



Non-fiction (T) Teacher Book with Copymasters & CD

by Alison Hawes

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INTRODUCTION

Non-fiction

It would be hard to overstate the importance of non-fiction in our daily lives. It may not be something we necessarily think about, but as adults at work and at home, the reading and writing we do every day is overwhelmingly non-fiction. The same emphasis on non-fiction reading and writing applies to children in junior and secondary schools.

To succeed at school therefore, it is vital that children become familiar with reading and writing a wide range of non-fiction texts and formats and understand the various structures and features they contain. This can be especially difficult to achieve if you are a reluctant reader.

What is a 'Reluctant reader'?

Reluctant readers don't get on with books!

- They may be reluctant to read because they have never really seen the point of books. Books are BORING! They don't **want** to read. They'd much prefer to be doing something else.

Or

- They may have a special educational need and, although keen to read initially, have found reading such a difficult and frustrating process, that they, too, have become reluctant readers.

But whatever the reason, students that have become disengaged from reading and the enjoyment of books will find themselves:

- struggling to catch up with their peers
- unable to fully access the curriculum.

The WOW! Facts series

The WOW! Facts books have been especially written with reluctant readers in mind. They have been written to spark students' interest in non-fiction and to help re-engage them in the reading process. To this end, the books have been written to the following brief:

- Reading age 7–7.5 (to allow struggling readers access to the text)
- Interest age 10–14 (so the content is age appropriate)
- 800 to 1000 words in length — the short text and chapter breaks allow the student to gain satisfaction from reading a complete chapter or book
- A wide selection of subject matter (so there is something to engage everyone)
- A clear, clutter-free layout with plenty of space (to help the reader navigate the text and not lose their place)
- Books have a spine and the look and feel of 'real' books (so the reader does not feel patronised)
- Books have colourful, eye-catching covers with the book title in a font to match the title (to make the reader want to pick up the book and look inside)
- High-quality colour photographs, illustrations, maps and diagrams throughout (to add interest and give the book visual appeal as well as presenting opportunities for the reader to gain extra information from different formats).

The WOW! Facts Teacher Book

The WOW! Facts texts are designed to be used with groups of students or individuals, aged 10-14, who are reluctant or struggling readers – or both! This guide has been written to provide an extra resource for busy teachers and is packed with pages of notes and suggestions for mostly literacy-based activities and Copymasters to accompany each text.

There is also a CD to accompany this book. It contains:

- the text in Word of all the books in the series
- the Teacher Book
- the colour covers in JPG and PDF format.

Some suggestions for using this additional resource are given in the Teacher's Notes for each title.

The Teacher's Notes

The notes for each text are set out under the following headings:

About the author ~ a brief biography of the author and their work

Genre ~ the type of non-fiction text or texts used in the book

Features ~ a list of the non-fiction features that appear in the book

Summary ~ a précis of the text and the information it contains

Before reading ~ pre-reading discussion points for you to give students

Tricky vocabulary ~ a list of words that students may need help to decode

Technical vocabulary ~ a list of technical vocabulary that may need to be discussed before reading

After reading ~ suggested questions for you to use with students in group activities and discussions

Non-fiction essentials

1. **Feature finder** ~ a closer look at one or more of the non-fiction features in each book
2. **Text detective** ~ suggested activities to help students practise and improve their research and/or comprehension skills
3. **Let's write!** ~ some suggestions for non-fiction writing for different purposes for you to give to students

Curriculum essentials

Text-based introductory or revision exercises for you to work on with students covering some of the basics of grammar, punctuation, phonics and spelling for students who struggle the most with their literacy skills.

1. **Grammar**
2. **Punctuation**
3. **Phonics**
4. **Spelling.**

More ideas ~ more follow-up activities, either literacy-based or cross-curricular

About the Copymasters ~ introducing the content of the Copymasters

The Copymasters ~ there are two or three Copymasters for each book.

Curriculum links

As the texts in the WOW! Facts series are not aimed at any one year group, the table below has been created to help with planning and assessment, by setting out the areas students will broadly have covered if they have read the texts and worked their way through the discussion points, activities and worksheets in the Teacher Book.

