Inside every book...

Oxford Reading Levels

A Teacher's Guide to Oxford Reading Levels

Australia & New Zealand

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OXFORD

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Contents

- About this guide ..... Page 2
- About Oxford Reading Levels ..... Page 3
  - How do levelled reading books support progress? ..... Page 4
  - Phonics and Oxford Reading Levels ..... Page 8
  - Comprehension and Oxford Reading Levels ..... Page 9
  - Developing a healthy habit of reading ..... Page 15
- Oxford Reading Levels
  - Oxford Reading Level 1 ..... Page 17
  - Oxford Reading Level 1+ ..... Page 23
  - Oxford Reading Level 2 ..... Page 29
  - Oxford Reading Level 3 ..... Page 35
  - Oxford Reading Level 4 ..... Page 41
  - Oxford Reading Level 5 ..... Page 47
  - Oxford Reading Level 6 ..... Page 53
  - Oxford Reading Level 7 ..... Page 59
  - Oxford Reading Level 8 ..... Page 65
  - Oxford Reading Level 9 ..... Page 73
  - Oxford Reading Level 10 ..... Page 81
  - Oxford Reading Level 11 ..... Page 89
  - Oxford Reading Level 12 ..... Page 97
  - Oxford Reading Level 13 ..... Page 105
  - Oxford Reading Level 14 ..... Page 113
  - Oxford Reading Level 15 ..... Page 121
  - Oxford Reading Level 16 ..... Page 129
  - Oxford Reading Level 17 ..... Page 137
  - Oxford Reading Level 18 ..... Page 145
  - Oxford Reading Level 19 ..... Page 153
  - Oxford Reading Level 20 ..... Page 161
- Appendices ..... Page 168
- Glossary ..... Page 174

About this guide

At Oxford University Press (OUP), we believe that expertly levelled reading books—when used as part of a rich and varied reading provision—play a fundamental role in helping *all* students learn to read by developing essential reading skills, breadth of knowledge and vocabulary, and by fostering positive reading habits.

This guide is designed to give you more information about Oxford Reading Levels and a deeper understanding of what goes into making levelled reading books from OUP.[1]

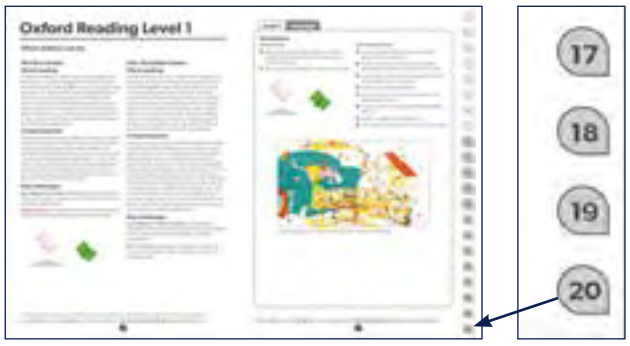
This guide aims to:

- help you understand the purpose of a text levelling system,
- explain the difference between a text levelling system, a reading scheme, and an assessment tool or system,
- give you an understanding of how Oxford Reading Levels helps develop word reading, comprehension, and fluency, and builds positive reading habits,
- explain what students can do at each Oxford Reading Level in terms of word reading and comprehension expectations,
- give a detailed breakdown of each Oxford Reading Level.

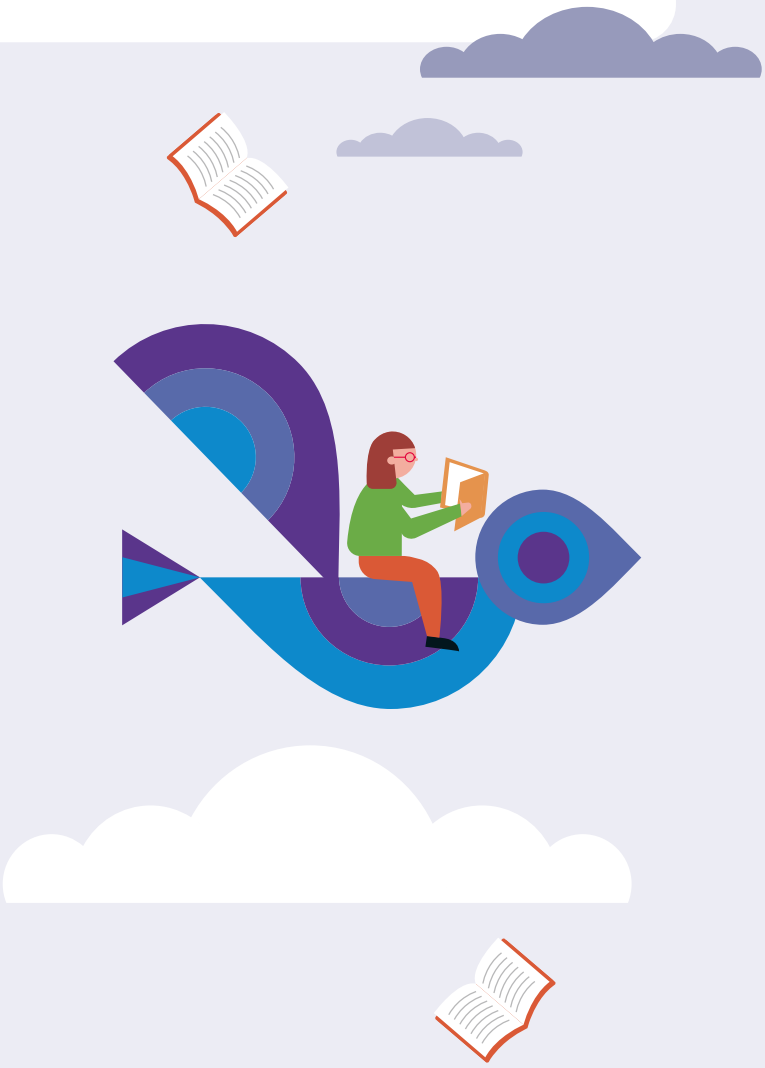
Navigating the guide

At the bottom of each page there is a footer with hyperlinks so that you can scroll back and forward through the document with ease.

In addition, when looking at the Oxford Reading Levels in detail, you will see the numbers for each level down the right-hand side of the page. These are also hyperlinked so that you can navigate between the levels.



At the end of this guide you will find a glossary of helpful words/terms that have been used. These words/terms have been emboldened throughout this guide.



1. This guide focuses on the make up and criteria for Oxford Reading Levels only and not any other text levelling system.

About Oxford Reading Levels

Oxford Reading Levels is a system used to determine the level of many popular primary reading books from OUP.[2] At each Oxford Reading Level, incremental changes to text difficulty based on a range of factors help to support students' progress in reading.

The Oxford Reading Levels system has been devised over decades with the help of many leading authors, editors, educational experts, and teachers.

Oxford Reading Levels range from Level 1 to Level 20, supporting readers from Foundation/Kindergarten to Year 6.

Year level	Age range	ORL
Foundation	5–6 years old	1
		1+
		2
		3
		4
Year 1	6–7 years old	5
		6
		7
Year 2	7–8 years old	8
		9
Year 3	8–9 years old	10
		11
		12
Year 4	9–10 years old	13
		14
		15
Year 5	10–11 years old	16
		17
Year 6	11–12 years old	18
		19
		20

This chart shows an approximate correlation between Oxford Reading Levels and students' age and year level. It reflects where most students should be in their reading journey in order to meet curriculum requirements. However, all journeys vary and students will have different needs at different points. Oxford Reading Levels can be used to support the three key phases of 'becoming a reader' as follows:

- Oxford Reading Levels 1–7 provide small steps of incremental progress in learning to decode as well as developing other essential reading skills. Working through the books in each of these levels in a rigorous and linear way is critical for building early reading foundations.
- Oxford Reading Levels 8–12 support students' transition from learning to read into reading to learn, as they begin to explore longer stories, chapter books, and more varied non-fiction. Students should be encouraged to make choices, based on their interests, within each level but progressing through these levels sequentially will really help to build their fluency and confidence as readers.
- Oxford Reading Levels 13–20 support students' onward reading journey by providing a range of increasingly sophisticated texts that can be used alongside or as part of a rich and varied reading library. It is useful for students to 'work through the levels' given the progression built in to the texts, but they should also be encouraged to make choices based on their interests and to move up and down the levels more freely if they wish.

2. **See Appendix 1** for a chart that illustrates how the Oxford Reading Levels system supports different series from Oxford University Press, from Foundation/Kindergarten to Year 6.

How do levelled reading books support progress?

Students need exposure to a rich and varied 'diet' of reading books and materials if they are to become successful, life-long readers, who take pleasure from reading. During primary school, this will include books that are read to, or shared with, students by an adult, books that teachers direct students to read independently, and books that students choose to read for themselves.* Some books will be used for instructional purposes, some for practising specific skills or acquiring specific knowledge, and some books will be read purely for pleasure. Most books will do all of these things! It is the mix of different reading experiences that matters when it comes to achieving the goal.

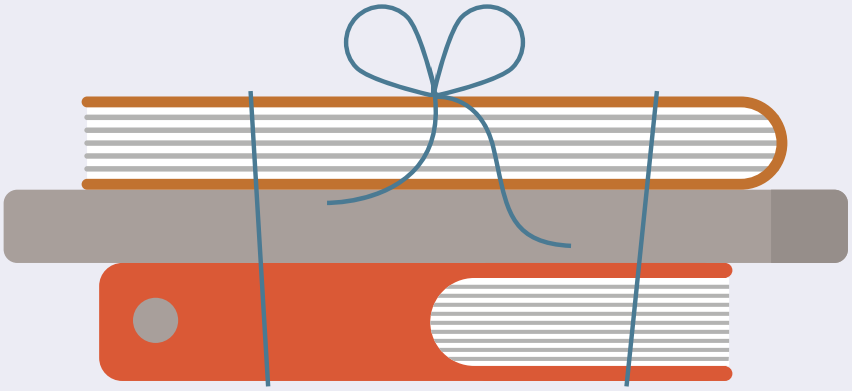
Levelled reading books can play a fundamental role in helping to develop essential reading skills, breadth of knowledge, and vocabulary, as well as helping to foster positive reading habits. They support students through small steps of progression, from wordless books to carefully structured, fully decodable books, to increasingly more complex, sophisticated, and varied fiction and non-fiction texts.

In the early years of Primary school, the development of word reading skills is key: many students will be mastering grapheme-phoneme correspondences and learning to read high-frequency words. Levelled texts that support practise of these skills in a systematic way ensure consistency between what students are taught in class and what they encounter when reading, which allows students to steadily gain confidence in their reading abilities.

Beyond developing word reading skills, levelled reading books can help support progress in reading comprehension and language skills, develop fluency and stamina, as well as establish the habit of reading.

Even when students *can read*—i.e. they have largely mastered word reading—the use of levelled reading books ensures students develop a range of reading skills in a supported way. Levelled reading books offer progressive exposure to different genres, themes, plot and text devices, as well as helping to develop students' grammatical knowledge, which in turn aids understanding.

For more details about how levelled reading books can support the development of a range of skills, **see pages 7–15** of this guide.

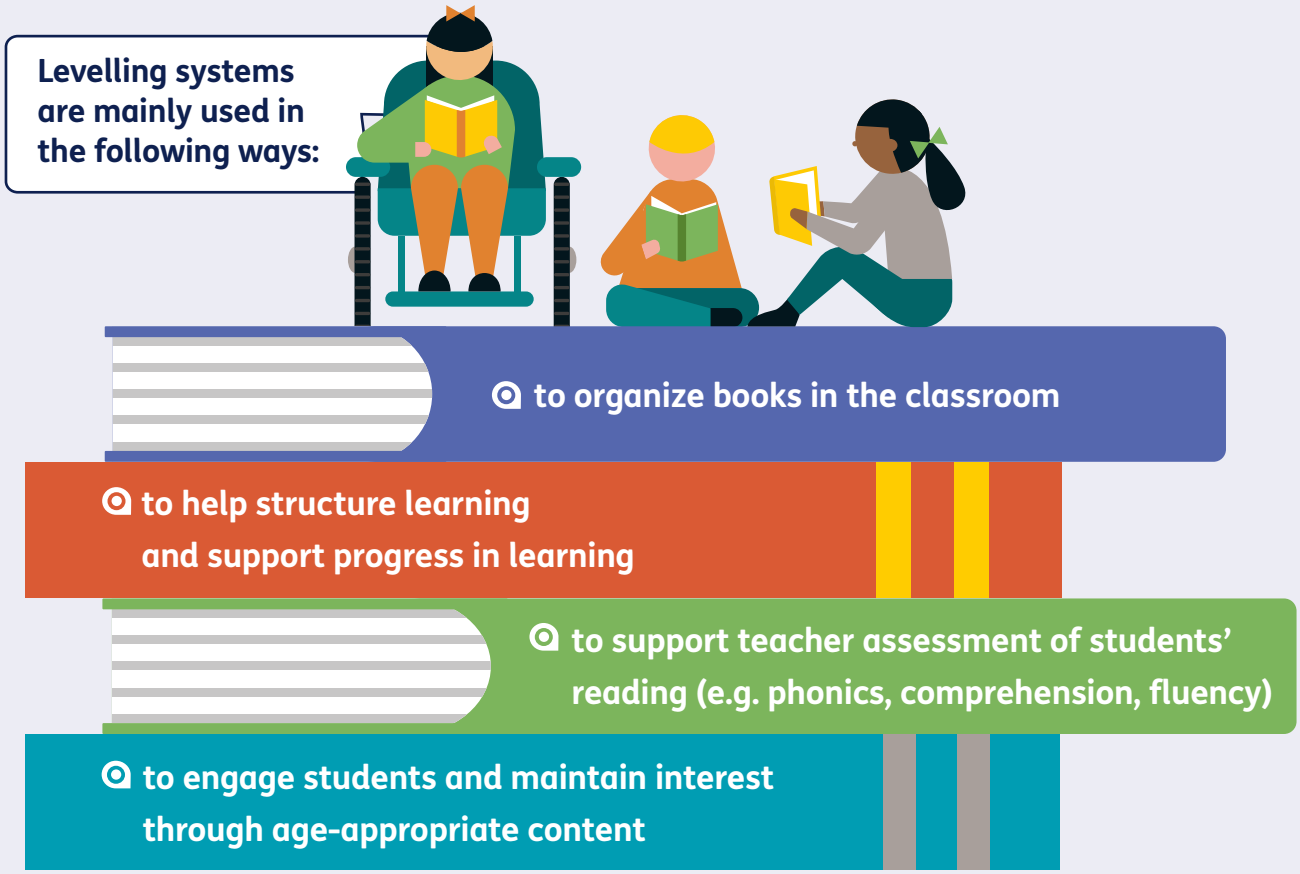


*The term 'book' in this context refers to any form of reading material.

Why are levelling systems for primary reading books important?

Oxford Reading Levels is a text levelling system. Text levelling systems are crucial for ensuring that levelled reading books meet certain standards, whether that be the appropriateness of the content, phonics, language, or grammatical and sentence structures used within them. This way, teachers can have confidence that students will be encountering books with the right amount of challenge, at any point in their reading journey, as they progress from learning to decode to becoming confident, fluent readers who can tackle any text.

Oxford primary reading books are carefully levelled by experts using the Oxford Reading Levels system.[9]



How Oxford Reading Levels can help assess students' reading capabilities

The dual processes of levelling texts and assessing students' reading capabilities are linked but different.

Levelling texts involves using a detailed set of criteria to determine the level of challenge within primary reading books. Oxford Reading Levels is a system for levelling text that supports many different series from OUP.[10]

Assessing a students' reading capabilities—i.e. judging what they can 'do'—involves a range of factors and assessment methods, including teacher judgement. However, in any assessment, it is important that students' reading is assessed in relation to a text of an appropriate level.

Reading books that have been levelled using Oxford Reading Levels can be used to support effective assessment of students' reading.

9. Read Write Inc. has its own unique and carefully structured progression and is not levelled using Oxford Reading Levels.
10. **See Appendix 1** for a chart that illustrates how the Oxford Reading Levels system supports different series from Oxford University Press, from Foundation/Kindergarten to Year 6.

Analysing the 'science' and 'art' of Oxford Reading Levels

A specialist team at Oxford University Press set out to analyse the 'science' and 'art' behind Oxford Reading Levels in order to create more comprehensive level descriptors. It is hoped that this robust analysis will help teachers by giving them detailed information about each Oxford Reading Level so that they can select the right books for their students, **see the Oxford Reading Levels section of this guide.**

The science

Using data from the *Oxford Children's Language Corpus*, OUP has analysed the 'science' behind Oxford Reading Levels, looking at:

- phonics (e.g. digraphs, alternative pronunciations, common exception words)
- text features (e.g. labels, captions)
- word level analysis (e.g. word counts per book/page)
- sentence characteristics (e.g. sentences per book/page/paragraph)
- sentences by function (e.g. statements, exclamations, questions, and commands)
- sentences by structure (e.g. **subject-verb-object**)
- punctuation features (e.g. commas, colons, dashes)
- word classes (e.g. **adjectives**, **nouns**, **conjunctions**, prepositions)
- vocabulary (e.g. frequency of individual words).

The art

In addition, OUP has interrogated the 'art' behind Oxford Reading Levels, including (among other things):

- choosing appropriate decodable words
- vocabulary choices
- subject matter and themes
- character, setting, and plot
- story structure and book devices
- dialogue
- text positioning
- design and illustration features.

The *Oxford Children's Language Corpus* is the largest living database of children's reading and writing in English. This unique insight into the words children write and read, allows OUP to understand the language children need to acquire at each step of their education.

The Oxford Reading Levels analysis was based on:

Books that have been developed using Oxford Reading Levels help to:

Build reading skills, confidence, stamina, and pace through:

- careful choice of words
- increasing the number of pages per book
- increasing the number of words and sentences per book and per page
- a selection of organizational features such as paragraphs, chapters, and headings
- thoughtful use of images and illustrations.

Build reading comprehension through:

- the transition from familiar topics to more complex subject matter and themes
- narrative and non-fiction structures that progress from linear to more sophisticated structures
- opportunities to encounter a variety of author voices
- gradual removal of the scaffolds that typically support understanding (e.g. fewer familiar words, more complex sentences, increased use of pronouns)
- varied punctuation.

Build language through:

- progressive use of language devices and figures of speech (e.g. **onomatopoeia**, **alliteration**, **similes**, **metaphors**, and **idioms**)
- introduction of different types of sentences (e.g. compound and complex sentences)
- use of increasingly varied vocabulary.

Build reading habits through:

- progressive exposure to different types of content in fiction and non-fiction
- character development, increasing complexity of plot, diversity of settings
- introduction of different genres (e.g. folk tales, classic texts).

… and much more!

Phonics and Oxford Reading Levels

Many schools in Australia have incorporated systematic synthetic phonics into their classroom teaching and therefore require decodable reading books to support effective teaching and practice.

As will be evident from this guide, there are many factors we consider when determining the 'level' of a text including, for example, the number of words, the sentence structure, and the design and layout; all of these factors—as well as phonics—support progression in reading. It is also the case that not all books created by OUP are fully decodable because we serve a broad range of reading needs and customers across Australia and around the world. However, where fully decodable books are required the Oxford Reading Levels can support phonics teaching programmes.

Systematic Synthetic Phonics teaching (SSPs)

Letters and Sounds 2007 Phonics framework	**Floppy's Phonics** Teaching program
Matched decodable books Oxford Reading for Comprehension Decodables Little Blending Books Project X Phonics Project X Alien Adventures Project X Hero Academy (fiction and non-fiction) Oxford Reading Tree Traditional Tales	**Matched decodable books** Floppy's Phonics Readers Oxford Reading Tree Traditional Tales

Oxford Reading Levels

A system for levelling reading books that underpins many different series from Oxford University Press

For more details on the specific phonics (and 'tricky word'/CEW) progression in each SSP, and the different OUP books that match, please refer to the specific teaching support for each program/series. As a general guide, a very detailed phonic progression through Phases 2–5 of Letters and Sounds will be found in Oxford Reading Levels 1–6 whilst words with rarer GPCs are covered from Oxford Reading Level 7 onwards. Whatever the phonics teaching program, students should be equipped with the skills to read any book from Oxford Reading Level 7 or 8 onwards.

Important note: The Oxford Reading Levels do not support the phonics progression found in Read Write Inc. (RWI) Phonics (also published by OUP). Schools using RWI Phonics should choose the RWI Storybooks and Book Bag Books to support the teaching of reading. However, once students have completed the RWI Phonics programme, the Oxford Reading Levels can be used to build students' fluency and confidence and support progress in reading as part of a rich and varied reading diet through Years 2–6. We recommend Oxford Reading Level 8 as a good starting point for students transitioning from RWI Phonics.

Comprehension and Oxford Reading Levels

> The goal of reading is to extract meaning from text.
>
> Dr Jessie Ricketts and Dr Helen L. Breadmore[11]

Reading is a complex process that requires students to use a range of comprehension skills and strategies in order to ensure understanding. Oxford Reading Levels supports the development of these skills and strategies through the progression of multiple, detailed criteria—from text features, word and sentence complexity, and punctuation, to content development—as set out in the **Oxford Reading Levels** section in this guide. You will also find the comprehension expectations for students for each Oxford Reading Level in this section.

Oxford University Press has also worked with leading academics and practitioners in the field of comprehension, including Professors Jane Oakhill and Kate Cain, to help develop the following Comprehension Skills Framework and seven core Comprehension Strategies.

The Framework has been devised to represent the best research in the area of comprehension whilst also reflecting statutory assessment criteria and ease of use for teachers and students.

The Comprehension Skills Framework

The Comprehension Skills Framework distills comprehension into five skills that research suggests are essential to deriving meaning from texts. These skills are broadly the same at all reading levels with the text itself creating the degree of challenge.

Using Oxford Reading Levels to develop comprehension skills

There are opportunities to draw out, reinforce, and practise the skills set out in the Comprehension Skills Framework at each Oxford Reading Level, through direct discussion about a text and within the teaching support for a particular series; for example:

- comprehension questions in the reading books themselves (e.g. as part of the inside cover notes),
- questions and activities in teaching notes,
- assessment support in teaching handbooks and on Oxford Owl,
- plenary activities (e.g. photocopiables),
- digital activities.

Each reading series will support the skills in a range of ways, depending on the purpose and the structure of the series.

A range of comprehension question stems can be found in **Appendix 3**.

The difference between 'skills' and 'strategies'

Comprehension skills and strategies are linked but not always the same. Strategies are consciously employed during reading to help construct meaning in real time; whereas skills are abilities that can be used after reading to answer questions about the text.

- 'Skills' are measurable and can be used in formative assessment.
- 'Strategies' are used in the moment and are not easily measurable.

