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# INTRODUCTION

*Read & Respond* provides teaching ideas related to a specific children's book. The series focuses on best-loved books and brings you ways to use them to engage your class and enthuse them about reading. This book provides detailed guided reading sessions for six children's books.

## GUIDED READING

Guided reading is usually conducted in small groups with children of a similar reading ability, under teacher guidance. The groups are often around six to eight children, although may be fewer depending on the children in your class. The sessions are likely to be short, around 20 minutes, and focused on reading and comprehension skills.

There should be one focus text and each child should have a copy of it. The text should be slightly more challenging than the children's independent reading level, where they can read and understand the vast majority of the text independently. The teacher facilitation of guided reading allows for the children to access more challenging materials in a supported environment – they should still be able to understand and access 90 per cent of the content though.

Guided reading is much more than just reading in turns. Time should be given for reading independently; the teacher may wish to listen to individual children, but this should be followed up by checking the children's understanding and comprehension of the text through discussion and questioning.

## How this book relates to the *Read & Respond* teacher's book

This book can be used for stand-alone sessions or in conjunction with the corresponding *Read & Respond* teacher's books. Each *Read & Respond* teacher's book is designed for whole-class teaching and contains a variety of activities that look at grammar, punctuation and spelling; plot, character and setting; speaking and listening; and writing.

While there are guided reading notes in the teacher's book, the ones provided in this book are much more detailed and therefore the two books can work together. If you are using a carousel system for guided reading, then the teacher's book may provide supporting activities to use when the children are not in the guided reading group. Within this book, there may be some optional links referenced to the *Read & Respond* teacher's book where, work could be expanded.

**ABOUT THE BOOK**

Each children’s book has been divided into eight guided reading sessions. The sessions work through each book progressively, so you read it over a number of weeks. It has been assumed that the sessions will be conducted in guided reading groups of around six to eight children. If you plan to use them differently, then they can be adapted accordingly. Each session follows a similar structure:

**Session aims:** The purpose of the session and what children will be focused on in their reading.

**Before the session:** If there is anything the children need to do prior to the session, such as reading some of the book, this will be identified here.

**Read:** This section will focus on the children reading the text either independently or as a group. It may be reading new chapters or sections of the book or re-reading parts of the book that they have read previously. They should consider questions about the text while reading and then discuss these as a group to check their understanding.

**Revisit and respond:** A range of different activities will have been provided under this heading to provide flexibility to select appropriate tasks for the group. As each session is only intended to be around 20 minutes long, it is advised that one or two of these activity ideas are used to meet the needs of your children.

**Assessment opportunities:** A bank of questions has been provided which could be used at any point in the session as relevant. They are sub-divided into headings to identify the purpose of the type of question.

At the end of the book, you will find two templates that you can use to support your guided reading sessions:

**Guided Reading Bookmark Template:** This template provides a bookmark that you can complete and give to the children as reference. It could include the questions you want them to consider when reading or you could use the assessment opportunities questions for the children to discuss.

**Guided Reading Record Template:** A template to record any notes from a guided reading session so you have a record that you can refer to.



# SESSION 1: SETTING THE SCENE

## SESSION AIMS

Consider how the scene is set/how characters and settings are introduced.

## BEFORE THE SESSION

The children should be familiar with the book cover and have read Chapter 1 prior to the session.

## READ

- Ask the children to remind themselves what they established about the book from both the cover and Chapter 1. Then involve them in a brief group discussion:
  - What genre of book is it?
  - What did you think about how the book began?
  - What have you learned about the characters so far: Fern, Wilbur, Avery and Mr and Mrs Arable?
  - Why did Mr Arable allow Fern to keep the pig?
- Then ask them to read Chapter 2 independently and consider as they read whether their opinion of Mr Arable changes.

## During reading

- If your school uses reading journals then the children should be encouraged to make notes as they read.
- Move around the group and 'tune in' to hear individuals read aloud. Encourage and praise good expression.

## REVISIT AND RESPOND

Use the following discussion points to help the children think about what they have read in more depth.