General objectives	Word level	Sentence level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand the terms: fact, fiction and non-fiction. To identify the different structures and features of non-fiction text types including: report, recount, instruction, explanation and persuasive texts. To write non-fiction texts, using texts read as models for own non-fiction writing. To comment critically on the success of examples of non-fiction, the author's intentions and language choices. 	<p>Reading and spelling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using phonic knowledge, context and high frequency words to read accurately. Using a dictionary/spellchecker. Unfamiliar words; new graphemes. Soft and hard sounds. Endings: –er, –est, –ing, –ed. Apostrophes. Question words. Silent letters. Alphabetical order. <p>Vocabulary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Word meaning in context. Unfamiliar words. Subject/specialist vocabulary. Using a dictionary and glossary. Figurative vocabulary. Acronyms. 	<p>Punctuation and grammar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proper nouns. Capital letters, full stops. Commas (separating words in a list.) Apostrophes. Exclamation marks. Question marks. Adjectives. Organising writing into paragraphs. Sequencing information logically. Use of connectives. Present and past tense. Imperative verbs. Variety of sentence structures. Time connectives. Synonyms. Homophones.
Comprehension/Research/Planning	Writing non-fiction texts	Speaking/Listening/Discussion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To read for meaning. To use text to answer simple and higher order questions. To use images, diagrams and tables to gain information. To understand implied and explicit meanings. To locate and extract particular information using headings, subheadings, contents page and index, scanning and skimming, as appropriate. To be able to identify and select key words and phrases. To summarise texts and make notes. Turn notes into connected prose. To plan writing non-fiction with the help of notes, topic webs and timelines. To separate fact from opinion, fiction from non-fiction. To formulate questions for own research and interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write lists, labels, captions, headings and subheadings. Draw diagrams and tables. Write recounts, reports, instructions, explanations, letters, diary entries, notes and messages. Write newspaper-style reports. Write the same event in different formats. Present an opinion or point of view. To summarise key points and ideas. Design an advert. To use formal and informal language appropriately. To make use of writing frames as required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading aloud. Listening and responding to others. Taking turns. Clarifying ideas by talk. Expressing a point of view. Validating an argument. Collaborating in groups or with a partner. Predicting, explaining and evaluating. To ask and answer pertinent questions.

WOW! FACTS: Super Snakes

About the author

John Townsend used to be a teacher in a secondary school but eventually gave it up to become a full-time writer. He writes both fiction and non-fiction. He especially loves writing non-fiction books packed full of amazing – and sometimes scary or gruesome – facts. He has also written *Animal Record Breakers*, *Sharks*, *Secrets of the Dead*, *Gross Body Secrets*, *Mystery Beasts*, *Plague and Pox* and *Tiny but Deadly* in the WOW! Facts series. You can read more about John and other featured Badger authors at www.newresourcesforschools.co.uk.

Non-fiction genre

Information text; a non-chronological report with some recount text.

Non-fiction features

Contents page, vocabulary page, headings, photographs, fact boxes, subheadings, charts, caption, newspaper article, questions, index.

Summary

Overview: This book is full of amazing facts about some of the most dangerous snakes in the world and includes two real-life stories of snake attacks on children.

Chapter 1: Fangs and venom

This chapter concentrates on the most venomous snakes in the world and how they inject poison into their victims.

Chapter 2: Squeezed to death

This section deals with snakes that kill by constriction and includes facts about boas, anacondas and pythons and how they swallow their victims whole.

Chapter 3: Snake superpowers

This chapter outlines the special senses a snake possesses to help it locate its victims and the different ways snakes protect themselves from their enemies.

Chapter 4: Dangers to children

This chapter tells the real-life stories of two children who were attacked by snakes – and includes a photo of a boy whose best friend is a python!

Chapter 5: Snake of the past

This section contains facts about Titanoboa, the biggest snake that ever lived.

Chapter 6: Snakes in the news

The book finishes with a round-up of news stories about escaped pet snakes in the UK and America, some of which have been popping up in people's toilets!

Before reading

Look at the cover of the book and discuss how you feel about snakes. Do you love them, like them, hate them or fear them?

Now, read the blurb on the back cover.

What do you think the author means when he says,

- *You might find some of the facts in this book **hard to swallow**?*
- *Prepare to be shocked – **even in the bathroom**?*

Tricky vocabulary

These words may be difficult for many students to decode as they are either phonically irregular or contain graphemes with which the student may be unfamiliar.