Oxford OWL

Oxford Owl is the home for Oxford Primary professional resources.

www.oxfordowl.com.au

11. Breadmore, H.L., & Ricketts, J. (2021). *Technical report on Levelling Texts: Factors that affect reading success*. Oxford University Press (unpublished).

The Comprehension Skills Framework:

Comprehension Skill	Description
Finding information	**This category is about:** retrieving literal information from the text or pictures. For example, in fiction, this could be information about characters, settings, or plot. The information should be overtly expressed/written in the text (such as a character expressing their feelings by explicitly saying they are 'sad/happy' etc.) rather than anything that has to be implied.
Making connections and inferences	**This category is about:** *reading between the lines* of the text, finding clues, and building meaning from information which isn't explicitly stated (inference). There are broadly two types of inference: 1. Global coherence is inference at a whole-text level and includes: • identifying *cause and effect* • identifying *reasons for events* or *characters' actions* • distinguishing between *fact* and *opinions* • identifying *point of view* • making *predictions*, in so far as this can be assessed. An example would be identifying a character's emotional state from the way they behave (e.g. 'Jake stomped off' implies the character is cross without explicitly saying so); or the setting for a text might be signaled by various words (e.g. *waves, sandcastles, pier*) but without explicitly stating 'beach/seaside'. 2. Local cohesion is at sentence level; it is the inference that's needed to understand sentence connecting. It includes linking words or ideas, such as: • linking pronouns to people/things (e.g. the cat/it), • categories (e.g. the bird/the robin), • synonyms or other referring phrases (e.g. the writer/the author).
Understanding vocabulary	**This category is about:** identifying the meaning of words and phrases, synonyms and antonyms, activating related words and concepts, and understanding the effect of word choices.
Using structure and organization to make meaning	**This category is about:** the ability to make sense of a text by understanding the 'gist', ordering events and identifying main ideas, drawing on knowledge of text conventions, forms, and features.
Understanding and appreciating the author's toolkit	**This category is about:** how the author uses language and punctuation to create effects, awareness of the author's intent, and expressing evaluative opinions on a text.

Comprehension Strategies

The seven core Comprehension Strategies listed below have all been proven by research to be important in aiding understanding of text. These strategies are consciously employed during reading to help construct meaning. Young readers need to be taught these strategies. The student-friendly prompts and descriptions may be used to help teach students about the different strategies.

Comprehension Strategies	Student-friendly prompt	Student-friendly description
Monitor comprehension	Check it makes sense	Check words, phrases, and ideas make sense. If they don't make sense, read around the sentence and think about the rest of the text to work them out.
Infer	Look for clues	Think like a detective and look beyond what the words say to the clues underneath.
Determine importance	Decide main points	As you read, watch out for the main events or the most important information.
Identify text structures, features, and language	Notice text features	Be aware of the type of text you're reading. Notice features that the writer has used to help you understand the text.
Ask questions and predict	Question and predict	Make predictions and ask yourself questions. Then read on to find out.
Visualize	Picture in your mind	Make a picture in your mind of the text or think about feelings or sounds to make the text more real.
Activate prior knowledge	Think and remember	Use what you already know about the world or other books to understand the text more.

The role of images in supporting understanding

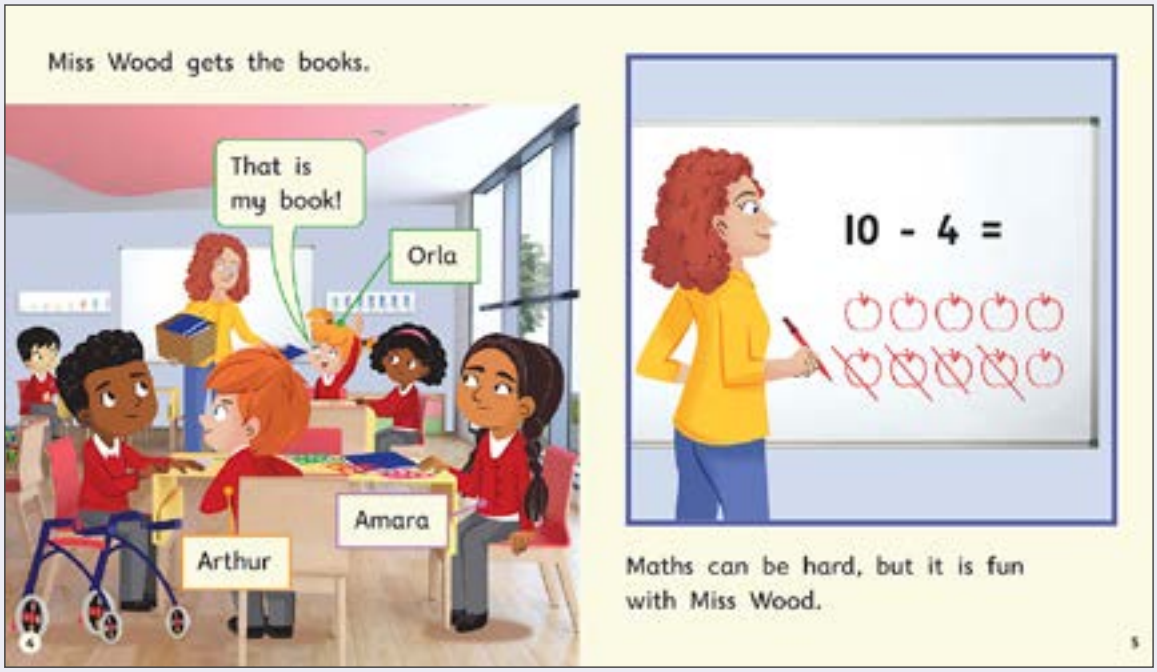
Images—photos and artwork—play a key role in engaging young readers and building their confidence; they scaffold and support understanding and are an important feature of the Oxford Reading Levels system. This is particularly true at Oxford Reading Levels 1–4, when students are still developing their early phonics skills and where images are essential for helping to convey the meaning of a book.

By Oxford Reading Level 5, students are increasingly able to apply their phonics knowledge automatically to help them read words, which means that the text can 'do more of the heavy lifting' in terms of telling the story or conveying the information in non-fiction, rather than relying on the images themselves. And by Oxford Reading Level 7, a book should be able to 'stand on its own' (i.e. it should make sense, or convey the meaning and the concepts, without the images); at this level, the images will still support the text however and enrich the whole reading experience for the student.

Often, in fiction, there is more than one piece of action happening on a page, so images can be used to shine a light on specific events. They can also be used to lighten serious topics, in fiction and non-fiction, or emphasize a particular moment of tension in a story.

At higher levels, images still have a function and are far from just being there for decoration. At Oxford Reading Level 18, for instance, images can support contextualization and help verify what students have read; they can also help to break up dense pages of text, giving the reader a 'breather' and giving a sense of achievement (that they have reached a milestone in a book).

The Oxford Reading Levels system also takes account of: perspectives and angles of images, the ratio of wide shots to close ups, and the progression in image colour, from full colour to black-and-white illustrations, as befits the more sophisticated reader.



Oxford Reading Level 3: Project X Hero Academy Non-fiction: *Miss Wood*

The role of text complexity in developing fluency and comprehension

Once students have mastered the skills they need to decode most words, developing their fluency is a key next step. A student who reads fluently—with accuracy, pace, and expression—has much more available 'brain space' to monitor their understanding and create the mental model of a text that is so vital to comprehension and to enjoyment of reading.

Fluency develops with practice, by reading and often re-reading texts, and through exposure to gradually more challenging and complex texts. Oxford Reading Levels can help to support students through this critical phase of becoming a reader in several ways.

> Research suggests that the amount you read is central to the development of reading proficiencies, particularly fluency.[12]

Text structure

One of the most basic principles behind the Oxford Reading Levels system is that, as students progress through the levels, the number of pages per book and the number of words per book increases. If you pick up an Oxford Reading Level 2 book and an Oxford Reading Level 5 book, for example, it is very clear that the Level 5 book has 'more pages' and 'more words' in it.

This is less visible at the highest levels where the text is denser. Nevertheless, there is a steady increase in extent and word count, which helps to build confidence and stamina in incremental stages. The table below gives an example of what the progression for some of the word and sentence characteristics looks like at four different Oxford Reading Levels for fiction titles.

Word and sentence characteristics	Oxford Reading Level 2	Oxford Reading Level 5	Oxford Reading Level 10	Oxford Reading Level 15
Average number of pages per book	16	24	32	64
Average number of words per book	85	300	1500	6000
Average number of sentences per page	1	2	6	13
Average number of words per sentence	5	6	8	8

Text breaks

Few of us will have the opportunity (or the time), to read a book in one sitting; we need regular breaks to be able to gather our thoughts and reflect on what we've read. Students are no different. Indeed, as they are learning the process of reading they will require more breaks, particularly as the books get longer.

Non-fiction books using Oxford Reading Levels include natural breaks and often there will be a new section on every spread. In fiction, chapters are introduced at Level 8 to ensure that, as more text appears on the page and as plots start to get more complex, readers have time to pause and reflect. In fiction, section breaks within a chapter are introduced at Level 15. New sections help signify to the reader that there's been a significant jump in time or place or that there has been a shift to a different character's point of view within a chapter. These are indicated with a space between paragraphs. All these factors mean that the level of challenge gradually increases but that students are not overwhelmed by the texts they read.

Text features

The range of text features—particularly in non-fiction—and the regularity with which they are introduced and used, is taken into consideration with Oxford Reading Levels to ensure readers are not unduly overloaded. This includes things like: labels, captions, speech bubbles, thought bubbles, environmental text, diagrams, timelines ... the list goes on!

12. Allington, R. L. (2002). *You can't learn much from books you can't read.* Educational Leadership.

Language and sentence complexity

Without enough language—a word gap—a student is seriously limited in their enjoyment of school and success beyond.[13]

If language is the key that unlocks learning, then sentences are the hand that turns that key. For full reading comprehension, words must be read and understood in context, i.e. in the way they are used within different sentence structures for different effects. In the words of David Crystal: *we use the grammar of the sentence to tell us what the word means ... That is what sentences are for. They help us to make sense of words. Without sentences what we say simply won't make sense. Little children have to learn that lesson. And so do we, if we want to understand how language works.*[14]

Unlike many other text levelling systems, Oxford Reading Levels takes into account grammatical structure, punctuation, and character of sentences along with sentence length and frequency to gauge the true complexity of the text. It ensures that sentences gradually increase in difficulty as readers progress through the levels and build their fluency and confidence.

Vocabulary is covered in detail at each of the Oxford Reading Levels in this guide. You can also see examples of the types of words that are used at different Oxford Reading Levels in **Appendix 4**.

The following examples illustrate the different levels of reading fluency and stamina required to read and process shorter and longer sentences.

It is a mess. (Oxford Reading Level 1+)

Boxer took the fish and ran off. (Oxford Reading Level 3)

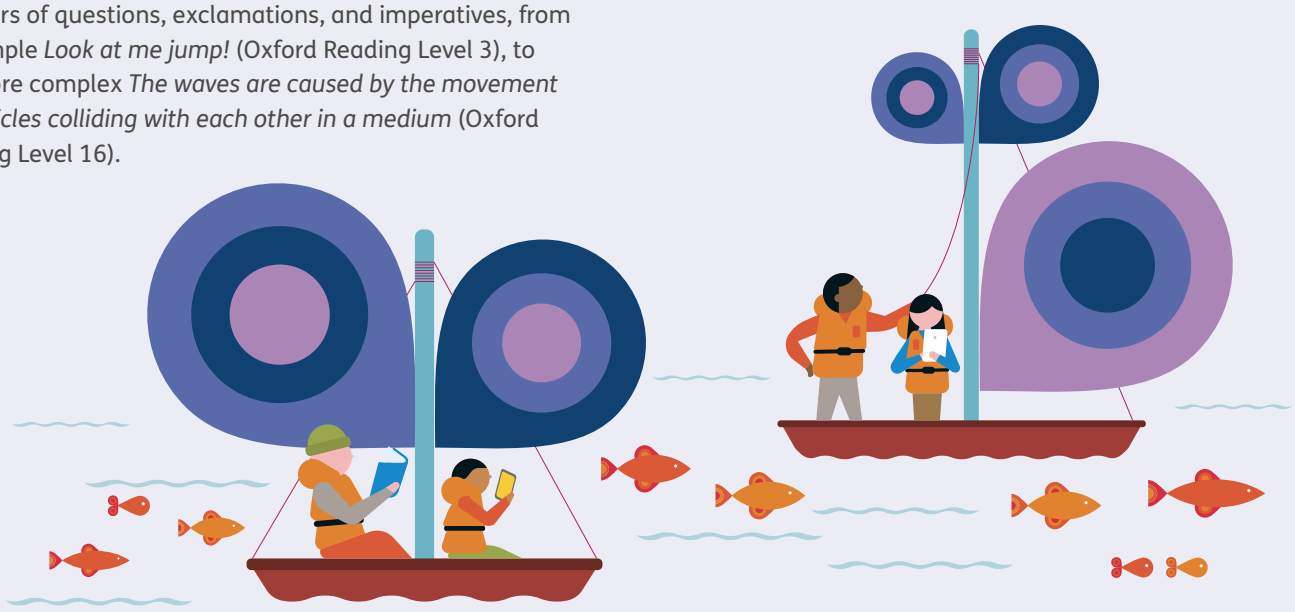
After tea, Cook made the children wash their hands again. (Oxford Reading Level 7)

There are different versions of what happened to Boudica after her army was defeated. (Oxford Reading Level 12)

Amongst the trees were houses of different shapes and sizes, cleverly built out of trunks and branches with some elegant balconies, others with decorative porches or doorways. (Oxford Reading Level 18)

Sentence function

Almost 50% of sentences read at any level tend to be statements and in the **active voice** and 50% in the **passive voice**, but readers are gradually introduced to increasing numbers of questions, exclamations, and imperatives, from the simple *Look at me jump!* (Oxford Reading Level 3), to the more complex *The waves are caused by the movement of particles colliding with each other in a medium* (Oxford Reading Level 16).



13. Oxford University Press (2018). *Why Closing the Word Gap Matters*. Oxford University Press.
14. Crystal, D. (2010). *A Little Book of Language*. Yale University Press.

Sentence structure

The most common sentence structures are single clause (simple) sentences across all Oxford Reading Levels. **Multi-clause sentences** are gradually introduced and increase in frequency. Below is an example of how this ratio changes as we progress through the levels.

Approximate percentage of sentences per book	Oxford Reading Level 3	Oxford Reading Level 9	Oxford Reading Level 12	Oxford Reading Level 20
Single clause sentences (present/past/conditional/future tense)	96%	75–80%	70–75%	60–65%
Multi-clause (compound and complex) sentences (present/past/conditional/future tense)	4%	20–25%	25–30%	35–40%

Coordinating conjunctions 'and' and 'but' are introduced early on in Oxford Reading Levels to help build sentence complexity and create simple but longer sentences, e.g. *Biff ran and ran* (Oxford Reading Level 2); later on, the use of **subordinating conjunctions**, **relative pronouns**, and **adverbs** create longer and more complex sentences to add to the difficulty level of the text, e.g. *Vilana planned to use the vipers while simultaneously harnessing the power of a tornado to generate enough force to blast the rip-lock off the staff* (Oxford Reading Level 19).

Subordinate clauses and **relative clauses** are introduced gradually to include more information, e.g. *Dan Peggotty also looked after an orphaned nephew named Ham, a tall lad with a wide smile, who was several years older than I was* (Oxford Reading Level 16).

Common sentence structure patterns

Sentence structure patterns (e.g. subject-verb-object) also determine the complexity of the sentence, the way information is presented within the sentence, and the connections that must be made: *He had found a big red button* (Oxford Reading Level 6) is a seven-word sentence with a straightforward subject-verb-object pattern, while the following sentence is only two words longer, and not difficult to read or understand, but includes a subject, verb, direct object, indirect object, and an object complement: *The alien gave him the gem as a prize* (Oxford Reading Level 6).

Mixed tense sentences are also introduced, particularly in dialogue, to mirror speech in real life or conversations, e.g. 'I get the feeling it might be Glass and his Betterworlders who find themselves locked behind a different sort of barrier soon,' Max commented (Oxford Reading Level 17).

Common sentence structure patterns for each Oxford Reading Level are listed in their respective sections of this guide, with example sentences.

See Glossary for sentence definitions.

Developing a healthy habit of reading

Over the last few years, there has been a growing focus on encouraging reading for pleasure in schools but it is useful to remember that reading for pleasure is a means to an end as well as an important end in itself.

Multiple research studies tell us that students who read widely and for pleasure do better academically and in life. As well as being 'good' at reading, taking pleasure in it matters because if a student enjoys reading, they are more likely to choose to do it regularly. If this student can also be encouraged to read widely, across a range of genres and authors, they will gradually build their knowledge of the world and of themselves in ways that will have far-reaching benefits.

However, not all reading is pleasurable; there are other reasons to read and other emotional responses to reading that are equally important.

You do not *need* to feel pleasure in order to be able to read a 300+ page physics textbook (although some might), but you do need to feel confident that you *can* read it, and you need to have developed reading skills and strategies in order *to* understand it. For the majority of upper-Secondary learners, it will be the need to acquire knowledge, not pleasure, that drives them to read a book and the need/desire to pass an exam.

So instead of focusing solely on the idea of reading for pleasure, we should consider the merits of developing positive reading habits. As part of a rich and varied reading curriculum, Oxford Reading Levels can help to encourage a habit of reading widely and often, as well as for pleasure.

Pleasure

NOUN

1 A feeling of happy satisfaction and enjoyment.

1.1 Enjoyment and entertainment as opposed to necessity.

Oxford Dictionary of English

Habit

NOUN

1 A settled or regular tendency or practice, especially one that is hard to give up.

Oxford Dictionary of English

Steady pace over speedy progress

An important aspect of building a positive reading habit is ensuring that students are progressing at the right pace, so they're not overwhelmed by texts they might struggle to read or given texts that are too easy so that they become disengaged. Oxford Reading Levels can play a crucial role here.

The needs of each individual student will determine how quickly or slowly they progress through the Oxford Reading Levels system: ultimately, they need to move at a pace that is right for them. You know your students and are therefore best placed to determine this.

Nevertheless, with the possible exception of swift early acquisition of word reading skills, we advocate progressing at a steady pace through the Oxford Reading Levels system. Students need to spend time at a particular level to develop their fluency and comprehension and ultimately their confidence and enjoyment of reading.

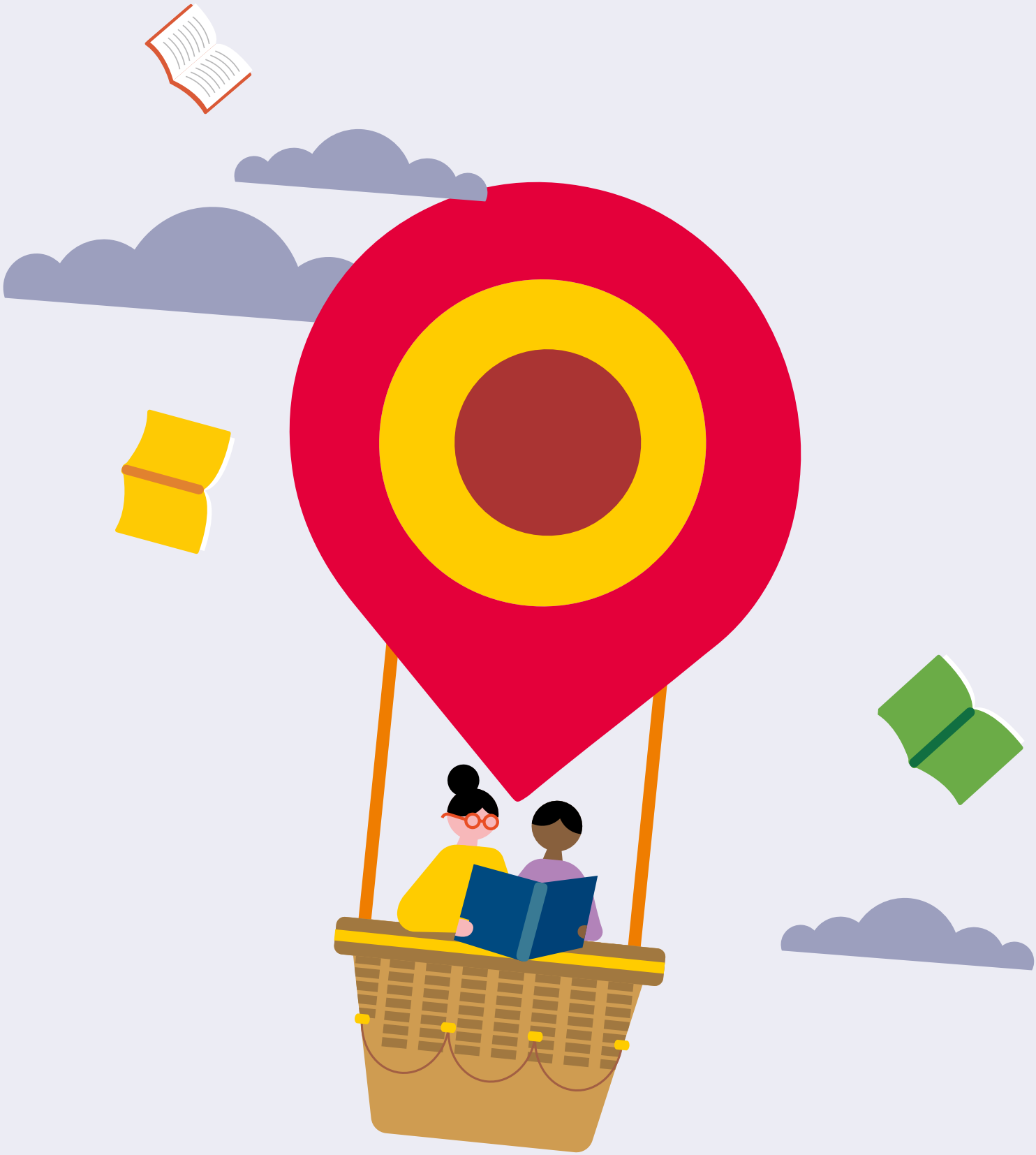
In the early years, depending on the phonics program you use, students should move swiftly through the phonics teaching progression (while ensuring time is given to consolidate that learning). However, learning a certain number of GPCs per week as part of a phonics program is just one aspect of progressing through a levelled reading system.

Levelled reading books that have been developed using a comprehensive levelling system such as Oxford Reading Levels, will also introduce students to different grammatical structures, varied page layouts and text features, and will allow them to explore the relationship between text and images. Some of these aspects are explored in the later sections of this guide when looking at each level in detail.

It is important to maintain steady progress throughout primary, and particularly at Years 2–6 where, in fiction, readers will be encountering greater plot complexity, e.g. **non-linear narratives** and **flashbacks**, a 'story-within-a-story', **prologues** and **epilogues**, and cliffhangers. Or where they will meet nuances of character development, e.g. when a character says one thing but means or does another, the use of inner monologue, encountering different character perspectives, and the difference between **protagonists** and **antagonists**.

