



# Ducks in a row

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## Focus phonics

ai written as ay as in okay, spray, away, way

ai written as a\_e as in save, grate, lane, lake, came, waved, made, gave, lemonade, homemade, grates

ai written as a as in basin, baby

## Tricky words

asked, could, friend, people, their, there, thought, through, two, want, where, who

## Book summary

Tam and Emma are told about some ducklings trapped in a fountain in Green Park. They rush to the rescue and reunite the ducklings safely with the parent ducks on Lake Bert.

## Learning intention

**Phonics:** To decode words with the phoneme /ai/ spelt ay, a\_e, and a, and to work on this group of grapheme-phoneme correspondences that feature in the book. To understand that the word *fountain* has a schwa sound for /ai/.

## Comprehension:

- Explain the meaning of words in context
- Summarise main ideas
- Make inferences from the text
- Make predictions
- Make connections (text to self, text to text, text to world)
- Ask questions
- Visualise

## Fluency:

- Read at a natural speaking pace with minimal sounding out
- Pay attention to punctuation when reading, pausing and changing tone as appropriate
- Read with appropriate emphasis and intonation to support the meaning of the text

## Before reading

**Story discussion:** Look at and discuss the cover. Read the title together. Ask: What could the title mean? What do you think the children are going to do? (catch something with the net) What are the ducks doing and why? (flapping and quacking; they may be scared of the bikes or the children) Where is the story taking place? Do you think this is a fiction or a non-fiction text and why? Look at the back cover. Read the blurb and discuss what it means. Share prior knowledge

about ducks. Ask: Has anyone seen ducks before in a park or on a farm? What did they notice? (Walking in a row following each other?) Look at the title page to compare the illustration to the cover. Ask: What do you notice in this illustration? (7 ducklings in a row) Ask: Where could they be going? Note predictions to return to later in the lesson.

**Quick phonics warm-up:** Read together the /ai/ words on the inside front cover. Notice the three alternate spellings (graphemes) for the phoneme /ai/ (ay, a\_e, a). Think of and record other words that rhyme with these or have the same spellings for /ai/, e.g. day, say, play; mate, same, late; bacon, apricot, paper. When we read the word *fountain*, it has the letters ai in the second syllable. This is not read as a long /ai/ sound. It is a schwa sound, which is an unstressed vowel sound. In this word the schwa sound is /i/. Sound out the word: /f/ /ou/ (as in cow) /n/ /t/ /i/ /n/ fountain. (*captain* also follows this model)

**Vocabulary check:**

grate p 6 frame of metal bars

siblings p 22 brothers and sisters

**Morphology:** duckling p 3 the suffix -ling means small, immature, young or inferior; duckling means a young duck.

**Etymology:** duck (n) a diving bird or a water fowl, generally shorter necks than geese or swans. The word duck comes from Old English *duce* "diver", a derivative of the verb *ducan* "to duck, bend down low as if to get under something, or dive", because of the way many ducks feed by upending.

Duck (v) c1300, "to suddenly go under water and immediately withdraw"; from Old English *ducan* "to duck", found only in derivative *duce* (n) "duck". Hence, "duck out" p 4 and "duck home" p 28 mean to go suddenly and return quickly.

**Tricky word practice:** Display the tricky words *could* and *friend*. Ask: What are the tricky parts of these words?

could – oul is the tricky part which says /oo/ as in put.

friend – ie is the tricky part which says /e/.

Practise writing and reading these tricky words.

## During reading

**Read the story:** This book may not fit into a single reading session. The end of Chapter 2, p 13 is a good point to break the reading. Students can finish the book in a second group session or for homework.

Reading could follow one or more of the following approaches:

- Start by reading the story aloud together, then invite students to take over the reading. Tell students to read aloud at their own pace, aiming for a smooth and fluent reading, but pausing to sound out and blend any words that they cannot read on sight. On p 2, ask: What do you notice about the words *homemade* and *lemonade*? (they rhyme and have the alternative grapheme a\_e for phoneme /ai/) Read the words together. On p 2, ask: What does *bitter* mean? (sour) What else helps you with the meaning? (the illustration of Emma's face) What do you do if you taste something sour? How do you feel? What does the word *don't* mean on p 3? (do not – it's a contraction where the apostrophe replaces the o in not) This sentence is a question – it is asking Tam if he likes birds – "don't you?" means "do you not?"
- Students read silently at their own pace; listen to each student in turn as they read a brief passage.

