

THE LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S LUNCH

About the book

First published in 1977, *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch* by Ronda and David Armitage has remained a bestseller ever since.

Every morning, come rain or shine, Mr Grinling travels out to his lighthouse. Every day, Mrs Grinling makes Mr Grinling a tasty picnic lunch and sends it across to him on a wire. One day, however, a group of seagulls discovers the flying lunch and eats the lot. Mrs Grinling tries different ways to stop the seagulls eating the picnic: she ties a napkin to the top and she sends the pet cat in the basket, but neither of these ideas work. In the end, she fills the sandwiches with mustard and the seagulls leave to find their lunch elsewhere.

The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch has been a favourite class book for primary school teachers since its publication. It is engaging and clearly sequenced plot, distinct characters and attractive setting provide a wealth of activity opportunities – both for literacy and cross-curricular subjects.

Despite its short length, *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch* has a rich and varied vocabulary, with many glorious adjectives and adverbs. While Key Stage 1 children might need help reading and understanding these, once they know the words they can enjoy a level of poetic writing not usually found in picture books. The vocabulary will also lead to work on noun phrases, adjectives and adverbs. Similarly, the book will also support activities on learning the days of the week, writing recipes, poems and diaries.

For cross-curricular work, art and design projects to create seascapes and model lighthouses will make an attractive classroom display. Further cross-curricular work can be incorporated for geography (vocabulary for key features – cliff, sea, weather), history (how life has changed), science (identifying seagulls, the seasons) and design and technology (designing a system to deliver sandwiches to a lighthouse).

.....

About the author

Ronda Armitage was born and grew up in New Zealand. She spent much of her childhood by the sea often playing around in boats and in the water. She moved to the UK in her early twenties. On the long boat journey to England, she met David Armitage. She has written nine books about the lighthouse keeper Mr Grinling as well as other titles, including three books about Small Knight and George. While writing books, Ronda Armitage has worked as a teacher, a care worker and a librarian.

.....

About the illustrator

David Armitage was born in Tasmania and moved to the UK as a young man. He works as a fine artist.



Key facts

The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch

Author: Ronda Armitage

Illustrator: David Armitage

First published: 1977 by Andre Deutsch Ltd

Awards: The Esther Glen Award for Best Book of the Year, New Zealand 1978

GUIDED READING

Introducing the book

Look together at the cover of *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch*. Ask the children to point out the lighthouse, the lighthouse keeper and the lunch. Ask: *What's happening to the basket? Where has it come from?* Listen to the children's ideas and suggest that you read the book to find out. Turn to the title page and ask the children to tell you what they see. Ask: *Has anyone seen seagulls at the seaside? What were they doing?* Ask the children to predict what might happen in the story.

.....

First reading

Read *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch*. Don't worry too much about the difficult words – allow the story to carry them through. But do point out the detail in the illustrations as you read: the wire between the cottage and the lighthouse, the contrast between the rainy and sunny days, the light and dark as Mr Grinling lies in bed. Pause on the page with the food that Mrs Grinling has prepared. Ask: *Which food here would you most like to eat? Can you describe it? I'd like to eat the Peach Surprise because it looks so creamy and fruity. Ask: What do you usually have for lunch? Would you eat as much as Mr Grinling?* Agree that Mr Grinling's lunch is huge and sumptuous and more like a feast than a lunch. Carry on reading the story, putting on different voices for the seagulls and Mr Grinling, if possible.

Help the children to empathise with Mr Grinling's anger when the seagulls eat his lunch. Ask: *What can Mr and Mrs Grinling do to stop the birds eating the food? How would you feel if they ate your lunch?* Listen to the children's ideas, adding in ideas of your own (perhaps Mr Grinling could take the food with him in the boat, or Mrs Grinling could put a radio playing loud music in the basket).

