: Book 1 (page 20)

Genre: Information

Source: Pathways to Literacy: City of York

Author: Gill Matthews

Introduction

This extract is from a guidebook to the city of York, written specifically for young readers. It is an information text which displays features enabling easy retrieval of crucial facts needed before visiting the site; these include classic devices such as a text box, symbols

and a bold font. It shows the value of the use of paragraphs in the descriptive text. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

- Answers**
1. archaeology
 2. relating to ancient times and relics
 3. York
 4. sight, sound, smell
 5. street musicians
 6. London
 7. 7pm
 8. (any two of:) combs, (belt) buckles, jewellery
 9. it makes the visitor information easier to find.

- Further activities**
- Highlight and compare examples of passive and active tense.
 - Use the text as a model for the children to write a guide to a local place of interest.
 - Reiterate that Jorvik is the Viking name for York. Challenge the children to find the old names for some other British cities.
 -  Draw attention to the wheelchair-user icon. Discuss how this could help people who cannot read or who do not speak English, and how communication does not always depend upon words. Discuss other icons the children can think of (the signs for men's and women's toilets; arrows in various forms). Challenge the children to look for signs on their journey to and from school and see how many different internationally-understood symbols they can find. Create a whole-class glossary of signs and their meanings.

City sounds heard after dark (Level 3 text)

Contained in: Book 1 (page 22)

Genre: Poem

Author: Wes Magee

- Introduction** Rhythm and rhyme combine with alliteration and onomatopoeia to create an audibly atmospheric piece by this popular poet. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

- Answers**
1. end word of each set of three lines rhymes or AAA, BBB, CCC, DDD
 2. 'sweesh'
 3. the words sound like the cars speeding past
 4. pop songs, some old songs, disco music; in the city streets
 5. 'josh': joke, fool'around; 'jaw': talk, chat, natter
 6. people have broken into the park or have accidentally got locked in
 7. second verse; 'fly' rhymes with 'sky', 'cry' and 'by'; the second verse, like the new line, refers to things that are high up (aircraft, rooftop cats)
 8. (look for two of:) content and sound describing an aspect of city life; 'dum-di, dum-di, dum-di, dum' rhythm; matching end-of-line rhyme (verse 1: -ars; verse 3: -or/aw/oar; verse 4: -ark).

- Further activities**
- Use this poem in conjunction with Edward Thomas's poem 'Digging' (see Book 2, page 38 and Teacher's Guide page 30) and invite the children to compare the style and content of the two poems. For example, they might compare: use of language; classic and contemporary aspects; town and country; content that relates to different senses (smells/sounds).
 - Explain that the poet is a prolific writer. Challenge the children to find more poems by Wes Magee and create a class anthology of their favourites.
 - After completing the comprehension exercise, challenge the children to create new words (like 'sweesh' in this poem, which is made from 'sweep' and 'swish') that are also onomatopoeic – sounding like the action they describe. For example, 'thumming' might be made from the words 'hammering' and 'thumping'. Put the words into sentences to show their meaning.
 -  Together, through discussion, write a class poem on 'City (or Country) sounds heard at dawn', modelled on Wes Magee's poem.

On the Yellow Brick Road (Level 3 text)

Contained in: Book 1 (page 24)

Genre: Playscript

Author: Adapted by Celia Warren from
L. Frank Baum

Introduction This passage presents a scene from the classic children's novel, *The Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum, in script form, complete with stage directions in parenthesis. The use of italics makes such directions distinct from the direct speech of each character. It is presented differently from direct speech in prose, where speech marks would be required. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Answers 1a. stage directions (to players) 1b. to distinguish them from characters' speeches 1c. to save space, be concise 2. four 3. the Emerald City 4. a heart 5. he is afraid/his heart beats fast 6. the wizard (of Oz)/Oz 7. (such as:) trees, landscape, yellow road; toy dog, oil can.

Further activities

- Ask the children to write a short profile of each of the characters, with a view to telling actors who are to perform this scene what sort of character they will be playing.
- Encourage the children to sketch in colour a design for an appropriate backcloth for this scene if it were to be presented on stage.
-  Invite the children to take particular parts, memorising the lines and acting out the scene. Use highlighter pens to help the children to pick out the words that they need to learn.
- Challenge the children to choose another scene from *The Wizard of Oz*, a favourite novel or famous fairytale, to rewrite in script form.