- For help with words such as python, see the phonics section below.
measured
python
weighed
muscles
whole
tongues

Technical vocabulary

Students may need help both understanding and reading some of these words. Things to do:

- Ask whether the students have heard any of these words before
- Discuss together what the words might mean
- Practise using a dictionary to look up the some of the meanings
- Help the students to write their own glossary to go with the book.
venomous
mg (milligrams)
predator
anaconda
glands
tonne

After reading

- Answer the first five quiz questions at the back of the *Super Snakes* book. How many can you answer *without* looking up the answer in the book?
- Think back to how you felt about snakes *before* you read the book and now answer the last quiz question. Has your opinion changed? If it has, why do you think that is?

Non-fiction essentials

1. Feature finder – text check – use Copymaster (1) page 11 of this book.

Non-fiction texts use lots of different ways of sorting and presenting information.

Find all the different non-fiction features that the author has used in this book.

How many different ones can you spot?

2. Text detective – super killers

In Chapter 1 of *Super Snakes*, the author mentions four times, how some snakes can kill humans. Using the text of Chapter 1 from the CD, carefully highlight the sentences in the text where this is mentioned.

Re-use this information to write a paragraph entitled: Super killers!

3. Let's write! – snake attack

On page 30 of *Super Snakes* there is an extract from a newspaper article about snake attacks in New York.

Look at the **headline**. See how big the letters are. Headlines are there to be noticed!

Underneath are several **quotations**. (A quotation is a copy of some of the words someone has written or spoken.) See how speech marks have been put around the actual words spoken.

Reread the facts about a snake attack on a boy in Brazil in 2007 (See pages 21 and 22 of *Super Snakes*). Then write your own newspaper article telling the story of the attack. Think what would make a great headline. Draw a picture or find a suitable photo to go with the article and write a caption for it. Then write the story. Make it as exciting or as scary as you can. If you want to add one or two quotations, think what the boy and his grandfather might have said, if you had interviewed them after the attack and put their words in the story.

The writing frame Copymaster (2) on page 12 of the Teacher Book is there to help you plan your article.

Curriculum essentials

1. Grammar – *snake adjectives*

Discuss what an adjective is. Make a list of as many adjectives as you can think of that could be used to describe a snake. Use the list as a starting point for a poem about a snake.

2. Punctuation – *full stops*

Discuss how full stops are used to make a text easier to read. Then using the text from the CD, remove all the full stops from pages 10, 11 and 12 of *Super Snakes*, and ask the students to put them back in the correct place.

3. Phonics – *y as i*

What sound does the grapheme 'y' in the word python make? It makes the same sound in these words from *Super Snakes* too. Can you work them out?
dry, types, by, terrifying, why

4. Spelling – *words like this*

Many of the words in this book and those we use every day begin like the word, *this*.

Read these words and learn to spell any that you are not sure of:
then, that, those, the, their, them, these, they, there.

More ideas

Snake bite: Dos and Don'ts: Research what to do if you are bitten by a snake. [Try www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Bites-snake/Pages/Treatment.aspx or a book on first aid.] Then make a table of the five most important things you must **do** and five most important things you **mustn't do** if you are bitten by a snake.

Mongoose vs Cobra: Do you remember what a mongoose and a cobra look like? Look at pages 18 and 19 of *Super Snakes* if you need reminding. Then watch and *listen* to a short video of a fight between a mongoose and a cobra at www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdg9gkmWsEA. Then write a paragraph explaining what happens, who wins and why?

About the Copymasters

1. Non-fiction checklist

Students are given a checklist, to record the non-fiction features they can find within this book.

Note: This Copymaster can be used with any of the other books in the series.

2. Snake attack!

Newspaper report writing frame

Students write a newspaper article about the snake attack on a boy from Brazil in 2007, using the writing frame to help them. See the Let's write! section above for details.

1

Super Snakes (1)

Non-fiction checklist

Book Title	Author	Date
Does the book have	Yes/No	Page Number
A contents page		
An index		
Do the pages have		
Headings		
Subheadings		
Photographs		
Tables		
Diagrams		
Labels		
Captions		
Bullet points		
Maps		
Numbered lists		
Fact boxes		
Questions		
Quotations		

1

Super Snakes (2)

Newspaper report writing frame – snake attack!

Newspaper Name	
Headline	
Photograph or illustration	
Caption	
The story [including any quotes you might want to use]	