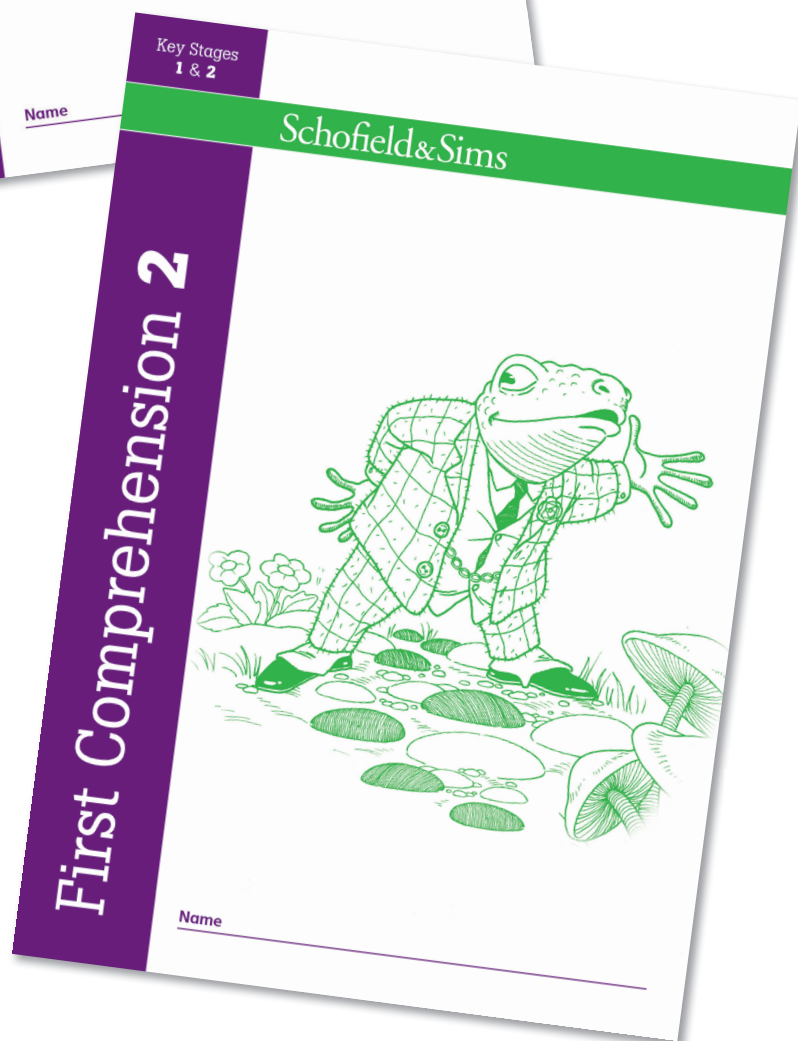
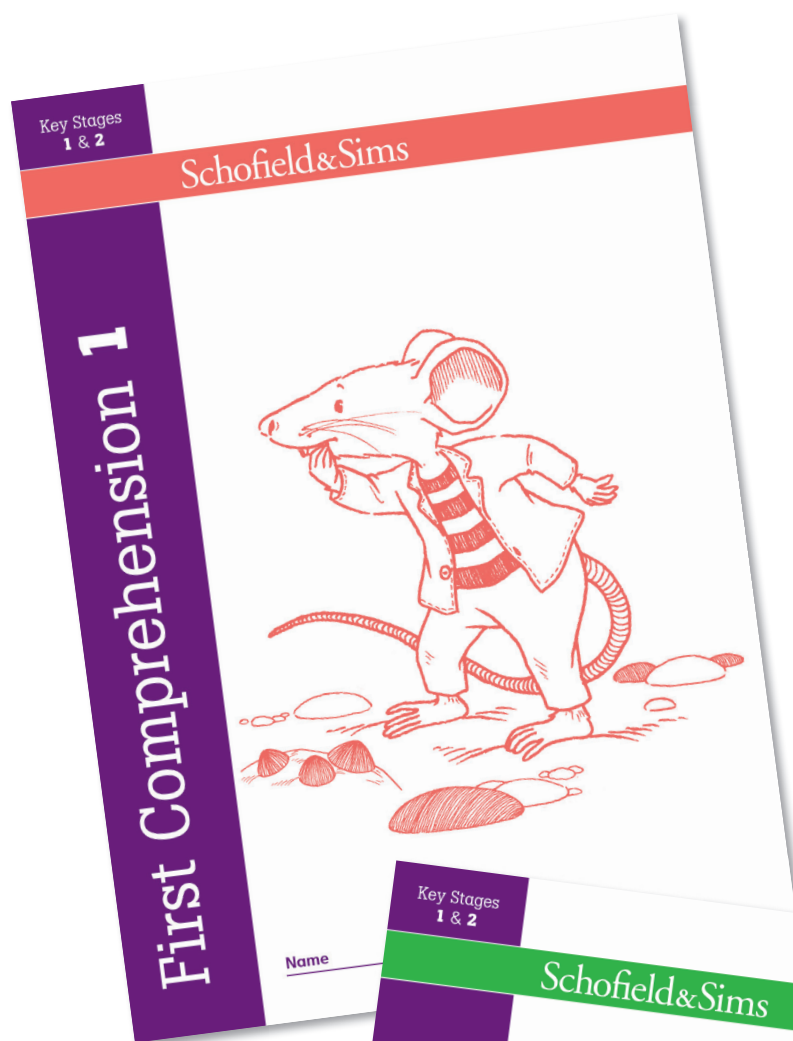


# First Comprehension

## Answers



# Teaching notes

## BOOK 1

### Big red boots

Contained in: Book 1 (page 4)


Genre: Poem

Author: Tony Mitton

**Introduction** This poem by children's poet Tony Mitton describes a pair of wellington boots on an outdoor walk. Its celebration of mud and puddles will delight many young children. The strong rhythm emulates the sound of booted feet, stamping along, and the verses are two pairs of couplets, rhyming AABB, with a separate rhyming couplet for the chorus. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. (boots should be red) 2b. stamping, hopping 3. down a country lane 4. (two of the following, or similar:) *young, happy, energetic, excited, muddy* 5. 'squeaks', 'toots'

**Part 2:** 6. *because they are happy that the boots are muddy* 7. *jumping in a puddle* 8. *squelch* 9. *the climax/ending of the poem; size of jump/splash; volume of splash; noise of splash; amount of mess made by splash.*

- Further activities**
-  Help the children to learn the chorus by heart.
  - Read the poem aloud and ask the children to march in time to the rhythm, performing the actions in each verse.
  - Discuss other places where the boots might walk. (Paddling in the sea? Swishing through tall grass or bracken?) Share ideas to create a new verse, beginning 'Big red boots . . .' (for example, 'Big red boots paddle in the sea'). Make sure that the first line ends with a word that offers a wide choice of rhymes for the second.
  - Explain that the poet has written hundreds of poems for children. Challenge the children to find more poems by Tony Mitton. Visit his website and find out more about the poet and his writing.

### British garden birds

Contained in: Book 1 (page 6)

Genre: Information / explanation


Source: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) Wildlife Explorers website

**Introduction** The birds in this passage introduce themselves through simple factual statements in the first person. Make sure that the children are aware that all the birds in the extract are common garden birds. Talk about the birds that do **not** appear in this extract, such as penguins, eagles and swans. Point out that the term 'garden birds' refers to birds whose regular habitat is the garden, rather than birds of prey or farmland birds, who may occasionally visit. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. blue tit 2a. blackbird, robin 2b. worms 3. a nest

**Part 2:** 4. chaffinch 5. short and wide 6. (one short sentence containing relevant facts and use of first person, for example:) 'I like water'; 'my feet are webbed'; 'I quack' 7. *not a garden bird; a water bird.*

### Further activities

- Visit a local bird hide where the children can identify birds and observe their behaviour. Alternatively, encourage the children to improvise their own bird hide, or simply sit still and quietly, to watch bird activity within the school grounds. You could ask them to conduct a bird count and draw a bar chart of species numbers. Discuss and record the children's observations in the classroom afterwards.
- Explain that the ability to fly enables birds to nest, feed and breed in high places. Roofs offer ideal shelter and plenty of crevices for insects on which they feed. Take the children outdoors to investigate what birds and other life they can see on roofs. Encourage them to notice how weeds take seed easily anywhere, and discuss how this is useful to birds. Identify and count bird species spotted on roofs and chimneys. You might choose to repeat this exercise over a period of weeks to note seasonal changes in behaviour. Ask the children to share and record their observations.
- Divide the class into groups. Invite the groups to research other terrains, such as rural, urban and coastal areas, and the birds they attract. You may wish to limit the search to a particular geographical area. Ask the children to present their discoveries as booklets, wall charts or presentations.
-  Ask the children to look for poems about birds, including those by poets such as John Clare, Ted Hughes and Walter de la Mare. Create a class anthology of bird poems. Ask the children to read their favourite poems to the group or class.
- Create a simple wall frieze of a garden – showing trees, grass, sky, a bird table, a bird bath and hanging peanut feeders. Provide illustrated references and ask each child to paint a bird mentioned in the extract. Cut these out and stick them to the frieze.

## The Enormous Crocodile


**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 8)

**Source:** *The Enormous Crocodile*

**Genre:** Fantasy

**Author:** Roald Dahl

### Introduction


*The Enormous Crocodile* is a picture book and is shorter than most of Roald Dahl's stories for children. The eponymous crocodile is the main villain, in search of some children to eat for lunch, and the Roly-Poly Bird acts as advocate for the children's welfare. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.  Provide dictionaries.

### Answers

**Part 1:** 1. *the children arrive all at once, in a crowd, lots of them* 2. Jill 3. wood (half mark only for 'wooden') 4. *only main characters need names*

**Part 2:** 5. *in order not to look alive; pretending to be wooden; to trick the children* 6. *in the river* 7. *she runs away* 8. *helpful, loud* 9. *yes; (answer to include at least one of the following facts:) he knows: the crocodile's character; where he lives; how he behaves; how and why he's planning to trick the children.*

### Further activities

-  Challenge the children to summarise the events in this extract. Ask them to dramatise these events in small groups, either improvising or using the original words to write a playscript. Ask each group to perform its drama to the rest of the class and

invite feedback from the 'audience' as to the effectiveness of each one.