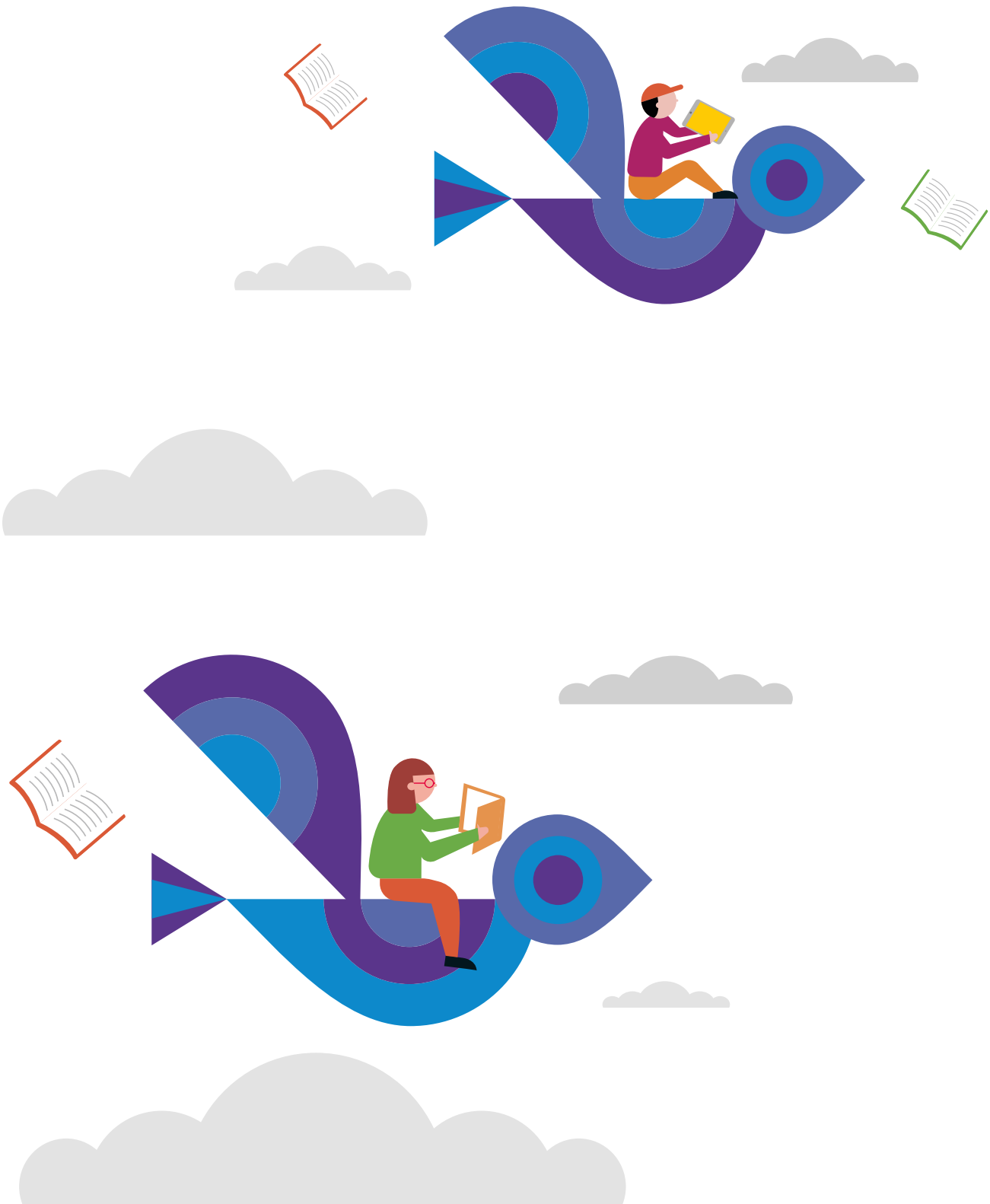
Non-fiction adds its own incremental challenges in terms of the number of features that are used on each page, the complexity of visual features such as diagrams, the conceptual challenges of the content, and the questions that are posed to the reader.

Oxford Reading Levels takes into account all these subtle facets of challenge—and many more—and introduces them incrementally as appropriate.



15. **See Appendix 2** for a chart that illustrates how Oxford Reading Levels relate to Book Bands.

Oxford Reading Level 1



Oxford Reading Level 1

What students can do

Wordless books: Word reading

Students are beginning to learn about books and reading and have begun to acquire knowledge of the alphabet. They can listen to and copy a range of different sounds using voice, body percussion, etc. They know the sounds associated with some letters and may be able to recognize some familiar words. They are learning the difference between words and pictures, and that written words correspond to spoken words. They are beginning to learn that, in English, words are written from left to right and from top to bottom. They are learning how to hold and handle books appropriately.

Comprehension

Students experience a range of stories and rhymes, both retold orally and read aloud from books, and can sometimes express a simple response, joining in with reading/retelling when appropriate. When prompted, they can sometimes retell a story they know well (though maybe only partially or in very simple terms). They sometimes express their views and ask questions and may contribute to discussions about texts at their own level. They are beginning to understand how to use pictures to help them work out what a book is about.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: learning how books work; book handling skills; responding to stories; using the pictures to help with comprehension.

NEW at this level: understanding stories told through pictures; joining in with telling/retelling; expressing simple opinions.

Fully decodable books: Word reading[1]

Students are beginning to learn about books and reading and have begun to acquire knowledge of the alphabet. They can differentiate between words and pictures and can identify a word and a letter when asked. They know the sounds associated with some letters and are beginning to use early grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) to sound out simple consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words. They are beginning to understand that written words correspond to spoken words. They are learning that, in English, words are written from left to right and from top to bottom. They are learning how to hold and handle books appropriately.

Comprehension

Students experience a range of stories and rhymes, both retold orally and read aloud from books, and can express a simple response, joining in with reading/retelling when appropriate. When prompted, they can sometimes relate aspects of a text to their own experience and retell a story they know well (though maybe only partially or in very simple terms). They can sometimes express a simple view about a text at their own level, asking and answering simple questions, and contributing to discussions. With prompting, they can sometimes attempt a simple prediction or anticipate what will happen next. They are sometimes able to mirror use of new vocabulary by an adult when talking about a book. They understand how to use pictures to help them work out what a book is about and may use the pictures to help them retell a story.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: using early phonics knowledge to help decode simple words; tracking directionality of print; using words and pictures together to help with comprehension.

NEW at this level: engaging with simple words on the page (a mixture of decodable, highly familiar/picture-cued, and character names).

1. For more details on the phonics progression for a particular phonics teaching programme or decodable reading series, please refer to the specific teaching support.

Vocabulary

Wordless books:

- Texts provide opportunities to draw on students' ability to hear and make sounds (through images rather than words).
- Titles may be used to introduce characters and a topic.

Fully decodable books:

- Text is introduced according to the start of the relevant phonic progression.
- Texts provide opportunities to develop students' knowledge of initial GPCs and blend first CVC words.
- A few common words may be introduced (according to the relevant phonic progression).
- Words will be single syllable words.
- Text will mostly be in the form of sound effects at Oxford Reading Level 1a.
- Simple sentences are introduced at Oxford Reading Level 1b.
- Suffixes: -s endings may be introduced.
- Titles may be used to introduce characters and a topic.

Oxford Reading Level 1: Oxford Reading for Comprehension Decodables: *The Giant Turnip*

Sentence structure

- On average, there are 3 words per sentence in both fiction and non-fiction books.
- Almost all sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- Generally, the present tense is used more than the past tense at this level.

Punctuation:

- Simple punctuation marks are introduced and used extensively in fiction and non-fiction, including: capital letters, full stops, and exclamation marks.
- Commas and question marks are used occasionally in fiction and non-fiction.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

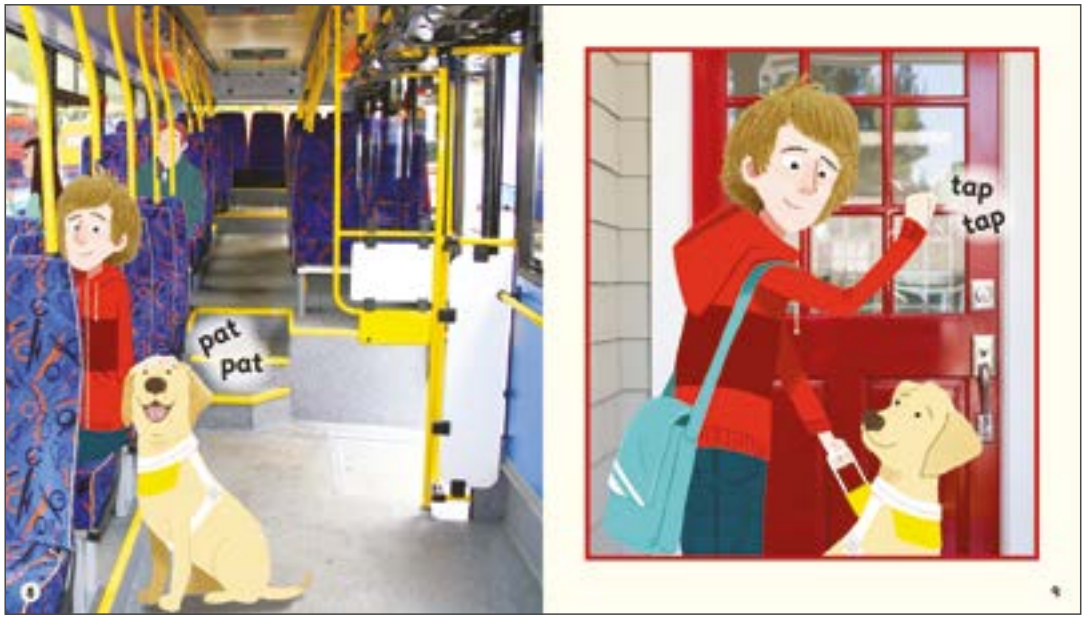
- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *Tim taps tins.*).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *Jin gets up.*).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *Pip sits.*).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *It is Floppy!*).

Oxford Reading Level 1: Project X Hero Academy: *Jin's First Day*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

- In fiction, stories are fun and often humorous.
- Age-appropriate and highly familiar concepts are used, for example: self, home, cooking, family, play, routine (e.g. getting dressed), birthdays, going places (e.g. the beach, the park), size, school, pets.



Oxford Reading Level 1: Project X Hero Academy Non-fiction: *Pat, Pat*

Themes

Overview:

- There will be one main theme in fiction/non-fiction although texts tend to be driven more by subject matter than theme at this level.
- Examples of themes include:

Action & adventure
Characters start to encounter dilemmas (e.g. a dog chasing a cat), things going missing (e.g. a teddy)

Plot and structure

Fiction:

- Stories have a very simple **linear narrative**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- All elements of the plot will be resolved within the story.
- Illustrations will be full colour.
- On average, there will be one main image per page; occasionally two (or more) images are used where it's necessary for the story.

Non-fiction:

- Subject matter will be limited to one main topic (e.g. weather).
- Simple repeating layouts and design features help to convey information.
- Most pages will have one main image; two (or three) images are occasionally used on some pages where it's necessary for the context.

Plot/book devices

- Repetition may sometimes be used (e.g. repeated phrases).

Setting

- In fiction, locations are limited to one main setting.

Character/s

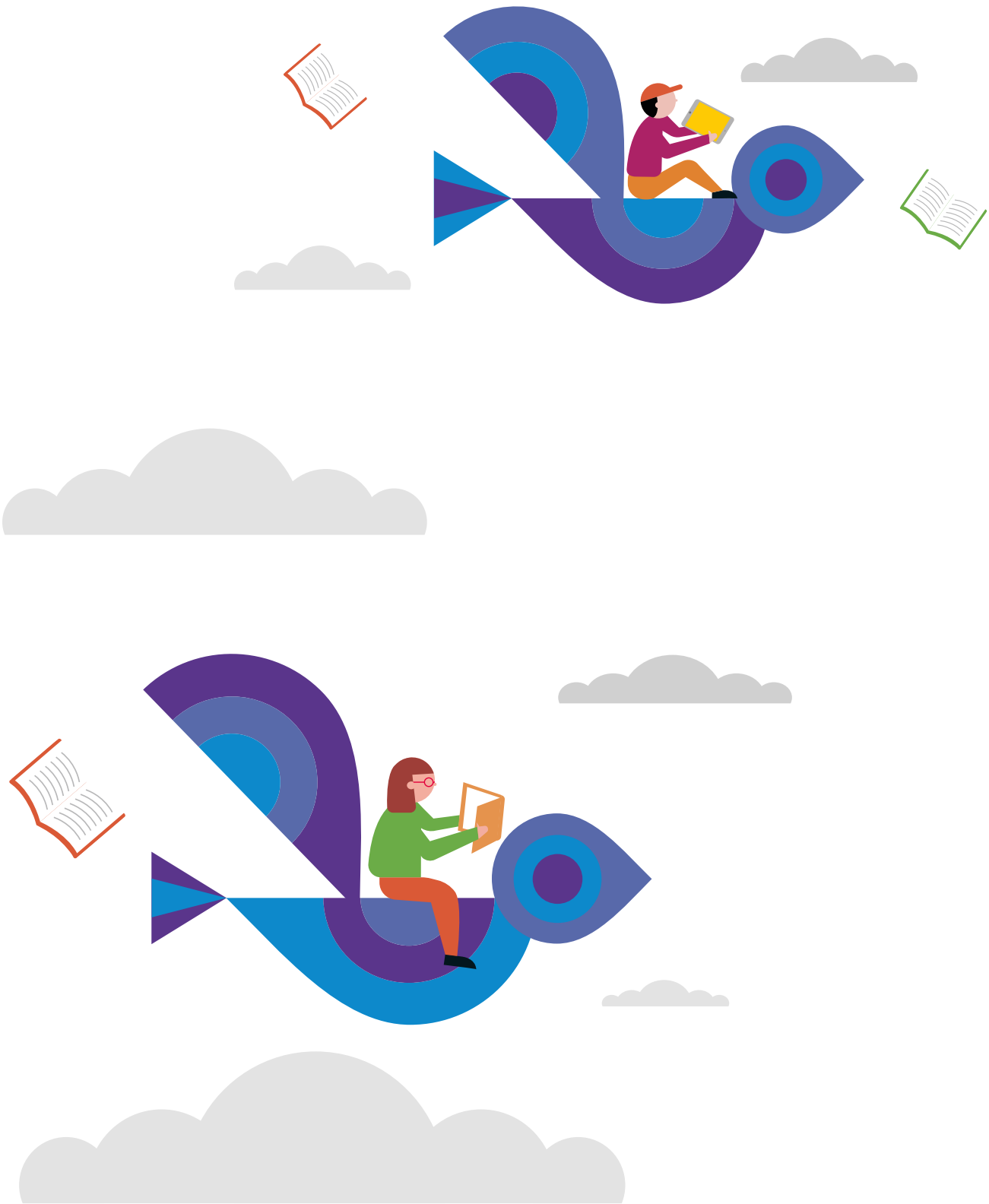
- In fiction, stories focus on one or two characters/ **protagonists**; some series may have more characters, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Oxford Reading Tree with Biff, Chip and Kipper).

Dialogue

- Simple speech can very occasionally be used at this level. This will be in the form of thought bubbles (for internal monologue) or speech bubbles (if the character is talking out loud).

Oxford Reading Level 1: Oxford Reading Tree: *At School*

Oxford Reading Level 1+



Oxford Reading Level 1+

What students can do

Word reading[1]

Students now know the main letter sound for many letters of the alphabet; they can use their phonics knowledge to decode some simple consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words and short familiar words using early digraphs (e.g. 'ck' and double letters that make one sound). They are also beginning to learn and read on sight some common exception words (CEWs).

Students can accurately track text from top to bottom and left to right, sounding out and blending the sounds left to right when decoding words.

Comprehension

Students are expanding their experience of stories, rhymes, and non-fiction texts, and they are beginning to use their knowledge of texts (both words and pictures) to help them anticipate what may happen next or make simple predictions as they read or listen to a book. They are beginning to use simple text conventions (e.g. speech bubbles or sound effects) to help them understand what they are reading. When prompted, they can pick out straightforward patterns in a text, e.g. rhyming end-words or repeated words and phrases. They are beginning to use their knowledge of common sentence structures to help them understand and read simple sentences. They are beginning to recognize basic punctuation including full stops. With support, they are beginning to understand how stories fit together in sequence (sometimes just identifying the beginning and end) and can often put the key parts of a story into the right order, using the pictures for support as necessary. They are beginning to recognize recurring characters. They can talk and give a basic opinion about texts they have read or listened to, sometimes using new vocabulary modelled by an adult. With support they can relate stories and information texts to their own experiences and ask and answer simple questions about a book.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: using early phonics knowledge to help decode simple decodable words; reading a few CEWs in context; beginning to use knowledge of sentence structure when reading; beginning to use sequencing and prediction; responding in more detail to books.

NEW at this level: beginning to understand simple text conventions like basic punctuation, speech bubbles, and sound effects; talking about sequence in stories (beginning, end, maybe middle).

Oxford Reading Level 1+: Oxford Reading Tree Traditional Tales: *Get the Rat!*

1. For more details on the phonics progression for a particular phonics teaching programme or decodable reading series, please refer to the specific teaching support.

Vocabulary

- Texts continue to provide opportunities to develop students' knowledge of grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs), including some simple digraphs.
- Texts reinforce previously learned GPCs and common words.
- Suffixes: -s endings continue to be used occasionally.
- Simple sentences continue to be introduced.
- **NEW:** Common and common exception words are introduced.
- **NEW:** Some very simple and limited two-syllable, decodable words are introduced.
- **NEW:** There is some limited scope for some **onomatopoeic** words (e.g. *hiss, sob, hum*).

Oxford Reading Level 1+: Oxford Reading for Comprehension Decodables: *A Dog Can*

Sentence structure

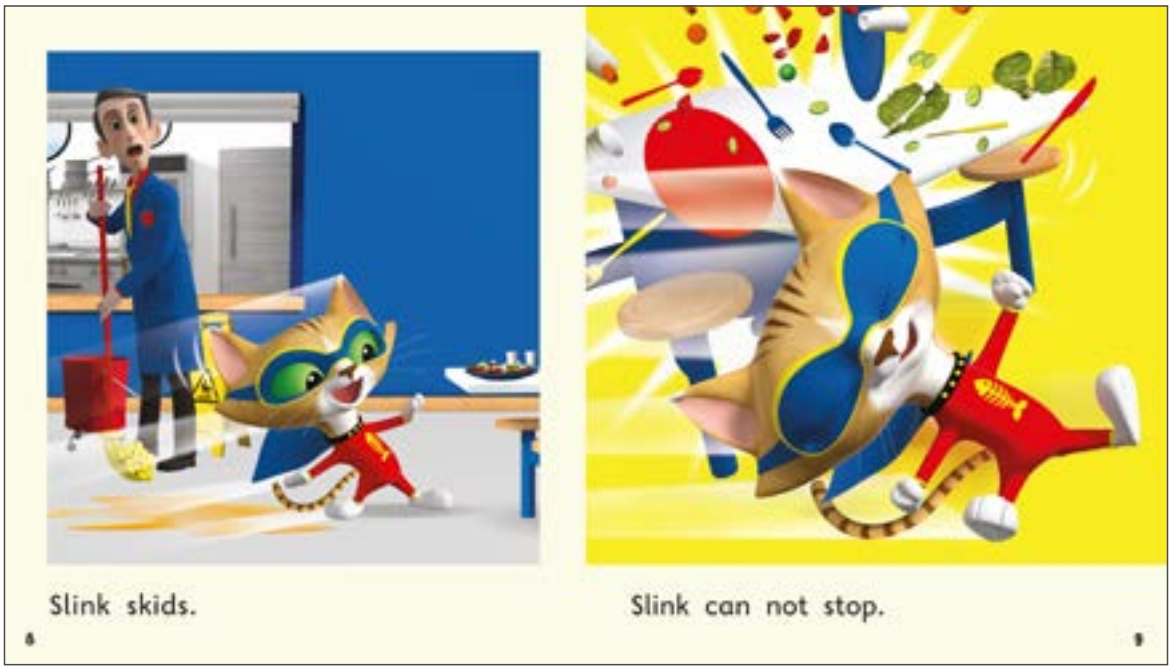
- On average, there are 4 words per sentence in both fiction and non-fiction books.
- Almost all sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- Generally, the present tense is used more than the past tense at this level.
- **NEW: Multi-clause (compound) sentences** may be used very occasionally.

Punctuation:

- Commas are now used regularly in fiction and non-fiction.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *I lick it.*).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *Dad ran off.*).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *Ben runs.*).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *Dick got a bag of cash.*).

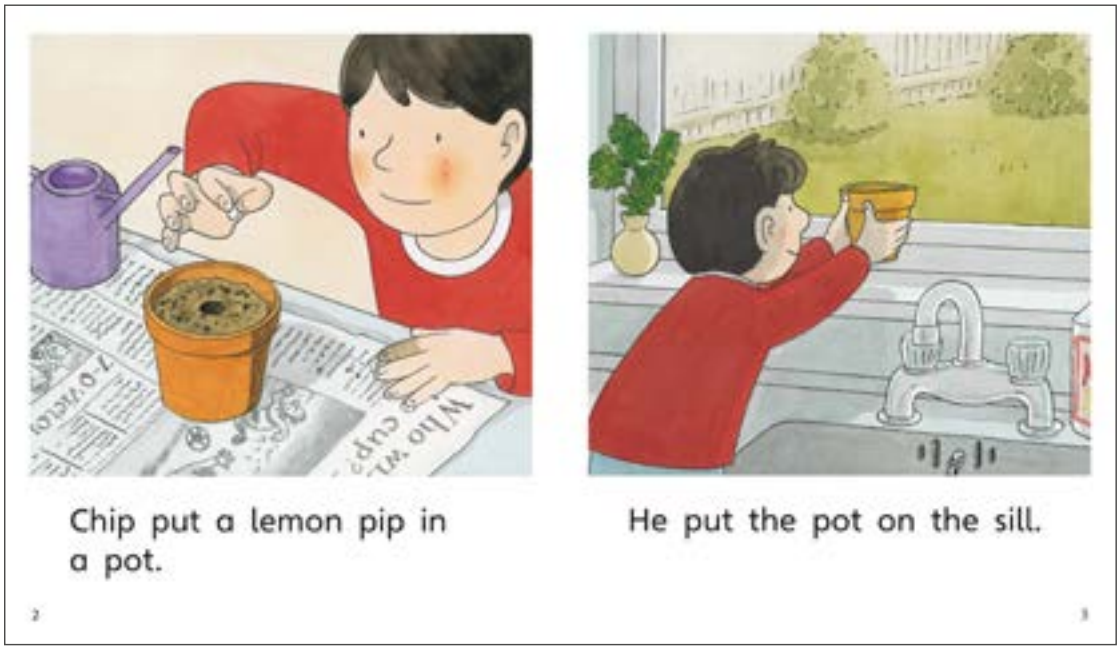


Oxford Reading Level 1+: Project X Hero Academy: *Tuck In*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

- In fiction, stories are fun and often humorous.
- Age-appropriate and highly familiar concepts are used, for example: home, family, cooking, play, going places (e.g. shopping, the beach), picnics/camping, looking after yourself (e.g. washing your hands), getting muddy/wet, school, fun competitions/races.
- **NEW:** In fiction, some mild peril may be included (e.g. something that seems scary which turns out not to be).



