



Fiction

Oxford Level 12

Hamper's Great Escape

Author: Pippa Goodhart

Range: Animal story

Theme: Fear

Teaching Notes authors: Thelma Page and Gill Howell

Synopsis

Sam and Clare take their pet hamster when they go to stay with Gran and Grandad. Grandad used to be a fireman and is very brave, so when Hamper escapes, he won't be frightened – will he?

Group or guided reading

Introducing the book

- Read the title and look at the picture. Ask: *Do you think Hamper is a good name for a hamster?*
- *Does anyone have a hamster for a pet?* Ask the children to tell you what they know about hamsters.
- Read the blurb on the back cover. Notice the cat.
- *What do you think might happen if the hamster escapes?*

Strategy check

- Remind the children to use syllables to help read new words. Find 'injection' on page 9, line 8. Ask a child to break it down into syllables.
- Find 'margarine' on page 13, line 3. Separate and read the syllables.
- Remind the children that compound words are easy to read when you split them into two shorter words. Find 'playground' (page 11), 'goldfish' (page 17), 'cardboard' (page 19). Ask the children to find the two shorter words each time.

Independent reading

Focus: Explain that you want the children to be able to answer this question when they have read the book: *What are the main events in this story?*

- Ask the children to read the story independently while individuals read aloud to you.
- Notice whether children become engrossed in reading or are easily distracted from the story. Praise children for concentrating well.
- When the children have read part of the story to you, ask them to tell you the most important things that have happened so far.

Returning and responding to the text

- *Can you tell me what the first event in this story was?* Make a note of the first event, e.g. Sam and Clare took their hamster to Gran and Grandad's house.
- *What happened next?* e.g. they built a playground for Hamper.
- Ask the children to tell you what to write next, e.g. Hamper escaped.
- *Who was frightened of Hamper?*



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- *How did the story end?*
- Look back at the list of events. Notice how the story was built up. *Which part was the introduction? Which part was the build-up? Which part was the climax? What was the resolution of the story?*
- Ask the children to say what they liked about this story.

Speaking and listening activities

- Ask the children to tell you about the pets they have.
- Give everyone who has a pet the chance to talk about it.
- Ask volunteers to be experts on different animals, e.g. a cat expert, a dog expert, a fish expert. Ask the rest of the class to think of questions for each expert.
- Ask some children to take notes of the answers. You might want to assign one note-taker to each animal. When the class asks a question, the expert tries to answer it.
- The note-taker for that animal writes down that fact, e.g. cats need to be fed twice a day.
- When everyone has asked a question, ask the note-takers to read their notes to remind everyone of the important facts.

Further reading activities

- Ask the children to look in their school or class library to find other animal stories. Use the blurb and the pictures to decide which one they would like to read.
- Encourage the children to make a storyboard for this story, putting in all the main events. Use the storyboard to retell the story orally.

Suggestions for using ICT

- Help the children to find out more about hamsters and other pets on the internet. Ensure that they only have access to child-friendly sites.
- Find out more about Pippa Goodhart on the internet.

Writing activities

- Ask the children to choose a different pet and to think about where it lives and what might happen if it got out.
- Ask them, in pairs, to plan and write the story independently, using this framework:
 - *Introduction*: remind them about the introduction to this story;
 - Ask them to make notes about the introduction to their own story;
 - *Build up*: in this section the children will need to show that something might go wrong;
 - *Climax*: something happens that will need to be put right;
 - *Resolution*: everything turns out well in the end.
- Next to each heading ask the children to make short notes of ideas for what will happen in their story.
- Then they should use their plan to write their story.

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