- Ask the children to research the author and find out more about his other books. They should then share their findings with the class or in small groups.
- Invite the children to predict what might happen next in the story. If possible, provide copies of the book, encouraging the children to read the whole story and to compare the ending with their predictions.
- Challenge the children to write individually, or to improvise in groups, their own story of the Roly-Poly Bird. They should invent a scenario where the bird can use his knowledge and wisdom to warn the other characters and prevent disaster.

## The Wizard's dog

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 10)

**Genre:** Poem



**Author:** Bernard Young

**Introduction** Children who have dogs at home will have some knowledge of dogs and how to look after them. Invite these children to talk about all aspects of owning a dog before you read the poem. Help the children to see how wizard themes influence the descriptions of the wizard's dog by talking about what wizards are like, how they dress and the things they do. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. the wizard 2. hides/buries them 3. wands

**Part 2:** 4. the witch's cat 5. (two of:) *gets excited/goes crazy when his master returns; loves his master; buries and fetches things; chases cats* 6. witch 7. (bowl should be decorated with stars), *because he prefers stars to bones, as in verse one.*

### Further activities


- Challenge the children to design a packet or label for Wizard's Dog Food, either on paper or on a computer. Discuss first the images that such an advert would normally include. Perhaps the dog could eat something other than meat? Elicit suggestions that match the tone of the poem, such as stardust, moonbeams, chopped wands. Encourage the children to think of a suitably appealing name for the product.
-  Ask the children to summarise what they have learnt about the wizard's dog, then invite one child to role-play the character. The child should sit in the 'hot seat' to be interviewed by the rest of the class. Encourage the children to draw on information within the poem and then extend beyond it. For example, *What did you bury in the garden this morning?* or *What was the scariest moment for you when the wizard was doing magic?*
- Develop the theme of the witch's cat, asking the children to suggest characteristic cat behaviour, likes and dislikes, and those of the cat's owner. The children could write a parallel poem, modelled on *The wizard's dog*.
-  Read through the poem again, drawing the children's attention to the last four lines. Discuss the meaning of these lines, suggesting that, despite the differences, the wizard's dog is still just a dog. Ask the children to suggest ways in which people can seem different, such as the colour of their hair, their accent or their interests. Draw a parallel with the poem, explaining that these differences are as superficial as the wizard's dog fetching wands rather than sticks.

# Dipping into the dictionary

Contained in: Book 1 (page 12)

Genre: Reference



Source: Schofield & Sims First Dictionary

**Introduction** This extract provides a useful example of the layout of words and definitions on a typical dictionary page. Make sure that the children are familiar with the concept of alphabetical order and that copies of the alphabet are available for them to refer to. Be prepared to explain that words beginning with the same letter are ordered according to subsequent letters. For the purposes of this exercise, the children will not need to look beyond the third letter in each dictionary entry. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.  Provide dictionaries.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. spell, mean 2. they all begin with 'S' (for one mark) or 'Se' (for two marks) 3. seldom

**Part 2:** 4. sought 5. select; *its first three letters are the same as 'seldom' but its fourth letter, 'e', comes after seldom's fourth letter, 'd'* 6. seek/seize 7. seized.

## Further activities

- Create a memory device with children who are not yet confident with the alphabet. Draw an arch (like a rainbow), which starts and ends on a horizontal line, or use the Alphabet rainbow photocopiable resource. Help the children to write 'a' on the bottom left, 'z' on the bottom right, and 'm', 'n' in the centre, at the top. Ask them then to write the other letters in between. If any children still find this difficult, add in 'g' and 't' down the sides of the arch. When this is complete, conduct an alphabet speed challenge, giving instructions such as, *put your finger on 'd'* or *put your finger on the first letter in 'fish'*. Encourage the children to remember the positions (a, z, m, n, g and t) so that they can recreate the alphabet without assistance. Eventually they should be able to visualise this arch and recite the alphabet.
- Invite the children to create alphabetised glossaries for their current topic work. If working on a computer, they may also be able to check their alphabetical order electronically.
-  Challenge the children to incorporate all seven words from the extract into a story or script, which they can then read aloud or perform to the class. As a prompt, provide a list of suitable story titles, such as: 'The magic seeds'; 'The fame and fortune seekers'; 'The rarest flower in the world'; 'From another planet'.
-  Provide dictionaries. Ask the children to work in groups, and give a stopwatch to one child in each group. This child should select a word at random from the dictionary, then write it clearly and accurately on a sheet of paper. They should then hold up the word for the rest of the group to read, and simultaneously start the stopwatch. The other children in the group then race to locate the word in their dictionaries. Note the times and see who was the first to find each word. If necessary, provide alphabets for reference.

## Plop meets a boy scout

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 14)

**Genre:** Fiction

**Source:** *The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark*


**Author:** Jill Tomlinson

**Introduction** *The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark* has become a modern classic for children. In each chapter, Plop, the baby barn owl, falls out of his nest (in his early attempts to fly) to find out more about the dark. In this chapter, Plop discovers that 'dark is fun'. Even in this short passage, there is scope for character analysis and close reading of the dialogue. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. (in any order:) young, small 2. (any two of:) have a sing-song, sit by the campfire, eat potatoes, drink cocoa 3. (any two of:) *to cook potatoes, keep the scouts warm, provide light* 4. *she has been worrying about where he might be*

**Part 2:** 5. Well, yes, all right 6. chew it 7. *he is trusted to build up the fire; he is kind and considerate to Plop; he thinks of others (aware of Plop's mother's probable feelings, cools Plop's potato, gives Plop wise advice).*

### Further activities

- Invite the children to research the Boy Scout movement. They should look at where, when and by whom the movement was founded, the skills that boy scouts are taught and the uniforms that they wear. The children may also be interested to look at the Girl Guide Association.
-  Ask the children to act out the scene in the extract in groups of three, playing the roles of the boy scout, Plop and Plop's mother. Encourage each child to identify their character in the extract and learn their part of the dialogue. Challenge the children to adapt their body language to their character and to use tone and expression to establish each role. Arrange for the groups to perform to the class and invite kind and constructive feedback from their peers. Support less confident children by writing a script to prompt them. More able children may be able to improvise further conversation.
- Encourage the children to find the book in the library and read the rest of this chapter (or possibly the whole book). Ask them to write a short review of the book afterwards.
- Ask the children to research owls, particularly barn owls, online or in reference books. Once they have enough information, the children should create an owl fact file.

## I love my darling tractor

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 16)

**Genre:** Classic poem

**Author:** Charles Causley

**Introduction** The Cornish author of this poem wrote for adults as well as children and his poems are enjoyed by people of all ages. Here he personifies the tractor, describing it as if it were a beloved farm animal. Discuss with the children the sort of jobs that would once have required a horse (such as ploughing fields or drawing hay carts), but which are now performed by tractors. Explain that the high power and simple maintenance of a tractor, in comparison to that of a horse, would influence the farmer's view of this new technology.




Each of the four verses is written in ABCB rhyming pattern, with the opening line repeated at the start of the last verse. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.  Provide dictionaries.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. farmer 2a. din 2b. cheerful and strong 3. muscles; skin (children may also suggest 'mouth' to drink with)

**Part 2:** 4. shed 5. wander off 6. *he treats it as if it's alive/like an animal or pet/thirsty* 7. toil

### Further activities

-  Challenge the children to write an account of a day on the farm from the tractor's point of view. They should adopt the tractor's voice and write in the first person. How does the tractor feel about the farmer? What jobs does it do? What is its favourite time of day? How does it feel when the farmer gives it a drink? Encourage the children to draw on the information in the poem and to add ideas of their own. Ask the children to read their stories aloud to their group or to the class.
- Invite the children to discuss 'merry dins' or sounds that they like, such as planes flying overhead, a referee's whistle, water running into a bath, thunder or a dog barking. They should then use these sounds to write a poem called 'Favourite sounds'. They could also look for other poems about sounds, including Roger McGough's 'The Sound Collector' and Carol Ann Duffy's 'Safe Sounds'.
- Create a list of inanimate objects that the children often use, such as scissors, pencil, bike, skateboard, football, umbrella, hat and gloves. Discuss personification and experiment orally with this technique to describe what inanimate objects mean to us. Offer and elicit examples to and from the class, for example, *My pencil's head has bright ideas and it writes them on my page; my scissors bite but they never nip me; my football strolls along with me, it's never on a lead*. Challenge the children to develop one of these ideas into a poem, using Causley's as a model and beginning, *I love my dear old (football) . . .*

## Keeping warm in bed

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 18)

**Source:** *Snug as a Bug*

**Genre:** Information / explanation

**Authors:** Mal Peet and Elspeth Graham

**Introduction** History is a vast subject, but fascinating details on a subject that is within a child's own experience offer a great introduction to the past. This extract includes several sub-headings. Explain the value of subheadings in navigating a non-fiction text and locating relevant information. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1a. *it was cold(er) in winter; the people brought their animals inside to keep them warm* 1b. *smell of animals and their droppings/waste* 2. *300 years ago, built in a cupboard (by the fire), to keep out draughts/keep warm at night*

**Part 2:** 3a. four-poster bed 3b. *they were expensive* 4. (look for:) *hot water bottle (soft/pliable, doesn't normally leak; hot brick is hard, rough), (accept, if logically justified:) hot brick (the stopper won't work loose and let the bottle leak; won't perish like rubber)* 5. *warming pan: hard, won't stay hot long; hot coals could burn; pottery bottles/belly warmers: often leaked; asking a servant to get into the bed first: unhygienic; unfair on the servant.*

### Further activities

- With the children, put together a list of the different kinds of bed that are used today. This could include double/single bed, bunk bed, hammock, air bed, water bed, camp bed, folding bed, cot, cradle, (adjustable) hospital bed, sofa bed, cabin bed and so on. Ask the children to find suitable images online or in reference books. They should use the pictures to draw a selection of five beds and write a caption beneath each one, giving the bed's name and its specific use – such as a water bed to ease back pain and make the sleeper more comfortable.
- Challenge the children to design their dream bed. Ask them to think about shape, size and material, as well as when, how and where it would be used. Encourage them to be imaginative and think of extra features, such as a sleep-inducing scent or a built-in sound system.
- Write the word 'BED' vertically down the side of the board. Ask the children to write three-line acrostic poems to describe their bed or its purpose. These might be single words, such as *Blissful / Easy / Dreamland* or longer lines, such as *Being here is / Ever-so comfy, under a / Downy quilt.* 📖 Provide dictionaries. If necessary, support the children by supplying word cards (see back of this Guide) to trigger their ideas. Some children may prefer to work with a partner. 👤 Listen to the children as they read their short acrostic poems aloud. Invite the class to nominate their favourite and explain why they enjoyed it.