Oxford Reading Level 1+: Oxford Reading Tree Decode and Develop: *The Lemon Pip*

Themes

Overview:

- There will be one main theme in fiction/non-fiction, although texts tend to be driven more by subject matter than theme at this level.
- Examples of themes include:

Action & adventure
Characters start to encounter dilemmas (e.g. a ball getting stuck in a tree), things going missing (e.g. a pet)

Plot and structure

Fiction:

- Stories have a very simple **linear narrative**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- All elements of the plot will be resolved within the story.
- Illustrations will be full colour.
- On average, there will be one main image per page; occasionally two (or more) images are used where it's necessary for the story.

Non-fiction:

- Subject matter will be limited to one main topic (e.g. school).
- Simple repeating layouts and design features help to convey information.
- Most pages will have one main image; two (or three) images are occasionally used on some pages where it's necessary for the context.
- **NEW:** Headings may be used within the book.

Plot/book devices

- Repetition may sometimes be used (e.g. repeated phrases).
- **NEW:** Some simple end-word rhyming patterns may be used (e.g. *It is a cat/It is a hat*.).

Setting

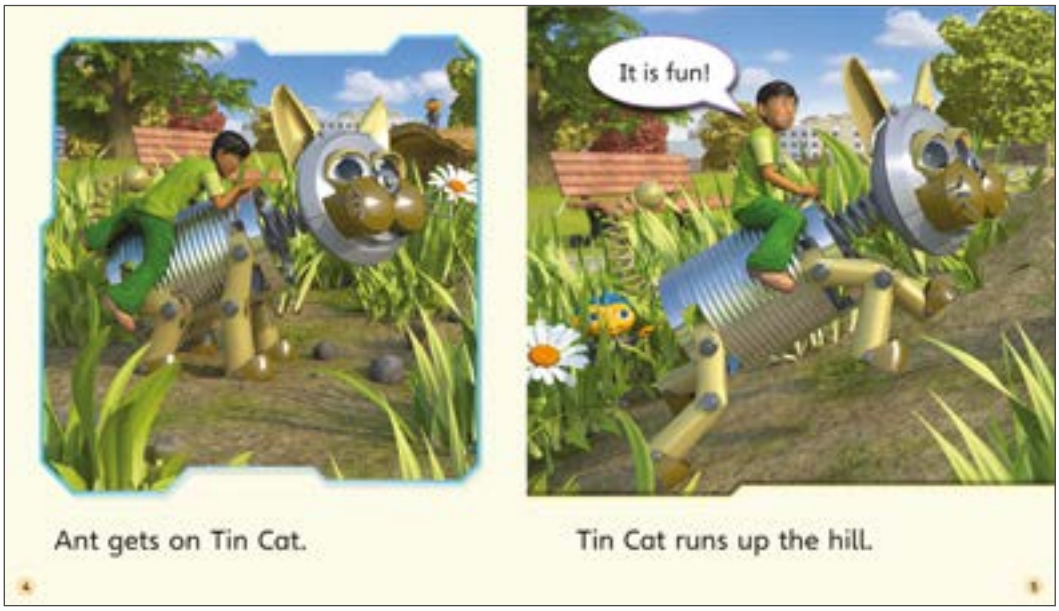
- In fiction, locations are limited to one main setting.

Character/s

- In fiction, stories focus on one or two characters/ **protagonists**; some series may have more characters, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Oxford Reading Tree with Biff, Chip and Kipper).

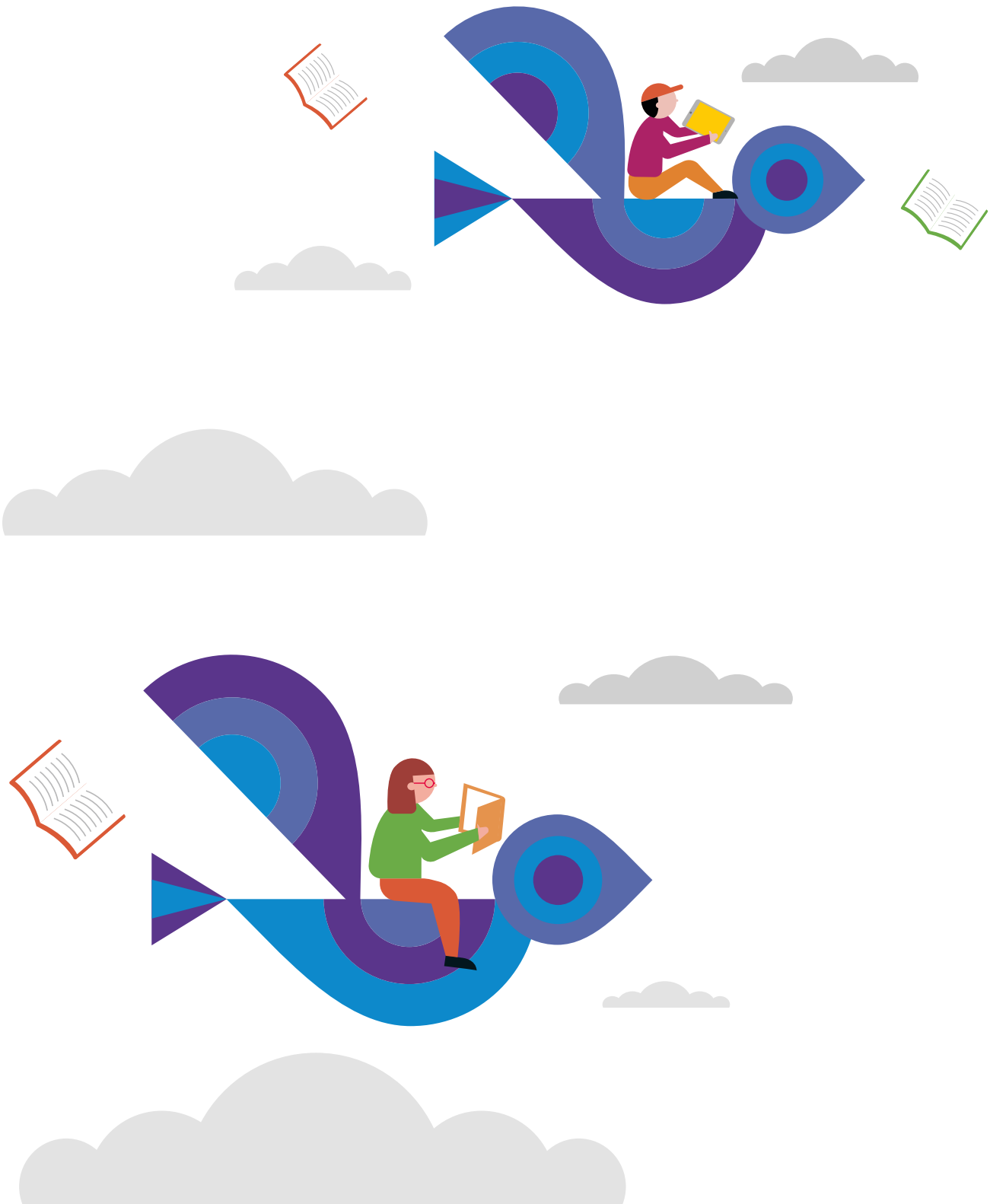
Dialogue

- Simple speech can occasionally be used at this level. This will be in the form of thought bubbles (for internal monologue) or speech bubbles (if the character is talking out loud).



Oxford Reading Level 1+: Project X Alien Adventures: *Run, Tin Cat*

Oxford Reading Level 2



Oxford Reading Level 2

What students can do

Word reading[1]

Students are becoming familiar with a wider range of grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs), including simple consonant digraphs (such as 'ch', 'sh'). They can use their knowledge of phonics to help them read an increasing range of simple decodable words and to help them tackle less familiar words. They are also learning to read on sight more common exception words (CEWs). They are beginning to show some awareness of punctuation when they read aloud (this may be restricted to full stops at this stage).

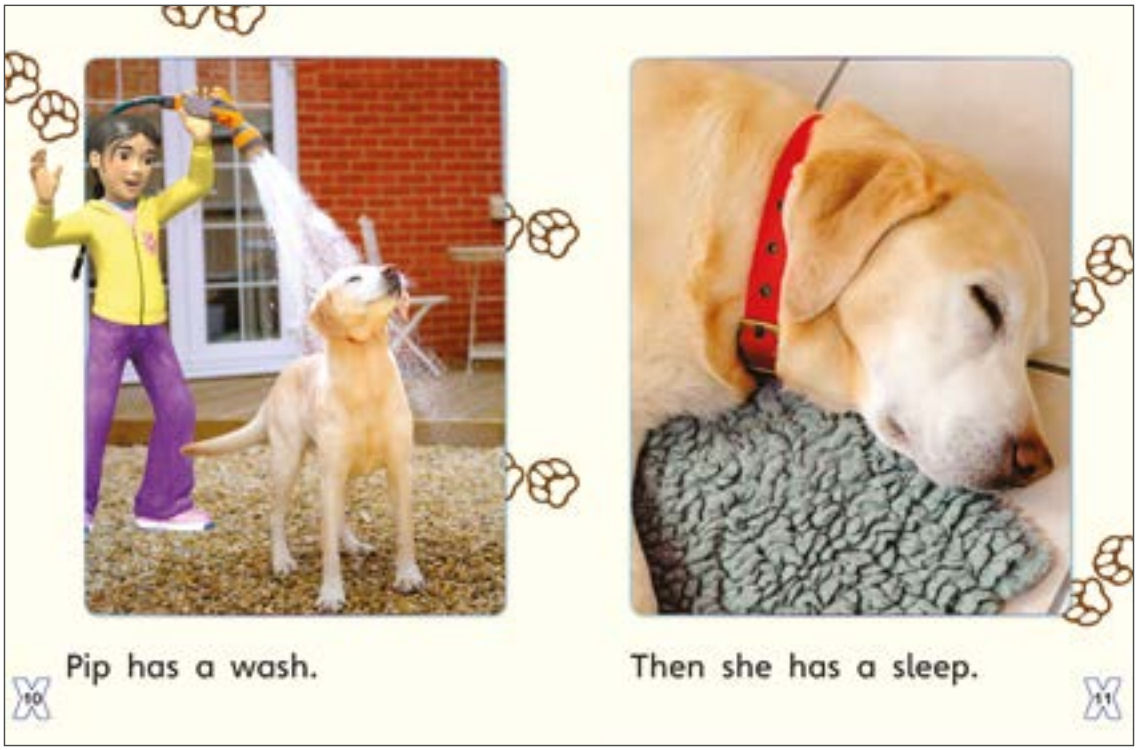
Comprehension

Students are becoming more adept at using both words and pictures to help them understand texts, and they sometimes use their knowledge/expectations about sentence structure to help them understand and read sentences. When prompted, they can often give a simple retelling of a story (which may include beginning, middle, and end), using the pictures for support as necessary. They can often ask or answer simple questions about a text. They are sometimes able to spot patterns in familiar texts, e.g. identifying repeating refrains, or noticing when story openings or endings follow a familiar convention. When talking about a story, they can sometimes use appropriate story language or new vocabulary that has been modelled by an adult. With support, they may be able to make predictions about fiction and non-fiction texts, based on evidence such as headings, pictures, personal experience, or their own knowledge of similar texts.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: using developing phonics knowledge to decode words (including common consonant digraphs); reading a wider range of CEWs; simple retelling; relating books to personal experience.

NEW at this level: beginning to respond to simple punctuation and use basic knowledge of sentence structure to aid comprehension when reading.



Oxford Reading Level 2: Project X Origins: *A Dog's Day*

1. For more details on the phonics progression for a particular phonics teaching programme or decodable reading series, please refer to the specific teaching support.

Vocabulary

- Texts continue to provide opportunities to develop students' knowledge of GPCs, including digraphs.
- Common and common exception words continue to be introduced.
- Double letters making a single sound ('rr', 'bb', 'tt' etc.) may be used.
- Texts reinforce previously learned GPCs, common and common exception words.
- Words are still mostly single-syllable words, but some very simple and limited two-syllable, decodable words are allowed.
- Simple sentence structures are used.
- There is limited scope for some **onomatopoeic** words, as far as phonic restrictions allow (e.g. *buzz, thud*).
- **NEW:** Suffixes: -es endings may be introduced (e.g. *hisses*).

Oxford Reading Level 2: Oxford Reading for Comprehension Decodables: *Buzz the Bot*

Sentence structure

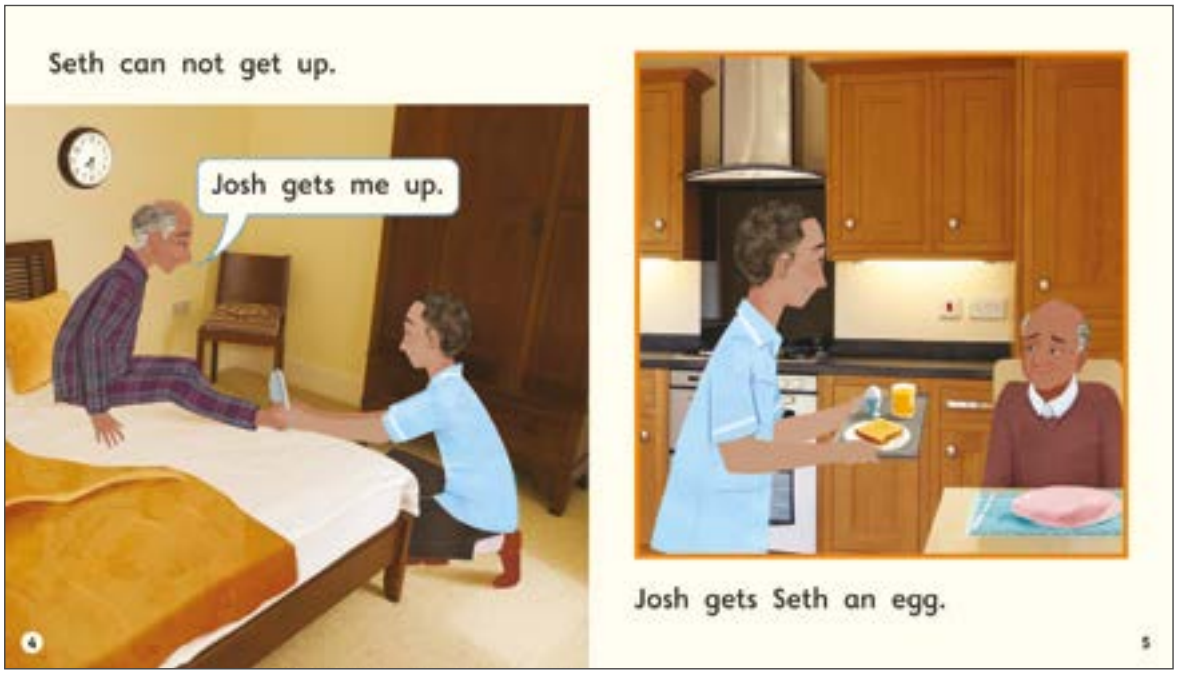
- On average, there are 5 words per sentence in both fiction and non-fiction books.
- Almost all sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound) sentences** may be used very occasionally.
- Generally, the present tense is used more than the past tense at this level.
- **NEW: Fronted adverbials** are introduced and used very occasionally.

Punctuation:

- Commas are now used widely in fiction and non-fiction.
- Question marks are now used regularly in fiction and non-fiction.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *Chip was digging.*).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *I get up.*).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *We get eggs from chickens.*).
- Fronted adverbials (e.g. *Then, six spins!*).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *Pip hid; Chip wins!*).

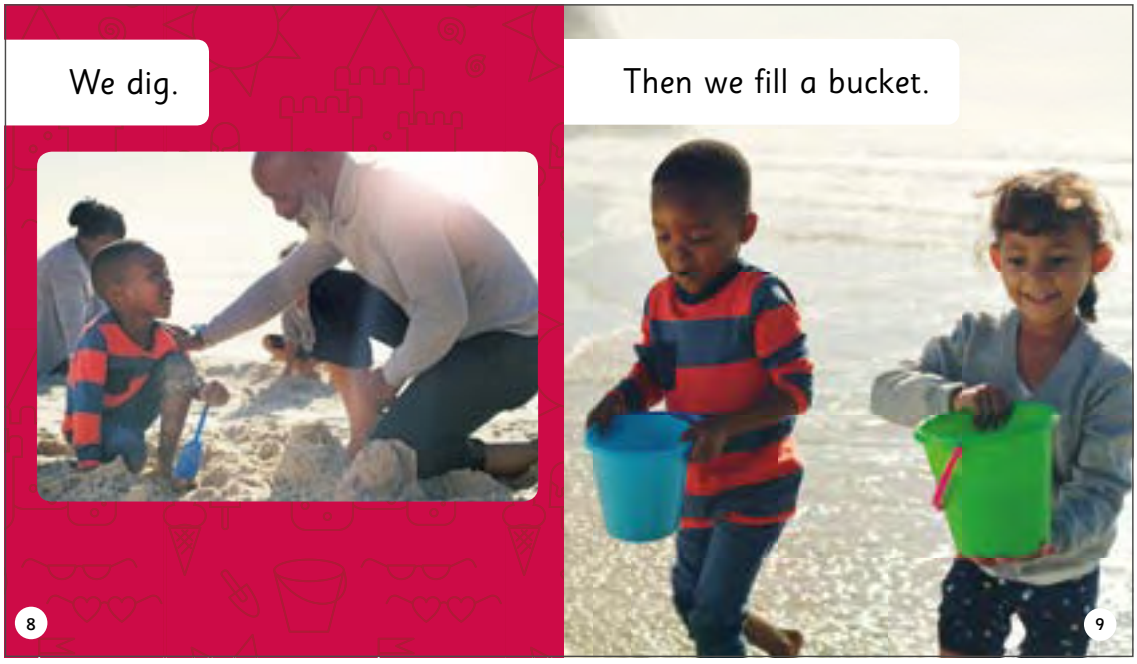


Oxford Reading Level 2: Project X Hero Academy Non-fiction: *Josh and Seth*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

- In fiction, stories are fun and often humorous.
- In fiction, some mild peril may be included (e.g. something that seems scary which turns out not to be).
- Age-appropriate and highly familiar concepts are used, for example: parties, dressing-up, going places (e.g. the play park, the beach), transport, weather, places (e.g. Africa), day/night, making things, school, sport (e.g. cricket), growing things.



Oxford Reading Level 2: Oxford Reading for Comprehension Decodables: *Fun with Nan and Pop!*

Themes

Overview:

- There will be one main theme in fiction/non-fiction. Examples of themes include:

Action & adventure	Conflict & decision-making
• Characters start to encounter dilemmas (e.g. a ball getting stuck in a tree), things going missing (e.g. a teddy, a pair of glasses)	• **NEW:** Characters start to encounter arguments with other characters, being told off • **NEW:** Comparing/contrasting (e.g. desert/forest, big/small)

Plot and structure

Fiction:

- Stories have a very simple **linear narrative**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- All elements of the plot will be resolved within the story.
- Illustrations will be full colour.
- On average, there will be one main image per page; occasionally two (or more) images are used where it's necessary for the story.
- **NEW:** More of the story is starting to be told through text, although the images still support the story.

Non-fiction:

- Subject matter will be limited to one main topic (e.g. school).
- Simple repeating layouts and design features help to convey information.
- Most pages will have one main image; the use of two or three images on some pages is becoming more common where it's helpful for the context.
- Headings may be used within the book.
- **NEW:** More of the book is starting to be told through text, although the images still support the concepts.
- **NEW:** Occasional longer captions may be included.

Plot/book devices

- Repetition may sometimes be used (e.g. repeated phrases).
- Some simple rhyming patterns may be used (e.g. *Ben has a hen/Trish has a pet fish.*).

Setting

- **NEW:** In fiction, locations are limited to one or two main settings.
- **NEW:** Non-fiction may start to explore different locations (e.g. a hot place/a cold place).

Character/s

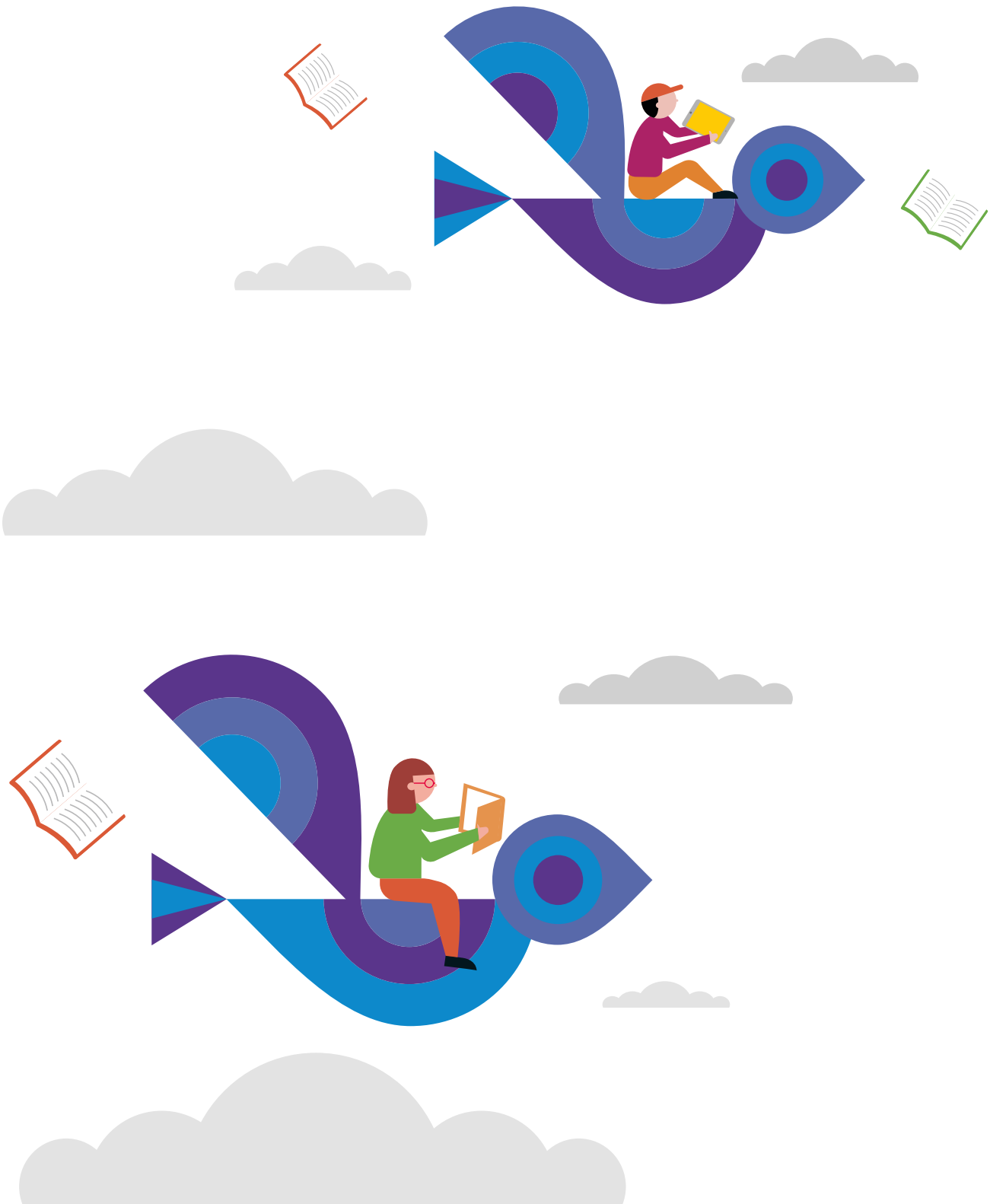
- In fiction, stories focus on one or two characters/ **protagonists**; some series may have more characters, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Oxford Reading Tree with Biff, Chip and Kipper).