House on fire! (Level 3 text)

Contained in: Book 1 (page 26)

Genre: Prose poem

Source: *A Child's Christmas in Wales*

Author: Dylan Thomas

Introduction This extract is from Thomas's descriptive prose poem *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, written in the 1940s. Some of it was written for radio – and all of it is good for reading aloud. The poem contains images that may be beyond a present-day child's experience, and these are worth discussing. You could also discuss the fact that this is a 'prose poem' – that is, a type of verse that does not rhyme but uses other poetic techniques. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

This is a long text for Year 3. You might want to read the text together in class and/or work on it over a couple of days.

Answers 1. it's Christmas (Eve) 2. speaking ironically/sarcastically, he means there have been better Christmases/this is not a good one 3. dinner gongs and slippers are old-fashioned; no home telephone or mobile phone; 'firemen' – not gender-neutral 'fire fighters' 4. the call to Ernie Jenkins 5. the most appropriate to the circumstances; the only urgent need 6. something to drink/eat 7. pliable/flexible and easily held in one hand 8. excited: they were happily throwing snowballs and casually discussing who to phone.

Further activities

-  Ask the children how many of their dads wear slippers around the house. Do their dads read a newspaper and sometimes fall asleep with it over their faces?
-  Then turn to some of the other images in this poem that are now falling out of use. What would the 'fire brigade' and 'firemen' more commonly be called now? (fire fighters) What is a gong? Do any of the children's homes have one? What would it have been used for in the past? (To call the family to dinner.) How many telephones do they have at home? How often do we use telephone boxes these days? How many of the children's homes have a fireplace for a log fire and a chimney to carry away the smoke? What are the advantages and disadvantages of heating your home in this way?
- Can the children tell whose viewpoint the episode is seen from? Ask them to imagine the three firemen discussing later on their visit to the house. Ask the children, in groups of three, to role-play the three firemen. Give them names (Welsh, if possible, perhaps surnames: Jones, Pierce, Williams) and, through improvisation based on the extract, create a script that begins, 'Do you remember that Christmas when we were called out to the Protheros?'
-  Ask the children if they have unusual Christmas memories of their own that they would like to share.

The story of Helen Keller (Level 3 text)

Contained in: Book 1 (page 28)

Genre: Biography

Author: Celia Warren

Introduction

The teacher Anne Sullivan turned the tragedy of the blindness and deafness of Helen Keller (1880–1968) into a story of success and triumph over adversity. Her teaching opened doors in Helen's life, freeing her from the imprisonment in which her disabilities had placed her. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Make sure the children understand that not only Helen Keller but many thousands of others have benefited from sign language and Braille since – and still do. Today there are over 23 000 people in the UK who, like Helen Keller, have problems with both their sight and their hearing. This makes it difficult for them to communicate with other people and to get the information they need for daily life. They may also find it difficult to get around.

Answers

1. 'blind'
- 2a. T
- 2b. T
- 2c. F
- 2d. F
- 2e. T
3. excited, elated, as she was no longer shut in and isolated, but could now communicate
4. felt their faces and clothing
5. touched their hands
6. Braille
7. herself and her life (an autobiography).

Further activities

- Reiterate the fact that this is a biography – that is, a non-fiction account telling the story of someone's life.
-  Place the children in twos and ask them to try communicating with each other without using words: they can use hand gesture and facial expression but must not mouth words or use any form of spoken language or writing. Come together and discuss how difficult they found this. Could they get their message across? How subtle were their communications? Discuss how much more difficult communication would be without sight. Challenge the children to find out how to say some simple phrases in sign language, such as 'hello'.

- Encourage the children to research the Braille alphabet. Ask each of them to write their name in Braille. When they have done so, show them how to turn their page over and make pin-prick indentations behind each dot. Turn the pages over again and let each child practise fingering the letters of his or her name. Mix up the names and see if they can decode each other's.
- Challenge the children to teach themselves to touch-type, using the computer keyboard to practise.

Rebecca (Level 3 text)

Contained in: Book 1 (page 30)

Genre: Narrative poem

Author: Hilaire Belloc

Introduction

This cautionary tale – a story with a moral warning – is one of many written by the comic poet Hilaire Belloc. Many of the children will have read the poem about Matilda who told lies; as a direct consequence, her house burned down and she died. The tale of Rebecca is a little less widely known. However, most young readers will at some time have experienced being told off for slamming a door – so the poem should be easily understood. Point out the fact that there are some difficult words in the poem: some of these are explained in the Glossary and the rest the children should be able to work out for themselves. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

This is a long text for Year 3. You might want to read the text together in class and/or work on it over a couple of days.