## An adventure for Brave Mouse

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 20)

**Source:** *Brave Mouse*

**Genre:** Fantasy adventure

**Author:** Jeremy Strong

### Introduction

This extract comes from a story called *Brave Mouse*, written by Jeremy Strong, a prolific children's novelist who is also featured in **First Comprehension Book 2**. The Mouse family – mother, father and son – are all personified. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

### Answers

**Part 1:** 1. Mrs Mouse/his wife; his/their son/Tiny Mouse 2. the sails 3. had an exciting thought 4. she cries/bursts into tears and wrings her tail 5. *she foresees danger; is worried about Mr Mouse's safety and lengthy absence; she will miss Mr Mouse*

**Part 2:** 6. *he tells Tiny Mouse that he can't come on the trip; he says that he is going to sail around the world 'single-pawed'* 7. food, photograph 8. fantasy, adventure.

### Further activities

- 👤 Ask the children to imagine performing the events in this extract. Discuss the ways in which they could use facial expressions and body language to support the dialogue. For example, when Mr Mouse's heart 'does a little dance' what will he do? (Jump up and down? Clap his hands? Do a little dance himself?) Discuss the different reactions of Mrs Mouse and Tiny Mouse to the news of Mr Mouse's plans – how could this be conveyed? Ask the children to act out the scene in groups of three, using dialogue and simple props, such as paper handkerchiefs.
- Invite the children to write a short episode about what might happen next. Ask them to focus on either the next stage of Brave Mouse's adventure or on his family's lives after he leaves. Encourage them to discuss their ideas with a partner to help them to think laterally. Prompt the children with questions, such as *Did they stay at home or follow Mr Mouse? What was the first thing that Brave Mouse saw when he left land?*



# The four friends

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 22)  
**Author:** A.A. Milne

**Genre:** Classic poem

**Introduction** The use of the word ‘friends’, apart from its alliterative quality, is doubly ironic – the creatures are of disparate size and nature, and there is no interaction between the characters throughout the poem. Their actions are presented in parallel. The irony is there for the enjoyment of older readers, while children will happily accept the animals’ friendship.


The ‘friends’ are personified while retaining characteristics of each animal, such as the elephant trumpeting and the snail being slow. The incongruity of certain lines enhances the separateness of the animals; for example, in verse one, each line refers to size except as regards the goat, where we learn the colour of his beard. Discussing the poem will help children to see why this adds to the humour of the poem.

Each verse of the poem has the ABAB rhyme scheme. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. Ernest, an elephant 2. James 3. lion, trumpets 4. *snails make no sound; any sound the snail makes is too quiet to hear*

**Part 2:** 5. a compass 6a. false 6b. true 6c. false 6d. true 6e. true.

## Further activities

-  Ask the children to prepare a reading of the poem in groups of four, and allocate the role of one character to each child. The children should read only the lines relating to their animal. If necessary, support less confident readers by highlighting their lines in the poem. Invite the groups to perform their poem to the class.
- Show the children a compass and demonstrate that the needle always points North. Ask the children to draw a compass, marking ‘N’ and ‘S’ at the top and bottom, for North and South. Use the mnemonic ‘WE’ to show on which sides to mark West and East. Ask the children to point to the position where ‘NE’ would be written. Explain that people use compasses to find their way. Relate this to the humorous idea that a snail would need a compass to travel the length of a brick.
- Use the poem to practise size-related vocabulary, including comparisons and superlatives, such as bigger than, smaller than and longest. Ask the children to draw the four animals to illustrate the poem, showing their respective sizes. Remind them to reread the poem to look for details. Prompt with questions, such as, *Which animal has the longest tail? Can you make the snail look a lot smaller than the goat? Can you make the lion bigger than the goat, but smaller than the elephant?*

# What makes me move?

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 24)

**Genre:** Information / explanation  
**Author:** Celia Warren


**Introduction** This extract effectively and simply explains how bones and muscles work together to

facilitate movement in the human body. It encourages children to realise that movement of the body is not confined to actions of our own volition, such as walking or waving, but also includes 'hidden' movements, such as the circulation of blood, pumped by the heart. The title is a rhetorical question and the article contains two simple subheadings. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. bones; skeleton/spine; muscles 2. the brain 3. only the cabbage should be coloured; because it is a green vegetable 4. cheese/fresh fruit

**Part 2:** 5. six hundred 6. arm 7. the heart 8. food, blood.

### Further activities

-  In groups, ask the children to share ideas for choreographing their own 'Dance of the skeletons'. They should discuss ways to demonstrate the different movements of various joints in the body and use these to devise a dance or gymnastic routine. This might include a 'follow-the-leader' succession of movements and some synchronised actions, or mirrored movements in pairs. Ensure that all children have a chance to contribute and to listen to each other's ideas.
- Use the Skeleton photocopiable resource or draw a simplified set of bone shapes to create a skeleton: a torso, two jointed arms, two hands, two jointed legs and two feet. Photocopy this onto white card for the children to cut out. Provide paper fasteners and ask the children to join the bones together to create a simplified moving model of a skeleton. Ask the children to put their skeletons in the positions required for different actions: star jumps, standing on one leg, waving, and so on. These could then be stuck onto a sheet of paper for the children to describe in an appropriate caption.
- Show a more accurate picture of a human skeleton to the children, alongside a number of dinosaur skeletons, including a Triceratops, Apatosaurus and Tyrannosaurus Rex. Ask the children to consider the main differences between these skeletons and explain that scientists can learn a great deal about a dinosaur from its skeleton. For example, its teeth show whether it ate plants or meat, and its skull can indicate whether it had good or bad eyesight. Ask the children to write a short story about a dinosaur skeleton coming to life, entitled 'After Dark in the Museum'.
- Discuss which organs are protected by the bones within the ribcage and the skull. Explain that skin (the biggest organ) holds the bones and muscles together. Invite the children to research teeth and the purposes of each type (for example, molars for grinding, and incisors for tearing and biting).

## A very small beetle

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 26)

**Source:** *Omnibombulator*

**Genre:** Fiction

**Author:** Dick King-Smith

### Introduction


This passage comes from a book called *Omnibombulator* by Dick King-Smith. The author wrote many books for children, most of which featured animals as the main characters. Often, as here, the creatures interact with humans. Write 'Omnibombulator' phonetically and in syllables, so that the children can practise saying it aloud before reading the extract. Some questions will require careful, close reading to reach an answer. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. under a haystack 2. his face; *he is unshaven, has a beard and/or moustache*

3a. because he has a hole in his (left) boot; his (left) boot lets in water/leaks 3b. he would go round puddles; to avoid getting his (left) foot wet 4. leather

Part 2: 5. a little too large 6. survived 7. it gives us a clearer picture of the way he walked; it sounds harder work than simply walking 8. squashed, afraid of being crushed, afraid of the dark, feeling sick from the smell, feeling suffocated, feeling relieved that he is still alive.

### Further activities

-  Ask the children to discuss what might happen next. Prompt the discussion with questions such as, *How might the beetle escape? When/where might the tramp remove his boots? Do you think Omnibombulator will be resourceful and quick-thinking? Will he have a plan of action?* Encourage the children to listen to one another's suggestions and offer corroboration or disagreement based on their understanding of the characters.
- Encourage the children to investigate beetles and the features that identify them as insects, such as having six legs and two pairs of wings. Take the children outdoors to look for beetles in cracks and crevices, under rocks and among fallen leaves.
- Challenge the children to choose a species of animal, fish, bird or insect and invent a five- or six-syllable name for it. Encourage them to draw a picture of their creature and write a short 'fact file', including the creature's likes and dislikes, habitat and favourite food. Some children might even write a short story about their creature.
- Encourage the children to consider this episode from the tramp's point of view. They should think about why someone might be glad to find an old boot by the roadside. On the board draw two columns. In the first column ask the children to suggest things that they might want for their own sake, and in the second, things that they need to be safe and comfortable.


## Birdsong lullaby

Contained in: Book 1 (page 28)

Genre: Poem

Author: Pauline Stewart

### Introduction

This poem's gentle rhythm befits its lullaby title. The sounds and sights of evening, especially birdsong, make it a wonderful poem for bedtime reading, or to share calmly at the close of a school day. Draw the children's attention to the long lines and the long vowels that make the poem slow and calming. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.  Provide dictionaries.


### Answers

Part 1: 1. evening 2. go to sleep 3. 'fidgeting' 4. 'One bird's little solo becomes a choir tree'

Part 2: 5. sleepy, calm 6. dusk 7. cheer up 8. 'drowsy'

### Further activities

- Remind the children that vowels can make short sounds or long sounds. Discuss the poet's use of long vowel sounds in long lines, as in 'evening', 'blue', 'light', 'sky'. Demonstrate, by reading the poem aloud, how these have a slow, calming effect, suitable for the end of the day, when people are 'winding down' before bed.
- Ask the children to create a contrasting list of words with short vowel sounds that have a quicker, 'waking-up' pace to them, suitable for daybreak. They should use this list to write a complementary morning poem, with short, punchy lines. If necessary, support the children by providing the word cards at the back of this Guide.

- Invite the children to investigate nocturnal creatures online or in reference books, beginning with the 'insects who love to dance at night', such as moths. They could then look at bats, mice, foxes, badgers, owls and nightingales (which sing in the evening). Use this information to create a class non-fiction book of 'Nature's Nightlife'.
- Challenge the children to find more lullabies and poems about the evening to copy out and compile a class anthology.
-  Ask the children to tell their partner about their favourite time of day, thinking about the way they experience it through all five senses. They should explain what they like about that time of day and try to work out what triggers certain feelings – this could include anticipation of the day's events when they first wake up, or a sleepy, contented feeling after an enjoyable meal. Encourage the children to ask open questions of their partners, beginning with words such as 'How?' and 'Why?'.


