



# Mum's Birthday Surprise

**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: /ur/ as in 'birthday' (made by er, ir, ur, ear, or)

Phonemes revisited include: /ee/ as in 'need' (made by ee, ea, y); /oo/ as in 'could'; /ai/ as in 'stay' (made by ay, ai, a-e)

## Group or guided reading

### Introducing the book

- W** Can the children read the title? Help the children identify the words with the phoneme /ur/ (*Birthday Surprise*). Read the title: *Mum's B-ir-th-d-ay S-ur-p-r-i-s-e*.
- C** (*Prediction*) Encourage the children to use prediction by looking at the cover picture and the blurb. Can they predict what Mum's surprise might be?
- W** Turn to page 1. Remind the children to use their phonic knowledge to read the text. Which letter patterns representing the long vowel phoneme /ur/ can they identify? (*ir, ur, er*)
- 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 the children what they think of Uncle Max's story. Is it true?

**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** (*Clarifying*) Ask: *What was Mum's birthday surprise?*

**Assessment** (*R, AF3*) Can the children explain what Mum's birthday surprise was?

## **Group and independent reading activities**

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

**W** Play *Phoneme spotter*. Read the text aloud. The children put their hands up when they hear a word with /ur/ or they can keep a tally if they know how to.

- Agree how many /ur/ words there are in total in the book (not including the title). There are at least 29.
- Now ask the children to work in pairs to do a 'word sort'. They organize the words into sets of words where the /ur/ phoneme is spelled the same way.
- Discuss which spelling is the most common in this book.

**Assessment** (*R, AF1*) Can the children identify and sort the /ur/ words correctly?

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

**W** Make a list of the longer 'tricky' words in the book, for example: *expensive, seventeen, certainly, amazed, favourite, concert, performed*.

- Discuss how to tackle each of the words: which are compound words, which have suffixes etc.
- Identify the 'tricky bit' in the words.
- Explicitly agree strategies for tackling harder-looking words.

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

**Objective** Spell with increasing accuracy and confidence (6.1).

- **W** Ask each child to choose six words with the /ur/ phoneme from the book and give those words to a partner.
- Each child should look at their words and consider strategies for remembering how to spell them – and which way they have to represent /ur/ in each word.
- Ask each child to give their partner a quiz to see how well they have learned the words.
- Share strategies across the group.

**Assessment** (*R, AF1*) Can the children explain their strategies for remembering the words? Do the strategies work effectively?

## Speaking, listening and drama activities

**Objective** Present part of a story for members of their own class (4.2).

- **C** (*Imagining*) Reread the story, focusing particularly on Uncle Max's story.
- Ask the children to work together in small groups to perform his story, just like the children did in the book.
- Let the children perform the story to other groups, or to the whole class.
- Ask all the children to critique their own performances.

**Assessment** (*R, AF5*) Can the children make good assessments of their performances?

## Writing activities

**Objective** Make adventurous word and language choices appropriate to the style and purpose of the text (9.4).

**C** (*Imagining*) Look again at the story and pictures of Uncle Max finding the pearl.

- The language Uncle Max uses is very simple. Explore some descriptive phrases to talk about the sea, the underwater creatures, the mermaid and the pearl.
- Ask the children to retell Uncle Max's story, but using more descriptive language so that people without the pictures in front of them can imagine the scene in their heads.

**Assessment** (*W, AF1*) Can the children write an interesting, descriptive story based on Uncle Max's original tale?