



EXPLORE

with Biff, Chip and Kipper

Oxford Level 8

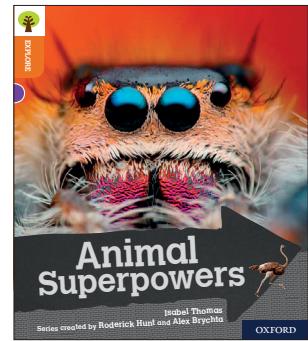
Animal Superpowers

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Teaching notes written by Teresa Heapy.

Text type: non-chronological report

Topic: how animals are adapted to their environments



Synopsis

This book looks at animals that can do amazing things. Including leafcutter ants who can carry objects 50 times heavier than themselves, ostriches who can run at 72 kilometres per hour, sailfish who can swim 10 metres per second, and okapi whose tongues are 45 centimetres long. It also looks at our own superpower – our amazing brains!

There is a topic-linked fiction book to partner this title, which is called *At the Monster Games*.

Group/Guided reading

Introducing the book

- (*Predicting*) Look at the cover together and read the title. Ask the children to talk about any animals they think might have superpowers, and what their superpowers might be. Encourage them to use the cover photo as a starting point.
- (*Predicting*) Turn to p3 and read the contents list together. Ask: *What animal do you think will have super greed? What about the super swinger and the super brain?*
- (*Questioning*) After reading the contents list, ask the children to think of some questions that they would like to find answers to in the book. Write some of the children’s questions down to return to later.
- Now read p4–5 together. Talk together about why animals need to adapt in order to survive. Ask: *Why would an animal need to lick its eyeballs or hear with its feet?*

Vocabulary check

- As they read, encourage the children to sound out and blend new words, for example *i-m-p-r-e-ss-i-v-e, a-b-i-l-i-t-i-e-s*.
- This book includes some more challenging words that do not conform to phonics teaching, as well as subject-specific vocabulary that may be unfamiliar to children. Explain to the children that these words may be challenging but they are important for the topic. Read these words for the children if necessary, to help build familiarity before they read the book.

super rhinoceros penguin forwards tongue islands

Reading the book

- Ask the children to read the book aloud and help where necessary. Praise and encourage them as they read. Where necessary, encourage children to re-read sentences to focus on meaning.
- Read p6–7 together, making sure the children understand the comparative chart showing how much the human, the rhinoceros beetle and the leafcutter ant can lift.
- After reading p12–13, ask: *Who would win a marathon out of an ostrich and a lion? Why?* If necessary, draw children’s attention back to the text at the bottom of p12 that explains that a lion would get tired more quickly.
- (*Questioning / Summarizing*) On p16–17, ask the children to work in pairs and ask each other questions about the sailfish, taking it in turns to answer questions. If they end up with extra questions which go beyond the scope of the book, ask the children to note them down to explore later.
- On p22, read ‘okapi’ together. Tell the children the name is pronounced ‘oa-carp-ee’.
- Read p24 and ask the children to imagine what it would be like to have 12,000 meals a day. Ask: *Why do you think a caterpillar needs to eat so much food so quickly?*
- (*Summarizing*) On p28, point to each of the pictures in turn and ask the children to explain how each of the animals’ superpowers helps them to survive.

Returning to the book

- (*Summarizing*) Talk to the children about the amazing animals in the book. Ask: *Which animal was your favourite? Why?*
- Ask: *If you could choose to have any of the superpowers mentioned in the book, which one would you choose and why?*
- (*Summarizing*) Remind the children that one of the animals in the book has a special way of hearing. Ask: *What animal is it and how does its superpower help it to survive?* If necessary, ask the children to re-read p20–21 to find the answer.
- Return to the list of questions you wrote down that the children said they would like to find answers to. Move through the list, talking through any questions that the book answered. Find an opportunity for children to do some research to find answers to the questions that the book didn’t answer.
- (*Clarifying*) Tell the children that the Glossary explains the meanings of certain words. These words appear in bold in the book. Turn to p30 and look at the Glossary together. Tell them to look out for these words when they read the book independently and encourage them to use the Glossary when they read the book again.
- (*Clarifying*) Draw children’s attention to the Index on p30. Tell children that an Index is an alphabetical list of some of the key words that can be found in the book, with references to the pages they appear on. Choose an example from the book’s Index and tell the children that you want to find out more about it. Ask the children to use the Index to help you turn to a page that will tell you more about it.

