② First steps

Read the text together and then encourage the children to discuss the following questions.

1 What does this extract aim to teach the reader?
It aims to teach the reader how to find and track dragons. The children may focus on a particular section of the extract (e.g. **Essential Equipment**). In this case, prompt them to think about the extract as a whole and to consider the main aim of the text.

2 What signs on the ground tell you that dragons are close by?
Footprints and tail swishing marks; burned and scorched undergrowth.

3 What makes being a dragonologist dangerous?
You can be bitten; burned; slashed by claws; killed by constriction; lashed by tails; attacked with venom; hypnotised. Some children may offer other suggestions not taken from the text. In this case, prompt them to draw their answer from the section **Dangers in the Field**.

③ Explore

- Discuss the fact that this text is very unusual: it is fiction because it is about a fictional creature, but it includes many features of non-fiction texts. Ask the children to point out the non-fiction features in the text. Then ask them what features they would expect to find in fiction texts (e.g. first-person or third-person narration; descriptive language; made-up characters and events; dialogue). You could use this as an opportunity to discuss other texts that display elements of both fiction and non-fiction (e.g. historical and science fiction).

- Although the dragons in *Dragonology* are mythical, there are some real-life creatures that are called dragons, such as the bearded dragon and the Komodo dragon. Ask the children to research one or more of these real-life dragons and to find out what they have in common with the mythical dragons discussed in the text. After they have completed their research, encourage them to debate whether these 'dragons' are worthy of their name!

- The text is called *Dragonology*, which means 'the study of dragons'. Many other subjects and types of work are described using names that end with the suffix '–ology'. The children could do online research to find out what the study of their favourite subject is called (e.g. if they like finding out about dogs, they might study cynology, the study of dogs). You could challenge them to think of three topics or a subheading that a how-to guide on that subject might include.

④ Skills focus   See pages 32 to 33

Use the information from the **Skills guide** and the relevant **Skills graphic** to introduce the skill of retrieval.

1 Model the skill using the **Unit 1 Modelling slides** and the **Modelling retrieval** guidance on page 32.

2 The children can then attempt the **Retrieval** questions on page 36.

3 Finally, the **Mix it up!** questions on page 37 offer practice in a range of comprehension skills.

Answers and marking guidance for all questions are included on pages 32 to 33.

⑤ Where next?

- **Speaking and listening task:** Ask the children to work in small groups to create a presentation or a short video about how to become a dragonologist. They should use information from the text for their content, as well as their own ideas. They could even use apps such as AR Dragon to place dragons in the classroom or playground in their videos.

- **Writing task:** The children could work in pairs, or individually, to design their own dragon. They could write a field report describing their dragon's feeding habits, behaviour and appearance, and add labelled diagrams to enhance their reports.

Reading list

Fiction
- ▶ *The Book of Dragons* by E. Nesbit
- ▶ *Dragon Rider* by Cornelia Funke
- ▶ *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* by J.K. Rowling
- ▶ *How to Train Your Dragon* by Cressida Cowell (Linked text: **Unit 2**)
- ▶ *An Illustrated Treasury of Scottish Mythical Creatures* by Theresa Breslin

Class reads
- ▶ *Darwin's Dragons* by Lindsay Galvin

Non-fiction
- ▶ *The Atlas of Monsters* by Sandra Lawrence
- ▶ *Dracopedia Field Guide* by William O'Connor
- ▶ *Joan Procter, Dragon Doctor* by Patrica Valdez
- ▶ *Mythologica* by Steve Kershaw

Websites
- ▶ The BBC Earth website has an interesting page about 10 real-life animals that are dragons.