

National Geographic Kids Reader: Owls

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; continue to apply phonic knowledge and skills as the route to decode words until automatic decoding has become embedded and reading is fluent; 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; read further common exception words, noting unusual correspondences between spelling and sound and where these occur in the word

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; articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions

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

Interest words: heart, camouflage, picture glossary, everywhere, hotshot, dinnertime, wings, ears, eyes, beak, feet, talons, prey, wingspan, Oriental bay owl, barred owl, young burrowing owl, Eurasian eagle owl

Pronunciation guide: camouflage (cam-oh-flah-j), Eurasian (Yur-asian)

Resources: internet; crayons; pencils; paper

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:
 - the vocabulary used to describe each owl and words associated with its appearance, e.g. *heart, camouflage*.
 - decoding the less familiar multi-syllable and compound words, e.g. *picture glossary, everywhere, hotshot, dinnertime*.
 - Making meaning from the less familiar language that is used to explain the processes in the book.

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- Children will enjoy reading about the owl's body parts and their uses on pages 10–11: *wings, ears, eyes, beak, feet, talons*. They may need help to read the explanation text for each body part.
- Children may need help using the organisational devices, e.g. the contents to find information; the picture glossary and Bird Boxes to learn the meaning of new words: *talons, prey, camouflage, wingspan*.
- There are some owl names that children may need help with, e.g. *Oriental bay owl, barred owl, young burrowing owl, Eurasian eagle owl*.
- Children may need help to understand the word play in the jokes.

Images

- Look at the image on the front cover. Ask who has seen an owl and share any experiences. Challenge children to describe the owl using creative language, e.g. *snowy-white feathers, eyes like lamps*.
- Look carefully at the owls on the front cover and inside pages. Challenge children to compare the owls' appearances, and support them to look closely.

Activities

- Play the hide and seek game on page 20 and develop children's understanding of camouflage by looking for other examples of camouflage in nature using the internet.
- 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.
- Give children crayons, pencils and paper. Challenge them to draw an owl and help them to label its different parts.

Questions

- How many kinds of owls are there?
- What shapes are owls faces?
- What are talons and what do owls use them for?
- What do owls eat and how do they sneak up on their prey?
- Which is your favourite owl and why?