Independent reading

- Introduce the book as in the Introducing the book section above.
- Encourage the children to read the book as independently as possible. Remember to give them lots of encouragement and praise.
- As they read, encourage the children to sound out and blend new words, for example *c-a-t-a-p-ul-t-s, j-oi-n-t-s*.
- This book also contains a number of more challenging words, which children may need

more support with at this stage, but which enrich the topic. You can look together at the inside front cover for a list of challenging words. Read them together and talk about what each word means.

- Remind the children to use the pictures to support them when reading the text.
- For suggestions of questions to ask the children after they have read the book to check comprehension, please refer to the Look Back, Explorers page in the book.

Speaking, listening and drama activities

- Organize the children into small groups and ask them to choose one animal from the book.
- Ask the children to prepare a short presentation about their chosen animal to share with the rest of the class.
- Prompt the children to give a description of the animal; explain what its superpower is – comparing it with a human, if appropriate; explain how its superpower helps it to survive and share why they think it's amazing.
- When they are ready, ask groups to share their presentations with the rest of the class. Remind them to talk with enthusiasm and share facts to engage their audience.
- Encourage the rest of the class to answer questions about the presentation.

Writing activities

- Ask the children to choose an animal from the book and to write a few sentences about what they would do if they had their chosen animal's superpower.
- You could ask children to create a short comic strip about a character with the superpower.
- Prompt the children to rehearse what they want to write aloud with a partner before writing anything down.
- Encourage the children to use their phonic knowledge to spell new or unfamiliar words and to look back through the book for support with spelling.
- Remind the children to re-read what they have written to check it makes sense.

Cross-curricular activity

Science

- Support the children to use books or child-friendly sites on the Internet to find out more about up to four of the animals in the book. Make sure they include details of where the animal lives, what it eats, and whether it is a predator or prey. Ask them to create a fact file for each animal using the findings from their research.



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Curriculum links and assessment

Links to Oxford Reading Criterion Scale

- Can apply phonic skills and knowledge to recognize an increasing number of complex words. (READ) (ORCS Standard 3, 3)
- Can locate some specific information, e.g. key events, characters' names or key information in a non-fiction text. (R) (ORCS Standard 3, 6)
- Can provide simple explanations about events or information, e.g. why a character acted in a particular way. (D) (ORCS Standard 3, 9)
- Is beginning to use contents and index pages to locate information in non-fiction texts. (A/R) (ORCS Standard 3, 11)
- Can apply their phonic knowledge automatically enabling an increasing capacity to attend to meaning rather than decoding. (READ) (ORCS Standard 3, 12)

ENGLAND The National Curriculum in England: English Programme of Study, Year 2

	National Curriculum objectives	Book-related assessment pointers
Spoken language	ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge (SpokLang.2)	Check the children can work together in pairs to ask each other questions about the sailfish, to clarify their understanding of what they have read.
	participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates (SpokLang.9) gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s) (SpokLang.10)	Check the children use intonation and enthusiasm to engage their audience when sharing their presentations about a chosen animal.
Reading: Word reading	continue to apply phonic knowledge and skills as the route to decode words until automatic decoding has become embedded and reading is fluent (Y2 ReadWord.1)	Check the children use their phonic knowledge to read any new or unfamiliar words such as 'skyscraper', 'froghopper' and 'marathon'.
Reading: Comprehension	drawing on what they already know or on background information and vocabulary provided by the teacher (Y2 ReadComp.2i)	Check the children share which animal is their favourite and use the information given in the book, as well as existing knowledge to explain why.
Writing: Composition	planning or saying out loud what they are going to write about (Y2 WritComp.2i)	Check the children plan their sentences or comic strips aloud before writing anything down.