## Beyond the castle walls

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 30)

**Source:** *Knights and Castles*


**Genre:** Information / explanation

**Author:** Toni Goffe

**Introduction** Castles are a prominent feature of the British landscape and a huge part of the country's historical heritage. If possible, take the class to visit a nearby castle and help them to identify the features described in this extract. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.  Provide dictionaries.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. besieged 2. thatcher 3. (two of:) shoemaker; tailor; armourer; sentry/sentries 4. the keep 5. *there is food and water for them and for their animals, craftsmen to make their clothes and shoe their horses, and a pond where they can fish*

**Part 2:** 6a. cold (exposed and windy) 6b. sentry boxes for shelter and/or hot food, ovens for keeping food warm 7a. the arm/hand that people use to hold and wield their sword 7b. *the spiral staircase twists upwards anti-clockwise, so right-handed attackers' sword arms would be jammed against the wall, whereas left-handed attackers would have their sword arm free.*

- Further activities**
-  Ask the children to write a short list of bullet points summarising the facts contained in the text. In groups, they should use this information to discuss and plan how to build a model castle. Provide a range of books and information for reference. The children will need to think about the features they want to represent and the most suitable materials for the task. Encourage them to draw plans, list materials and decide who will work on each part of the model. Listen to each group's discussions and ask questions to help their planning process. *What sort of glue will you need? What shape are the turrets? What household waste items could be recycled in the model? Who is good at drawing banners and flags? How will you make the drawbridge operate?* Ensure that the children take turns to speak and listen, considering one another's opinions. If time allows, the children may build their castles in school or at home.
  - Use the Arrow slits photocopyable resource or draw a simple picture of a slit window in a castle. Ask the children to think about who might have used these windows, and why they are so narrow. Ask the children to put their hands side by side in front of their face. They should then bend their fingers slightly to make a crack to look

through, emulating the effect of looking through the slit window in a castle (see diagram). Discuss how much they can see of others, and the space around them, and compare this with how little of their faces others can see. Can they see their friends? Can their friends see their face? How would this have protected the archers?



- Challenge the children to research online or in reference books the trades and skills mentioned in the extract, including archers, masons, blacksmiths, thatchers, armourers, tailors and carpenters. Discuss which of these skills are still in use today.
- Find or create a poster-sized map of the British Isles. Add flags of noteworthy castles to the corresponding geographical locations. Ask the children to find pictures (online, in books or at home) to add to the map.

## Stop thief!

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 32)

**Source:** *Stig of the Dump*

**Genre:** Fiction

**Author:** Clive King


**Introduction** Clive King's *Stig of the Dump* is a popular modern classic. Children are likely to have some awareness of 'cavemen' but a brief review of the Stone Age will help them to put Stig's existence in 'our time' in its incongruous context. They will understand why adults have trouble believing in the friend that Barney (the hero) has made.

The extract concerns Barney's reaction to seeing a thief entering his grandmother's house, and includes direct speech. The noun 'down', in the second paragraph, appearing as it does in the same sentence as three other prepositions, could cause confusion, so is defined in the glossary. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.



**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. *he might tread on them; they are growing on the ground underfoot* 2. Barney expects to find Stig there, and he is 3. *he glues them in place* 4. 'puffed'

**Part 2:** 5. *he doesn't understand a word/doesn't speak English* 6. no; (look for references to:) *the word 'hopeless'; that the adults 'just smile'; the question mark in 'Really?'* 7a. he points (to the top of the cliff) 7b. he screws up his face (to look wicked) 7c. he mimes/acts out the use of weapons.

### Further activities

- Ask the children to look again at the final sentence of the text. Encourage them to suggest ideas about what might happen next and write these on the board. The children should then choose one idea from the board and use it to write the next paragraph of the story.
-  In pairs, ask one child to play a police officer and the other to play an eye-witness reporting a crime that is taking place at that moment. Challenge each pair to improvise the dialogue or use the 'Stop thief!' starter playscript photocopyable resource. Encourage the eye-witness to give details of the event and any developments as they happen, such as, *The man has a beard and is going through the window, carrying*

a black sack. The police officer should ask pertinent questions and offer advice to the eye-witness, such as, *Don't go near – the thief could be dangerous*, or *Wait by the roadside and look out for the police car – there's one on its way*.

- Ask the children to copy out neatly the first two paragraphs from the extract. Together, identify prepositions in these two paragraphs – that is: *after, up, through, out, in, round, into* and *along* (not *down* – see glossary). Ask the children to highlight or underline these words. You do not need to introduce the term 'preposition' at this stage, and can describe them as 'words that show where one thing (or person) is in relation to another'. Challenge the children to write two sentences that describe a journey (real or imaginary). Invite individuals to read these aloud and ask the rest of the class to put their hands up when they hear a preposition.
-  Hold a short class discussion about safety issues at a crime scene, beginning with the events in this extract. *Was Barney sensible to go and get help? Should people fire weapons at burglars? Why not? What is the safest thing to do? Who would you ask for help in a similar situation?* Talk about and list the emergency services: fire, police, ambulance, coastguard and mountain rescue.
-  Discuss the importance of only dialling 999 in a real emergency and the danger caused by hoax calls.

## The months

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 34)  
**Author:** Christina Rossetti


**Genre:** Classic poem

**Introduction** Christina Rossetti (1830–1894) was born to Italian parents in London and wrote many poems specifically for children. This poem about the seasons reflects the British climate. The short lines of the long thin poem mean that each month only has a brief sketch of its features. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. March 2a. October 2b. flowers die, trees lose their leaves 3. (flowers should be coloured in) 4. July

**Part 2:** 5. November 6. January and December 7. June 8. Look for correct matching of the child's birthday with the correct lines, and accuracy of the respective quotation.

### Further activities

- Provide each child with a long, thin piece of card and ask them to list the months of the year, evenly spread down the length of their card. They should then use the descriptions in the poem to add illustrations to each month. Hang these cards on the wall and give each child a colourful clothes peg or paperclip to indicate the current month. Encourage the children to move their peg along as appropriate each month. The children might add a sticker to the chart to mark their birthday month. If the chart is big enough, ask the children to write the lines of the poem under each month.
- Create a bar chart of the year to record and compare the number of the children's birthdays falling in each different month. Again, lines from the poem could be added if space permits.
-  Write the current month as a title on the board. Below this, write the poet's description of that month for the children to read. For example, *July / scorched /*



*storm-clouds fly.* Ask the children to give observations about the month from their own experience. These may extend beyond the weather and include, for example, sports day, picnics or school reports. Add individual suggestions to form a long, thin class poem. Read this aloud together, encouraging the children to keep in time with one another, and to share the same emphasis, intonation and pace. When the children have practised, create an opportunity for them to perform their poem to another class or to the school, introducing the poem as inspired by Rossetti's original work.

## Jeremy Strong's world

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 36)

**Genre:** Autobiography


**Source:** The Telegraph

**Introduction** This autobiographical text is adapted from an interview with prolific and popular children's author Jeremy Strong. The text is presented under subheadings about the author's life and work. The glossary will help children to understand this challenging extract. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. an author 2. (clock showing 8 o'clock should be coloured in) 3a. the studio 3b. (look for:) *it sounds more important/professional; sounds posher* 4. (one of:) washing up, ironing

**Part 2:** 5. a primary school teacher 6. turning the pages and 'dipping into' the book 7. he suddenly thinks of a good idea for something to write 8. *he might go back to sleep and forget his ideas; he might not remember the conversation the next morning; it keeps him awake* 9. notebooks.

### Further activities

- Draw the children's attention to the extracts from *Brave Mouse* (Book 1, page 20) and *The Beak Speaks* (Book 2, page 20), both of which were written by Jeremy Strong. Encourage them to find and read further books by this author and to discuss their favourites. Ask them to think about which character they found the funniest. Challenge the children to work in groups to act out scenes from their favourite story.
-  Discuss the meaning of 'routine' and ask the children to contribute to an oral sequential description of a typical school day. Ask the children to take turns in describing their morning routine to a partner. Encourage the children to consider the purpose served by routine in our lives, prompting with questions such as, *Is it helpful? Tedious? Reassuring? A combination of things?* Discuss the ways in which our morning routine changes (or remains the same) at weekends.
- Invite the children to write a diary for a character of their choice, imagining their daily routine. This might be a fictional character, such as Spiderman or Cinderella, or a character of their own invention. If necessary, support the children by providing a list of times such as *before breakfast, breakfast* and *early morning*, or specific times, such as *7.00 a.m., 7.30 a.m.* and *8.45 a.m.*

# Clever Gretel

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 38)  
**Author:** The Grimm Brothers, retold by  
Celia Warren


**Genre:** Fairy tale

**Introduction** Most children will be familiar with other fairy tales written by the Grimm brothers which have been retold in books and in films (see activity book for examples). Discuss this genre with the children and look at the literary features associated with it. Often (although not here) stories will begin 'Once upon a time' and end 'happily ever after'. Point out that the retelling of this fairy tale includes the word 'alas'. Explain that words such as this are typically seen in traditional stories, but would rarely be used in everyday speech. Ask the children to suggest alternatives in modern spoken language, such as 'unfortunately' or 'sadly'. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. *greedy, because she eats both chickens herself; dishonest (or similar) as she lies and tricks her master/thinks up and carries out a wicked trick* 2. *does not concentrate/pay attention/notice what is happening; whose mind wanders; is inattentive/forgetful/distracted/scatterbrained/lost in own thoughts* 3. *no-one else will want it because it is burnt* 4. *guest*

**Part 2:** 5. *she wants to prevent her master seeing the guest, so that she can scare him away without her master knowing* 6. *to carve the chickens/meat* 7. *he might have let the guest in and have discovered what Gretel had done and been angry with her or punished her* 8. *the chickens, which he thinks the guest has stolen.*

## Further activities

-  Invite the children to act out the story in groups of three, improvising dialogue and exaggerating the characters' actions to turn the story into the beginnings of a pantomime. Demonstrate and encourage the dramatic use of 'stage whispers' where suitable; for example, Gretel might share her devious plan with the audience, 'whispering' audibly behind her hand. Invite each group to perform to the rest of the class (perhaps over a period of days) and invite feedback from the audience on which aspects of the performance were most successful and why.
- Encourage the children to find and read more stories by the Grimm brothers. Discuss any features that the stories have in common, in terms of theme (characters with conflicting aspirations; a downtrodden character winning against all odds) and in terms of language and structure (words that are rarely spoken appearing in dialogue; little development of character; a plot featuring an obvious motive and a clear outcome).
- Ask the children to look at the title *Clever Gretel* and think of alternative titles, such as 'Cunning Gretel' or 'Greedy Gretel'. Create a list of adjectives to describe other imaginary characters, such as, 'funny', 'lazy', 'curious', 'cunning', 'proud', 'ticklish', 'sleepy'. Challenge the children to add a name to the adjective and use it as a title to plan (and later write) a fairy tale of their own. Explain that the plot must involve this central character's personality trait and the problems it causes. They should work out how these problems will be resolved, introducing other characters in the process. Limit them to three or four characters. Allow children to work alone or with a partner.