Dialogue

- Simple speech can occasionally be used at this level. This will be in the form of thought bubbles (for internal monologue) or speech bubbles (if the character is talking out loud).
- **NEW:** There may be up to two speech bubbles on some pages as characters interact/converse with each other.

Oxford Reading Level 2: Oxford Reading Tree Traditional Tales: *Rabbit on the Run*

Oxford Reading Level 3



Oxford Reading Level 3

What students can do

Word reading[1]

Students are becoming increasingly confident in identifying and using a wider range of grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs), including some common vowel digraphs and trigraphs (such as 'ai', 'or', 'air'). They use their knowledge of phonics to help them read an increasing range of words, including occasional two-syllable words, sometimes accurately decoding words that are less familiar (though always in a familiar and supportive context). They show some awareness of punctuation when they read aloud (may be restricted to full stops and commas). They are also extending their knowledge of common exception words (CEWs), often recognizing and reading known CEWs on sight.

Comprehension

Most students are becoming confident in giving an opinion on texts, though this may still be restricted to straightforward likes and dislikes. They sometimes independently choose books. They may be able to make a sensible attempt at explaining their views about a text, e.g. giving suggestions for why a character behaves in a particular way or understanding how simple ideas in a non-fiction text are related to each other. They can often ask and answer simple questions about texts, and are usually able to retell a familiar story without much support. They are beginning to be aware of some obvious language features, e.g. identifying an interesting or simple **onomatopoeic** word in a text (*woof, cheep,* etc.). They can sometimes make use of text features such as labels or numbered instructions to help them understand non-fiction texts. In fiction, they are gaining experience in reading dialogue (sometimes with appropriate intonation and attention to punctuation). With support, they may be able to use new vocabulary from a text when talking about it. They can use their knowledge of simple sentence structures to help them understand and read sentences, which may include occasional longer sentences with simple conjunctions. When prompted, they can often anticipate what may happen next or make predictions about a text.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: using developing phonics knowledge to decode words (including common consonant and vowel digraphs and trigraphs); increasing knowledge of CEWs; talking about books, sometimes using new vocabulary from/connected to the book.

NEW at this level: reading some two-syllable words; showing awareness of full stops and commas when reading aloud; increasing independence when retelling, predicting, sequencing, and contributing ideas about books.

Oxford Reading Level 3: Oxford Reading for Comprehension Decodables: *The Buzzing Bee*

1. For more details on the phonics progression for a particular phonics teaching programme or decodable reading series, please refer to the specific teaching support.

Vocabulary

- Texts continue to provide opportunities to develop students' knowledge of grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs), including digraphs and some simple trigraphs (**NEW**).
- Common and common exception words continue to be introduced.
- Texts reinforce previously learned GPCs, common and common exception words.
- Words are still mostly single-syllable words, but some simple two-syllable, decodable words are allowed.
- There is limited scope for some onomatopoeic words, as far as phonic restrictions allow (e.g. *cheep, moo, woof*).
- Simple sentences continue to be used.
- **NEW:** Some longer sentences can be introduced but the vocabulary is still straightforward and familiar.
- **NEW:** Suffixes: -ing and -er endings are introduced.
- **NEW:** Some simple adjacent consonant words may be used from this level; if used, these will be conceptually easy and familiar words (e.g. *stop, jump*).

Oxford Reading Level 3: Oxford Reading for Comprehension Decodables: *I Can See a Sheep!*

Sentence structure

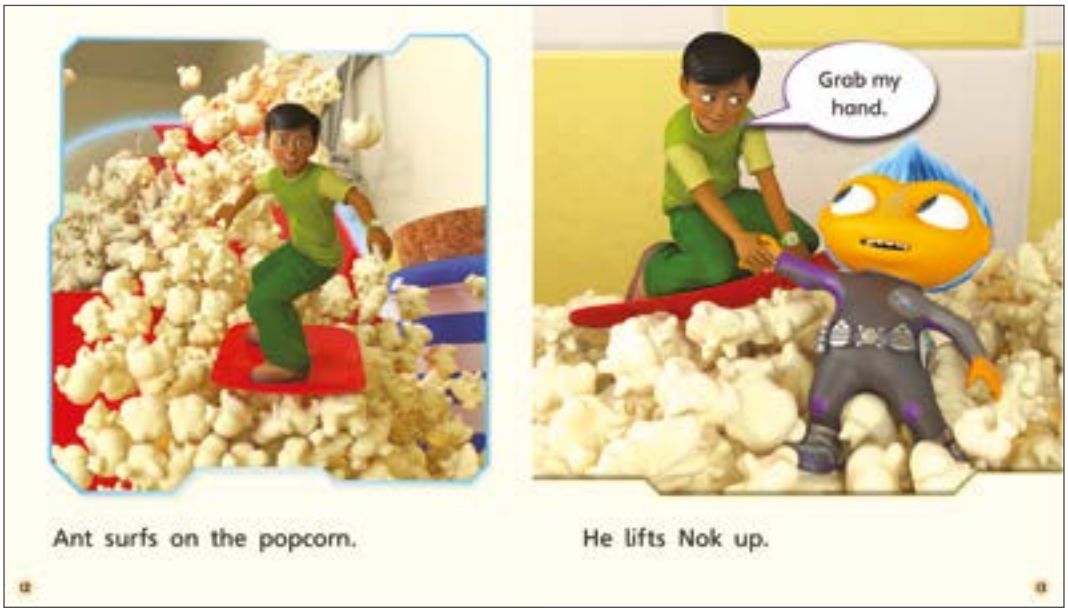
- On average, there are 5 words per sentence in both fiction and non-fiction books.
- Almost all sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound and complex) sentences** may be used occasionally.
- Generally, the present tense is used more than the past tense at this level.
- **Fronted adverbials** continue to be introduced and are used occasionally.

Punctuation:

- Commas are now used extensively in fiction and non-fiction.
- Ellipses are introduced and used occasionally.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *Biff was cross; I need air.*).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *A toad was on the road; Duck jumps down.*).
- Fronted adverbials (e.g. *Soon the sun was up and bright; Then Ant sees a set of big prints.*).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *Rats ran; I quit!*).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *Mum got food for the parrot; I can see Ted in the pond!*).
- **NEW:** Multi-clause (compound) sentences where two main clauses are joined by a **coordinating conjunction** (e.g. *Wilf got to the dog but it ran off; I am Pat and this is Ted.*).
- **NEW: Multi-clause (complex) sentences where two clauses are connected by a relative clause** (e.g. *The air is cool down by the river.*).

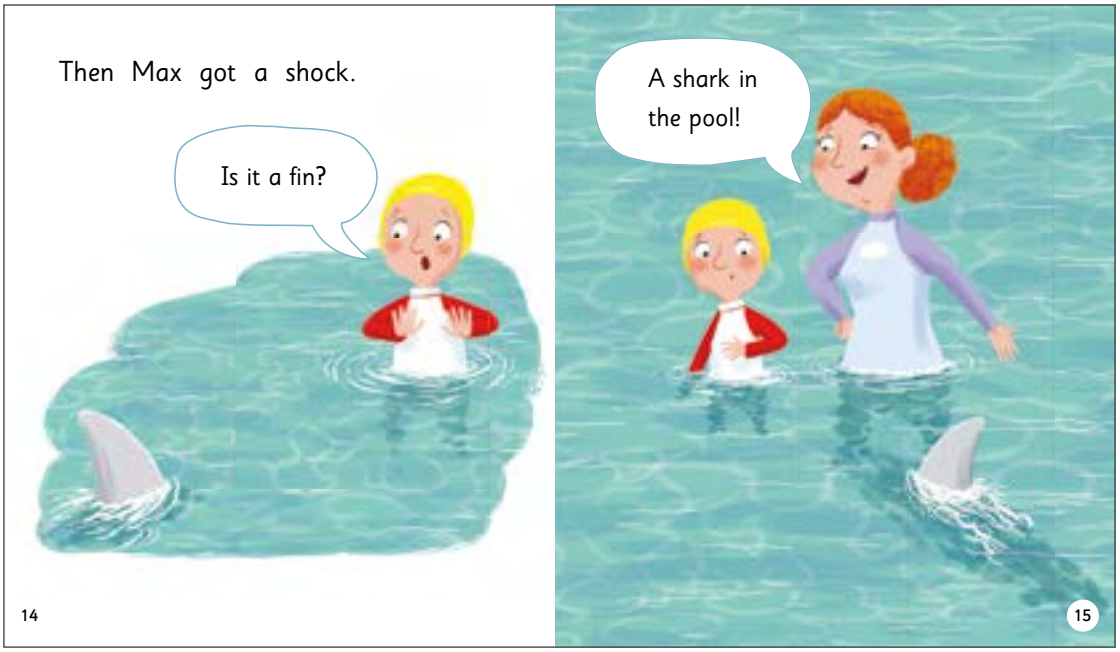


Oxford Reading Level 3: Project X Alien Adventures: *Popcorn Surfing*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

- In fiction, stories are fun and often humorous.
- In fiction, some mild peril may be included (e.g. something that seems scary which turns out not to be).
- Age-appropriate and highly familiar concepts are used, for example: food, cooking/baking, play, toys, competitions, going places, people who help (e.g. vets, dentists), weather/seasons, sorting things, growing things, animals/bugs/pets, nature/plants, school.



Oxford Reading Level 3: Oxford Reading for Comprehension Decodables: *A Shark at the Pool*

Themes

Overview:

- There will be one main theme in fiction/non-fiction. Examples of themes include:

Action & adventure	Conflict & decision-making	Relationship & emotion
• Characters start to encounter dilemmas, things going missing (e.g. a lost lunchbox)	• Characters encounter arguments with other characters, being told off • Comparing/contrasting (e.g. in space/on Earth, then/now) • **NEW:** Characters may play (friendly) jokes on each other	• **NEW:** Characters helping others • **NEW:** Characters start to see the consequences of their actions • **NEW:** Personal choice

Plot and structure

Fiction:

- Stories have a very simple **linear narrative**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- More of the story is starting to be told through text, although the images still support the story.
- All elements of the plot will be resolved within the story.
- Illustrations will be full colour.
- On average, there will be one main image per page; occasionally two (or more) images are used where it's necessary for the story.

Non-fiction:

- More of the book is starting to be told through text, although the images still support the concepts.
- Subject matter will be limited to one main topic (e.g. school).
- Simple repeating layouts and design features help to convey information.
- Occasional longer captions may be included.
- Most pages will have one main image; the use of two or three images on some pages is used where it's helpful for the context.
- Headings may be used within the book.
- **NEW:** Non-fiction may include a sequence of events over time; such information may be supported by a simple diagram.
- **NEW:** Numbered instructions may be used (e.g. *1. do this ... 2. do this*).

Plot/book devices

- Repetition may sometimes be used (e.g. repeated phrases) although, as more decodable words are introduced, there is greater scope for storytelling and conveying information in a non-repetitive form.
- Some simple rhyming patterns may be used.

Setting

- In fiction, locations are limited to one or two main settings.
- Non-fiction may start to explore different locations (e.g. a desert/a cold rainforest).

Character/s

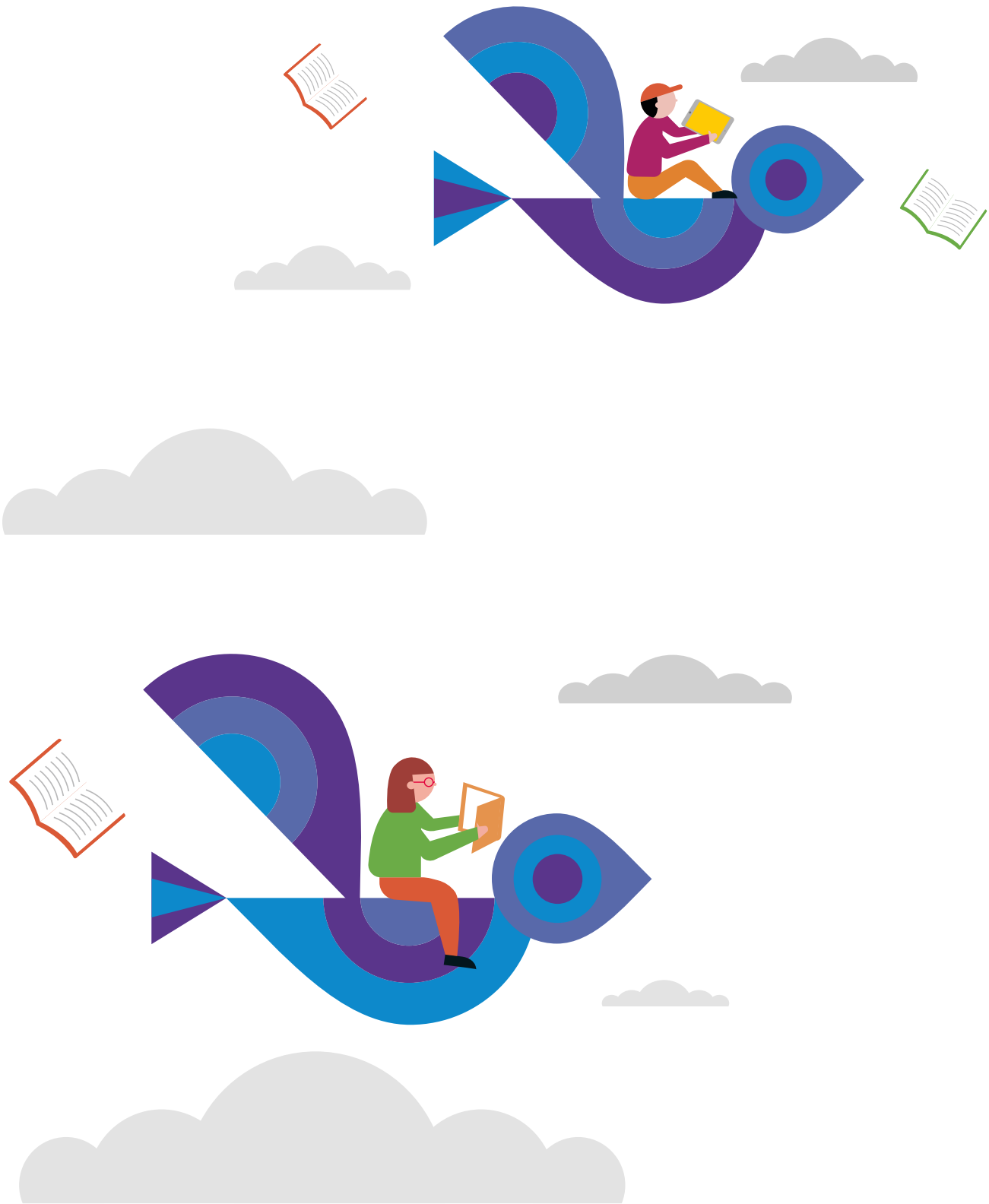
- In fiction, stories focus on one or two characters/ **protagonists**; some series may have more characters, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Oxford Reading Tree with Biff, Chip and Kipper).

Dialogue

- Simple speech can occasionally be used at this level. This will be in the form of thought bubbles (for internal monologue) or speech bubbles (if the character is talking out loud).
- There may be up to two (or sometimes three) speech bubbles on some pages as characters interact/converse with each other.

Oxford Reading Level 3: Oxford Reading for Comprehension Decodables: *Rain and Hail*

Oxford Reading Level 4



Oxford Reading Level 4

What students can do

Word reading[1]

Students use their knowledge of grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs), including a range of common vowel and consonant digraphs and trigraphs and adjacent consonants. They use their phonics knowledge increasingly automatically to read both familiar and simple less familiar words, including occasional polysyllabic words. They can read and recognize a growing range of common exception words (CEWs). They are beginning to take a wider range of punctuation into account when reading aloud (including commas, full stops, question marks, and exclamation marks). They can also read some words with possessive apostrophes, simple contractions with apostrophes, and speech marks.

Comprehension

Most students are able to contribute actively and sometimes independently to discussions of texts, asking and answering simple questions, giving opinions, and relating texts to their own experiences. They are increasingly able to express their own ideas about a fiction or non-fiction text, e.g. making predictions based on ideas in the text, their life experience, and sometimes their own prior knowledge of similar texts. When retelling a story, students can usually get the key events in the correct order with little support. They are increasingly aware of basic language features and vocabulary choices in texts. They can sometimes make use of text features such as labels and captions or fact boxes to help them understand non-fiction texts. In fiction, they are gaining experience in reading **direct speech** as well as speech bubbles. With appropriate support and prompting, they can often use new vocabulary from a text when talking about it. They can use their knowledge of simple sentence structures to help them understand and read sentences, which may include occasional longer sentences with simple conjunctions. When prompted, they can often anticipate what may happen next or make predictions about a text.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: using developing phonics knowledge to decode words, including words with adjacent consonants; reading an increasing range of CEWs; continuing to become more active and collaborative in discussing books, sometimes using new book-related vocabulary; retelling and sequencing more accurately/in more detail.

NEW at this level: reading words with Phase 3 consonant and vowel digraphs along with adjacent consonants; use of simple non-fiction text features to aid comprehension; reading occasional polysyllabic words.

Oxford Reading Level 4: Oxford Reading for Comprehension Decodables: *Park Jobs*

1. For more details on the phonics progression for a particular phonics teaching programme or decodable reading series, please refer to the specific teaching support.

Vocabulary

- Common and common exception words continue to be introduced.
- Texts reinforce previously learned GPCs, common and common exception words.
- Simple sentence structures are still prevalent; some longer sentences may be used.
- Texts give opportunities to read some polysyllabic words.
- There is scope for some **onomatopoeic** words, as far as phonic restrictions allow (e.g. *tweet, snarl, snort, sniff, crash, splat*).
- **NEW:** Texts provide opportunities to develop students' knowledge of adjacent consonants, including adjacent consonants that have short and long vowel sounds.
- **NEW:** Suffixes: -ed endings are introduced where 'ed' makes its own/separate sound.
- **NEW:** Contractions with an apostrophe are introduced as per the phonic progression.
- **NEW:** Possessive apostrophes are introduced, although use is restricted.

Oxford Reading Level 4: Project X Hero Academy: *Baa-Beep!*

Sentence structure

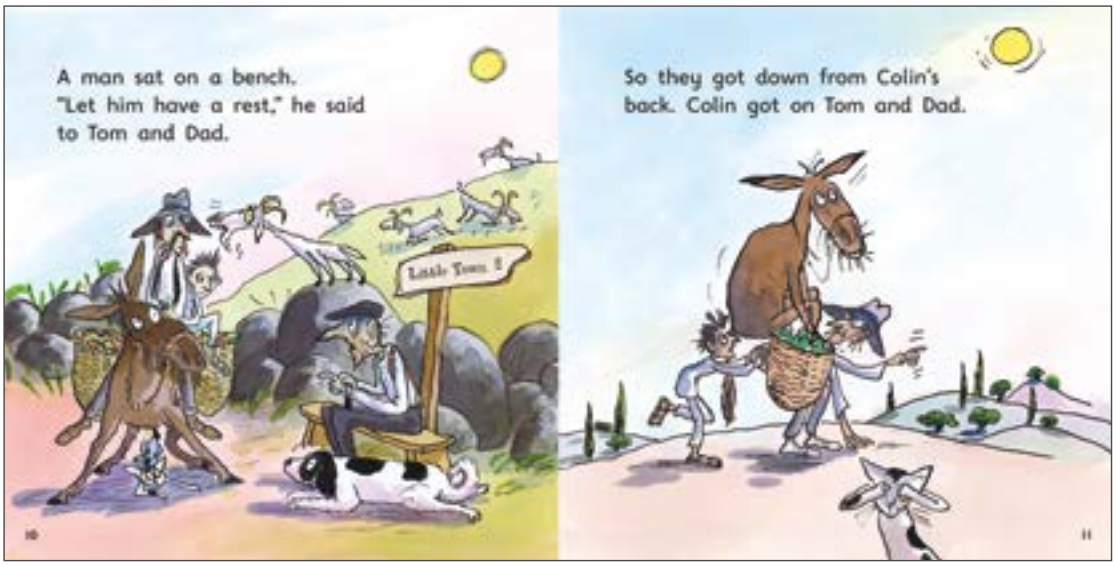
- On average, there are 6 words per sentence in both fiction and non-fiction books.
- Almost all sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound and complex) sentences** are used occasionally.
- **Fronted adverbials** continue to be introduced and are used regularly.
- **NEW:** Generally, the past tense is used more than the present tense. At previous levels the present tense was used more.

Punctuation:

- Bullet points are introduced in non-fiction.
- Contractions with an apostrophe are introduced and occasionally used as per phonic progression.
- Hyphens are introduced and used occasionally.
- Possessive apostrophes are introduced.
- Question marks are now used widely in fiction and non-fiction.
- Speech marks are used widely as dialogue is introduced in the text.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *They got help; I like jam tarts!*).
- Fronted adverbials (e.g. "Quick, grab my hand!" he said*; In the ring, jugglers do tricks with clubs and torches.*).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *He looked in the box; It feeds on krill.*).
- Multi-clause (compound) sentences where two main clauses are joined by a **coordinating conjunction** (e.g. *He twists it and sticks it down.*).
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences where two clauses are connected by a relative clause** (e.g. *We left the shop, which was about to shut.*).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *Deer was getting cramp in her legs.*).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *The Mixture fell; I do!*).
- **NEW: Multi-clause (complex) sentences with one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses,** joined together by a **subordinating conjunction** (e.g. *It was hot, so we ran into the sea to cool off.*).

