



# The Castle Garden

**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: /ar/ as in 'garden' (made by ar, a (Southern accents only))

Phonemes revisited include: /ee/ as in 'need' (made by ee, ea, y, e); /oo/ as in 'choose' (made by oo, u-e, ou)

## Group or guided reading

### Introducing the book

- W** Can the children read the title? Remind them of the silent *t* in *castle*. Which words can they hear with the long vowel phoneme /ar/? Read the title: *Th-e C-a-s-t-le G-ar-d-e-n*.
- C** (*Prediction*) Encourage children to use prediction. Look at the cover picture and the blurb. What can they tell you about the story? Can they predict what might happen in the castle garden?
- 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 /ar/ can they identify? (*ar*)
- 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 letter can often be pronounced in more than one way. If the 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** (*Prediction*) Ask the children what they think might happen after the end of the story.

**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: *Do you think Tara loved Carl before he said that he loved her?*

**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 (5.4).

- **W** Ask all the children in the group to read the following words: *cat, cart, castle, class*. The children should listen hard as each child speaks, and then decide how many different ways there are of pronouncing the vowel phoneme /ar/.
- In different regional accents, this set of words will be pronounced differently. You will need to be sensitive to the children's accents as you teach the phoneme /ar/.
- Give each child a set of the words. Ask them to find other words with the same spelling and pronunciation in the book.

**Assessment** (*R, AF1*) Can the children read the words *grass, gather* and *garden* and tell you which words are pronounced with the same vowel phoneme?

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

**W** Look again at the book's title. Can the children identify the 'tricky bit' in the word *castle*? What do they remember about silent letters?

- Challenge the children to find more silent letters on pages 16–18 (silent letters in *Tsar*, *knight*, *ghastly*).
- Discuss why the *gh* in *knight* and the *r* in *garden* are not silent letters. (They are part of the letter pattern that represents the long vowel each time.)
- Talk about strategies for reading when you can't simply sound out the word letter by letter.

**Assessment** (*R, AF1*) Can children suggest other words with silent letters in them?

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

**W** **You will need:** either a PC and a USB microphone or an audio-cassette recorder and microphone.

- Tape each of the children while they read two pages aloud from the book. At the beginning of the tape, read two pages yourself as a model of fluent reading.
- Listen together to all of the readings. Ask each child to comment on what they need to do to become more fluent readers. Help them to identify useful strategies and skills. Let each child set their own target for reading fluently.

**Assessment** (*R, AF1*) Can each child set a reasonable target? Give them a few weeks to work towards it and then revisit the target in the same way with a different book.

## Speaking, listening and drama activities

**Objective** Tell imagined stories using the conventions of familiar story language (1.2).

**C** (*Imagining*) Reread the story, talking about what is happening at each stage.

- Ask the children to draw four pictures, each one representing an important event in the story.

- Ask the children to work in pairs to think of answers to Biff's question at the end of the story. They then practise retelling the whole story, including their ending, using their pictures.
- Children then swap partners to tell their stories.

**Assessment** (*R, AF5*) Can children use conventions of story language when retelling their stories?

## Writing activities

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

- **C** (*Summarizing*) Ask the children to add at least two more pictures to their story summary.
- As the children then write their stories, remind them to use the pictures for sections in their writing.

**Assessment** (*W, AF4*) Can children write in sections based on their pictures?