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 4)  
**Author:** Lynette Craig


**Genre:** Poem

**Introduction** Many children (and adults) will relate to the message of this poem. Written in the first person, it is essentially a 'list' poem, rhyming AABCCB, and with a wealth of verbs to enjoy. Some fears are rational: they are reasonable as they do involve danger. Others are irrational: there is no real danger but people can still feel fear. The poem ends with a rhetorical question. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1a. bats 1b. 'examined' 2. bees have stung the speaker's knees 3a. bugs 3b. it rhymes

**Part 2:** 4. cats 5. pushed them in(to) pens 6a. crab/mole 6b. 'Pulled crabs out of the sand' / 'Go down his hole' 7. only the dog and duck should be coloured.

### Further activities

-  Introduce and discuss the words 'rational', 'irrational', 'phobia' and 'phobic'. Explain that irrational fears are normal and natural and most people have them. It may not be appropriate to ask the children to talk about their own phobias with the class, but they could discuss them in pairs. Bring the class together and discuss how you might help the speaker in the poem to overcome their fear of spiders. Consider giving the spider a pet name; realising how frightened the spider must be; removing the spider without hurting it and without coming into direct contact with it. Ensure that the children take turns to speak and to listen to each other's ideas.
- Ask the children to draw a two-column table and list the animals that appear in the poem in the left-hand column. Challenge them to find out three facts about each and write them in the right-hand column, alongside the animal's name. They should try to find at least one fact that they did not previously know. When they have finished, demonstrate how to turn a fact into a question, for example: *Spiders have eight legs* becomes *How many legs does a spider have?* Invite individuals to ask questions for the other children to answer in a quiz. Conclude the activity by asking the children to sum up the new facts they have learnt.
- Encourage the children to look more closely at the rhyme scheme in this poem, drawing their attention to the AABCCB pattern. Challenge the children to complete the new verse included in question 3, retaining the original rhyme and scansion. Discuss where this would fit in the poem (somewhere before the final verse).

## Stars twinkle

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 6)  
**Source:** *I Wonder Why Stars Twinkle?*

**Genre:** Information / explanation  
**Author:** Carole Stott


**Introduction** Astronomy is a huge and complex subject. To help the children begin to comprehend the vast numbers given in this extract, you might discuss them in relation to the children's experience of the world. Ask them to imagine counting the grains of sand on a beach or the blades of grass in a park. Invite them to see how far they can look into the distance and

discuss how much there is beyond what they can see, even on the Earth's surface. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. two hundred 2. galaxy 3. they study stars and planets 4. hydrogen and helium 5. out in space

**Part 2:** 6.(one of:) 'shimmering'; 'blinking' 7a. look for drawings with spikes and points 7b. (bubbles of) hot and cold air around the earth bend(s)/wobble(s) the light from the stars. 8. round, like balls; spherical

### Further activities

- If possible, ask the children to look at the night sky at home. Discuss the way that clouds can hide the stars and light-pollution can affect the view. Explain that the view is best away from streetlights and lit windows. Show the children charts or photographs of easily identifiable constellations to look out for in the Northern Hemisphere, such as the Plough, Orion's Belt and Cassiopeia's 'W'. Make a wall frieze displaying some of these constellations.
-  Find simple retellings of the Greek myths whose characters give names to the constellations and planets, and read these to (or with) the children. Challenge the children to act out these stories in groups, improvising dialogue and eventually performing to the rest of the class.
- Ask the children to research the lifecycle of a star in reference books or online. They should then work in pairs to draw and annotate a comic strip, depicting a star's development from protostar to black dwarf, black hole or neutron star.
- Help the children to list the names and comparative sizes of planets within our galaxy. Make a wall-chart showing their positions in relation to each other and the sun. Explain that Earth is sometimes referred to as a 'Goldilocks' planet – not too hot and not too cold – which allows it to support life. Discuss which planets can be seen from Earth with the naked eye, particularly Venus (the 'evening star') and Mars (the 'red planet').

## The Iron Man returns

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 8)

**Source:** *The Iron Man*

**Genre:** Fiction


**Author:** Ted Hughes

**Introduction** A former Poet Laureate, Ted Hughes (1930–1998) is best remembered for his poetry for both children and adults. The language used in this short children's novel is characteristically poetic, with no wasted words. Written in 1968, it has been described as a modern fairy tale. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. not far from the sea/a clifftop, in countryside/farmland 2. (two of:) 'green'/'lights'/'headlamps' 3. for emphasis; to suggest urgency, panic, speed, fear, sense of danger, need for safety 4a. they are afraid of him 4b. the Iron Man is dangerous/cruel.

**Part 2:** 5a. to shoot the giant; to protect himself and his family 5b. to keep the Iron Man out of the house 6. the first laughs and does not believe him; the second frowns and does believe him 7. by following tracks, looking for footprints in the earth. 8. that the Iron Man has taken a bite out of the tractor; that he eats metal

### Further activities

- Help the children to draw a map of the setting of this text, marking different focal points, such as the location where Hogarth first sees the Iron Man, Hogarth's house, the first farmer's house and the half-eaten tractor. It should show a coastline, Hogarth's home and two other farms with roads to link them. The arrangement of these may differ, but should be in keeping with the description. Children might work with a partner to discuss the layout of the map.
-  Invite the children to act out this scene in small groups (with or without the Iron Man and Hogarth's mother and sister, as numbers permit). It may help if they first write and learn a script, taking dialogue directly from the text or using the 'Iron Man returns' starter playscript (see back of this Guide). Encourage the children to create metallic sound effects by tapping a radiator with a ruler or jangling several pairs of scissors together. They should discuss and decide where and how these sounds might be incorporated into their performance for the best dramatic effect.
- Although the story is told quite simply, there are layers within the text which some children might appreciate through discussion. For example, in the first farmer's reaction to news of the Iron Man, Hughes uses the word 'red' three times. To help the children understand the significance of this, ask them to empathise with Hogarth's father being laughed at – how would it make him feel? Angry? Embarrassed? Frustrated?
- Ask the children to think up attention-grabbing newspaper headlines to sum up the events in the passage. How many different angles and viewpoints can they find? They could focus on the disagreement among neighbouring farmers, or on Hogarth's father's concern for his family, or even the visible evidence (tractor damage and giant footprints). Limit the children to five or six words. Remind them to omit non-essential words, such as 'the', 'and', 'with'. More able writers could choose one headline and write an article to accompany it, using dramatic, evocative words and phrases, such as those below.

alleged panic admitted shock community danger grave risk

## One-eyed monster

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 10)

**Source:** *Homer's Odyssey*

**Genre:** Playscript / myth

**Author:** Simon Armitage

### Introduction



This extract is from a dramatisation of Homer's epic poem, *The Odyssey*. Some children may already know the names of the main characters: the hero Odysseus and Cyclops – the one-eyed giant and son of Poseidon. There are different schools of thought as to the pronunciation of ancient Greek names, so the children may need some guidance before starting to read the text; for example, Od-iss-ee-us, **Sigh**-clops, Pol-**ee**-tez, You-rill-o-cus, El-pen-os, You-**rib**-a-tees, **An**-ti-phas. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

### Answers

**Part 1:** 1. aground 2. do something to mislead him 3. *they think Cyclops will destroy their ship* 4. *they think Cyclops is harmless, that he won't hurt them* 5. *they describe the characters' actions; they are stage directions; they tell the actors what to do or how to look*

**Part 2:** 6. *let's help ourselves to Cyclops's food* 7. *he is very hungry and tempted by the food; he thinks Cyclops is friendly/soft at heart* 8. 'one-eye'; (also accept 'big dumb animal') 9. (any of:) *he killed and ate Antiphus / one of the men; he used food to lure, trick and trap the men inside his cave, where they could not escape his plan to eat them.*

### Further activities

-  Divide the class into groups of eight to ten children. Ask them to read the script aloud in their groups, each taking a different role. One child in each group should act as narrator, reading the pointer and stage directions. Discuss and demonstrate any strategies they will need to speak 'on cue' in order to keep the drama engaging and realistic. Encourage them to use a range of tone, pace and volume, and to think about what kind of voice to use – for example, Odysseus could be commanding and assured, Cyclops, giggly with cunning. Bring the class together to hear each group's performance. Invite the children to comment on one another's performance, focussing on interpretation, clarity of speech and characterisation.
- Discuss how a performance of this scene might be staged. Would the children need any props? How would they show Cyclops crushing and eating Antiphus? Perhaps the actors could move behind a backlit screen and mime the event as silhouettes, or Cyclops might drag his victim off-stage. Explore and experiment with possible sound-effects.
- Encourage the children to discuss what might happen next, now that the men are trapped in the cave. Will the characters survive? What will happen to Cyclops? Help the children to find out how the story continues and retell the narrative, either improvising a playscript or writing the story in their own words.
-  Ask the children to design a mask for the actor playing Cyclops. The mask should convey the character's personality and appearance without obscuring the actor's mouth, so that the dialogue can still be heard and the actor can still see. The children should think about the materials they would use and how the mask would be worn. If time allows, they could try to make their masks using paper plates, ready-made masks or papier-mâché and balloons.

## Swede pulls up carrot

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 12)

**Genre:** Newspaper report

**Source:** *Daily Mail*

### Introduction

The pun in the title of this newspaper article indicates the light-hearted nature of the human-interest news story and demonstrates the value of an eye-catching headline. The story made headlines in the UK as well as in Sweden. It is about a Swedish woman who loses her wedding ring, only for it to turn up years later, with a carrot growing through it. The woman discovers the ring when harvesting her garden vegetable plot. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.


