

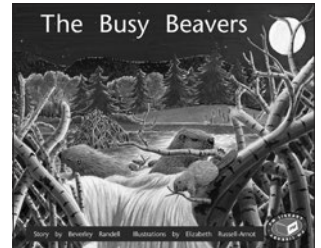
# The Busy Beavers

PM Level 16

Orange

**Text Type** Narrative

**Running Words** 360



## Preparing for Guided Reading

### Orientation to the text

- Ask students to guess what the saying 'busy as a beaver' means.  
Record students' ideas on a chart. Highlight key words or phrases, e.g. 'work very hard'.

### Prior knowledge

- This factual story is about beavers that live in North America. There are also beavers in Europe and Asia.

## Building the Balanced Reader

### Vocabulary

#### Key vocabulary

*great, hurried, lake, needed, smaller, something*

#### Content Words

*beaver, dam, evening, filled, pouring, spring, teeth, tired, slept, washed, wild*

### Decoding

- Encourage automatic recognition of high-frequency words.
- Apply knowledge of syllables to break words into readable units.
- Observe students' ability to integrate meaning, language structures and visual information as they read. Provide support when necessary.
- Explicitly teach students to use a variety of comprehension strategies to predict or check meaning, including applying prior knowledge, thinking aloud, attending to details in illustrations, re-reading and reading on.

### Focusing on the story – guided reading

- Explain that beavers live in small family groups. There may be kits (baby beavers) from the previous year. The normal size of a litter is four.
- Note that the building of the dam and lodge is an amazing engineering feat. 'Lap, lap, lap' gives the idea of sound, as well as movement.
- Show students how the exit from the lodge is by a safe underwater passage (p. 7). Beavers have webbed feet and can swim for 1/4 hour underwater without coming up for air.
- Explain that the beaver's tail can act as a rudder for swimming, can slap the water as a warning signal and can compact mud when building.

- Point out that the whole family hurried to help. Beavers are rodents and have very strong incisor teeth. They act like chisels and keep growing throughout the beaver's life.
- Describe to students how the soothing sound of the lapping water allows the beavers to sleep again.
- Revise initial blends, e.g. *br-* in *branches, broken*; *sl-* in *slipped, slept*; *st-* in *sticks, stones*.
- Draw students' attention to the adjectives *big, bigger* (comparative) and *bigger* (superlative).

### Comprehension

- Why was the water in the dam going down? (*Literal*)
- Why were the beavers safe on the island? (*Inferential*)
- Why did the father beaver slap his tail on the water? (*Inferential*)

### Follow-up activities

- Direct students to locate information about other animals that have nests in or near water, e.g. platypus. Compare the behaviour and nesting habits of these animals with the beaver.
- Discuss the continuous growth of a beaver's teeth. Explain that human teeth do not continually regrow, so there is greater need to continually take good care of them.

# The Busy Beavers

Date \_\_\_\_\_

PM Level 16

Orange

## Learning Intentions

- We are learning to apply knowledge of syllables to break unfamiliar words into readable units.
- We are learning to integrate meaning, language structures and visual information as we read.

• \_\_\_\_\_

## Success Criteria

- I can use my knowledge of syllables to assist me to decode unfamiliar words.
- I can use a variety of skills and strategies to understand what I read.

• \_\_\_\_\_

## Guided Reading Notes

Student's name	Reading focus	Observations/notes	For follow-up