



Oxford Level 7

The Lightning Key

Written by Paul Shipton and illustrated by Nick Schon, based on the original characters created by Roderick Hunt and Alex Brychta.
Teaching notes written by Gill Howell.

Text type: fiction

Topic: weather and extreme weather

Synopsis

Dad tells the children they can't fly their kite because a storm is coming, but then the magic key begins to glow and they are transported back in time. They meet a scientist (based on Benjamin Franklin) who is conducting an experiment to prove that lightning is electricity – he's flying a kite in a storm!

There is a topic-linked non-fiction book to partner this title, which is called *Safe in a Storm*.

Group/Guided reading

Introducing the story

- ➔ *(Predicting)* Look at the front cover together and read the title. Say: *I wonder what the lightning key is?* Encourage the children to make predictions.
- ➔ Ask: *Have you ever seen a lightning storm?* Encourage the children to describe the storm they saw.
- ➔ Ask: *Do you know what causes lightning? Do you think it's safe to go outside during a lightning storm? Why?*
- ➔ *(Predicting)* Read the blurb together. Ask the children to make predictions about who the children might find outside in a storm in the story. Ask: *Why do you think anyone would want to be outside in a storm?*

Vocabulary check

- ➔ As they read, encourage the children to sound out and blend new words, for example *r-ai-n-c-o-a-t-s*, *p-r-o-b-l-e-m*.
- ➔ This story 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 story. Read these words for the children if necessary, to help build familiarity before they read the story.

dangerous electricity young minutes scientist

Reading the story

- ➔ Ask the children to read the story aloud and help where necessary. Praise and encourage them as they read. Where necessary, encourage the children to re-read sentences to focus on meaning.
- ➔ On p4, ask: *How do you think the children feel when Dad says they can't fly their kite?*
- ➔ Point to the ellipsis on p8. Ask: *Why has an ellipsis been used?* If necessary, explain that the ellipsis shows where a pause should be added. Encourage the children to read the text with appropriate intonation.
- ➔ On p9, ask the children to look at the picture carefully. Ask: *Has the young man picked up something he shouldn't have?* Ask the children to share what it is and, if necessary, point out the key in the ball of string.
- ➔ *(Predicting)* After reading p12, say: *I wonder how they will get their key back.* Encourage the children to make predictions.
- ➔ After reading p19, ask: *Why are the children concerned that Will's dad is flying a kite?*
- ➔ After reading p25, ask: *What has happened to the key? Why do you think it was blackened?*
- ➔ After reading p26, ask: *How do you think Kipper feels when he thinks the magic key is broken?*

Returning to the story

- ➔ *(Questioning)* Ask: *If you went back in time to the same place as Biff, Chip and Kipper, what questions would you ask the scientist about his experiment?*
- ➔ *(Clarifying)* Re-read p11 and ask: *Why does the man have to get back to his father before the storm arrives?*
- ➔ Re-read p12 together and ask: *How do you think the children feel when they realize they have lost their key?*
- ➔ *(Clarifying)* Ask: *What do you think the children were thinking when Dad told them about the famous scientist? Have you ever heard of the famous scientist the story is based on?* Explain to the children that the scientist's name was Benjamin Franklin and that he helped to discover electricity.
- ➔ *(Summarizing)* Ask the children to look at the story map on p30 and describe what is happening in each picture. Then ask them to retell the story to a partner in their own words.

Independent reading

- ➔ Introduce the story as in the Introducing the story section above.
- ➔ Encourage the children to read the story 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 *f-ore-c-a-s-t, l-igh-t-n-i-ng*.
- ➔ This story also contains a number of more challenging words, which children may need more support with at this stage, but which enrich the story. 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 story 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. Ask one child in each group to take on the role of either Biff, Chip or Kipper and to sit in the hot seat.
- ➔ Ask the other children to ask them questions about their adventure. Encourage them to ask questions to find out what Biff, Chip and Kipper thought and felt at different points in the story.
- ➔ Provide opportunities for different children to sit in the hot seat and remind the children to stay in character.

Writing activities

- ➔ Ask the children to write three short paragraphs to explain the experiment that the scientist carried out in the story.
- ➔ Provide them with paragraph headings, i.e. Equipment (what was needed), Method (what was done), Results (what happened).
- ➔ Encourage the children to rehearse aloud what they want to write before writing anything down. Prompt them to re-read what they have written to check it makes sense.