### Answers

**Part 1:** 1. Sweden 2. 'wearing' 3. Ola 4. baking 5. Christmas/winter time 6. under the floor boards; behind things in the kitchen

**Part 2:** 7. Lena's (and/or Ola's) daughter 8. that her mother has hurt herself 9. sheep; vegetable/carrot 10. *her fingers have grown fatter; she is fatter; she has put on weight.*



### Further activities

-  Challenge the children to present this news item in groups as a television report, broadcasting from the scene after the ring has been found. A studio newsreader could introduce the item first, and then 'move' to the reporter at the scene. Ask the children to role-play any or all of the members of Lena's family, who can be interviewed by the reporter. Allow the children time to plan their questions and answers before presenting their news item to the class.
- Help the children to locate Sweden on a globe or map of the world. Challenge them to research the country and find out key facts such as its capital, national flag, terrain, population size and famous people from Sweden (such as Alfred Nobel). Create a class poster of the country with individuals' written and illustrated contributions, from captions to short paragraphs.
- Provide or ask the children to bring in some fresh carrot tops (cutting about the top centimetre off the carrot). Show the children how to grow these on a shallow plate of sand or small pebbles. Keep them well-watered and place them in a sunny position, and then watch what happens. Within a few days the carrot top should sprout foliage. The carrot tops could be used in a maths activity, measuring the growth at intervals and seeing whose carrot top grows the most in the space of a week.

## Mary and the robin

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 14)

**Source:** *The Secret Garden*

**Genre:** Classic fiction

**Author:** Frances Hodgson Burnett



**Introduction** Still popular today, *The Secret Garden* was first published in serial form in 1910, and as a complete book in 1911. Its heroine, Mistress Mary, is living in India when an outbreak of cholera kills both her parents. At just 10 years old, she is sent to live with her uncle in Misselthwaite Manor, in Yorkshire. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. she asks, 'Is it you?' 2. in the orchard 3. 'twittered', 'chirped' 4. she laughed/began to laugh/began to run after him 5. 'sallow'

**Part 2:** 6. whistle 7. *it has no entrance* 8. he can fly over the wall 9. (look for sensible suggestions relating to ideas in the extract).

### Further activities

- Take the children to a nearby park or garden and ask them to list all the living things they can see. Encourage them to remain silent for a minute and then list all the sounds they can hear. On returning to the classroom, ask the children to imagine that they can only describe what they have just seen and heard from a position outside the garden or park. What would still be visible? Ask them to write a list poem based on this, including sounds, smells and sights.
- Provide information in books or online about birds (perhaps referring to the RSPB website) and ask the children to label the robin illustration in the pupil book: eye, beak, tail, wing, foot, head, body. Invite them to colour in the annotated picture, showing the robin's brown feathers and red breast. Point out that both male and female robins have the same markings. Challenge the children to draw, in the robin's beak, something that it likes to eat. If possible, play a recording of the robin's song.


-  Sort the children into groups and ask them to design their ideal garden. Would it have flowers and trees? A fountain? Somewhere to sit? A wildlife area? They should think of any play equipment that they might include, such as a swing, sand-pit or basketball net. Make sure that all the children take part in the discussion, listening to and commenting on one another's suggestions. Provide large pieces of paper for the children to plan their garden and encourage them to lay cut-outs of its features on the paper, so that they can move them around. How much space will they need for a swing? Can they climb a tree without getting their feet wet?
-  Children who have lived abroad or who have recently moved to a new area may identify with Mary's solitude, or with her enjoyment of discovering a new environment. Some of the children may be excited to share these experiences with the class, or with a partner. In groups, ask the children to discuss and then list the things they would miss from home if they were to move to a different country. Make sure that all the children take part in the discussion, listening to and commenting on one another's suggestions.

## Written in March

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 16)

**Genre:** Classic poem


**Author:** William Wordsworth

**Introduction** These well known lines were written by the romantic poet, William Wordsworth (1770–1850), who was Poet Laureate for the last seven years of his life. The verses all follow the same pattern: two pairs of short rhyming couplets, with two strong, cheerful beats in each line, closing with a longer line, which slows down the vibrant lists of signs and activities that typically indicate the arrival of spring. This slowing of tempo allows the reader to linger over the scene. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.  Provide dictionaries.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. has 2. *because they eat constantly* 3. a (defeated) army (retreating) 4. spring, (any of:) *it is March; the weather is improving; the field is green; sun and blue skies replacing snow and rain; animals and birds content and are feeding on grass/singing*

**Part 2:** 5. rural; (quote in full two of lines 2, 4, 5, 8, 14, 15, 16) **6a.** happy, optimistic **6b.** (any two of:) 'The plough-boy is whooping – anon – anon', 'The cock is crowing' 'The small birds twitter', 'There's joy in the mountains', 'There's life in the fountains'.

### Further activities

- Make sure that all the children have understood the poem, taking time to explain and discuss phrases such as 'doth fare ill'.
-  In groups, ask the children to discuss and list signs of spring in a town or city. How will the warmer weather be apparent in city streets (among shoppers, commuters, window displays)? Will it be noticeable in the parks and leisure centres? Using suggestions from the groups, create a shared list. From this, draft a modern verse using Wordsworth's poem as a model. It should follow a similar rhythmic and rhyming pattern, for example, *Shoppers in flip-flops / Short sleeves and vest tops / Hot sun brings drought / Washing pegged out / Markets sell tulips in pots*. Read the new verse aloud and ask the children to listen for ways that the rhythm could be improved to match the original poem.

- Ask the children what sounds they would need to include in an accompanying soundtrack for Wordsworth's poem. They might consider the sound of birdsong, a flowing stream, cows in the fields. Ask them to imagine returning to this nineteenth century landscape in the twenty-first century. Put together a list of any additional sounds that they might hear, such as car engines, mobile phones or aeroplanes. Take the children outside and, if equipment is available, record as many different sounds as possible. Listen to these in the classroom and encourage the children to add further sounds using their voices, musical instruments and objects in the room. Experiment with weaving the sounds into a shared narrative, taking turns to add a piece of the story to each sound.
- List the months of the year and explain how, in the Gregorian or Western calendar, the year begins in January and ends in December. Draw a circle on the board, dividing it into four and labelling it with the names of the seasons. Use this to demonstrate that the seasons do not fit neatly into the calendar year, with winter beginning in December and lasting for three months. Similarly, the following three months represent spring, the next three summer, and finally, autumn. Challenge the children to find poems about other months or times of year and create a class anthology of 'Seasons Poems'.

## Measuring straight lines

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 18)

**Genre:** Information / explanation

**Author:** Celia Warren

**Introduction** Before reading this extract, the children may have a broad concept of standards of measure. They might have experimented with using pencils, wooden bricks or building blocks as units of measure, even before starting to measure in centimetres.


They may also have some idea of using smaller units to measure smaller lengths, and longer for bigger objects. They should understand that consistent units should be used to compare measurements. This passage gives some of the history behind the standardisation of measurements, from Ancient Egypt to the modern world. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. *you can't lose it; you always have it with you* 2a. a yard 2b. a cubit 3. the thumb 4. tall; *you would get more material*

**Part 2:** 5. four (digits) 6. seven (palms) 7. metric 8. one hundred (100) 9a. cubit 9b. digit.

### Further activities

- Give the children some simple maths challenges, asking questions such as, *If there are four digits in a palm and seven palms in a cubit, how do I find out the number of digits in a cubit? or I have two pieces of string: one measures seven digits and the other measures two palms. Which is longer? By how much?*
- Provide some imperial and metric rulers or tape measures. Ask the children to make a comparison chart with three columns headed inches, centimetres and digits. Create a list of items to be measured and ask the children, in pairs, to measure them using each method, taking care to be as accurate as possible. This might include items such as window panes, chair seats and glue sticks. The children should then form groups to compare their answers. Ask them to think about whether one method was less accurate or less reliable than another (expecting the greatest variation in 'digits').

-  This activity will require a length of string and a felt-tip pen (or similar). Invite a short child (S) and a tall child (T) out to the front to role-play merchants, explaining that you, too, are a merchant. Invite a third child to be a customer who wants to buy a cubit of string. Measure the string from the tip of S's elbow to the tip of S's middle finger. Mark the string. Is the buyer happy with that length? No? Measure again, this time using T's elbow to fingertip length, and mark the string. Ask the merchants to try and convince the customer to buy from them. Meanwhile, measure the string using your own elbow to fingertip, and mark it again. Ask the customer to decide who they will buy from and to explain why.
- The children should work in groups, making sure that each group has one taller and one shorter child. Allocate the role of merchants to these two children, and the role of customer to a third child. Ask the remainder to be members of the crowd who will be demanding fair trading and standard measures. Allow time for them to share ideas as to how they will act this out – they might mime rolling out material, or make some simple placards to carry. Ask each group to act out their scenario for the class. Encourage the children to improvise reactions, such as the dismay of the shorter merchant at losing sales. Support less confident children with the dialogue prompt-cards at the back of this Guide.


## Bird meets chimpanzee

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 20)

**Source:** *The Beak Speaks*

**Genre:** Fantasy


**Author:** Jeremy Strong

**Introduction** Jeremy Strong has written many children's books and is a master of humorous story-telling. This extract is from a story written in the first person in the persona of a mynah bird, called Dinah. She is considerably more intelligent than the chimp, Arnold, who lands on her hearth after falling down the chimney. The reader, who is also brighter than the chimp, can laugh along with the story-teller. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.  Provide dictionaries.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. the (mynah) bird 2a. a beak 2b. soot (from the fireplace) 3. chimpanzee 4. *she thinks the chimp is 'an idiot'/stupid because he doesn't know his arm is supposed to bend at the elbow/thinks his arm is broken; accept yes or no if justified well*

**Part 2:** 5. *he is sad, sorry, anxious, worried, upset* 6. *he suddenly cheers up/looks up happily/ keeps asking Dinah if she's sure his arm's all right* 7a. *when they have won/achieved something; done something clever with a good result/passed a test or exam/have a birthday or are getting married* 7b. *it is normal to have two elbows, it is not an achievement* 8. *the state of the world, current affairs, fashion, lifestyle, grooming*

### Further activities

-  Ask the children to act out the scenario in the extract, taking the roles of Dinah and Arnold. Encourage the children to use voices and speech patterns that reflect their character's personality and view of the world. Develop this activity by asking them to improvise a new dialogue, keeping in character. This should focus on a particular event, such as going to the supermarket or cinema, building a house, or eating breakfast. Invite the children to perform their scene to the rest of the class. Can the audience tell which character is which? How? What sort of things does the chimp get wrong? How does the bird seem patient while showing how daft she thinks the chimp is?

