The Drop in my Drink by Meredith Hooper
Group and guided reading

[Perhaps in a flash at the top:

- Year 4
- Non-fiction
- Middle-ability readers]

Book summary
This lyrical narrative non-fiction book tells the story of water, through poetic text and lush illustrations. The book explains how every drop of water that we drink has travelled through time and space to reach us, and how much the human race, and our whole planet, depends on water. The book includes non-fiction features such as a water cycle diagram and a list of amazing water facts, as well as text features more often associated with fiction books. It is therefore an excellent text to use to encourage children to think about the differences and similarities between fiction and non-fiction. It can also be used as part of a cross-curricular topic on the theme of water.

Key learning objectives
Year 4: Strand 7, Understanding and interpreting texts: identify and summarise evidence from a text to support a hypothesis
Year 4: Strand 8, Engaging with and responding to texts: interrogate texts to deepen and clarify understanding and response

Session 1
Introduction
- If possible, put a tray with a jug of water and some glasses on the table. Pour a glass of water for each child, and say: What do you think of when you look at a glass of water? Share ideas about this, and then ask: What do we use water for? Why is it so important to us? Do you know where water comes from?
- Show the book to the children and invite them to flip through. Ask: What type of book do you think this is? Help the children to identify that it is a non-fiction book, and discuss some of the features that are unusual in a non-fiction book, e.g. the use of paintings instead of photographs, the lack of a contents and index page, the lack of headings and page numbers in the text, etc. Challenge the children to spot ways in which this is like a ‘normal’ non-fiction book, e.g. the fact that the text is factual, and the labelled diagram and list of facts at the back of the book.

Independent reading activity
- Ask children to read independently from page 1 (‘Water trickles and seeps and flows’ to the end of page 7 (ending ‘The drop in my drink has been an endless number of raindrops’). Ask them to keep notes about the main message that each page is giving, as they read.
- Share children’s notes. What do they think this whole passage is mostly about? (It’s about the water cycle, and the way that all the water on Earth moves about but always stays on Earth.) Share children’s feelings about the book so far – what do they like and dislike about it?

Homework/follow-up
- Ask children to read the next five pages independently (from ‘Life on Earth began in water’ to ‘Without water there would be no life on our planet’). They should note down what they think this passage is mostly about.
Session 2
Introduction
• Discuss children’s thoughts about the main message of the passage they have read. Help them if necessary to identify that it’s about how water supports life on Earth.

Independent reading activity
• Ask children to read the next two pages independently, from ‘Rain drums on hillsides’ to ‘The drop in my drink has dissolved rock, making new substances’. Say: *Can you sum up what these two pages are about?* Challenge children to make their summary as short and concise as they can.
• Ask children to read the next four pages independently (from ‘The drop in my drink journeys constantly’ to ‘It lapped the eyes of a turtle and the fin of a shark’). Then ask them to look back through the whole book so far and select the page or section that they think is most interesting or beautiful, and explain why to the group.

Homework/follow-up
• Ask children to read to the end of the main narrative section (‘This drop happened just for me’). Ask them to write some brief notes explaining what the text tells us about how water is cleaned up before it is piped to our taps.

Session 3
Introduction
• Share children’s notes from the follow-up activity. Ask: *How easy was it to find out this information from the book?* Share children’s thoughts on how the book is organised.

Independent reading activity
• Ask children to read the final part of the book independently (‘Looking after water’, ‘The water cycle’ and ‘Amazing water facts’. Ask: *How are these sections different from the main part of the book? Which part of the book is more interesting to read? Which part is easier to find facts in?*
• As a group, talk about why the author chose to present the book in this way, rather than as a ‘normal’ non-fiction text. Ask: *What are the good things about the way this book is presented? Can you think of any things the author could have added to make the book easier to use?* (E.g. page numbers, contents and/or index page, headings etc.).

Homework/follow-up
• Ask the children to choose a fact or image from the book which they found particularly interesting or inspiring. Invite them to draw a picture to illustrate their chosen part of the book, or create a poem using chosen images.