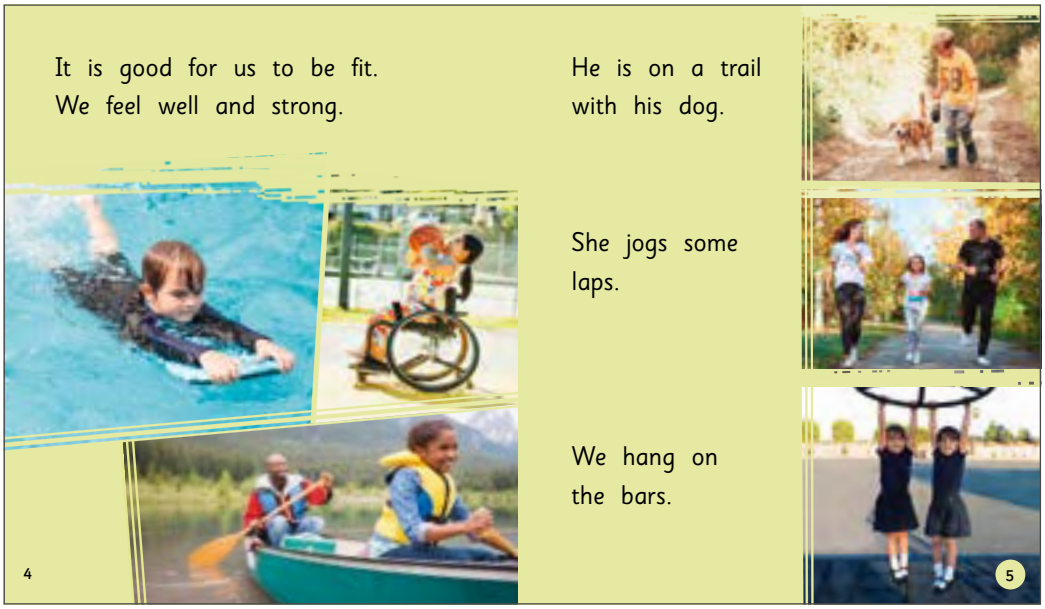


Oxford Reading Level 4: Oxford Reading Tree Traditional Tales: *Tom, Dad and Colin*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

- In fiction, stories are fun and often humorous.
- In fiction, some mild peril may be included (e.g. something that seems scary which turns out not to be).
- Age-appropriate and highly familiar concepts are still prevalent, for example: food, cooking/baking, homes (e.g. what they're made out of), shapes, people who help us (e.g. doctors), birthdays, growing things, making things (e.g. a puppet theatre, fruit salad), holidays, weather (e.g. storms), animals/bugs/pets, nature/plants, school, friends.
- **NEW:** Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are starting to be introduced, for example: Vikings, dinosaurs, bones, animal camouflage, environmental issues, art.



Oxford Reading Level 4: Oxford Reading for Comprehension Decodables: *Get Fit!*

Themes

Overview:

- There will be one main theme in fiction/non-fiction. Examples of themes include:

Action & adventure	Conflict & decision-making	Relationship & emotion
• Characters start to encounter dilemmas, things going missing • **NEW:** Time concepts (e.g. things happening over a period of time) • **NEW:** Simple 'cause and effect' concepts	• Characters encounter arguments with other characters, being told off • Characters may play (friendly) jokes on each other • Comparing/contrasting (e.g. looking at different countries, then/now) • **NEW:** Stories with explicit morals are used	• Characters helping others • Characters start to see the consequences of their actions • Personal choice • **NEW:** Celebrating the achievements of others

Plot and structure

Fiction:

- Stories have a very simple **linear narrative**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- More of the story is starting to be told through text, although the images still support the story.
- All elements of the plot will be resolved within the story.
- Illustrations will be full colour.
- On average, there will be one main image per page; occasionally two (or more) images are used where it's necessary for the story.

Non-fiction:

- Non-fiction may include a sequence of events over time; such information may be supported by a simple diagram.
- More of the book is starting to be told through text, although the images still support the concepts.
- Subject matter will be limited to one main topic (e.g. school).
- Simple repeating layouts and design features help to convey information.
- Occasional longer captions may be included.
- Numbered instructions may be used (e.g. *1. do this ... 2. do this*).
- Headings may be used.
- Most pages will have one main image; the use of two or three images on some pages is used where it's helpful for the context.
- **NEW:** Fact boxes may be used.
- **NEW:** Simple keys may be used.
- **NEW:** Some stylized features may be used, e.g. newspaper reports.

Plot/book devices

- Repetition may occasionally be used (e.g. repeated phrases) although, as more decodable words are introduced, there is greater scope for storytelling and conveying information in a non-repetitive form.
- Some rhyme may occasionally be used.

Setting

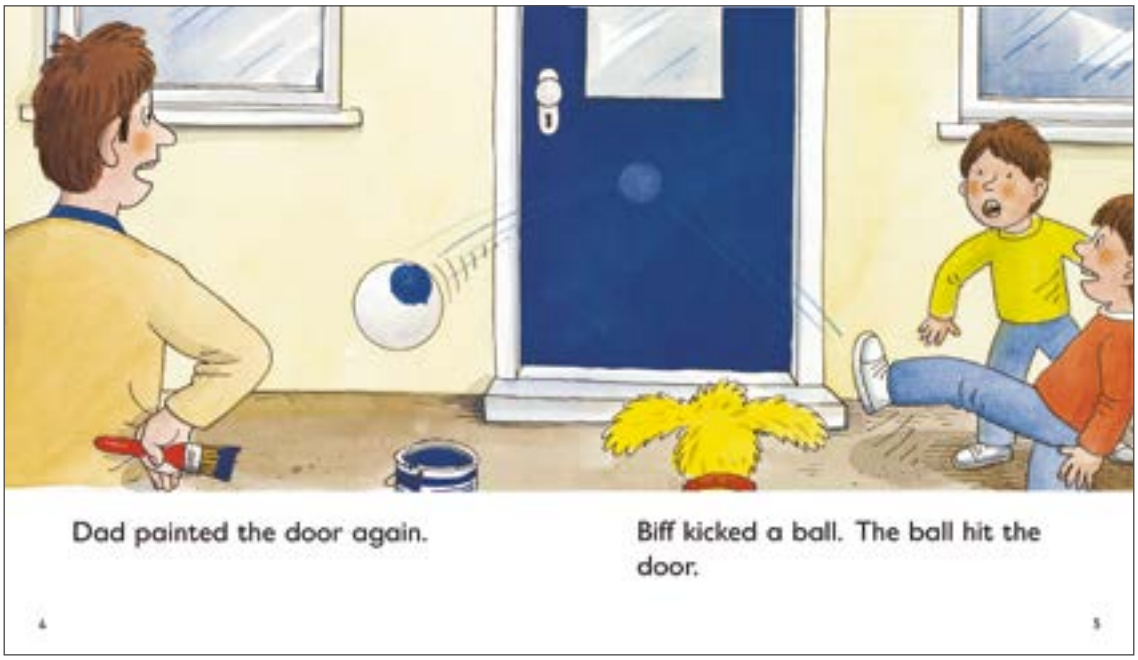
- In fiction, locations are limited to one or two main settings. These can include different countries (**NEW**).
- Non-fiction can include different locations within the same book (e.g. different countries).

Character/s

- **NEW:** In fiction, stories can feature up to four main characters/**protagonists**, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Project X with Max, Cat, Ant, and Tiger) although many stories tend to still focus on one or two protagonists.

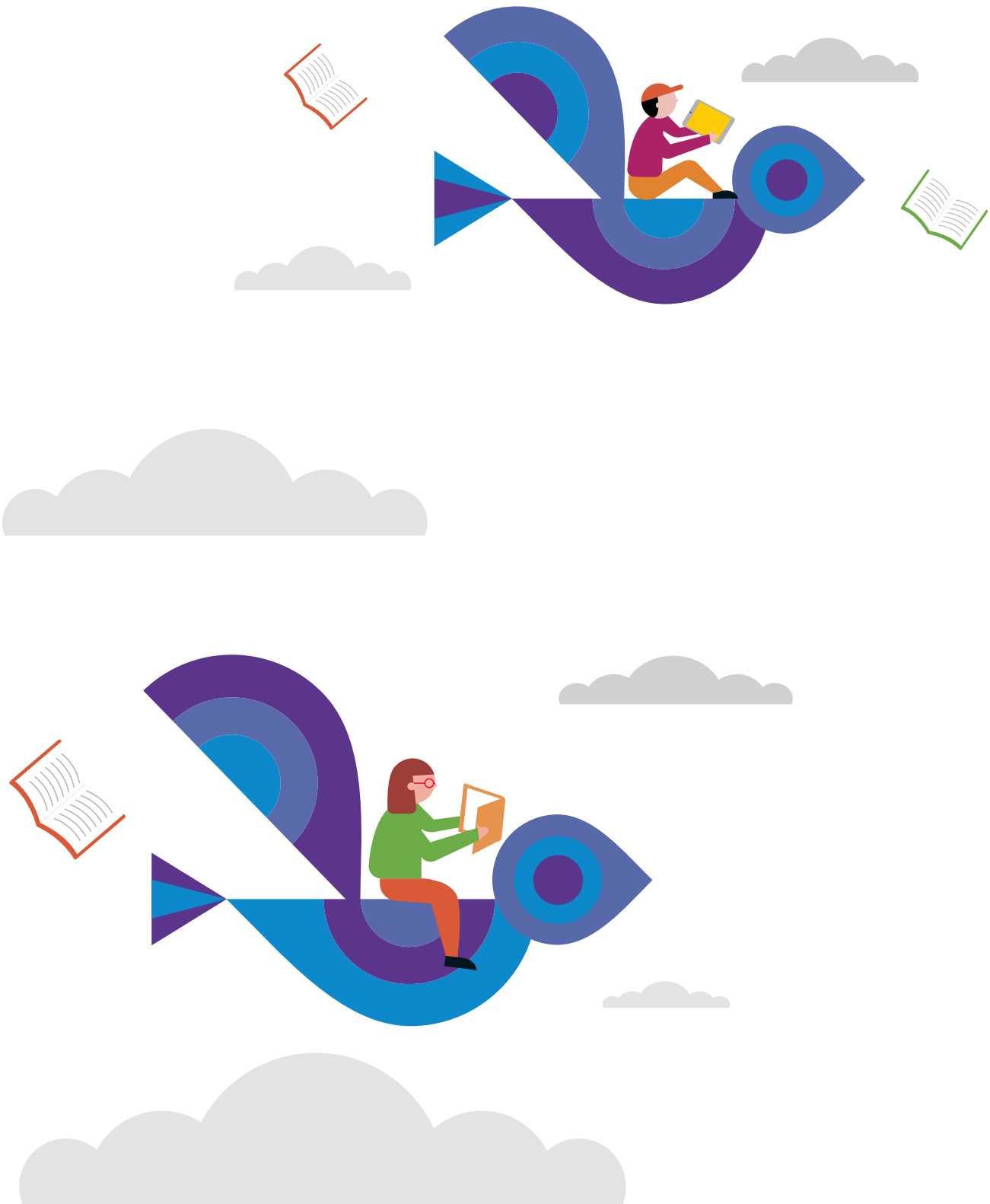
Dialogue

- Speech bubbles can still be used where appropriate.
- **NEW:** Dialogue is introduced within the text.



Oxford Reading Level 4: Oxford Reading Tree: *Wet Paint*

Oxford Reading Level 5



Oxford Reading Level 5

What students can do

Word reading[1]

Students can read words with a wider range of new graphemes, and alternative pronunciations for some graphemes they already know. They use their phonics knowledge to work out some less familiar words (e.g. words related to the topic of the book). They are increasingly able to apply this knowledge automatically, not relying on sounding out and blending orally when reading familiar and decodable words. They are able to review their reading and identify whether it makes sense, using their knowledge of sentence grammar, and will sometimes self-correct if it does not. They often take punctuation into account when reading aloud (including the full range of final punctuation, commas, and sometimes also ellipses and dashes). They can read words with possessive apostrophes, simple contractions with apostrophes, speech marks, and hyphens. They are continuing to extend their knowledge of common exception words (CEWs) and can read many on sight.

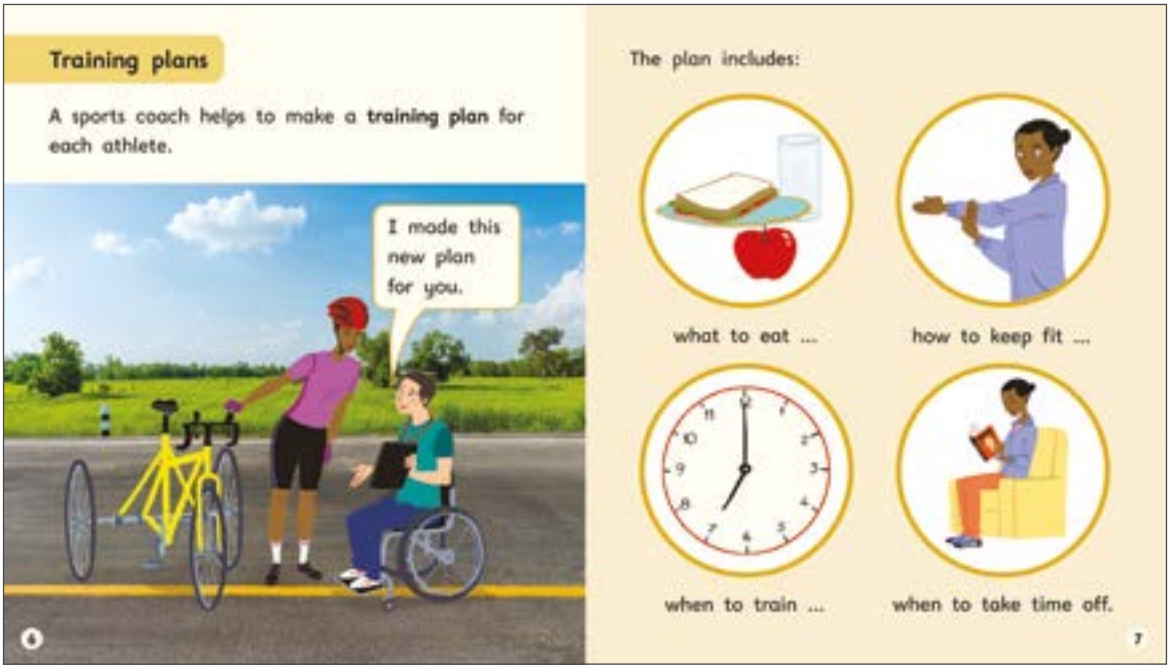
Comprehension

Students are beginning to make more complex predictions about texts, sometimes giving reasons or evidence for their ideas. They can often use simple inference to help them understand texts, e.g. working out a character's motivation or understanding how one fact links to another in a simple non-fiction text. When retelling a story, they will usually be able to include the main ideas in the right sequence. They are increasingly able to move around a non-fiction text and use text evidence to ask and answer simple questions, though they may still need support to do this. They are gaining experience in using simple non-fiction features such as labelled diagrams and simple tables and charts. In fiction, they can confidently read simple **direct speech**, and can often read aloud with appropriate intonation. They can often use new vocabulary from a text when talking about it, sometimes without prompting. They employ their knowledge of simple sentence structures to help them understand and read sentences, which may include occasional longer sentences using simple conjunctions.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: learning and using more complex phonics, including alternative pronunciations for known graphemes; continuing to learn new CEWs and practise those already met; increasing their ability to navigate and retrieve information from texts using a wider range of text features; working on reading aloud with appropriate intonation/expression and attention to punctuation; continuing to develop simple inference skills.

NEW at this level: decoding words that include alternative pronunciations for known graphemes; beginning to make more complex predictions.

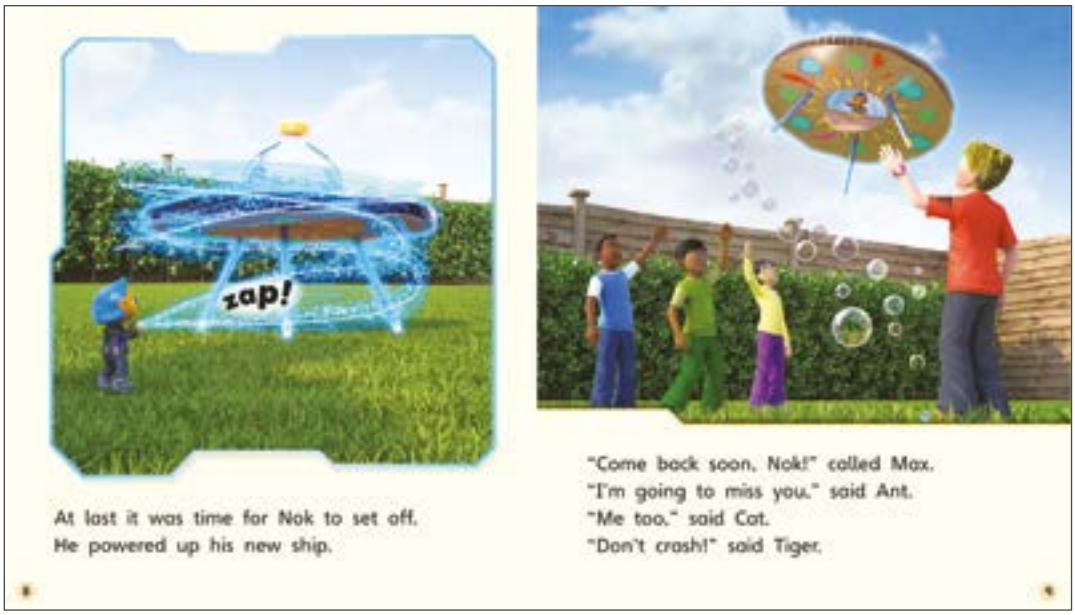


Oxford Reading Level 5: Project X Hero Academy Non-fiction: *Help to Win*

1. For more details on the phonics progression for a particular phonics teaching programme or decodable reading series, please refer to the specific teaching support.

Vocabulary

- Texts continue to provide opportunities to develop students' phonics knowledge, including new graphemes for reading and alternative pronunciations (**NEW**).
- Common and common exception words continue to be introduced.
- Texts reinforce previously learned grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs), adjacent consonants, and common and common exception words.
- Simple sentence structures are still prevalent; some longer sentences may be used.
- Texts give opportunities to read some polysyllabic words.
- Contractions with an apostrophe continue to be introduced.
- Possessive apostrophes are used.
- There is scope for some **onomatopoeic** words, as far as phonic restrictions allow (e.g. *whee*, *wham*).
- **NEW:** Suffixes: -le and -ed endings are introduced where 'ed' makes the single sound /d/ or /t/ (e.g. picked, looked).



Oxford Reading Level 5: Project X Alien Adventures: *Nok Gets Homesick*

Sentence structure

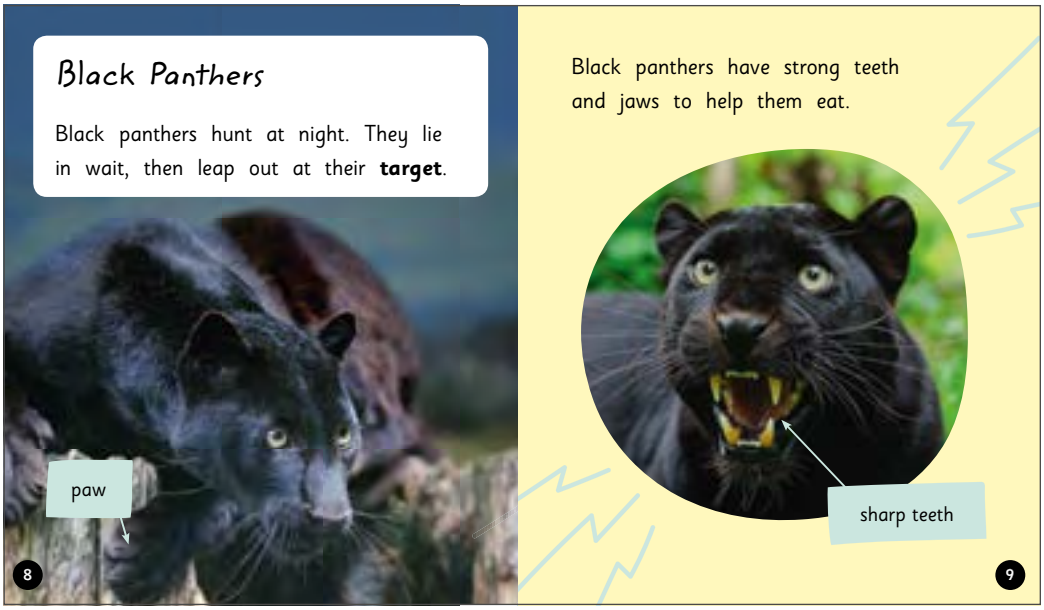
- On average, there are 6 words per sentence in both fiction and non-fiction books; generally, non-fiction books tend to have more sentences per page.
- Almost all sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound and complex) sentences** are used occasionally.
- Generally, the past tense is used more than the present tense.
- **Fronted adverbials** are used regularly.

Punctuation:

- Brackets are introduced and used occasionally.
- Colons are introduced and used occasionally.
- Contractions with an apostrophe are now used in fiction and non-fiction.
- Possessive apostrophes are now used.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- Fronted adverbials *(e.g. Just then, Cat saw a bee; On some days, Mum takes us out.).*
- Multi-clause (compound) sentences where two main clauses are joined by a **coordinating conjunction** *(e.g. I was in London and London is my home; The power beam hit Cam and she became an elephant.).*
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences where two clauses are connected by a relative clause** (e.g. *Lifeguards, who keep a lookout, check to see if you are safe.*).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *I walked in the hills; Butterflies taste with their feet.*).
- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *It was playtime*; "I miss Nok," Cat sighed.).
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences with one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses**, joined together by a **subordinating conjunction** *(e.g. Rabbit grinned as they all went to fetch their fishing stuff, but he hid the grin with his paw; A lot of trees and plants die when a volcano erupts.).*
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *Blackbeard stole lots of gold; I can see the moon in the pond!*).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *Sam frowned; Turtles beware!*).



