

National Geographic Kids Reader: Koalas

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 accurately by blending the sounds in words that contain the graphemes taught so far, especially recognising alternative sounds for graphemes; read accurately words of two or more syllables; discussing and clarifying the meanings of words, linking new meanings to known vocabulary; be introduced to non-fiction books that are structured in different ways; answering and asking questions

Spoken language objectives: participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play/improvisations and debates; use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary

Curriculum links: Science: Animals, including humans; Living things and their habitats; Geography: Geographical skills and fieldwork; Art and Design; Writing – composition

Interest words: furry, hurry, pouch, mammals, marsupials, kangaroos, wombats, scent patch, joey, habitat, eucalyptus, Port McQuarie, territory, backbone, cushion, midnight, fingerprints, cough, hospitals, thousands

Pronunciation guide: eucalyptus (you-ca-lip-tus), McQuarie (Mc-kwo-ree)

Resources: internet; paper; pencils

Children who are reading at Green, Orange and Turquoise book bands are developing reading stamina and should be able to tackle longer stretches of text and some unfamiliar vocabulary with increasing independence. Children will enjoy talking about the content and pictures with some support – for example, in a group or guided reading session, or when reading with an adult.

Language

- The language used in the main text should be familiar to children reading at this level and may be read independently, but children may need help with the following:
 - Reading *furry* and *hurry* on page 4, and hearing the difference.
 - the vocabulary used to describe koala bears and other marsupials, e.g. *pouch*, *mammals*, *marsupials*, *kangaroos*, *wombats*, *scent patch*, *joey*.
 - decoding the less familiar multi-syllable words used to describe where koalas live and their surroundings, e.g. *habitat*, *eucalyptus*, *Port McQuarie*
 - Making meaning from the less familiar language that is used to explain how koalas live and reproduce.
- Children may need help to understand how to understand the map on page 7. They will enjoy spotting familiar countries and looking at how far away Australia is.
- Children will enjoy reading about the way that the koala is adapted to life in the trees on pages 10-11. They may need help to read the explanation text for each body part.

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- Children may need help using the organisational devices, e.g. the contents to find information; the picture glossary and Tree Talk boxes to learn the meaning of new words: *mammal, marsupial, habitat, territory*.
- Children may need help to understand the word play in the jokes.

Images

- Look at the koala on the front cover. Discuss what makes him so cute. Ask who has seen a koala and share any experiences.
- Look carefully at the images on pages 8-10 and help children to spot the babies in the pouch. Challenge them to find another baby in a pouch in the book.
- Help children to spot the koala's *scent patch* on page 14.

Activities

- Play the 'What in the World?' quiz together. Explain what a 'close-up' view is. Show children how to use the word bank and hints, and how to check their answers. Challenge children to find the 'close-up' views in the book.
- Use a children's website to find out about other marsupials and how they look after their young.
- Give children paper and pencils and ask them to draw a new fact card about koalas, based on their reading.

Questions

- Can you describe what a koala bear looks like in your own words?
- Where do koalas live and how are their bodies made perfect for their habitat?
- Are koala bears really bears? If not, what are they?
- What do koala bears spend most of their time doing?
- How do koala bears care for their babies?