

# Guided reading

SECTION

2

## Cover, title page and spread 1

Look at the pictures together and discuss the deep-sea setting of the story. Encourage the children to name some of the species they recognise, such as the seaweed, anemone, coral, colourful tropical fish (indicating it is a warm sea), octopus, walrus, jellyfish, lobster, shark, seahorse, crab and cuttlefish. Ask the children if they know what the collective noun for fish is. Explain that it is called a 'shoal'. Discuss how a treasure chest and unattached anchor might find their way to the seabed.

Ask the children to identify Tiddler from the description. Point out the words: 'plain grey scales'. Can they see the scales and the fins? Discuss the meaning of 'telling tales'. Explain that literally it means telling stories, but metaphorically it means telling lies or stretching the truth.

Invite the children to spot adjectives in the text, such as 'plain', 'grey', 'big', 'small' and 'tall', and verbs, such as 'riding', 'flying' and 'diving'. Point out how words beginning with the same sound (alliteration) add to the rhythm and rhyme of the verse structure of the story. Can the children identify the rhyming words? Can the children pick out the phrase Tiddler always uses when making his excuses for being late. Point out the words: "Sorry I'm late".

## Spreads 2 and 3

Tell the children that all the characters' names are the names of real fish. Explain that they begin with capital letters in the story because they are also names. For example, there is a fish called a skate, whose name is used for the teacher, Miss Skate. Discuss how each fish is identifiable by its pattern, such as the spot on Johnny Dory's side and Rabbitfish's black and white head and yellow rear. Invite the children to describe each fish.

Read the page beginning 'At nine o'clock on Monday', inviting the children to answer the register in the roles of Rabbitfish and Redfin. Demonstrate a change of tone between the two callings of "Tiddler?". Invite the children to suggest why 'TIDDLER'S LATE!' is in capital

letters. How do they think Miss Skate says this? How does she feel about Tiddler being late? She might be cross, exasperated or annoyed. Ask the children what the fish are learning about that day. Point out that they are drawing fishbone skeletons on their slates.

Ask the children who they think is speaking in the phrase: "Sorry I'm late." (Tiddler). Discuss the possibilities of who says "Oh, no, she didn't." and "OH, YES, SHE DID." Is it Miss Skate, or the other fish, or both? Or could it be Tiddler or Johnny Dory? There is no right or wrong answer. Point out that the speech marks open and close, indicating a change of speaker. Draw the children's attention to the way the reader can work out who is speaking in some cases, but in others the word 'said' is used.

## Spreads 4 and 5

Discuss the similarities between this part of the story and the last two spreads. Point out that it is the same time of day and Miss Skate is calling the register. The names called are different and it is a new day, but the words 'TIDDLER'S LATE!' are repeated. Invite the children to compare Tiddler's excuse to his previous excuses. Can the children see it is more imaginative and exciting as Tiddler was apparently in danger this time?

Can the children spot the clues that suggest that Tiddler's excuses are made up? Highlight the fact that Tiddler's friends never believe him and that mermaids do not exist. Ask who likes Tiddler's tall stories best. Who does Little Johnny Dory tell the stories to? How do other fish get to hear the story?

Encourage the children to identify the rhymes and to join in the repeated phrases, especially the pantomime style, "OH, YES, HE DID." Before turning the page, can the children predict the time and day of the week that will begin the next part of the story?

## Spreads 6 and 7

Ask the children if they know what 'dawdling' means. Which phrase tells us that Tiddler is

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