**Note:** Since there are only 20 minutes for each session, you are advised to focus on only one or two of the elements that are listed below.

- Examine how the author begins the story. Ask the children to imagine being in Fern's place at the breakfast table, seeing what Fern saw. Ask: *How did Fern react? How would you have reacted? What sort of impact did the author want to make?*

- Consider the language. Ask: *What does Mrs Arable mean by 'do away with it'? How does Fern say the same thing in different ways? Why did Mrs Arable and Fern use such different words to describe what would happen to the runt?*
- Examine Fern's reaction. Ask: *Why is she so upset? Mr Arable tells Fern she will have to 'learn to control herself'. What does he mean? Is her reaction appropriate for her age? Ask the children to predict how Avery would have reacted if he'd been at breakfast instead of Fern.*
- Analyse Fern's argument. Ask: *How does she persuade her father to spare the runt? Do you think Fern was right – was it unfair and an injustice to kill the pig because it was small? Now assess the other side of the argument. Why did Mr Arable want to kill the runt? Was he being cruel or just practical? Encourage the children to discuss why animals are raised on a farm. Ask: *How might people who live on farms see things differently from people who live in towns?**
- Examine Avery's tone when he sees Fern's piglet. Is he being sincere or sarcastic? Does he really mean that it's a 'fine specimen of a pig'? How can you tell? What is the effect of 'fine' being in italics?
- Focus on the illustrations. Ask: *How do they help the reader visualise the characters? What does Mr Arable's expression show as Fern grabs the axe? Does this change your view of him? How is Avery described when he first appears? Does his picture match his description? How? Do the illustrations of Fern help you visualise her, or are they different from your idea of her?*
- Focus on the story's setting. The book was written more than 60 years ago. Do Avery and Fern appear old-fashioned, modern or timeless? Ask: *Could they be considered stereotypes? Is the location important? For example, does anything reveal the farm is in America?*
- Examine Wilbur's impact. In Chapter 2, does he cause trouble as Mr Arable predicts? Why is he moved outside? If he's no trouble, why does Mr Arable insist he is sold?

- Consider motivation and attitude. Even though Fern wept, why didn't Mr Arable allow her to keep Wilbur for longer? Was it fair when she had looked after Wilbur so carefully? Has he changed his attitude?

Ask the children, whenever appropriate, to revisit the text to exemplify/support their answers.

Encourage them to read aloud to the group when referring back to the text – praise clear, confident and expressive reading.

## ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The following bank of question prompts provides a quick and easy means of monitoring the children's comprehension skills and understanding of the text. The children's answers to a question must be supported by evidence from the text.

### Understanding

- Was Mr Arable cruel to plan to kill the runt?
- How does Wilbur show his devotion to Fern?
- Although Fern treats Wilbur like a baby or her doll, how does Wilbur reveal that he's very much a pig?
- What is Wilbur's new home like? Is it more suitable for a pig?

### Inferences

- What is an 'injustice'? What examples of injustices can you think of in real life? Was this a real injustice?
- Why did Fern say 'Wilbur' when asked the capital of Pennsylvania? Why did she blush?
- Why did Mr Arable agree to sell Wilbur for six dollars? Do you think this was what he sold Wilbur's siblings for? Why?

### Predicting

- What would have happened to Wilbur's siblings after they were sold?
- Will Wilbur be happy in Mr Zuckerman's barn?
- How might Avery and Fern be portrayed as more modern characters if *Charlotte's Web* had been written recently?
- What might the 'problem' to be solved be in the book?

### Main ideas

- Summarise the main events in Chapters 1 and 2.
- Wilbur is described as a spring pig. What signs are there that it is springtime?

### Language, structure and presentation

- Are the illustrations essential for understanding the story?
- What synonym is used for 'pig'? Can you think of others?
- What does 'It was apple-blossom time' mean? Why is apple-blossom hyphenated?
- How are italics used in the text? Find examples and read out those passages.

### Themes and conventions

- Who narrates the book? How can you tell?
- How does the author make the reader see Wilbur as a human rather than as a pig?
- What emotions and feelings are usually associated with springtime?