

## National Geographic Kids Reader: Elephants

### 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; read aloud books closely matched to their improving phonic knowledge, sounding out unfamiliar words accurately, automatically and without undue hesitation; retrieve and record information from non-fiction; read accurately words of two or more syllables

**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; Mathematics: Statistics; Art and Design; Writing – composition

**Interest words:** migration, mate, herbivore, habitat, herd, instinct, calf, poacher, livestock, drought, Mali elephant, wildebeest, Sahara desert, Africa, Asia, papayas, Lake Banzena, scientists, mileage, nutritious, outlawed, illegally, jewellery, solution

**Pronunciation guide:** Mali (*mar-lee*), Banzena (*ban-zeen-uh*)

**Resources:** ICT; paper; pencils; crayons

Children who are reading at White and Lime book bands will be able to read this book in a group, pair or independently over several sessions. They will have good reading stamina and will be able to tackle more challenging vocabulary and a range of varied sentence structures. Guided group work and independent challenges can be used to develop retrieval, interpretation and meaning making, as well as children's ability to express and explain ideas and concepts.

### Language

- Most of the language in the book will be decoded by children using the full range of cues available to them and extensive word knowledge. Some discussion in guided groups and after independent reading can be used to develop children's abilities to understand and interpret more complex information. Children may need help with the following:
  - decoding and understanding some of the words contained in the *Weighty Words* boxes: *migration, mate, herbivore, habitat, herd, instinct, calf, poacher, livestock, drought*. Children may need to look at the glossary to use the visual support provided.
  - reading and pronouncing some animal and place names: *Mali elephant, wildebeest, Sahara desert, Africa, Asia, papayas, Lake Banzena*.
  - reading less familiar words with multiple syllables: *scientists, mileage, nutritious, outlawed, illegally, jewellery, solution*.

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- Children may need to talk about some of the less familiar vocabulary to develop understanding.
- Children may need to discuss or record key information as they read, to help them retain facts and ideas.
- Children may need help to explain back what they have read, e.g. why elephants migrate from and back to Lake Banzena.
- Children may need help to interpret the elephant emergency graph using the key.

## Images

- Look at the close-up image of the elephant on pages 8–9 and the description of its features carefully. Discuss other ways to describe the elephant.
- Notice how each elephant's skin colour seems to vary in different images and talk about why elephants don't always appear to have grey skin. Find adjectives to describe the elephant's appearance.

## Activities

- Read from page 34 *Elephant emergency* together. Help children to understand the different threats to the Mali elephants. Using the websites listed on page 45, help children to undertake further research to find out more about the elephants and how they are being helped as they migrate.
- Give children pencils, crayons and paper. Challenge children to draw a picture of a mother and a baby elephant, with captions to show how the mother cares for her calf.

## Questions

- What do elephants use their tusks for?
- What special skills do elephants have?
- How do scientists track elephants?
- Why do Mali elephants need to migrate from Lake Banzena each year?
- How are local people and charities helping to save the Mali elephants?