Answers

1. 'perished miserably' 2. dislike 3. bad behaviour 4. a banker 5. Rebecca's slamming the door below it (vibration) 6. 'She looked like that' 7. jump (with shock/surprise) 8. children at the funeral decided not to slam the door in future 'as often they had done before' 9. to give a warning of potential dangers 10. 'inly'.

Further activities

-  Ask the children to describe to the class any misdemeanours like door-slammimg that they are regularly 'cautioned' about. Forgetting to wash behind their ears? Not cleaning their teeth? Leaving their room untidy? Leaving clothes on the floor? Forgetting their swimming kit? Allow the children to work with a partner to plan a sticky end that could result from disobeying adult advice. (Their ears grow to the size of elephants' ears? Their teeth turn black?) Challenge them to write their story in verse.
- Encourage the children to add any new words from the poem to their personal vocabulary books, together with a definition and a sentence that uses the word in context.

Steam train stories (Level 3/4 text)

Contained in: Book 1 (page 32)

Genre: Classic fiction

Source: *The Railway Children*

Author: E. Nesbit

Introduction

This is an extract from the children's classic *The Railway Children*, by E. Nesbit. It was first published in 1906, when railway travel was in its heyday. This humorous extract demonstrates how dialect can be used in direct speech to great effect – in this case, the

Yorkshire dialect, which sounds strange to the London children's ears. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Answers

1. Roberta, Phyllis
2. tired
3. includes description and direct speech, is in the past tense
4. hooks to link carriages
5. £5 fine
- 6a. hold, of
- 6b. would
- 7a. someone fooled her/misled her for fun
- 7b. I bet she never forgot.

Further activities

- Ask the children to investigate the importance and impact of the railway network and its usefulness in Victorian and Edwardian Britain, before the advent of cars and tarmac roads. Remind them that, at this time, most ordinary people did not own carriages or even horses.
-  Select a small group of children to present the information that they have found (see above) as if for a television documentary programme. Ask the 'audience' to make notes and ask questions at the end of the presentation.
- Encourage the children to read sections of the passage aloud, varying voice, tone and pace to enhance the comic effect. Pay particular attention to the porter's anecdote and the children's questions.
- Challenge the children to imagine the three characters in a present-day setting – with contemporary names – and write a scene about how they are passing their time. Where might they be? (In a shopping mall? At a bus depot? On the London underground?) Ask the children to use plenty of direct speech, referring to the original text to check how to punctuate their characters' speeches.

A great storm in Scotland (Level 3/4 text)

Contained in: Book 1 (page 34)

Genre: Fiction

Source: *The Water Horse*

Author: Dick King-Smith

Introduction

Taken from *The Water Horse* – one of many novels by Dick King-Smith – this extract offers an atmospheric description of setting and skilful mood-creation, as well as being a passage that reveals character through both action and direct speech. Many children will already be familiar with this author's writing and some may have seen the 2007 film based on this novel. Other Dick King-Smith stories have also been filmed, including *The Sheep Pig*, which is well known as the film *Babe*. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Answers

1. small
2. it 'grabbed' the house 'in its jaws'
3. on top of a cliff
4. that the roof will be blown off
5. younger
6. snoring
7. capital G on second 'grumble'
8. sailors
9. mother carried an oil lamp
10. "Can't sleep a wink".

Further activities

- Invite the children to underline the strong verbs and discuss their role in creating a vivid atmosphere.
- Remind the children that earlier in this book they read a biography of Helen Keller. Reiterate the key features of this genre. Ask the children to research the author of *The Water Horse* (Dick King-Smith) and write a brief biography of his life. This should include when and where he was born, and the names of his books for children. Also challenge them to find out why it is that Dick King-Smith has written so many books featuring animals.

- Invite the children to imagine they are Angus, waking in the morning after the storm has abated. Suggest that, although he didn't wake, he heard the storm in his sleep and the sounds entered his dreams. Ask them to write a first-person narrative, entitled 'Angus's dream', using powerful verbs to create atmosphere. The narrative should begin, 'Last night I dreamed ...'
-  Ask the children to share with the class any memories of their own concerning storms, strong winds and floods that their family has experienced.