Cross-curricular activity

Science/History

- ➔ Encourage the children to use books and child-friendly sites on the Internet to find out about the life and work of Benjamin Franklin.

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The Lightning Key

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 make predictions about a text using a range of clues, e.g. experience of books written by the same author, experience of books already read on a similar theme, or book title, cover and blurb. (D) (ORCS Standard 3, 7)
- Can provide simple explanations about events or information, e.g. why a character acted in a particular way. (D) (ORCS Standard 3, 9)

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 ask and answer questions in the hot seat activity to find out more about what the characters thought and felt at various points in the story.
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 decode new and unfamiliar words.
Reading: Comprehension	making inferences on the basis of what is being said and done (Y2 ReadComp.2iii)	Check the children are able to infer why Biff, Chip and Kipper are concerned about Will's dad flying a kite in a storm.
	predicting what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far (Y2 ReadComp.2v)	Check the children make predictions about how Biff, Chip and Kipper will get the magic key back.
Writing: Composition	writing for different purposes (Y2 WritComp.1iv)	Check the children organize the details of the experiment under the headings: Equipment, Method, Results.

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 ask and answer questions in the hot seat activity to find out more about what the characters thought and felt at various points in the story.
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 decode new and unfamiliar words.
	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 are able to infer why Biff, Chip and Kipper are concerned about Will's dad flying a kite in a storm. Check the children make predictions about how Biff, Chip and Kipper will get the magic key back.
Writing	By considering the type of text I am creating, I can select ideas and relevant information, organise these in a logical sequence and use words which will be interesting and/or useful to others. (LIT 1-26a)	Check the children organize the details of the experiment under the headings: Equipment, Method, Results.

WALES Curriculum for Wales: Foundation Phase Framework, Year 2

	Framework objectives	Book-related assessment pointers
Oracy	prepare and ask a variety of questions, e.g. 'Who?', 'What?', 'Why?', 'When?' and 'How?', for a variety of purposes and to clarify understanding (Y2_OracSpea.9)	Check the children ask and answer questions in the hot seat activity to find out more about what the characters thought and felt at various points in the story.
Reading	apply the following reading strategies with increasing frequency to a range of familiar and unfamiliar texts: - phonic strategies (Y2_ReadStrat.4i)	Check the children use their phonic knowledge to decode new and unfamiliar words.
	show understanding and express opinions about language, information and events in texts (Y2_ReadResp.2)	Check the children are able to infer why Biff, Chip and Kipper are concerned about Will's dad flying a kite in a storm.
	refine and revise predictions in fiction and non-fiction texts (Y2_ReadComp.5)	Check the children make predictions about how Biff, Chip and Kipper will get the magic key back.
Writing	follow a structure in their writing with support, e.g. reports, lists (Y2_WritStru.1)	Check the children organize the details of the experiment under the headings: Equipment, Method, Results.

NORTHERN IRELAND Levels of Progression in Communication across the curriculum: Primary Level 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 ask and answer questions in the hot seat activity to find out more about what the characters thought and felt at various points in the story.
Reading	use a range of reading strategies (L2_com_read.2)	Check the children use their phonic knowledge to decode new and unfamiliar words.
	talk about what they read and answer questions (L1_com_read.5)	Check the children are able to infer why Biff, Chip and Kipper are concerned about Will's dad flying a kite in a storm.
	express opinions and make predictions (L2_com_read.5ii)	Check the children make predictions about how Biff, Chip and Kipper will get the magic key back.
Writing	write using a given form (L2_com_write.3)	Check the children organize the details of the experiment under the headings: Equipment, Method, Results.

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 ask and answer questions in the hot seat activity to find out more about what the characters thought and felt at various points in the story.
Reading	Use phonics as the main method of tackling unfamiliar words. (2R02)	Check the children use their phonic knowledge to decode new and unfamiliar words.
	Make simple inferences from the words on the page, e.g. about feelings. (2Ri3)	Check the children are able to infer why Biff, Chip and Kipper are concerned about Will's dad flying a kite in a storm.
	Predict story endings. (2Ri1)	Check the children make predictions about how Biff, Chip and Kipper will get the magic key back.
Writing	Write instructions and recount events and experiences. (2Wa6)	Check the children organize the details of the experiment under the headings: Equipment, Method, Results.