

National Geographic Kids Reader: Manatees

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; be 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; draw on what they already know or on background information and vocabulary provided by the teacher

Spoken language objectives: participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play/improvisations and debates; give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings; use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary; use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas

Curriculum links: Science: Animals, including humans; Living things and their habitats; Geography: Geographical skills and fieldwork; Mathematics: Measurement

Interest words: manatees, mammal, graze, herbivore, migrate, endangered, sanctuary, gracefully, somersaults, molars

Pronunciation guide: manatee (*man-a-tee*)

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 specific vocabulary is introduced. Children may need help with the following:
 - reading the title *Manatees*.
 - decoding and understanding some of the words contained in Water word boxes: *mammal, graze, herbivore, migrate, endangered, sanctuary*.
 - reading less familiar and longer vocabulary that appears in the main text: *gracefully, somersaults, molars*.

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- Children may need help to use the Water word boxes as they read to make meaning, e.g. on page 7, they can use the Water word box to deepen their understanding of what a mammal is.
- Children will need support to make deep meaning from the text and images/maps on pages 22–23. Discuss what the arrows show, and develop children’s vocabulary as they describe where the manatees migrate to and from.
- Children may need help to use a wide range of cues to make full meaning as they read, e.g. on pages 28–29, children need to understand that information from the images and labels needs to be used with the text and Water word box to understand what a sanctuary is and how it protects the endangered manatee.
- Children may notice how the word *sanctuaries* in the text differs from the singular form included in the Water word box *sanctuary*.

Images

- Look at the image on the front cover. Read the title and challenge children to describe the manatee’s body parts and its facial features and expression.
- Look closely at the images on pages 1–5, using the visual information to develop descriptive vocabulary. Encourage children to make descriptive phrases, e.g. *wrinkled tummy*, *curvy body*.
- Children will enjoy using the images to make connections to known information as they read, e.g. comparing manatees to cows; talking about the relative size and weight of the children and a manatee.

Activities

- Turn to page 30. Challenge children to work with a partner to try out the quiz, before taking it home to their parents. Model how to use the table of contents to locate the answers efficiently.
- Look at the glossary together and notice that it is organised alphabetically. Skim through the book looking for other words that could feature in the glossary, e.g. calf.

Questions

- What do manatees look like when they are sleeping underwater?
- Why do they like shallow water?
- What body parts help manatees to eat?
- Which fact on pages 16–17 do you think is the most amazing and why?