SCOTLAND Curriculum for Excellence: Literacy and English experiences and outcomes, First Level

	Experiences and outcomes	Book-related assessment pointers
Listening and talking	I can show my understanding of what I listen to or watch by responding to and asking different kinds of questions. (LIT 1-07a)	Check the children can work together in pairs to ask each other questions about the sailfish, to clarify their understanding of what they have read.
	I can select ideas and relevant information, organise these in a logical sequence and use words which will be interesting and/or useful for others. (LIT 1-06a) I am exploring how pace, gesture, expression, emphasis and choice of words are used to engage others, and I can use what I learn. (ENG 1-03a)	Check the children use intonation and enthusiasm to engage their audience when sharing their presentations about a chosen animal.
Reading	I can use my knowledge of sight vocabulary, phonics, context clues, punctuation and grammar to read with understanding and expression. (ENG 1-12a)	Check the children use their phonic knowledge to read any new or unfamiliar words such as 'skyscraper', 'froghopper' and 'marathon'.
	I can share my thoughts about structure, characters and/or setting, recognise the writer's message and relate it to my own experiences, and comment on the effective choice of words and other features. (ENG 1-19a)	Check the children share which animal is their favourite and use the information given in the book, as well as existing knowledge to explain why.
Writing	Throughout the writing process, I can check that my writing makes sense. (LIT 1-23a)	Check the children re-read what they have written to check it makes sense.

WALES Curriculum for Wales: Foundation Phase Framework, Year 2

	Framework objectives	Book-related assessment pointers
Oracy	show understanding of what they have heard by asking relevant questions to find out specific information (Y2_OracList.8)	Check the children can work together in pairs to ask each other questions about the sailfish, to clarify their understanding of what they have read.
	use a growing range of appropriate vocabulary in play and structured activities and formal situations, using variety in tone to add interest (Y2_OracSpea.5) speak clearly to a range of audiences (Y2_OracSpea.6)	Check the children use intonation and enthusiasm to engage their audience when sharing their presentations about a chosen animal.
Reading	apply the following reading strategies with increasing frequency to a range of familiar and unfamiliar texts: - phonic strategies (Y2_ReadStrat.4i) confidently use all phonemes and their corresponding graphemes when blending and segmenting polysyllabic words (Y2_ReadStrat.3)	Check the children use their phonic knowledge to read any new or unfamiliar words such as 'skyscraper', 'froghopper' and 'marathon'.
	show understanding and express opinions about language, information and events in texts (Y2_ReadResp.2) draw upon relevant personal experience and prior knowledge to support understanding of texts (Y2_ReadComp.4)	Check the children share which animal is their favourite and use the information given in the book, as well as existing knowledge to explain why.
Writing	use talk to plan writing (Y2_WritMean.4)	Check the children plan their sentences or comic strips aloud before writing anything down.

NORTHERN IRELAND Levels of Progression in Communication across the curriculum: Primary
Levels 1/2

	Levels of progression	Book-related assessment pointers
Talking and listening	ask and answer questions to develop understanding (L2_com_talk.2ii)	Check the children can work together in pairs to ask each other questions about the sailfish, to clarify their understanding of what they have read.
Reading	use a range of reading strategies (L2_com_read.2)	Check the children use their phonic knowledge to read any new or unfamiliar words such as 'skyscraper', 'froghopper' and 'marathon'.
	talk about what they read and answer questions (L1_com_read.5)	Check the children share which animal is their favourite and use the information given in the book, as well as existing knowledge to explain why.
Writing	talk about what they are going to write and how they will present their writing (L2_com_write.1i)	Check the children plan their sentences or comic strips aloud before writing anything down.

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL Primary English Curriculum Framework: Level 2

	Learning objectives	Book-related assessment pointers
Speaking and listening	Listen carefully and respond appropriately, asking questions of others. (2SL7)	Check the children can work together in pairs to ask each other questions about the sailfish, to clarify their understanding of what they have read.
	Articulate clearly so that others can hear. (2SL3) Vary talk and expression to gain and hold the listener's attention. (2SL4)	Check the children use intonation and enthusiasm to engage their audience when sharing their presentations about a chosen animal.
Reading	Use phonics as the main method of tackling unfamiliar words. (2R02)	Check the children use their phonic knowledge to read any new or unfamiliar words such as 'skyscraper', 'froghopper' and 'marathon'.
	Find factual information from different formats, e.g. charts, labelled diagrams. (2Rx4)	Check the children share which animal is their favourite and use the information given in the book, as well as existing knowledge to explain why.
Writing	Plan writing through discussion or by speaking aloud. (2W06)	Check the children plan their sentences or comic strips aloud before writing anything down.