

## The Den

Teaching Notes Author: Pam Mayo

<p><b>Comprehension strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehension strategies are taught throughout the Teaching Notes to enable pupils to understand what they are reading in books that they can read independently. In these Teaching Notes the following strategies are taught: <i>Questioning, Clarifying, Summarising, Imagining</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Decodable words</b></p> <p>back, began, but, by, children, logs, made, make, nest, next, put (north), rain, sticks, stop, stream, them, time, week</p>
	<p><b>Tricky words</b></p> <p>asked, branches, couldn't, everyone, found, idea, some, splashed, stopped, straw, swan, wanted</p>
	<p><b>C</b> = Language comprehension</p> <p><b>W</b> = Word recognition</p>

### Group or guided reading

#### Introducing the book

- C (Clarifying)** Ask the children to tell you what a den is. Talk about dens they might have made – under tables or in their gardens.
- C (Clarifying)** Look through the pictures to find out where the children make a den in this story.
  - Read the sentence about the story on the back cover.

#### Strategy check

Remind the children to use the pictures to help them read unfamiliar words.

#### Independent reading

- Ask the children to read the book on their own from the beginning. Listen to each child in turn.
- W** Encourage the children to sound out new CVC words. Praise them for reading with expression.
- C (Summarising)** Ask children to retell the story in a few sentences.

**Assessment** Do the children remember the key points of the story (building a den, the rain, the surprise when they went back)?

#### Returning to the text

- C (Clarifying)** Encourage the children to reread a sentence if they miss a word or if it does not seem to make sense.
- W** Praise them for using phonemes and the sense of the sentence to work out new words.
- C (Questioning)** Ask the children what is happening in some of the pictures to check their understanding.
- C (Imagining)** Discuss how Wilma might have felt when she looked into the den on page 15.

**Assessment** Check that the children:

- automatically blend consonants such as 'st', 'tw' and 'str' when reading
- check for sense by rereading sentences.

### Group and independent reading activities

**Objective** Apply phonic knowledge and skills as the prime approach to reading words. Segment sounds into their constituent phonemes. Children move from spelling simple CVC words to longer words.

**W** Demonstrate how you would work out a word such as 'straw', using phonemes, the picture and the sense of the story.

- Ask the children to choose a word that they think other children might find hard to read, e.g. 'stream', 'idea', 'found'.
- Ask each child to explain how to read the word they chose from the book. Praise them for using as many clues as possible.

**Assessment** Check that the children are aware that they can use a variety of approaches including decoding to read new words.

**Objective** Use syntax and context when reading for meaning.

**W** **You will need** a copy of the book with some words covered with reusable stickers. Write substitute words (that look similar but do not make sense) on the stickers, e.g. page 1: change 'by' to 'be'.

- Ask a different child to read each page. Ask them to say what is wrong with the sentence. Ask them to suggest what the real word should be. Peel away the sticker to check.

**Assessment** Check that the children are aware that the sentence does not make sense. Do they suggest a word that would put it right?

**Objective** Recognise automatically an increasing number of familiar high frequency words.

**W** Look at the title on the cover of the book. Ask the children: *Can you find a word inside the word 'the'?* Praise them for finding 'he'.

Go through the book and on each page ask the children to put their hands up when they see a small word inside a longer one, e.g. page 1: 'child' in 'children', 'we' in 'were', 'am' in 'stream'.

**Assessment** Do the children find the shorter words quickly?

**Objective** Segment sounds into their constituent phonemes in order to spell them correctly. Children move from spelling simple CVC words to longer words.

**W** Write the following words on the board: 'sticks', 'branches', 'children', 'splashed'.

- Together, let the children read them by sounding out the phonemes.
- Clean the board and ask them to write the words on their whiteboards as you call them out. Say each word twice, very clearly, sounding out the phonemes carefully, but not unnaturally.

**Assessment** Check that the children include all the adjacent consonants, e.g. 'cks' in 'sticks' and 'ldr' in 'children'.

**Objective** Make predictions showing an understanding of ideas, events and characters.

**C** (**Questioning**) Ask the children to look at the cover of the book. Now that they know the story, can they suggest why the illustrator has put a swan in the picture?

**Assessment** Check that the children realise that the swan on the cover is a clue to the end of the story. This will help them in their own writing.

## Speaking, listening and drama activities

**Objective** Listen to and follow instructions accurately.

- Give each child a pencil and paper and tell them that you are going to give them instructions for drawing the den in the story.
- Tell them what to do step by step: *Draw a long stick with a fork at the top. Draw two more long sticks leaning against this stick.*
- Continue with the instructions, following the sequence of building the den in the story, finishing with: *Draw a swan on a nest in the den.*
- Let the children take turns, one child giving the others instructions on, e.g., 'How to draw a house', 'How to draw a man', 'How to draw a face'.

## Writing activities

**Objective** Use key features of narrative in their own writing. Compose and write simple sentences independently to communicate meaning.

- Talk about the story with the children. Make a list of the main points: Wilf's idea, making the den, the rain, the swan.
- Ask the children to think of something they might make with their friends, e.g. a camp, a circuit for their bikes.
- Ask them to imagine that there is a reason why they do not go back to it for some time, e.g. they go on holiday, it rains, or they are unwell.
- Ask them to think of something that might have happened in the meantime, e.g. other children have used it for something else; builders have moved in. Ask the children: *How do you think this story will end?*
- Ask each child to write their own story using their suggestions.

**Assessment** Do the children use the story structure (beginning, middle, end) to write their story? Do they ask for help when they get stuck?

**Oxford**  
**OWL**

**For teachers**

Helping you with free eBooks, inspirational resources, advice and support

**For parents**

Helping your child's learning with free eBooks, essential tips and fun activities



**[www.oxfordowl.co.uk](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk)**