



# A Rare Pair of Bears

**C** = Language comprehension    *R, AF* = QCA reading assessment focus  
**W** = Word recognition            *W, AF* = QCA writing assessment focus

## Focus phonics:

Focus phonics in this book: /air/ as in 'fair' (made by air, are, ear, ere, a)

Phonemes revisited include: /ow/ as in 'pounds' (made by ow, ou); /ur/ as in 'worth' (made by ir, or, er)

## Group or guided reading

### Introducing the book

- W** Can the children read the title? Which words can they hear with the phoneme /air/? (*Rare, Pair, Bears*) Read the title: *A R-are P-air o-f B-ear-s*.
- C** (*Prediction*) Encourage the children to use prediction by looking at the cover picture and the blurb. Ask: *Why might the bears be rare?*
- W** Turn to pages 1–3. Remind the children to use their phonic knowledge to read the text. Which letter patterns representing the long vowel phoneme /air/ can they identify? (*air, are, ear, ere*) Point out that the *a* in *Mary* is a very uncommon representation of /air/ (also in *vary* and *wary*).
- Look through the book, talking about what happens on each page. Use some of the high frequency words as you discuss the story.

### Strategy check

Remind the children to sound out words carefully, remembering that two letters can represent one sound, particularly one vowel sound, and also that the same letters can often be pronounced in more than one way. If children can't sound out a word, what other strategies can they use?

### Independent reading

- Sample the children's reading as they read the story aloud. Praise and encourage them while they read, and prompt as necessary.

- C** (Questioning) Ask: *Why might the woman in the red coat want to steal Gran's bears?*

**Assessment** Check that children:

- (R, AF1) use phonic knowledge to sound out and blend the phonemes in words (see chart on page 3)
- (R, AF2) use comprehension skills to work out what is happening
- (R, AF1) make a note of any difficulties the children encounter and of strategies they use to solve problems.

### **Returning to the text**

- C** (Questioning) Ask: *Was it good that Gran sold the bears?*

**Assessment** (R, AF3) Can the children evaluate possible answers to the question and decide on their own?

## **Group and independent reading activities**

**Objective** Read and spell less common graphemes including trigraphs (5.4).

- W** **You will need:** cards showing the words: *rare, spare, share, scare; pair, chair, stair, repair; bear, wear, tear, pear;* as well as cards with the graphemes: *air, ear, are.*

- Put the children into teams, and give each team a grapheme card.
- Shuffle the cards in your hands, so the children can't see them. Look at the top word and say it, together with a sentence to clarify homophones.
- Look for the first child to put up their hand and claim the word for their team. If they are right, give them the word and one point. If they are wrong, deduct a point.

**Assessment** (R, AF1) Can the children think about the spelling when they hear the word?

**Objective** Know how to tackle unfamiliar words that are not completely decodable (5.3).

- W** Ask the children to look through the book and jot down all words with *o*, either on its own or as part of a spelling pattern (for example *or, ough*). Give children different pages to search through.

- Let the children do a 'word sort' of all the words, writing them according to how the o is pronounced on a big sheet of paper.
- Discuss the 'oddities' like *money, woman, over, worth*. Talk about strategies for reading and pronouncing the words in context.

**Assessment** (*R, AF1*) Can the children explain which strategies they use when they read a tricky word?

**Objective** Read independently and with increasing fluency (5.1).

- W** Model reading the first three pages of the book and ask the children for feedback on your reading. Are they aware of the way you:
- read with no hesitation between words;
  - use expression to make your reading aloud interesting;
  - make your voice reflect the punctuation by pausing at full stops or putting an emphasis on the first word in the speech marks?
- Ask the children to choose a double page spread from the book and to practise reading it aloud.
  - Let the children read to response partners. The child who read should first say what they thought they did successfully and what they need to improve; then the response partner should do the same.

**Assessment** (*R, AF1*) Can the children self-assess their reading accurately and give useful feedback?

## Speaking, listening and drama activities

**Objective** Listen to each other's views and preferences (3.3).

- G** (*Questioning*) Do a hot-seating drama activity with Gran in the hot seat.
- Ask children to reread the book, thinking of questions to ask Gran. You could help them with some of the questions to begin with.
  - During the question and answer session, encourage discussion rather than simply answering the questions.

**Assessment** (*R, AF5*) Can the children think of questions and then listen politely to each others' views?

## Writing activities

**Objective** Use planning to establish clear sections for writing (10.1).

- **C** (*Summarizing*) Ask the children to write a character report on Gran, based on the events in the book.
  - They should begin by mind-mapping to establish the headings for their report.

**Assessment** (*W, AF3*) Can the children summarize their understanding of Gran in a well-planned report?