



A shadow in the surf

Kath Beattie

Focus phonics

oo (moon) written as ue as in blue, true

v written as ve as in have, swerves, give

or written as oar as in boards, board, roaring, aboard, surfboards

Tricky words

laughs, many, once, their, there, through, where

Book summary

Three young surfers are enjoying the sun and the surf when a shadow of a shark appears deep in the sea. Leo remembers enough of what his parents told him to keep safe.

Learning intention

Phonics: To decode words with the phonemes /oo/ (as in moon) spelt ue, /v/ spelt ve, and /or/ spelt oar in the text and extend to other known words with the same grapheme-phoneme correspondences, e.g. clue, glue; love, olive; coarse, uproar.

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 that fit with information given in the text
- 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

Before reading

Story discussion: Look at and discuss the front cover and read the title together. Ask: What could the shadow be? What does the illustration show? Look at the picture on the title page. What does it show? Whose boards could these be? Read and discuss the blurb on the back cover. What is the illustration on the back cover? Who is the author? (Kath Beattie) Share knowledge and views of any other books written by Kath. (in the Reading Road series she has written The dark thing, Teeth) Invite students to share any prior knowledge of surfing, and make predictions about what

might happen in the story. Keep a note of predictions and return to them later. Flick through the book to get an idea of the story. Ask: Do you think this is a fiction or non-fiction text and say why.

Quick phonics warm-up: Read the words on the inside front cover together, with the focus phonemes of /oo/ written as ue, /v/ written as ve, and /or/ written as oar. Flip through the text to locate and read words with these same focus phonemes. Discuss the meaning of these words. There are many ways to write the phoneme /oo/ (as in moon). Two ways are: ue and u_e. Sort words into the way the /oo/ phoneme is written: e.g. flute, glue, prune, blue, June, Sue. Then read the words.

Vocabulary check:

shallows p 8 water near the shore, not very deep

beyond p 8 further out

Morphology: safest p 2 – the -est suffix is added to *safe* (one 'e' is dropped). This makes the superlative of *safe* (used to compare more than two things). The comparative is *safer* (comparing two things).

Etymology: save p 21 – c1200, *saven*, "to deliver from some danger; rescue from peril, bring to safety"; from Old French *sauver* "keep (safe), protect, redeem", from Late Latin *salvare* "make safe, secure", from Latin *salvus* "safe".

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

once – the tricky part is o which says /w/ /u/.

laughs – the tricky parts are au which says /ar/ and gh which says /f/.

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 17 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 wind is safest to surf in? (offshore) On p 3, ask: What tide is best for surfing (incoming) Who are the characters and how are they related to each other? (Zara and Leo are siblings, Denzel is a friend and neighbour) On p 6, ask: Who is feeling a bit scared and why? (Denzel, because he's new to surfing) How does Mum reassure Denzel? (tells him Dad is life-saving at the beach and says she will help too) Students continue reading.
- Students read silently at their own pace; listen to each student in turn as they read a brief passage.
- Divide the book up between pairs or groups of students; they read a section or chapter each and then summarise the main ideas to report back on.

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 /oo/ written as ue, /v/ written as ve, and /or/ written as oar.

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 8, ask: What advice does Zara give to Denzel? (paddle when the waves are flat) On p 10, ask: What is Leo's advice? (don't wait until the waves break) On p 11, ask: How do Leo and Zara encourage Denzel? (tell him it was a good first try and offering to help him catch a good wave)

After reading

Apply learning: Discuss the story. Ask: What have you learned about surfing and people who surf? On p 11, ask: Why did Denzel decide to go surfing even though he was scared? (he had the help and reassurance of his friends) On p 16, why is the surfboard tied to a surfer's leg? (to prevent a loose board hurting people) How were the friends feeling on p 17 and how do you know? (Happy because Denzel is doing well and they are having a good time surfing. The illustration shows them smiling and high-fiving each other.) What did Kath (the author) need to know before writing this text?

Comprehension: Review the predictions made earlier. Were they correct? Were there any surprises? Ask: Who was first to spot the shadow in the surf? (Denzel) What advice did Leo give to Denzel when they saw the shark? (don't splash as it attracts sharks) How did the book end? (they were rescued safely) What made the shark swerve away? (the noise of the boat) What can you learn from this book about keeping safe from sharks? What does swerve mean? (turn sharply) Read and discuss the questions on the inside back cover. Ask students to choose a chapter or a page and retell part of it. Together they retell the story in order, chapter by chapter. Ask: Do you think this story could be based on a true story? Ask students to find five words each with adjacent consonants in the text (e.g. still, toast, window, fantastic, golden). Write them, say them and spell them. Ask students to find as many words as they can in the text that have /l/ spelt le on the end and practise saying them. e.g. paddle, tumble, scramble(s), little.

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 18)

"It's nearly lunchtime," Leo tells Denzel as they bob on the sea, watching Zara surf in to shore. "Let's make this our last one." Denzel is peering into the water. "Hey, Leo, what's that shadow?" he asks. Leo looks. He knows at once what it is. "Get your feet up on your board, Denzel. Don't splash," Leo says quickly.

Denzel laughs and splashes, thinking Leo is joking around. "Stop, Denzel!" Leo whispers. "That shadow is a shark."

"A shark?" Denzel is shocked. "What shall we do?"

(page 20)

Zara is paddling her way back to the boys. Leo yells, "Go back, Zara. Shark!" and points below his board.

Zara turns and makes for the shore at top speed. "Mum, shark! I'll tell Dad!" she yells. Mum scrambles up and shouts, "Stay still, boys. Leo, remember what we told you." She watches them, willing them to be safe.

(page 21)

Dad is at the other end of the beach. Zara runs to him, shouting, "Shark, shark!" Dad hears her and sounds the hooter. Swimmers hurry to get out of the water. Then, Dad sends the rescue boat to save Leo and Denzel.

Follow-up activities

Students complete the follow-up activities:

Worksheet 1: Phonics

/or/ spelt oar. /oo/ as in moon spelt ue. /v/ spelt ve.

Homophones.

Complete sentences.

Vocabulary.

Worksheet 2: Comprehension

Verbs.

Fill in a story planner and use it to retell the story.

Worksheet 3: Health & Wellbeing

Write about the dangers of surfing.

Write about the good aspects of a favourite sport or hobby.

Write about self-esteem and encouraging people.

Worksheet 4: Sport

Read about surfing terms.

Play charades.

Write a dictionary about a hobby or short story about surfing.