- Challenge the children to write a story about Dinah and Arnold. They might write about the events that they think will follow this extract, or write a new story using the same characters.
- Discuss why people keep mynah birds as pets (focusing on their ability to mimic sounds). Ask the children to research the bird and its natural habitat, diet and habits. Ask them to draw a picture of a mynah bird and add bullet points to present the facts they have discovered.

## Get the picture?

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 22)

**Genre:** Poem


**Author:** Philip Waddell

**Introduction** This humorous poem portrays the scenario of a child showing photos to a friend on their return from a holiday. The photos have personal meaning to the child, but are of limited interest to the friend who was not there. Ensure that the children understand the figurative expression in the title, alerting them to the explanation in the pointer. The poem is written in the first person with an ABAB rhyme scheme. Draw the children's attention to the instances where the narrator 'states the obvious', describing something that is clearly visible in the photo. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1a. in photo 1b. not in photo 1c. in photo 2. the seaside/coastal resort 3. yes; the comment 'small world' when they meet a boy who lives there too 4. brother

**Part 2:** 5. the one of the ocean liner 6. the speaker; *he/she is talking a lot about them, very interested as they bring back holiday memories; the friend is falling asleep* 7. Belinda (in a Stetson hat); Dad (stepping on a lady's toes)/all of us (line-dancing); Mum (*reading in the shade/enjoying her book*)

### Further activities

-  Provide a range of 'holiday photos' from the internet or travel brochures, or invite the children to bring some photos from home. Describe the photos in a similar way to the child in the poem, stating facts that are obvious from the picture. Discuss with the children whether the description was boring – did it add anything? Demonstrate describing the event *behind* a photo rather than the photograph itself. Discuss how and why that is more interesting. Give one or two photos to each child and ask them to work in groups of two or three. Ask them to talk with their group about their picture, adding interest so that their listeners want to listen. Explain that, for the purpose of this description the stories behind the photo do not need to be true. Ask the listeners to nominate the description that they enjoyed most. Invite the children to share those descriptions with the whole class.
- Give each child a copy of the photocopiable story cards at the back of this Guide. Ask the children to imagine that these are three photographs that you took in quick succession. Invite individuals to describe what is happening in each 'photo'. Challenge the children to create their own story in three pictures, like a cartoon strip. Prompt with story openings if necessary, such as: a child sets off downhill on her skateboard; a dog chases a squirrel; a man falls asleep in the sun. When the children have finished, ask them to swap their cartoons with a partner. Can the partner tell the story from the pictures? Discuss with the class whether pictures can be interpreted in different ways.

- Challenge the children to draw a picture of one of the photos described in the poem. Ask them to swap their picture with a partner and see if they can each identify the corresponding line in the poem.

## Figurative expressions

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 24)

**Genre:** Reference


**Author:** Celia Warren

**Introduction** Many young children will understand words literally and need to learn that some phrases are figurative expressions, with a meaning that extends beyond the literal definition of the words. The key words in this extract are arranged alphabetically (as in any dictionary), and are central to the idiom that follows. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. it never rains but it pours 2. rein 3. red (in 'red flag' and 'red-letter day') 4. the record 5. rain, rein

**Part 2:** 6. experienced 7a. caught red-handed 7b. a drowned rat 8a. rein, Rome 8b. *because the words are arranged alphabetically*

### Further activities

-  Ask the children to work in groups and choose from the following as the title of a play: 'It Never Rains But It Pours', 'Caught Red-handed' or 'A New World Record'. They should discuss the title and decide what could happen in their play, as well as thinking of and allocating characters. The play must have a beginning and a middle, so that the plot develops throughout their performance towards a satisfying ending. They do not need to write a script, but may write notes to help them in improvising a dialogue when they perform. Encourage the children to use their imagination and, if appropriate, humour – perhaps thinking of a funny world record. The untidiest bedroom? The funniest grandpa? Ask each group to perform their plays to the class. You could ask the groups not to reveal their title, and ask the rest of the class if they can tell which it was at the end.
- Challenge the children to look for more figurative expressions in their reading during the next week, adding them to a class collection, presented either as a wall-poster or a booklet. Try to use the phrases orally (as opportunities arise) to reinforce their purpose and effectiveness.

## Tracy Beaker's nightmare

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 26)

**Genre:** Fiction

**Source:** *The Story of Tracy Beaker*

**Author:** Jacqueline Wilson

**Introduction** *The Story of Tracy Beaker*, first published in 1991, was short-listed for the Smarties prize and has since been adapted for television. It is written in the first person by the eponymous hero – a strong-willed 10 year old living in a children's home, who longs for a 'real' home one day. Many children, whatever their home circumstances, will relate to the way Tracy Beaker's dream reflects aspects of her life, entwined with bizarre scenarios. Use the pointer




in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. creepy music 2. a bad dream; a nightmare 3. she doesn't see what it is 4. doggy-paddle

**Part 2.** 5. fall asleep, laughing hard, going to be in trouble, knocked me over 6. *relieved because she is not drowning; glad to find it was only a dream and she is safe; unhappy because the dream reminded her of bad memories*

### Further activities


- Read the extract and work out which parts of the dream were influenced by events in Tracy's life. Ask the children to think about the 'real-life' events that are reflected in the dream, and consider why they might lead Tracy to dream that she is drowning. Encourage the children to talk about the physical feeling of their own dreams, sharing common experiences such as the sensation of falling, being unable to move, and trying to shout but having no voice.
-  Explain that we remember some dreams for a long time, while others are forgotten as soon as we wake up. Ask the children to work in pairs and tell their partner about any bits of a dream that they remember, allowing them to make up a dream if they prefer. Provide useful joining words and phrases (see back of this Guide) and guide the children in telling a dream as a class – the 'Great Funny Movie of all time'. Using the first person, each child should add one line to the dream, based on their earlier discussions. Prompt the children with joining phrases where necessary, and record their collective dream on the board to enjoy (and perhaps refine) later.
- Ask the children to identify the slang expressions used in the extract (including those from question 5 in the activity book). Discuss why the author chose to use this casual style of language and what effect it has on the text (such as establishing character, mood, feelings or attitude). Can they 'hear' Tracy's tone of voice through the author's words? Invite them to try reading phrases aloud to convey Tracy's feelings through the language, for example 'not much point', 'stupid nightmares' and 'really scary'.
- Explain how and why children sometimes need to live in a children's home or with foster parents, and reassure the children that this is rare and often a temporary arrangement. Encourage them to discuss how they might feel: frightened, bewildered, worried, homesick, resentful or angry. Elicit suggestions as to the sort of people who would make good foster parents to Tracy. Challenge the children to write a letter from Tracy 'to whom it may concern' telling her potential foster parents what she would like to find in them and their home; from abstract qualities such as patience, kindness, permission to stay up late at weekends, to concrete things, such as a bike, a pet, pocket money. The children could write their letters using slang to retain Tracy's voice.

## from Roadways

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 28)

**Genre:** Classic poem


**Author:** John Masefield (1878–1967)

**Introduction** These are the first four verses of a longer poem by John Masefield. Like so many of his poems, it describes his love of the sea, and the way the ocean lures him. It is written in a classic ABCB rhyming scheme, with a flowing rhythm that echoes the streaming sea currents. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.  Provide dictionaries.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. London, Wales 2a. boat/ship sails 2b. *the waves/the movement of the sea*  
3. sun-tanned 4. (any of:) pulling, luring, leading, calling

**Part 2:** 5. green 6. the sea 7. seagulls/seagulls' cries, the wind.

**Further activities**

-  Provide the children with anthologies and demonstrate how to use the index to look up 'Masefield, John'. Encourage them to find more poems by the same poet, especially about the sea. They should make a note of the book's title and poem's page number, for easy retrieval. Alternatively, invite them to look online for further sea poems. In groups, ask the children to read the poems they have found and to discuss which they liked most and why. Create a class collection of Masefield's poems.
- Challenge the children to write their own poem about a place they love. Ask them to begin by listing features of the place, including sounds and smells. Help the children to use their list as a word-bank from which to develop lines of their poem. Children who need extra help with structure could use Masefield's poem as a model, substituting words, for example: *One path leads to Bournemouth / One path leads to Poole / My path leads to autumn / And brand new shoes for school.*
- Create or provide a simple wall map of the British Isles. Write the names of ports and seaside towns on small paper labels. These could include the places below, although you may wish to add more, especially those geographically nearest to your school. Invite the children, in pairs, to pick one or two of these names from a bag. Ask the children to find the location of their place name by looking online or in an atlas. Each pair can then stick their labels onto the map. This may be developed over time with illustrations of specific landmarks and coastal images.

Aberdeen, Aberystwyth, Ballycastle, Bangor, Barmouth, Barrow-in-Furness, Belfast, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Bideford, Blackpool, Bognor Regis, Bournemouth, Bridlington, Brighton, Bude, Cardiff, Cardigan, Clacton-on-Sea, Colwyn Bay, Dover, Eastbourne, Falmouth, Folkestone, Gairloch, Great Yarmouth, Grimsby, Hull, John o'Groats, Larne, Liverpool, Llandudno, Lowestoft, Mallaig, Margate, Montrose, Newquay, Oban, Pembroke, Penzance, Peterhead, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Rhyl, Scarborough, Skegness, South Shields, Southend-on-Sea, Southport, St Austell, St David's, Sunderland, Swansea, Torquay, Weymouth, Whitby.

## Early bicycles

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 30)

**Genre:** Information / explanation

**Author:** Celia Warren


**Introduction**

It is easiest to relate to history when the subject matter lies within our personal experience. Those children who are able or learning to ride a bike may identify with the difficulties and discomforts that early bicycle models presented. This passage highlights significant stages of the bicycle's development, from the addition of pedals to the introduction of pneumatic tyres. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. hobby horse; wood 2. Scotland 3a. (French) velocipede 3b. *it had no springs; would rattle your skeleton; gave you a bumpy ride*

**Part 2: 4.** *it had a big wheel at the front and a small wheel at the back, in similar proportions to the penny and farthing coins; its wheels were steel with solid rubber tyres* **5a.** 1873  
**5b.** pedals/a chain **6.** air.

