



Zed

Bronwyn Tainui

Focus phonics

n written as kn as in Knight's, knee, know, knelt

air written as ear as in pear

Tricky words

again, anyone, could, eye, friends, laughed, many, Mr, should, there, thought, tomorrow, two, where, who, would

Book summary

Ashlee finds a stray cat and decides to keep him in her tree hut until she can persuade her mum to let her keep the cat, who she calls Zed. Mum and Dad find the cat and it looks like Zed will go to the shelter until he does two surprising tricks which change Mum's mind.

Learning intention

Phonics: To decode words with the phonemes /n/ spelt kn; and /air/ spelt ear, to work on this group of grapheme-phoneme correspondences that feature in the book and to extend to other known words containing them.

Comprehension:

- Retrieve and record information/key details from the text
- 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 and read the title together. Ask: What could the title mean? Could it be the name of the girl? Can you see a clue in the tree house? Could it be the name of a cat? Ask: Where is the story taking place? Who wrote the story? (Bronwyn Tainui) Have you read any other books by Bronwyn and what did you think of them? (in the Reading Road

series Bronwyn has also written One top dog, My farm jobs, A robber at Pop's, On Fog Hill, Out of orbit, When the Romans ruled) 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. Notice the picture of the cat. Share prior knowledge about cats. Ask: Does anyone own a cat? Share their knowledge about what's needed to look after a cat. Look at the title page and compare the illustration to the cover. Ask: What do you notice in the title page illustration? (a cat peeking out from a hedge looking scared) What do you think will happen in the story? Keep a note of predictions and return to them later.

Quick phonics warm-up: Read the words on the inside front cover together, with the focus phonemes of /n/ written as kn and /air/ written as ear. Locate these words in the text. Think of and record other words that have these same grapheme-phoneme correspondences, e.g. knock, knit, knack; bear, tear.

Vocabulary check:

litter p 24 young animals born to an animal at one time. (It can also mean rubbish in a different context.)

slipper p 25 light footwear for indoors

Morphology: explore p 8 to travel out of a familiar area and search for information; the prefix ex- means out of, from or thoroughly.

Etymology: shelter p 23 a place giving protection from danger or weather; originated in 1590s from middle English, sheltroun, sheltron, sheldtrume "roof or wall formed by locked shields". The sense of "temporary home for animals" is from 1971.

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

Mr – the tricky part is r. Mr is short for Mister (pronounced Mist/uh/), a term used to address a man before his surname, e.g. Mr Smith.

tomorrow – the tricky part is to. The o says /oo/ as in moon.

Practise reading and spelling these words.

During reading

Read the story: This book may not fit into a single reading session. The end of Chapter 3, p 15 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 text with students, then invite them to take over the reading. On p 2, ask: What is the name of the girl (the main character) in the story? (Ashlee) How could Ashlee tell that the cat was hungry? (he ate the scraps she gave him quickly) What does gulped mean? (ate very fast in just a few mouthfuls) On p 4, ask: Why didn't Ashlee take the cat home with her? (her mum wasn't keen on cats) Ask: What do you think will happen next? On p 5, ask: Why did the author use the word "bingo"? (to represent Ashlee thinking of a bright idea) Encourage 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.
- Students read silently at their own pace; listen to each student in turn as they read a brief passage.
- Divide the book up between students; groups read a chapter each and then report back on it, summarising the main ideas.

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 words with the focus phonemes of /n/ written as kn and /air/ written as ear.

Comprehension support: Pause occasionally to talk about the story and encourage students to find and retrieve key details from the text, e.g. on p 8, ask: What was Ashlee's plan? (to keep Zed in the tree hut) Do you think it was a good idea? Say why or why not. On p 12, ask: What does Mum think Ashlee is doing differently these days? (she's in her tree hut more than usual; she's eating a lot of meat) What can you say about Zed so far?

After reading

Apply learning: Discuss the story. Ask: Which of Ashlee's parents first spotted Zed? What did Mum think of Ashlee's plan to keep Zed? How did this story make you feel? Would you like to have found the cat? What would you have named him?

Comprehension: Review the predictions made earlier. Were they correct? Were there any surprises? Ask: What convinced Mum that it would be okay to keep Zed? Encourage students to retell events in the right order, chapter by chapter. Discuss the questions on the inside back cover. Ask: What does "breeding" mean on p 23? (having babies) What is a "litter"? (a group of baby animals) If a rat has 6 litters each year with 18 pups in each litter, how many pups is that in a year? (108) The word "bingo" was used on p 5 to show Ashlee had an idea. What other words were used by the author to show more bright ideas Ashlee had? (ping on p 23 and ping, ping on p 25) In your view was that a clever use of words by the author? Can you think of other words she could have used?

Notice the words in bold print on pp 27-28. Why is that? (to show that the cat did a clever trick; to show that he is part of the family now) How would you read them? (with meaningful emphasis)

Fluency: Choose a passage from the book and model how to read it fluently paying attention to punctuation when reading, pausing and changing tone as appropriate for different characters. Students read the same passage, copying your reading. (echo-reading) Students choose another brief passage and read it fluently/with expression to their partner, then swap over. Read parts of the text together (choral-read) 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.

(page 27)

Ashlee patted her knee. "Fetch, Zed!" she said. "Fetch, boy, fetch!"

Zed slowly came out from under the couch with Mum's lost slipper in his mouth. Mum looked amazed!

"Did you teach Zed to do that?" said Mum.

"No, he's just a wonder cat! If Zed's around, you will never have cold feet, Mum," said Ashlee. "Or rats!"

"It is a clever trick for a cat," said Mum.

"I thought catching rats was good, but finding slippers is even better!" said Dad.

(page 28)

"So, can we keep him?" said Ashlee. "Yes, we can keep him," laughed Mum.

"It's fine by me, too!" Dad said.

Ashlee hugged Zed tight. "You are our wonder cat now," she said. Zed purred.

Follow-up activities

Students complete the follow-up activities:

Worksheet 1: Phonics

/n/ spelt kn. /air/ spelt ear.

Read and write words and sentences.

Create question sentences.

Read words against the clock.

Worksheet 2: Comprehension

Answer questions about the story.

Verbs.

Worksheet 3: Art

Choice of three art projects: decorate a cat outline, paint a rock, create a treehouse diorama.

Write a short story, description or report on the art project.

Worksheet 4: Science/Our Living World

Research and write about felines.