Oxford Reading Level 5: Oxford Reading for Comprehension Decodables: *Swoop, Creep and Cling*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

- In fiction, stories are fun and often humorous.
- In fiction, some mild peril may be included (e.g. something that seems scary which turns out not to be).
- Age-appropriate and highly familiar concepts are still prevalent, for example: surprises, food, growing things, making things, people who help us (e.g. teachers), inventions, noise/music, flight, animals/bugs, nature seasons, true/false, school, competitions/races, sports, games, superheroes.
- Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, continue to be introduced, particularly in non-fiction, for example: artists and paintings, animal camouflage, light, robots, pirates, knights, rescues and emergency services, space, travel/journeys and explorers, environmental issues, concepts like values, bullying.

Oxford Reading Level 5: Oxford Reading Tree Traditional Tales: *The Moon in the Pond*

Themes

Overview:

- There will be one main theme in fiction/non-fiction. Examples of themes include:

Action & adventure	Conflict & decision-making	Relationship & emotion
• Characters start to encounter dilemmas, things going missing, things going wrong • Time concepts (e.g. things happening over a period of time) • Simple 'cause and effect' concepts	• Characters encounter arguments with other characters, being told off • Characters may play (friendly) jokes on each other • Stories with explicit morals are used • Comparing/contrasting (e.g. looking at different countries, then/now)	• Characters helping others • Characters start to see the consequences of their actions • Personal choice • Celebrating the achievements of others • **NEW:** Dealing with tricky emotions, like being sad

Plot and structure

Fiction:

- Stories have a very simple **linear narrative**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- All elements of the plot will be resolved within the story.
- Illustrations will be full colour.
- On average, there will be one main image per page; occasionally two (or more) images are used where it's necessary for the story.
- **NEW:** The story should be told through the text, although the images will still have a supporting role.

Non-fiction:

- Non-fiction may include a sequence of events over time; such information may be supported by a simple diagram.
- The text should convey the meaning and explain concepts, although the images will still have a supporting role.
- Subject matter will be limited to one main topic (e.g. school).
- Simple repeating layouts and design features help to convey information.
- Occasional longer captions may be included.
- Numbered instructions may be used.
- Headings may be used.
- Some stylized features may be used, e.g. newspaper reports.
- Most pages will have one main image; the use of two or three images on some pages is also regularly used.
- **NEW:** Fact boxes and simple discussion boxes (e.g. 'Did you know?' boxes) may be used.
- **NEW:** Simple tables, charts, and keys may be used.
- **NEW:** Contents pages, glossaries, and indexes are regularly used.

Plot/book devices

- Some rhyme may occasionally be used.
- **NEW:** In fiction, text devices to indicate a passage of/break in time may be used (e.g. The next day ...).

Setting

- In fiction, locations are limited to one or two main settings. These can include different countries.
- Non-fiction can include different locations within the same book (e.g. different countries).
- **NEW:** In fiction, two different stories may be set in the same location (e.g. two stories set at a beach).

Character/s

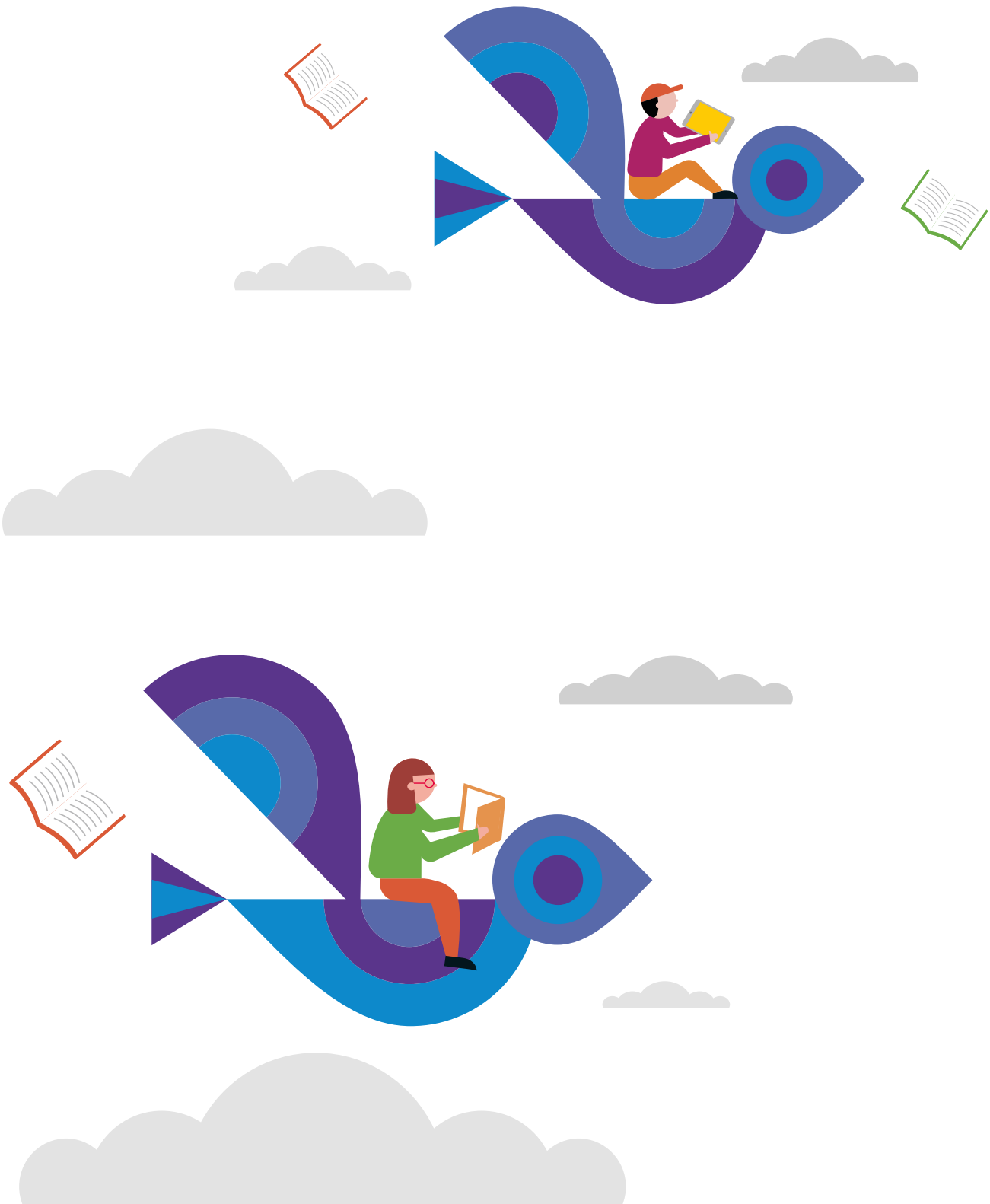
- In fiction, stories can feature up to four main characters, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Project X with Max, Cat, Ant, and Tiger) although many stories tend to still focus on one or two **protagonists**.

Dialogue

- Dialogue is now regularly used in fiction.
- Speech bubbles can still be used where appropriate.

Oxford Reading Level 5: Oxford Reading for Comprehension Decodables: *Grow, Tomato, Grow!*

Oxford Reading Level 6



Oxford Reading Level 6

What students can do

Word reading[1]

Students continue to learn to read words with further alternative pronunciations for some graphemes and a range of alternative spellings for some common phonemes. They are also revising and practising the many grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) which they have already been taught. They mostly apply their phonics knowledge automatically, and their reading is becoming more fluent. They can usually identify whether their reading makes sense, using their knowledge of sentence grammar (including some longer and multi-clause sentences). They may self-correct automatically if their reading does not make sense. They usually take punctuation into account when reading aloud (including a wide range of final punctuation, commas, ellipses, apostrophes, speech marks, and hyphens). They are continuing to extend their knowledge of common
non-decodable high-frequency words.

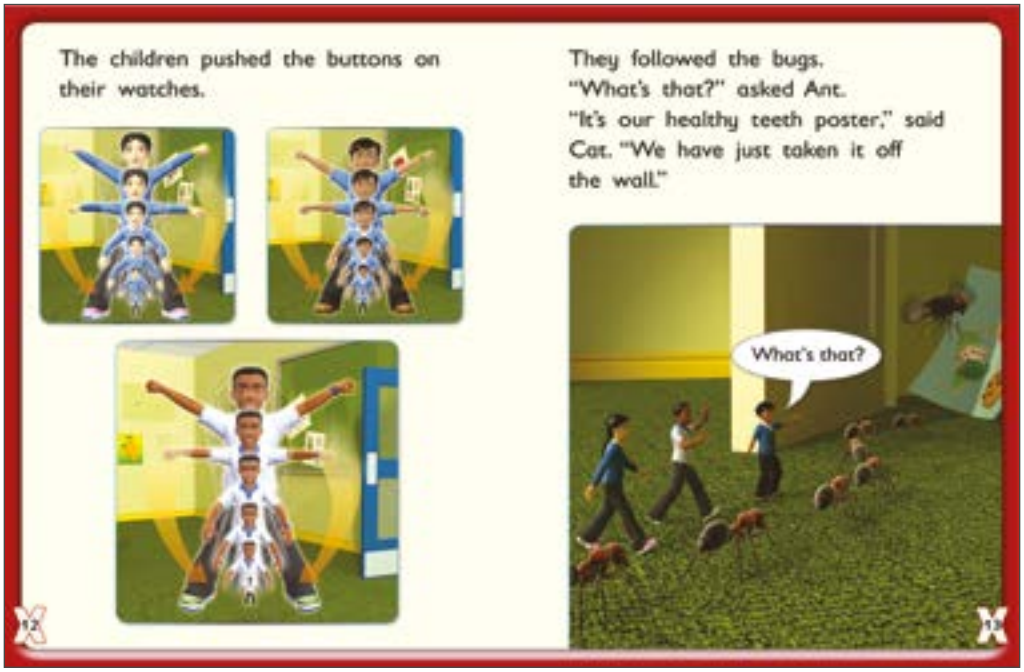
Comprehension

Students are becoming more confident in making predictions and using simple inference to help them understand texts. They will still often need support to do this, but they may volunteer their own ideas without prompting. They are increasingly confident in contributing ideas to discussions, sometimes accurately using new vocabulary encountered in the text. They can ask and answer simple questions on a range of texts, using inference as well as basic information retrieval skills. They can usually retell and sequence the main points or ideas in a text. They can use simple non-fiction features such as labelled diagrams and simple timelines or food chains. Most students can read aloud with appropriate expression and intonation when prompted. They use their knowledge of simple sentence structures to help them understand and read sentences, which may include occasional longer and multi-clause sentences.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: continuing to acquire more complex phonics knowledge, including alternative pronunciations for known graphemes/spellings for known phonemes; reading sentences with more varied lengths and structures, including some longer sentences with simple conjunctions; continuing to contribute ideas when talking about books; responding more independently to others' ideas.

NEW at this level: more able to apply phonics knowledge automatically when reading; often able to use phonics to work out unfamiliar words; often able to self-correct; able to use a wider range of text features to help understanding.



Oxford Reading Level 6: Project X Origins: *Buzz Off!*

1. For more details on the phonics progression for a particular phonics teaching programme or decodable reading series, please refer to the specific teaching support.

Vocabulary

- Texts continue to provide opportunities to develop students' phonics knowledge, including alternative pronunciations and alternative spellings (**NEW**).
- Common words continue to be introduced.
- Texts reinforce previously learned GPCs, adjacent consonants, and common and common exception words.
- Simple sentence structures are still prevalent, although a broader range of sentence structures are used.
- Texts give opportunities to read some polysyllabic words.
- Contractions with an apostrophe may be used.
- Possessive apostrophes are used.
- There is scope for some **onomatopoeic** words, as far as phonic restrictions allow (e.g. *clickerty-clack, clippetty-clop).*
- **NEW:** Suffixes: -al, -est, -il, -ily, and -tion endings are introduced.

Oxford Reading Level 6: Oxford Reading for Comprehension Decodables: *The Biggest Pet*

Sentence structure

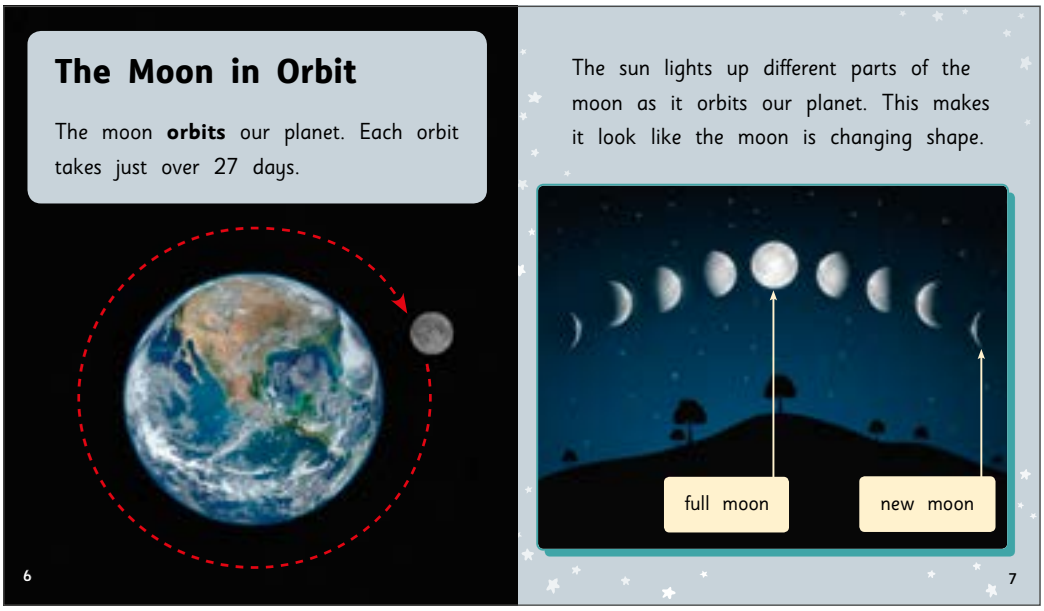
- On average, there are 7 words per sentence in both fiction and non-fiction books; generally, non-fiction books tend to have more sentences per page.
- The vast majority of sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound and complex) sentences** are used occasionally.
- Generally, the past tense is used more than the present tense.

Punctuation:

- Hyphens are now regularly used across books.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- Multi-clause (compound) sentences where two main clauses are joined by a **coordinating conjunction** (e.g. *Tiger pushed a button ... and they blasted off into space; Animals can carry heavy loads and they are faster than people.*).
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences where two clauses are connected by a relative clause** (e.g. *Bear, on the other hand, has learned that he shouldn't believe everything he is told.*).
- **Fronted adverbials** (e.g. *Luckily, Grub spotted us; From space, all of the sea makes Earth look blue.*).
- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *They spread pollen; Energy gives us light.).*
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences with one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses,** joined together by a **subordinating conjunction** (e.g. *Everyone is on holiday because it is a public holiday.*).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *They were made of slate; My fingers feel like ice.*).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *Pip gasped; I'm hiding!*).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *Pip saw a flash of gold.*).



Oxford Reading Level 6: Oxford Reading for Comprehension Decodables: *The Night Sky*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

- In fiction, stories are fun and often humorous.
- In fiction, there is often some age-appropriate peril (e.g. being chased by an alien ship).
- Age-appropriate and highly familiar concepts are still prevalent, for example: family, surprises, buildings, extreme weather, sea and underwater, sport/competitions, games, school, pets and fictional creatures (e.g. monsters/aliens), fantastical places, familiar folk/traditional tales.
- Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, continue to be introduced, particularly in non-fiction, for example: travel, sports and competitions, historical figures, environmental issues, recycling, historical schools, art, concepts like honesty, landmarks.

Oxford Reading Level 6: Oxford Reading for Comprehension: *Who EATS Who?*

Themes

Overview:

- There will be one main theme in fiction/non-fiction. Examples of themes include:

Action & adventure	Conflict & decision-making	Relationship & emotion
• Characters start to encounter dilemmas, things going missing, things going wrong • Time concepts (e.g. things happening over a period of time) • Simple 'cause and effect' concepts • **NEW:** Quests and missions start to be more apparent	• Characters encounter arguments with other characters, being told off • Characters may play (friendly) jokes on each other • Stories with explicit morals are used • Comparing/contrasting (e.g. looking at different countries, then/now)	• Dealing with tricky emotions, like being sad, scared • Personal choice • Celebrating the achievements of others • **NEW:** Overcoming a specific fear

Plot and structure

Fiction:

- Stories have a very simple **linear narrative**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- The story should be told through the text, although the images will still have a supporting role.
- All elements of the plot will be resolved within the story.
- Illustrations will be full colour.
- On average, there will be one main image per page; two (or more) images may be used where it's necessary for the story.

Non-fiction:

- Non-fiction may include a sequence of events over time; such information may be supported by a simple diagram.
- The text should convey the meaning and explain concepts, although the images will still have a supporting role.
- Subject matter will be limited to one main topic (e.g. school).
- Simple repeating layouts and design features help to convey information.
- Occasional longer captions may be included.
- Numbered instructions may be used.
- Fact boxes and simple discussion boxes (e.g. 'Did you know?' boxes) may be used.
- Headings may be used.
- Some stylized features may be used, e.g. newspaper reports.
- Contents pages, glossaries, and indexes are regularly used.
- Most pages will have one main image; the use of two or three images on some pages is also regularly used.
- **NEW:** Features like: simple food chains, timelines, tables, charts, and keys may be used.

Plot/book devices

- In fiction, text devices to indicate a passage of/break in time may be used (e.g. The next day ...).
- **NEW:** Story recaps (e.g. 'The story so far ...') feature in some series.
- **NEW:** Sentence openers like 'Just then,' may be used to indicate and increase tension or drama.
- **NEW:** First person narrative may be introduced.
- **NEW:** Recounts may be used.
- **NEW:** Emails and other forms of communication may be used.

Setting

- In fiction, locations are limited to one or two main settings. These can include different countries.
- Two different stories may be set in the same location (e.g. two stories set at a beach).
- Non-fiction can include different locations within the same book (e.g. different countries).

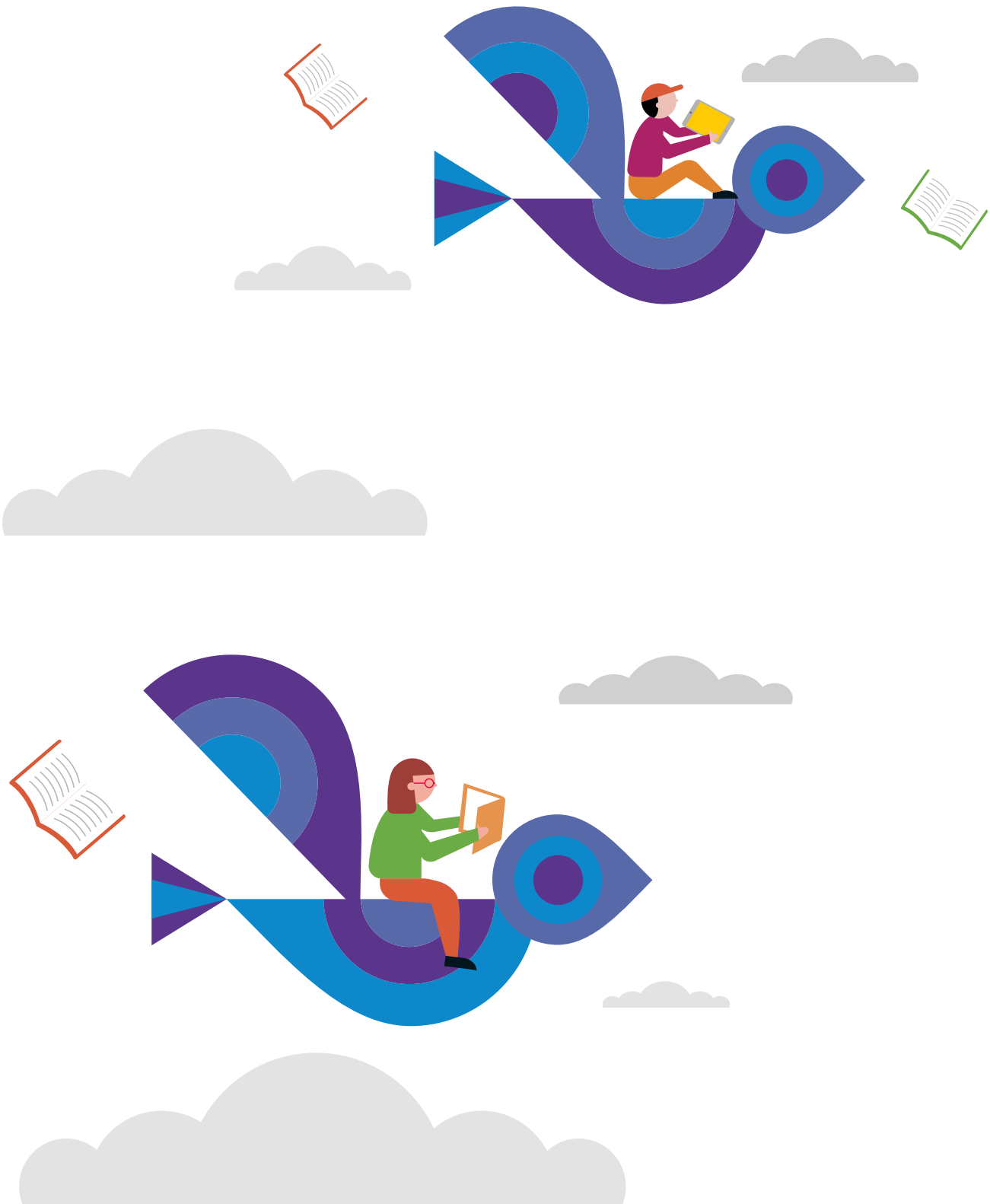
Character/s

- In fiction, stories can feature up to four main characters/**protagonists**, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Project X with Max, Cat, Ant, and Tiger) although many stories tend to still focus on one or two protagonists.
- **NEW: Antagonists** in the form of 'villains' may be introduced.

Dialogue

- Dialogue is now regularly used in fiction.
- Speech bubbles can still be used where appropriate.

Oxford Reading Level 7



Oxford Reading Level 7

What students can do

Word reading[1]

Students continue to practise and apply their phonics knowledge. They can usually use their knowledge of grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) automatically to read a wide range of familiar and unfamiliar words. However, they may still need support and extra practice with some aspects of phonics. When tackling unfamiliar words they normally sound out accurately and automatically. Their reading is becoming increasingly fluent, usually without overt sounding out and blending, and they often take a range of basic punctuation into account appropriately, including full stops, exclamation marks, question marks, commas, and ellipses. They can accurately read some words with two or more syllables and are gaining experience reading words with rare and unusual GPCs. They usually take account of apostrophes for possession and omission, hyphens, and speech marks. Some students may still need to be prompted to use appropriate emphasis and expression when reading aloud. They usually self-correct automatically if their reading does not make sense. They are continuing to extend and consolidate their knowledge of common non-decodable high-frequency words.