Carry on reading, checking for understanding. Point out Mr Grinling's and Hamish's facial expressions and ask the children to infer how the characters are feeling. Ask: *What might Mr Grinling and Hamish say?* Check that the children know that mustard is very strong-tasting and can create a burning feeling in one's mouth.

.....

Rich language

Now they know the story, read the book again, asking the children to join in. Help them to use their phonics to segment and blend words as you go along. Point out the long vowel sounds that you encounter and talk about any tricky words that they know and you want them to read without sounding out.

Pause to discuss the glorious (but difficult) vocabulary as you encounter each word, for example: 'perched', 'industrious', 'tended', 'concocting', 'appetising', 'devoured', 'gusto', 'varmint', 'scrumptious', 'baffle', 'racked their brains', 'brazen lot', 'accomplished', 'ingenious plan', 'secured', 'lackaday', 'expectant'. Ask older or more confident children to suggest what the words mean. Talk about why the author might have chosen that word rather than an easier word, for example why 'concocting' rather than 'making'? Ask the children if they like the words in the book. Ask them to discuss question 8 on the bookmark with a partner (page 10).

.....

Focus on setting

Ask: *What is the setting for this book?* (The rocky coast.) Ask the children about times when they have been to the seaside. Is there anything from *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch* that reminds them of their trip to the sea? Have they seen cliffs and a lighthouse?

1. Long vowel scavenger

Objective

To know the different graphemes for the long vowel phonemes.

What you need

Copies of *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch*, printable page 'Long vowel scavenger', interactive activity 'Long vowel baskets'.

What to do

- Recap on the main spelling options for the long vowel phonemes. Remind the children that while 'ea' is the /ee/ phoneme, 'ear' is the /ear/ phoneme.
- Provide the children with printable page 'Long vowel scavenger'. Ask them to find a word for each slot on the page. Tell them to colour in a layer of the lighthouse each time they fill in a word. Can they reach the top?
- Write the words 'give' and 'glove' on the board. Remind the children that these are exception words with short /i/ and /u/ phonemes. Ask the children to complete the challenge at the bottom of the page and colour in the light.

Differentiation

Support: Carry out interactive activity 'Long vowel baskets'. Tell the children to drag and drop words into the lunch basket with the correct long vowel phoneme. Explain that first they have two baskets to choose from, then three, then four.

Extension: Challenge children to find two words in the story where the long /oa/ phoneme is spelled with 'o' ('most', 'gusto'). Ask them to learn to spell the following words: 'white', 'lived', 'lighthouse', 'keeper', 'sea', 'tomorrow', 'most'.

2. Sound sort

Objective

To know the alternative sounds for graphemes.

What you need

Copies of *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch*, printable page 'Sound sort', scissors.

What to do

- Write the words 'hive', 'top', 'farm' and 'hint' on the board. Ask volunteers to come to the front and read the words and underline the grapheme making the vowel phoneme.
- Remind the children that although these words follow the normal rules for English, there are many words that we need to learn that have alternative pronunciations.
- Write the words 'lived', 'most', 'warm', 'gusto', 'have' and 'mind'. (Find them together in *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch* if time allows.)
- Help the children to read these words and underline the graphemes for them. Ask them to tell you how the pronunciation of these vowel graphemes differs from how they would normally expect to pronounce them.
- Provide pairs with printable page 'Sound sort'. Ask them to cut out the words from the page and sort them into piles on top of each phoneme.

Differentiation

Support: Provide the children with only the first two rows of words to sort.

Extension: Challenge more confident learners, in pairs, to read another picture book together and draw up a list of words they find that have non-standard pronunciations. (Remind them that many will be high-frequency words.)

Adding 'ly' and 'ful'

- Read these words from *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch*.
- Split the words up into their two parts: root and ending.
- Write the two parts.

brightly _____

clearly _____

sadly _____

thoughtful _____

- Add 'ly' or 'ful' to each word to create a new one.

pain _____

bad _____

slow _____

joy _____

poor _____

cheer _____

kind _____

help _____

