

National Geographic Kids Reader: Trot, Pony!

Notes for teachers: using this book in the classroom

Reading objectives: apply phonic knowledge and skills as the route to decode words; read common exception words, noting unusual correspondences between spelling and sound and where these occur in the word; being encouraged to link what they read or hear to their own experiences

Spoken language objectives: give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives; use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary; articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions

Curriculum links: Science: Animals, including humans; Art and Design

Interest words: there, they, mountains, grassy, hilly, pony, ponies, field, moor, herd, beach

Pronunciation guide: *Chincoteague* (Chin-coh-teeg), *fjord* (fee-yord)

Resources: crayons/pencils; paper

Children who are reading at Yellow and Blue book bands should be able to read the main text in this book and talk about the content and pictures with some support – for example, in a group or guided reading session, or when reading one-to-one with an adult.

Language

- The words describing each picture should be familiar to children reading at this level and may be read independently, but children may need help with the following:
 - irregular high frequency words (common exception words), e.g. *there, they*
 - compound words or words with multiple syllables, e.g. *mountains*
 - adjectives made from nouns by adding 'y', e.g. *grassy, hilly*
- The use of exclamation marks and the impact they have on a sentence can be noticed and discussed.
- The singular and plural forms of *pony* and *ponies* can be noticed and discussed.
- Some technical vocabulary that is less familiar but decodable might challenge children, e.g. *field, moor, herd, beach*.
- Children will need help decoding and pronouncing the different ponies' names. They may need to say the names aloud several times: *Welsh mountain pony, Exmoor pony, Dartmoor pony, Icelandic horses, Chincoteague, Haflinger, Shetland, Norwegian fjord horse*.

Images

- Look at the image on the front cover and talk about how the pony is moving and what a trot is. Ask children if they have tried pony riding, and what it feels like.
- Develop children's vocabulary by asking them to describe the ponies in the pictures. Introduce technical and descriptive language to describe the parts of the pony: *the mane, hooves, gentle eyes...*

Activities

- Turn to page 22 and ask children to look at the different kinds of ponies that are featured. Help children to read their names and try to remember where they live, and any of their special features.
- Provide crayons, pencils and paper for the activity on page 23. Encourage children to talk about the parts of the pony as they draw one, and help them to write simple labels.

Questions

- What do we call a group of ponies who live together?
- What sorts of places do wild ponies live in? Find some pictures in the book.
- What type of hair do Shetland ponies have?
- What do all ponies like to eat?
- Which pony do you like best and why?