

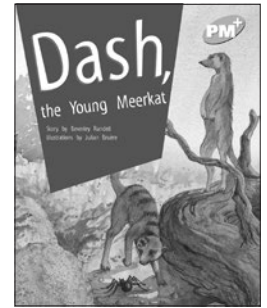
Dash, the Young Meerkat

PM Level 21

Gold

Text Type Narrative

Running Words 616



Preparing for Guided Reading

Orientation to the text

- From a selection of books and photographs, find out about the physical features, habits and habitats of meerkats.

Prior knowledge

- Meerkats are small squirrel-sized animals that live underground. When above ground, they take it in turns to watch and listen for danger.

Building the Balanced Reader

Vocabulary

Key vocabulary

caught, danced, dangerous, escape, pounced, wandered, warning

Content Words

arched, burrow, desert, enemy, guards, jackals, listen, meerkat, rose, scorpion, tumbled, upright

Decoding

- Encourage automatic recognition of an increased range of high-frequency words.
- Apply knowledge of phonics, prefixes, suffixes, syllabification and scanning across words to assist in decoding unfamiliar words.
- Attempt to decode unfamiliar words by predicting the behaviour of the characters and possible resolutions to the complication in the text. Provide support and encouragement when necessary.

Focusing on the story – guided reading

- Read the title. Discuss the cover and title page illustration. Talk about why underground burrows are suitable homes for animals that live in hot, dry climates.
- Discuss the duties of a guard. Search the text to find what warning systems meerkats have developed.
- Observe Sandy's actions on pp. 6–9. Talk about how modelling of a desired behaviour is an effective way for a new skill to be learned.
- Discuss Sandy's teaching techniques. Observe the guards in the background.

- Study the illustration on pp. 12–13. Point out the poisonous sting at the end of the scorpion's tail. Talk about moving quickly and skilfully to catch a scorpion without being stung!
- Recall the meerkat warning signal. Observe the eagle's outstretched talons! Point out that the guard has already rushed down into the burrow.
- Revise words that begin with a prefix, e.g. *upright, underground*.
- Discuss words that begin with *gu*, e.g. *guard, guess*.
- Revise word endings: *safety, burrow, scorpion, eagle, tumbled, jackal, enemy*. Encourage students to scan across the entire word.
- Revise irregular past tense verbs, e.g. *catch, caught; bring, brought; sting, stung; sleep, slept*.

Comprehension

- Where did the meerkats sleep? (*Literal*)
- Why wouldn't Sandy let Dash out of her sight? (*Inferential*)
- Why do some animals pick up and carry their young by the neck? (*Applied Knowledge*)

Follow-up activities

- Using a variety of non-fiction sources (**PM Library Animal Facts** texts; encyclopaedias, the internet, etc.) have students write and present projects about young animals that learn life (survival) skills through the careful tuition of adults.
- Search the text for verbs that describe the actions of the main characters, e.g. *race, learned, wandered, surprised*. Have students write these words in sentences to show they understand their meanings.
- Compare the skills Dash learned with those learned by animals from other environments.

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Learning Intentions

- We are learning to apply knowledge of high-frequency words, phonics, syllables, and affixes and scanning across words to decode the text.
- We are learning to make predictions about the text based on our applied knowledge, vocabulary in the text, and likely solutions to the problem encountered by the characters.
- _____

Success Criteria

- I can use my knowledge of high-frequency words, phonics, syllables, affixes and scanning across words to assist me in decoding the text.
- I can predict events in the text based on prior knowledge, vocabulary and possible solutions to the problem presented in the text.
- _____

Guided Reading Notes

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