**Phonics support:** Remind students to sound out and blend the letters as necessary to read any unfamiliar words, but encourage them to read words with familiar letters and sounds fluently on sight if they can, without sounding out. If students get stuck on a word, model how to sound out and blend the sounds in the word. Encourage students to help each other with sounding out and blending and praise good use of this strategy especially with words using the alternate graphemes for /ai/ (ay, a\_e, a).

Find other words in the story that are contractions, e.g. let's p 4, didn't p 12, it's p 13. Read the sentences that contain these contractions aloud.

**Comprehension support:** Pause occasionally to talk about the story and encourage students to find and retrieve key details from the text, e.g. at the end of p 3, ask: What do you know so far about Emma and Tam? (Tam liked his homemade lemonade because it's cheap, Emma didn't because it's sour. Tam likes birds). On p 11, ask: What do you think the mum duck was saying? What did her quack mean? On p 12, ask: Why do you think the mum and dad ducks are flapping?

## After reading

**Apply learning:** Revisit the book and discuss the story. Encourage students to retell events in the right order. Ask: When did Tam and Emma realise the ducklings were in trouble? Do you think it was right for them to put the ducklings in a box? Is there anything else they could have done? What can you say about the mother and father ducks? Were they caring parents? Say how you know.

Look at the words *lemonade* and *handmade* on p 2. Count and clap the syllables in each. Home/made (2) lem/on/ade (3). Notice that they rhyme. This technique where a vowel sound is repeated is called assonance. It is used by authors to make the reading sound interesting. (In this case it's the /ai/ sound spelt a\_e) that is repeated.)

Count and clap the syllables in words ending in the suffix "ly", e.g. happily p 20, suddenly p 25, loudly p 14, slowly p 14. Discuss the meaning of the words. ("ly" makes an adjective into an adverb.)

Find the words *cheep* and *chirp* on p 17. This is alliteration where the initial sound is repeated (another technique the author has used to make the story sound interesting). Look for other examples in the book, e.g. Dad duck on p 18.

**Comprehension:** Ask: How did this book make you feel? Would you like to have been helping Tam and Emma? Do you know any other books about animals being rescued? Do you think this could have been a true story and why or why not? Revisit predictions. Were they correct? Take a chapter per group to retell and summarise the main ideas.

**Fluency:** Choose a passage from the book and model how to read it fluently/with appropriate accuracy, rate and prosody (the three elements of fluency). Students read the same passage, copying your reading and paying attention to punctuation. (echo-reading) Students choose another brief passage and read it fluently/with expression to their partner changing tone when appropriate. Choral-read part of the text together to build fluency and self-confidence. Students practise speed-reading the focus words from the inside front cover to encourage automatic recall (words that can be recalled automatically have been orthographically mapped to students' long-term memory).

**Spelling and writing through dictation:** Read out the following passage for students to write. It uses words and sentences from the text as these are decodable. The focus is on encoding (spelling) rather than creating content.

(pages 5-6)

Emma and Tam rode their bikes to Green Park. The fountain was a big basin with a spray of water shooting up. The water splashed down, and drained away through grates in the bottom of the basin.

Tam and Emma saw that seven little ducklings were stuck on a grate. Water gushed onto them, pushing them down. They were too little to fly out of the basin to the lawn, where the mum and dad ducks waited.

### Follow-up activities

Students complete the follow-up activities:

#### **Worksheet 1: Phonics**

Spelling patterns for /ai/.

Use words in sentences.

The schwa sound – fountain, captain. Use words in sentences.

#### **Worksheet 2: Comprehension**

Answer questions about the text.

Summarise a chapter using RAP technique.

#### **Worksheet 3: Social Science**

Everyday heroes – describe heroes and create a poster.

#### **Worksheet 4: Maths**

7x table