



FIRST FACTS READERS LEVEL 2

Teacher Book with Copymasters

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Introducing First Facts Readers



The Reading and Writing Link

"Across evaluations of beginning reading programmes, emphasis on writing activities is repeatedly shown to result in special gains in reading achievement."

Marilyn J. Adams *Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning About Print*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990.

First Facts readers introduce non-fiction features using a structured approach. They contain simple, accurate and easy-to-read examples of non-fiction, with each book concentrating on a specific factual structure or skill. At this beginning level, pupils are encouraged to develop strategies such as classifying, labelling and finding connections — all essential skills for understanding non-fiction. The text in each book then provides a model for pupil writing through activities provided in the *Linking to Writing* lessons. The *First Facts* series has been developed to foster this reading and writing link.

Learning About Non-fiction

Important differences in structure, content and purpose mark fiction and non-fiction — narrative and information text. Non-fiction text is often unfamiliar to young readers but, as we read non-fiction to learn, it is important for pupils to learn how to understand its structures. Pupils need to be exposed to a variety of non-fiction texts and to be taught different strategies for comprehending it.

One of the main features of non-fiction is that information is grouped together under chapters or headings. The ability to group information together needs to be learnt and is a major underlying theme in all the *First Facts readers*. Many non-fiction reading books at this level are simply a random series of facts with few organising structures to aid pupil comprehension. All *First Facts readers* include a contents page and chapter headings to familiarise pupils with the structures of non-fiction. These structures help pupils to look for similarities and differences, to compare and contrast, and to make connections to their own experience. This makes the reading experience memorable and the text easier to understand.

Writing Workshop in a Comprehensive Literacy Programme

In a comprehensive literacy programme, writing is as important as reading. During the reading block, pupils learn reading skills so that they can construct meaning from a wide range of texts. In the writing block, pupils develop the ability to organise their ideas and to express them in print. Just as with guided reading lessons, guided writing lessons allow the teacher to give explicit instruction in targeted skills and strategies. The lessons in this guide provide strong teacher support, including detailed notes showing how to model a variety of reading and writing skills and strategies.

Using First Facts Readers Level 2

First Facts integrates science and society and environment with reading and writing. The books are ideal for use in literacy lessons, or during a thematic unit about one of the topics in the series.

There are three strands to the series — Science and Technology, My World (Society and Environment) and a mixture of the two, the Animal World. Each strand begins with the child's directly experienced world, and then moves out gradually to the wider world as you move up the reading levels. Level 2 is the second of four levels of carefully graded readers.

Reading the Non-fiction Text

Grouping: small groups

Pacing: 15–20 minute sessions. Some may take two days to complete the copymaster and share.

The reading lessons in this guide are suitable for small groups and fit easily into the guided reading component of the literacy lesson. The lessons teach effective reading strategies for processing non-fiction texts. The teacher introduces the text and the teaching points before pupils read independently. The lessons encourage oral participation from pupils, which provides further teaching opportunities. At the end of each lesson pupils can complete a copymaster or other activity.

Using the Writing Non-fiction Lesson Notes

Grouping: small groups or whole class

Pacing: One or two sessions of 15–20 minutes.

By following each reading lesson with a lesson in writing non-fiction, pupils learn to use the structures modelled in the *First Facts* books in their own writing. By the end of the series pupils will have worked on a variety of purposeful writing activities.

The teacher models a writing strategy by thinking aloud while writing. Pupils participate by telling the teacher what to write, or by helping plan and write some of the text. Each lesson has a copymaster or other writing activity.

The Writing Non-fiction lessons are suitable for small groups or the whole class. They encompass the shared, guided and independent writing and investigation components of the writing block. They could also be used over a two-day period, teaching the strategy on day one then allowing pupils to apply the strategy and share their work on day two.

Assessment

Suggestions for informal assessment appear throughout the reading and writing lessons. Page 32 provides an assessment checklist rubric, as well as a merit certificate. Teachers can photocopy one page per pupil and record each pupil's progress in reading and writing non-fiction texts.



Families Help Each Other

Teaching Focus

Information report

Introducing the Text

Prior to the lesson, ask a small group of pupils to help you introduce *First Facts Families Help Each Other*. Ask the group to prepare a mime that shows members of a family helping each other, for example taking shopping from a car to the kitchen. Use any example that demonstrates a family helping each other that is appropriate to the group of pupils in the class.

At the beginning of the lesson, seat the remaining pupils in the classroom. Introduce the actors and then ask the class to observe what they see. When the actors have finished, ask pupils:

What were the pupils doing?

Who were they pretending to be?

How did they show you this?

Who has a different idea?

Why do we help people?

Why do we help our family?

Praise any interpretations given by pupils, and then ask the actors to explain what they were doing. Allow pupils time to discuss other ways that families can help each other.

Reading and Discussing the Text

1. Show pupils the cover of *First Facts Families Help Each Other*. Explain to pupils that this is an information report about the way people in different families help each other. Say:

Remember that all families are different. One of the families in the book might remind you of your family or you might think they are all very different from your family. Families help each other in different ways. All families have different family members.

2. Ask pupils to turn to the contents page. Remind them that the contents page tells readers how information is arranged in the book. Prompt pupils to look at the pictures and text. Ask pupils to read the chapter headings. Remind them to use the pictures to help them work out what the text says. Pupils turn to page 2. Make sure each pupil knows where to find the heading on the page.

3. Discuss the picture with pupils. Read, or ask volunteers to read, the text. Continue in this way until the end of the book.

4. Ask pupils if they noticed similarities in how the members of each family help each other and what happens in their own family. Ask: *Are there any pages that remind you of your own family?*

Give pupils more time to revisit the book and encourage them to discuss their ideas.

5. Show pupils **Copymaster 1**. Explain that there are some words missing from the sentences which they must fill in. Choose an example from your family and demonstrate for pupils. Tell pupils to choose one member of their family who helps them. They can write this name in the first space. At the beginning of the second sentence, pupils must write 'she' or 'he', depending on the family member they have chosen. In the remaining spaces, pupils should write how that person helps them. Pupils should write one word in each space. Tell pupils that they might not fill every space in the second sentence. Next, pupils read their sentences to themselves and then cut out each of the words. Pupils can mix these up on their table and then rearrange them to form the sentences again. Depending on the ability of pupils, have them swap their puzzle pieces with a friend.

Linking to Writing

1. Ask pupils to think about a time when someone in their family helped them and describe it. Ask them to write a recount about this. Encourage pupils to illustrate their recount.

2. Pupils might like to use these recounts as a basis for further mime activities.

3. Ask pupils to think of ways that they can help at home. What tasks do their parents ask them to do? What helpful tasks do they do without being asked? Encourage each pupil to make a poster of four tasks that they perform at home titled 'I help'. Ask pupils to draw a picture and add a caption to each.

Reading Name _____
Date _____

Sentence Puzzle

1. Finish the sentences.
2. Cut out the words.
3. Mix up the words.
4. Put the sentence back together again.

My		helps	me.
	helps	me	

My		helps	me.
	helps	me	