

## National Geographic Kids Reader: Alligators and Crocodiles

### Notes for teachers: using this book in the classroom

**Reading objectives:** read most words quickly and accurately, without overt sounding and blending, when they have been frequently encountered; discuss and clarify the meanings of words, link new meanings to known vocabulary; being introduced to non-fiction books that are structured in different ways; discuss the sequence of events in books and how items of information are related

**Spoken language objectives:** participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play/improvisations and debates; use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary; give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings

**Curriculum links:** Science: Animals, including humans; Living things and their habitats; Art and Design

**Interest words:** snout, reptile, senses, prey, hatchling, endangered, Schneider's dwarf caiman, chameleon, scutes, gharial, caiman, Morelet's crocodile, Philippine, crocodilian, carnivores, sanctuary, snout

**Pronunciation guide:** Schneider's (sh-neye-ders), caiman (cay-man), Morelet's (more-let's), gharial (gar-ee-al)

**Resources:** paper; pencils; ICT

Children who are reading at Purple and Gold book bands should be able to read longer and more complex sentences and tackle more challenging and less familiar vocabulary with increasing independence. They may still need support from adults to help maintain fluency and to develop understanding as ideas become more complex, and more inference and deduction is required. Guided and Independent reading opportunities can be used to develop these skills.

### Language

- Most of the language in this book will be manageable to children reading at this level and many words will be decoded independently. Some discussion may be needed in guided groups to develop comprehension as less familiar and technical vocabulary is introduced.

Children may need help with the following:

- decoding and understanding some of the words contained in Croc Talk boxes: *snout, reptile, senses, prey, hatchling, endangered.*
- reading creature names: *Schneider's dwarf caiman, chameleon, scutes, gharial, caiman, Morelet's crocodile, Philippine.*
- reading less familiar and longer vocabulary that appears in the main text: *crocodilian, endangered, carnivores, sanctuary.*

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- Children may need help using the organisational devices, e.g. the table of contents to find answers for the quiz; the alphabetically organised glossary to check the meanings of words.
- Children may need help to use a wide range of cues to make full meaning as they read, e.g. on pages 6-7, children need to understand that information from the images, captions and labels needs to be used with the text and Croc Talk box to understand the differences between crocodiles and alligators. Discussion and simple questioning about the information will help as the children read together.

## Images

- Look at the image on the front cover and read the title. Turn to pages 4 and 5 and discuss which image children think is a crocodile and which one an alligator. Challenge them to describe the creature, counting teeth, noticing the scaly skin and developing vocabulary. Use the answer at the bottom of page 3 to find out whether they were correct.
- As you read, encourage children to look closely at the beautiful images, using the information to deepen and cement understanding, e.g. on pages 8-9, looking at the chameleon's scales and comparing them with the crocodile's scutes.

## Activities

- Turn to page 30. Challenge children to work with a partner to complete the quiz. Model how to use the table of contents to locate the answers efficiently.
- Provide paper and pencils and ask children to draw a crocodile or alligator, labelling its key features.
- Using ICT, research endangered crocodylian species and find out how they are being protected.

## Questions

- What are the main differences between an alligator and a crocodile?
- What features help crocodylians to survive in the water?
- How do crocodylians find prey in muddy water?
- What noises does the book tell us the crocodylians make?