Tom finds happiness (Level 4 text)

Contained in: Book 1 (page 36)

Source: *The Water Babies*

Genre: Classic fiction

Author: Charles Kingsley

Introduction

First published in 1863, this abridged extract from the children's classic *The Water Babies* by Charles Kingsley links well with the study of children's lives in Victorian England. Even in this short extract, the wide gap between the rich, educated middle-class children and their poor, over-worked counterparts is evident. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Answers

- 1a.** *in bold* **1b.** *intro: present tense, extract: past tense* **2.** an adjective **3.** both in water and on land **4.** chimney sweep **5.** (any two of:) tired, hungry, beaten, sent up dark chimneys **6.** friends (mates, pals) **7.** just right (*not too hot, not too cold*) **8.** (one such as:) comfortable, content, happy, carefree.

Further activities

- Explain and explore the life of chimney sweeps, covering why sweeps were needed and what they did. Point out that children employed as chimney sweeps were small enough to get inside chimneys. Make sure that the class understands how hungry and poor the children were, having lived on the street. Point out that many of the children were orphans, and this made them vulnerable to exploitation by irresponsible adults.
- Use the extract as a starting point for research on underwater life in a river in this country – what creatures and plants might a 'water baby' expect to encounter?
- Invite the children to rewrite part of the passage in the first person, as if they were Tom, describing what happened to him and how he felt.
-  Discuss with the children the meaning of 'amphibious' and invite comments on whether they would enjoy being amphibious or if they prefer land or water. They might write and perform poems beginning 'If I were a water baby ...'

The milkmaid and her pail (Level 4 text)

Contained in: Book 1 (page 38)

Author: Celia Warren

Genre: Traditional tale / fable

Introduction

A retelling of one of Aesop's fables, exemplifying the widely-quoted moral, 'Don't count your chickens before they're hatched'. The wise, hard-working farmer and his feckless, daydreaming daughter are far removed from present-day role-models, but are typical of the genre of traditional tales. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Answers

1. she is daydreaming or in a world of her own
2. tell off
3. 'poultry'
4. a fine silk gown
5. tossed her head
6. outmoded occupation and dress; archaic words, such as pail, a-courting
7. bucket, think, dress
8. don't count on/assume success/riches till you have achieved them/have them in your hand – look for understanding and interpretation as well as the ability to answer in a clear sentence.

Further activities

- Explain that this is a fable – that is, a story with a warning or piece of moral advice.
- Reiterate, as in the pointer, that the fable was written over two and a half thousand years ago. Make it clear that Aesop's stories spread quickly by word of mouth. Tell the children that the stories are now available across the world and in many languages.
- Invite the children to collect further Aesop fables and investigate the stories behind other sayings attributed to Aesop, such as 'dog in a manger'; 'belling the cat'; 'crying "wolf"'.
- Ask the children to identify in this text the tag words that differ from 'said' ('scolded', 'mused', 'reasoned') and to begin a wider collection to use in their own narrative writing.
- Write a list of proverbs and ask the children to choose one as the subject of their own fable or story, which will include a warning or a piece of moral advice. (A friend in need is a friend indeed; Better late than never; Never a rose without thorns; Where there's a will, there's a way; Do good, reap good, do evil, reap evil.)
-  Invite the children to act out the story of 'The milkmaid and her pail', improvising dialogue and using a narrator.

London goes wild (Level 3 text)

BOOK 2

Contained in: Book 2 (page 4)

Genre: newspaper report

Source: *Observer*, 31 July 1966

Introduction

The children may have heard grandparents and older football enthusiasts talking animatedly about the English World Cup home match victory of 1966, which is described in this newspaper article. Use the text to tap into the children's own interests in football as well as their grandparents' recollections. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Answers

1. enthusiasm, excitement
2. (one of:) crowds mobbing the players; stopping traffic flow; climbing in fountains
3. Royal Gardens Hotel, Kensington
4. pubs
5. police cordons 'popped open like seams'
6. their own safety/wouldn't get mobbed; widely visible to the crowds
7. England was again the victor over Germany (as at the close of World War 2)
8. 3000 million (five times 600 million).

Further activities

- Discuss what mood the writer was trying to convey in his report (excitement, joy).
- Ask if the children know why the outcome of the match held an extra spark of interest and national pride. Expand on the Glossary note about the meaning of VE ('Victory in Europe') Day: 21 years earlier, England and its allies had defeated Germany in World War 2, and some saw the match as a sporting parallel to the hostilities. As England also hosted the contest in 1966, there was an additional motivation to national pride.
- Invite the children to imagine that England had lost the cup final. Ask them to write a newspaper report describing this outcome. Remind them to use similarly emotive language (for example, 'Britain sank into a slough of despond').
- Invite the children to research particular parts of the article to help paint a clearer