### Further activities

- Draw a timeline from 1800 to 1900, marking the major advances in bicycle manufacture as described in the extract. Elicit suggestions of other major inventions from the Victorian era, prompting with clues, such as, *Something that rings when someone wants to talk to you* (telephone, 1876). Encourage the children to investigate other great inventions from around the same era, such as antiseptics (1860), the electric light bulb (1878–9) and cars (1885).
-  Explain that in the early days of the bicycle there was less traffic on the road, and there were fewer fast roads. Hold a class discussion on cycling proficiency and safety, listing aspects of safety elicited from the class and prompted by questions, such as visibility of bike (lights) and rider (fluorescent clothing), safety helmets, using hand signals to indicate direction and using cycle lanes. You could also look together at cycling safety websites.
- Ask the children to work in groups and develop short, memorable slogans on cycling safety. Each group should select one slogan to incorporate in a poster, which they should then design and produce, either on paper or on a computer. Encourage each child to contribute, perhaps by producing artwork to cut out and stick onto the poster. One or two children could be responsible for the layout of the final poster.
- Ask the children to summarise the information included in the text. Challenge them to research (either online or in reference books) cycling challenges and races such as BMX (Bicycle Motocross), the keirin and the Tour de France. Ask them to write a new paragraph to add to the text. It should include information about these challenges, such as where they are held, what they involve, their history and the names of recent winners.

## A strange dream

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 32)  
**Source:** *Mary Poppins*

**Genre:** Classic fiction  
**Author:** P. L. Travers

### Introduction

This extract is from the classic children's story, *Mary Poppins*. The children may already be familiar with the story, perhaps through the film adaptation. The story describes the magical effect that Mary Poppins, the new nanny, has on the lives of the Banks children. The paragraph which follows this extract (and closes the chapter from which the passage is taken) appears below for use in a follow-up activity. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

### Answers

**Part 1:** 1. morning; they are eating breakfast 2. (there is a dash at the end of Jane's speech and) Michael finishes off her sentence 3. boiling milk 4. buttered toast

**Part 2:** 5. she changes the subject to talk about breakfast; she keeps repeating Jane's question without answering 6. quiet and orderly (and knows what is, and what isn't) 7. yes; she decides she must have been dreaming.

### Further activities

-  Discuss the ending of the passage. Do the children think that Jane believes Mary Poppins? Does the author intend her readers to believe Mary Poppins? Ask the children

to support their opinions with reference to clues in the text. Explain that you are going to read to them the paragraph that follows this extract so that they will know what happens next. Read the passage below, reminding the children that it follows on from Jane's questions to Mary Poppins.

But Michael was staring, open-mouthed, at Mary Poppins, who was now making toast at the fire.

'Jane,' he said in a shrill whisper, 'Jane, look!' He pointed, and Jane, too, saw what he was looking at.

Round her waist Mary Poppins was wearing a belt made of golden scaly snake-skin, and on it was written in curving, snaking writing:

'A Present From the Zoo.'

- Invite the children to demonstrate how loud a 'shrill whisper' is, explaining that both Mary Poppins and Jane would probably be able to hear it. Discuss the implications of the evidence that Michael spotted. Based on the passage, and the tone of conversation and actions, do the children think Mary Poppins was teasing Jane and Michael with her denials, or simply lying? Did she know they would work out that there was magic going on? Encourage the children to express their thoughts and to listen to each other, building on others' opinions to develop a consensus as to the author's intentions.
- Challenge the children to work with a partner to think up a new adventure that Jane and Michael could go on with Mary Poppins. Encourage them to come up with new ideas, rather than being influenced by their knowledge of the story. Ask them to study the extract and discern what punctuation to use when writing dialogue. Highlight the use and position of commas, full stops, question marks and speech marks for younger children. This activity could be spread across more than one session, so that the children could write a paragraph of their new story.
- Hold a short discussion about zoos and their gift shops. What other 'presents from the zoo' might Mary Poppins have received? Compile a list including items such as a pencil, toy animal, umbrella and poster. Discuss how any of these items might be decorated to show that they were bought at the zoo. Ask the children to draw their own choice of 'A present from the zoo', incorporating this caption. Invite them to write a few lines explaining who the present is for (themselves or a friend or relation) and why they chose it.

## Riddles of the seashore

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 34)

**Genre:** Poem


**Author:** Catherine Benson

**Introduction** Each verse in this poem full of imagery is a riddle in itself. Close reading is needed to pick up on the clues and discover what each verse describes. All are about the sea, the shore and the creatures we find there. For example, in verse 6, the 'seagull's poem ... rubbed out by the waves' is a metaphor that describes the bird's footprints, or tracks, in the sand that are washed away by the incoming tide. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. (starfish should be coloured in) 2a. under seaweed 2b. (new) 'armour'  
3a. seaweed 3b. sea water/salty water

**Part 2:** 4. 'In a bowl' 5a. jellyfish 5b. verse four/the 4th verse 6. the sea/ocean waves  
7. yes/no; 'secret sea-songs'/'music' (of the sea)/the sound of the sea/the sound of waves.

### Further activities

- Discuss the title of the poem. Explain that 'riddles' are puzzles with clues in the words to help you guess the answer. Challenge the children to write their own riddle to describe a sandcastle, providing clues to help someone guess what they are describing. They should write it in two lines, like the verses in the poem.
-  Put the children into nine small groups or pairs. To eight of the groups, allocate a verse from the poem. They should each learn their verse by heart and practise performing it in unison. The ninth group should create a sound-effect verse. They can write this down and practise performing it together. For example, it might involve *swish* and *swoosh* sounds as the waves roll ashore, alternating with *shlup*, *shwup* and *sssssss* sounds, as the waves retreat. Bring the class together, arranging the groups left-to-right in verse order to perform the whole poem. Invite the sound-effect group to perform either at the beginning and end of the poem, or in between verses. Remember to announce the title and author of the poem at the beginning. If possible, arrange for the class to perform their poem to another class or in an assembly.
- Challenge the children, in groups of four or five, to devise a board game inspired by the poem. They will need to draw a pathway of squares with a 'start' and 'finish', including seashore decorations. They will also need to make or find playing pieces to reflect seaside objects or creatures, such as shells of different shapes. Ask the children to add forfeits and bonuses to some of the squares, which should be related to the poem. These could include, *Your jellyfish is washed back to sea, move forward two squares* or *You are nipped by a crab, miss a turn*. Allow the children to use their imagination to go beyond the poem, such as, *A sea-breeze carries you back two squares*. In a separate session, provide an opportunity for the children to play the games. Discuss the success of their games, and resolve any flaws.

## Fossil hunting

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 36)

**Genre:** Information / explanation


**Source:** National History Museum website

**Introduction** Finding and examining fossils is an engaging way to approach the concept of pre-history and the development of the universe. This extract introduces fossils, how they are formed, what they represent and where they can be found. Remind the children to take care when looking for fossils, drawing their attention to the 'Be safe!' icon. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. 'Where can you find fossils?' 2. (any two of:) *coast, beaches, quarries, farmland, garden, sedimentary rocks* 3. extinct 4a. the sea 4b. squid/octopus

**Part 2:** 5. (check that the ammonite is correctly labelled) 6. some were tiny; some were as big as a man 7. millions.

### Further activities

-  Challenge the children to write an acrostic poem using the letters 'F-O-S-S-I-L' at the beginning of each respective line. Make this a whole-class, shared writing activity.



Prompt with opening words if necessary. Encourage the children to build on one another's suggestions, listening to contributions and developing these into phrases or a narrative poem. Read the poem aloud together.

- Provide materials for making and using printing blocks, such as thick paint or ink, rollers or brushes, sponge, cardboard, glue, scissors and paper. Ask the children to find pictures of fossils (or look at real fossils if possible), and create printing blocks based on these shapes. They may find it easiest to cut out the shapes and glue them to cardboard, before coating them in a layer of paint or ink. Finally, help them to print their fossil designs onto paper and label them appropriately.


## Camping with Toad

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 38)

**Source:** *The Wind in the Willows*



**Genre:** Classic fiction

**Author:** Kenneth Grahame

**Introduction** This short extract from *The Wind in the Willows* is a more challenging passage. Draw the children's attention to the help provided in the glossary. The italicised stresses in the dialogue will also help them to understand the tone of the conversation between Mole and Rat. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before you read it aloud.  Provide dictionaries.

**Answers** **Part 1:** 1. evening/late evening 2. tired/sleepy but happy or *mixed feelings* 3. eat grass 4. 'talked big' 5. *the word 'pathetically'; he thinks about his river 'all the time'* 6. Mole squeezes Rat's paw/holds his hand

**Part 2:** 7. that he is not impressed by Rat's river 8a. true 8b. false 8c. true 8d. true.

- Further activities**
-  When the children have completed the comprehension activity, return to the final question and discuss the textual evidence on which they based their answers. Ask open questions, such as, *How do we know it is a mainly clear night? What tells us that Rat is responsible and trustworthy?* Elicit more detailed observations on the content of the passage. Ask, for example, *What is the moon doing that makes it sound like a person? What do the children think about the characters and their relationships with each other?*
  -  Ask the children, in groups of two and three, to share experiences of a time they have felt homesick. Alternatively, they could discuss the things they would miss about home if they were away for a long time. Explain to the class that almost everybody will feel homesick at some time in their life. Suggest that, even so, it is good to explore new places and experiences. Demonstrate how we often have mixed feelings first; for example, in the extract, the animals arrive 'tired and happy' – but soon Ratty is feeling homesick. Give an example of your own, such as, *I loved going abroad, but I longed for a proper cup of tea*, or *I missed my cat, but it was so exciting to see somewhere new*. Challenge individuals to construct a similar sentence, including a 'but' clause, and drawing on their earlier discussions.
  - Explain that Ratty misses the river because he is a water rat. Elicit suggestions of other creatures whose homes are on and around rivers, including mammals, amphibians, fish and water birds. Find a copy of the poem 'Ducks' Ditty', from *The Wind in the Willows*. Read it with the children and explain that, in the story, it is Rat who has written this poem. Challenge the children to write about their home and what they love about it.