

Tiny Owl and the Prickly Plant

PM Level 9

Blue

Text Type Narrative

Running Words 174



Preparing for Guided Reading

Orientation to the Text

- Display a picture of an elf owl (search the internet for a suitable picture if you don't have one available). Read the title and discuss the cover illustration. Explain that this is a story with factual information.
- Introduce Tiny Owl and study the desert environment in which she lives (south-western United States and eastern Mexico). Inform students that Tiny Owl is hardly bigger than a sparrow. Discuss why Tiny Owl makes her nest up in a prickly plant.

Prior Knowledge

- This is a factual book written in story form.

Key Language Structures

- Longer, two-clause sentences encourage the development of children's thought and language skills.

Building the Balanced Reader

Vocabulary

Key High-frequency Words

be, but, can't, climb, have, saw

Content Words

hole, nest, prickly, snake

Decoding

- Encourage quick recognition of high-frequency words in the book.
- Build upon students' phonemic awareness. Provide support when students apply their knowledge of letter-sound relationships to decode or check unfamiliar words, e.g. *n-e-st*, *b-u-t*, *f-o-x*. Demonstrate how to cross-check decoding attempts against meaning and structure.
- Ask students to name punctuation symbols, e.g. full stops and quotation marks.

Fluency and Phrasing

- Explicitly teach students to adjust how fast they are reading when meaning needs to be clarified. Suggest that they repeat phrases or re-read from the beginning of the sentence, rather than depending on decoding individual words.

- Support students when they need to cross-check or self-correct. Say, *Something didn't sound right. Try that again.* Model how to search further when an error is detected.

Focusing on the Book – Guided Reading

- Invite students to retell events in the story in the sequence in which they happened.
- Draw students' attention to the personal pronouns used in the book, i.e. *she, I, he, you*. Ask questions that require students to name the noun each pronoun replaces. Explain the gender changes made by some pronouns, e.g. *he/she*.
- Explore descriptive vocabulary by using sentences from the book. Write a sentence on the whiteboard, e.g. *Tiny Owl saw a hole up in a prickly plant.* Replace the word *prickly* with another word that has a similar meaning.
- Display pictures of different birds. Enrich students' vocabulary by comparing the features of different birds, e.g. *The elf owl is smaller than ... but not as small as ... A magpie is smaller than ... but not as small as ...*
- Draw students' attention to the silent *b* at the end of *climb*.
- Write these words on a whiteboard: *tiny, prickly, hungry*. Ask students to name other words with the same final sound and spelling pattern.
- Identify the contraction *can't*. Show students how to write this word in expanded form.

Comprehension

- Where did Tiny Owl make her nest? (*Literal*)
- What did the brown snake like to eat? (*Literal*)
- What did Tiny Owl do after all the animals had gone away? (*Literal*)
- Why was a hole up in a prickly plant a good nest for Tiny Owl? (*Inferential*)
- Why couldn't the brown snake climb a prickly plant? (*Inferential*)
- When did Tiny Owl go to sleep? (*Inferential*)

Follow-up Activities

- Ask students to discuss safe places for animals to lay their eggs. Talk about which animals prey on others.
- Identify plants that have spikes, thorns or prickles. Talk about how this provides protection for the plant by discouraging animals from eating them.

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Learning Intentions

- We are learning to identify the problem in the narrative and suggest possible solutions.
- We are learning to use connections between letters, sounds and/or spelling patterns to decode unknown words.

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Success Criteria

- I can identify the problem in the narrative and suggest a possible solution.
- I can use my awareness of spelling patterns to chunk sounds together to help me to decode unknown words while reading.

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Guided Reading Notes

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