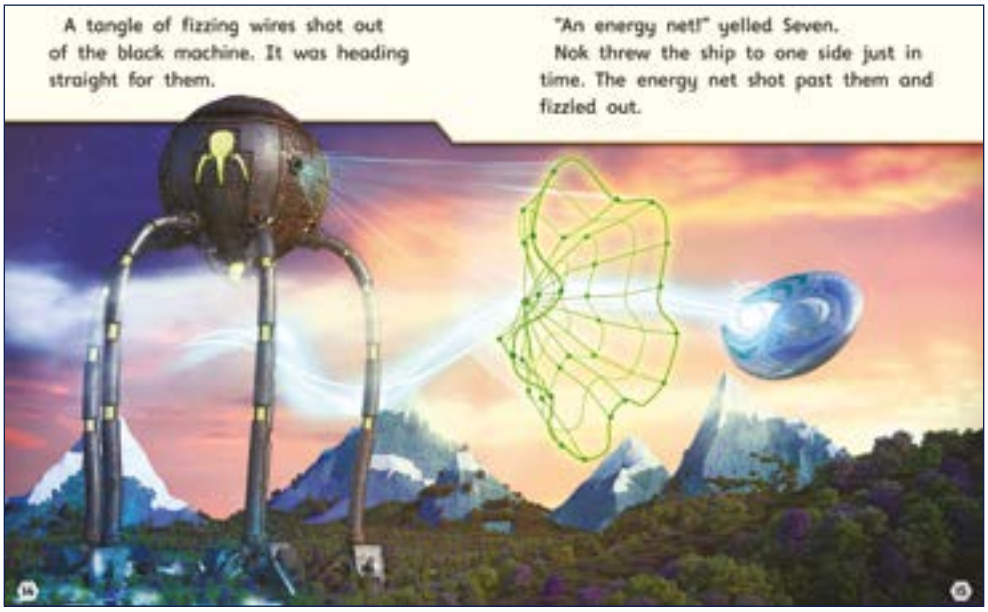
Comprehension

Students are increasingly able to find and assess relevant information within a section of text to help them answer a question or deepen their understanding. They are becoming more experienced in using non-fiction features such as labels, captions, diagrams, charts, tables, and keys. They can sometimes use their reading and life experiences, as well as evidence from the text, to help them understand what they read. In fiction they are beginning to encounter and understand stories with more serious subject matter, sometimes including experiences they may not have had themselves. As students' reading stamina increases, they can sometimes sustain their interest across a longer story arc (occasionally spanning more than one book). Students expect to encounter some new and/or subject-specific words and are beginning to use various strategies to work out their meanings, including using the context, analogy with known words, discussing with others, and looking up in a dictionary. They are increasingly able to retell a story concisely, getting the main parts in the right order. With prompting and support as appropriate, they can use straightforward inference and prediction skills to understand why characters act as they do and anticipate what may come next. In non-fiction they can make simple connections across a text, beginning to understand how items of information are related.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: applying phonics skills to a wider range of words including those with rare and unusual GPCs; reading more automatically and fluently with less overt sounding out and blending overall; using various strategies to work out the meanings of unfamiliar words; reading slightly longer books, sometimes with more sustained story arcs or increasingly detailed information.

NEW at this level: navigating text using a wider range of text features, especially in non-fiction; using phonics knowledge to read a wider range of vocabulary, including some words with rarer GPCs.

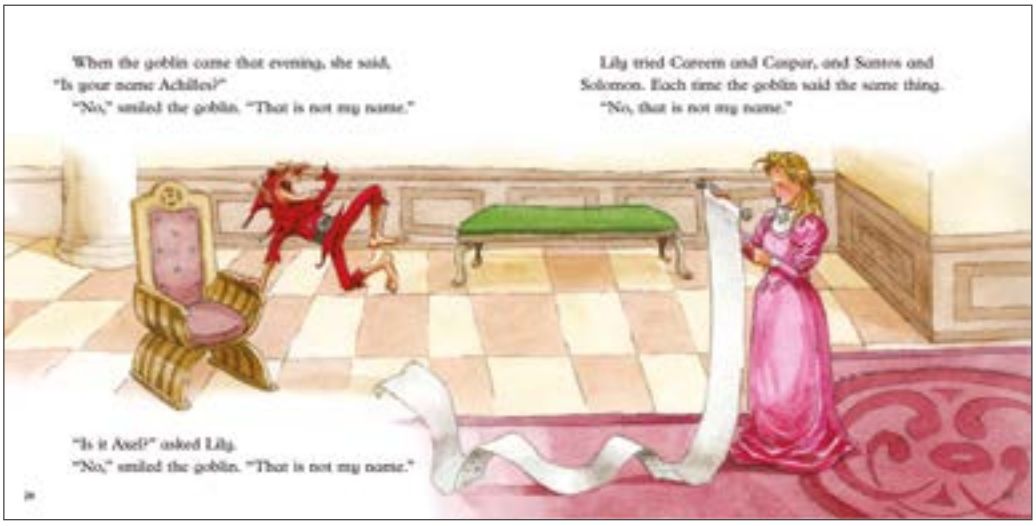


Oxford Reading Level 7: Project X Alien Adventures: *Planet Exis*

1. For more details on the phonics progression for a particular phonics teaching programme or decodable reading series, please refer to the specific teaching support.

Vocabulary

- Texts provide opportunities to practise and apply phonics knowledge and skills previously learned.
- Texts reinforce previously learned GPCs, adjacent consonants, and common and common exception words.
- Further suffix endings may be used introduced.
- Texts give opportunities to read a range of polysyllabic words.
- In fiction, there is some scope for richer language, such as **onomatopoeia** (e.g. *twang, thud*).
- Sentence openers like 'Just then,' and 'Suddenly,' may be used to indicate and increase tension or drama within a narrative.
- **NEW:** Texts provide opportunities to practise reading words with rare/unusual GPCs.
- **NEW:** Vocabulary is still mostly familiar, but texts include a broader range of words.
- **NEW:** Pronunciation devices to break down hard vocabulary can be occasionally used (e.g. a book on dinosaurs may have: titanoboa (say: tigh-tan-a-boh-a)).
- **NEW: Alliteration** (e.g. *Davy Dawson and the Disappearing* ...) is introduced.



Oxford Reading Level 7: Oxford Reading Tree Traditional Tales: *Rumpelstiltskin*

Sentence structure

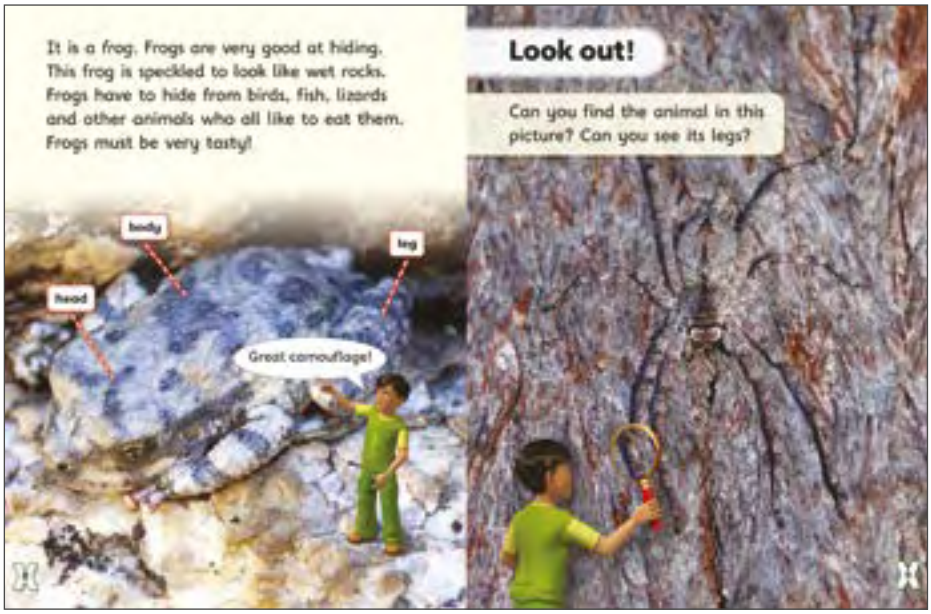
- On average, there are 6 words per sentence in fiction books and 10 words per sentence in non-fiction books (although non-fiction books tend to have fewer sentences per page).
- The vast majority of sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound and complex) sentences** are used occasionally.
- Generally, the past tense is used more than the present tense.

Punctuation:

- Brackets are now regularly used in non-fiction.
- Colons are now widely used in non-fiction.
- Ellipses are now widely used in fiction.
- En rules are introduced and occasionally used.
- Hyphens are now widely used across books.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences where two clauses are connected by a relative clause** (e.g. *Each match has a referee who starts and finishes the game.*).
- **Fronted adverbials** (e.g. *On the weekend, I like to play soccer.*).
- Multi-clause (compound) sentences where two main clauses are joined by a **coordinating conjunction** (e.g. *We bought the scarf and went to Grandma's house.*).
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences with one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses,** joined together by a **subordinating conjunction** (e.g. *What happens if you push on one of the top corners?*).
- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *Burden had discovered a dragon!*).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *It was also faster.*).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *The crowd cheered.*).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *Shield bugs suck juices from plants.*).

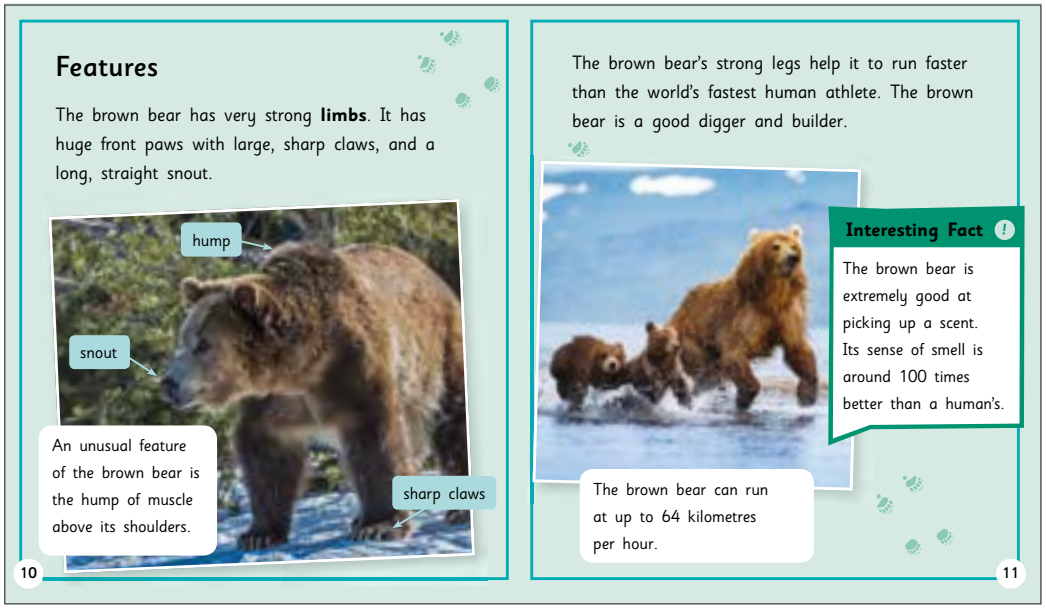


Oxford Reading Level 7: Project X Origins: *Animal Magic*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

- In fiction, stories are still fun and often humorous.
- In fiction, some peril or mild danger may be involved (e.g. being chased by an alien ship).
- Age-appropriate and familiar concepts are still used regularly, for example: food, shopping, waste/recycling, making things (e.g. a scrapbook, puppets), classmates, sports (e.g. athletics, football), pets and looking after them, mending things, holidays, following rules, feeling poorly.
- Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, continue to be introduced, particularly in non-fiction, for example: history/ancient history, extinct creatures/dinosaurs, conservation/environmental issues, colours and camouflage, different jobs in society/people who help us, comparing then/now.
- **NEW:** More serious subject matter is starting to be introduced (e.g. characters being mean to each other).
- **NEW:** Adventure/fantasy stories are becoming more common.



Oxford Reading Level 7: Oxford Reading for Comprehension Decodables: *Big Animals*

Themes

Overview:

- There will be one main theme in fiction/non-fiction. Examples of themes include:

Action & adventure	Conflict & decision-making	Relationship & emotion
• Exploration, missions and quests • **NEW:** Time pressures (i.e. 'time running out')	• Characters encounter arguments with other characters, being told off • Explicit moral themes (e.g. cheating, things we should/shouldn't do) • **NEW:** Characters deceiving others	• **NEW:** Being 'new' (e.g. a new person at school) or being the 'odd one out' • **NEW:** Characters helping others (fiction); people who help others

Plot and structure

Fiction:

- Stories have a very simple **linear narrative**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- The story should be told through the text, although the images will still have a supporting role.
- All elements of the plot will be resolved within the story.
- Illustrations will be full colour.
- On average, there will be one main image per page; two (or more) images may be used where it's necessary for the story.

Non-fiction:

- Non-fiction may include a sequence of events over time; such information may be supported by a simple diagram.
- The text should convey the meaning and explain concepts, although the images will still have a supporting role.
- Subject matter will be limited to one main topic (e.g. school).
- Simple repeating layouts and design features help to convey information.
- Occasional longer captions may be included.
- Numbered instructions may be used.
- Fact boxes and simple discussion boxes (e.g. 'Did you know?' boxes) may be used.
- Features like: simple food chains, timelines, tables, charts, and keys may be used.
- Headings may be used.
- Some stylized features may be used, e.g. newspaper reports.
- Contents pages, glossaries, and indexes are regularly used.
- Most pages will have one main image; the use of two or three images on some pages is also regularly used.

Plot/book devices

- Story recaps (e.g. 'The story so far ...') feature at the front of the book in series where there is a broader story arc.
- First person narrative may be used.
- Recounts and diary entries are used occasionally.
- Emails, letters, and other forms of communication (e.g. to friends/relatives can be used).
- Sentence openers like 'Just then,' and 'Suddenly,' may be used to indicate and increase tension or drama within the narrative.

Setting

- Two different stories may be set in the same location.
- Non-fiction can include different locations within the same book (e.g. different countries).
- **NEW:** In fiction, stories can include up to two main settings.
- **NEW:** Characters start to have adventures in far-flung places.
- **NEW:** Fiction books can be set in different countries and in/on different worlds.

Character/s

- **Antagonists** in the form of villains and their sidekicks/helpers may be used.
- **NEW:** In fiction, stories can feature up to five main characters particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Project X with Max, Cat, Ant and Tiger) although many stories tend to still focus on one or two **protagonists**.
- **NEW:** Other types of antagonist may occasionally be used, i.e. conflict antagonists.

Dialogue

- Dialogue is now widely used in fiction. It is mostly limited to one or two different characters speaking per page.
- Speech bubbles are less frequently used in fiction, although they are still common in non-fiction.

Oxford Reading Level 8

Oxford Reading Level 8

What students can do

Word reading

Students use their knowledge of a wider range of grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) automatically, to read familiar and unfamiliar words. However, they may still need support and extra practice with some aspects of phonics. When tackling unfamiliar words, they normally sound out accurately and automatically. Their reading is becoming increasingly fluent, often without overt sounding out and blending, and they usually take a range of basic punctuation into account, including full stops, exclamation marks, question marks, commas, and ellipses. They can read a range of common polysyllabic words, including some words with rare and unusual GPCs. They understand the use of apostrophes for possession and omission, hyphens, and speech marks. Most students can use appropriate emphasis and expression when reading aloud (sometimes with prompting). They usually self-correct automatically if their reading does not make sense. They can read on sight an increasing range of common non-decodable high-frequency words.

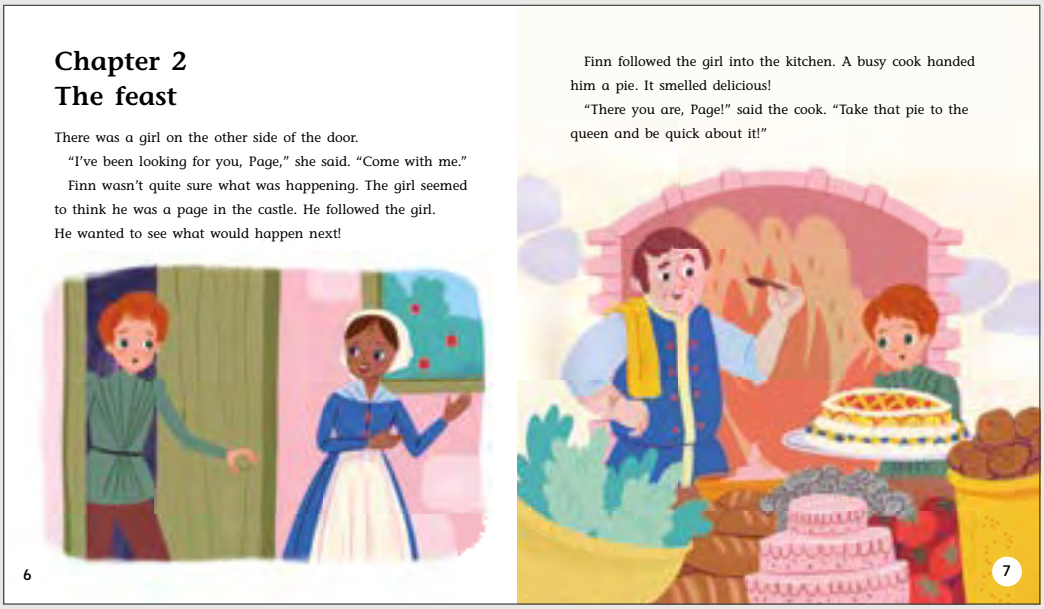
Comprehension

Students can locate appropriate information within a section of text to help them answer straightforward questions or use in a discussion, though they may still need prompting or support. With prompting they can use a range of simple non-fiction features to navigate a text. They often use their reading and life experiences as well as evidence from the text to help them understand what they read. In fiction they can tackle stories with more varied and slightly more serious subject matter, including topics outside their own experience, and some books with simple sub-themes. They can read and understand text with simple **figurative language** including descriptive language and occasional **similes**. They are developing greater reading stamina and beginning to read short chapter books. When engaged by a book or series they can sustain their interest across a longer story arc (occasionally spanning more than one book). When encountering new and/or subject-specific words, with prompting students can often use strategies to work out or learn their meanings, including using the context, analogy with known words, discussing with adults or peers, and looking up in a dictionary. With support they can often identify main ideas and themes, and can usually retell or summarize what they have read briefly and accurately. With prompting and support as appropriate, they can use inference and prediction skills to understand what is happening and why, and anticipate what may come next.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: reinforcing and consolidating skills from Oxford Reading Level 7.

NEW at this level: able to read longer books, including fiction books with short chapters; able to understand simple sub-themes.



Chapter 2
The feast

There was a girl on the other side of the door.

"I've been looking for you, Page," she said. "Come with me."

Finn wasn't quite sure what was happening. The girl seemed to think he was a page in the castle. He followed the girl. He wanted to see what would happen next!

6

Finn followed the girl into the kitchen. A busy cook handed him a pie. It smelled delicious!

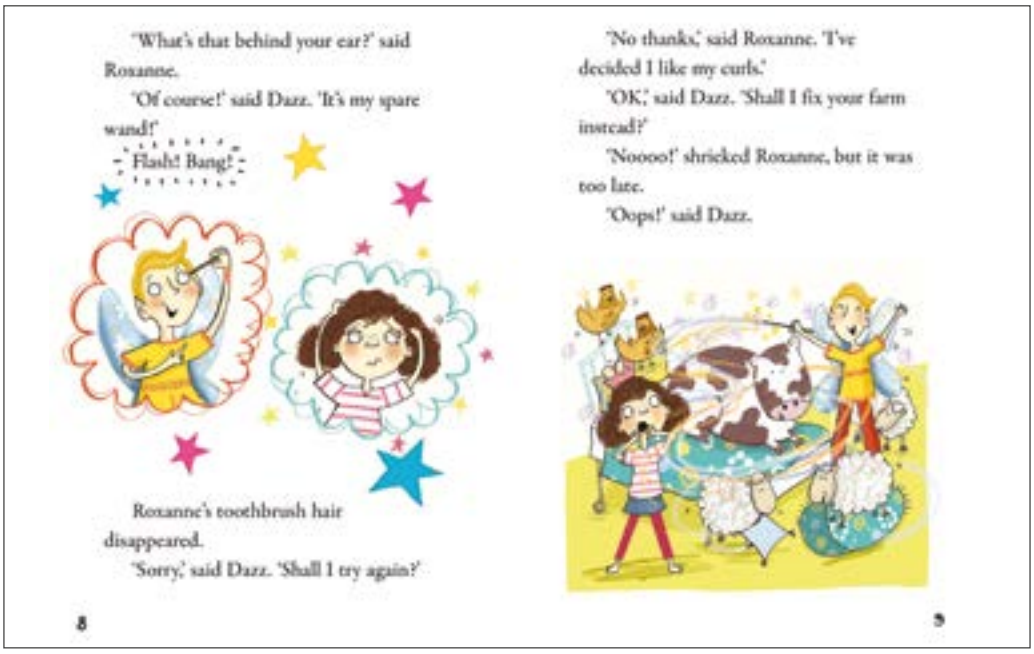
"There you are, Page!" said the cook. "Take that pie to the queen and be quick about it!"

7

Oxford Reading Level 8: Oxford Reading for Comprehension Decodables: *The Great Castle Fair*

Vocabulary

- Texts provide opportunities to practise and apply phonics knowledge and skills previously learned and to practise reading words with rare/unusual GPCs.
- Texts give opportunities to read polysyllabic words.
- Pronunciation devices to break down hard vocabulary may occasionally be used in fiction and non-fiction (e.g. a book on composers may have: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (say: wolf-gang am-a-day-us moat-start)).
- In fiction, there is some limited scope for richer language, such as: **alliteration** (e.g. *Sam swam to safety* ...) and **onomatopoeia** (e.g. *splash, swish*).
- Sentence openers like 'Just then,' and 'Suddenly,' are used to indicate and increase tension or drama within a narrative.
- **NEW:** Texts give opportunities to read words with some common word endings, prefixes, and suffixes.
- **NEW:** Vocabulary is still mostly familiar, but texts include a broader range of words with a higher proportion of new/interest words.
- **NEW:** At Key Stage 2, richer language can include some occasional similes (e.g. *legs like tree trunks, fists like rocks*.).



Oxford Reading Level 8: TreeTops Chucklers: *Roxanne and the Fairy Godbrother*

NOTE: For more information on the rationale for having the same level at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, **see Supporting transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.**

Sentence structure

- On average, there are 7 words per sentence in fiction books and 10 words per sentence in non-fiction books (although non-fiction books tend to have fewer sentences per page).
- Most sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound, complex) sentences** are used occasionally.
- Generally, the past tense is more common than the present tense in both fiction and non-fiction.

Punctuation:

- Ellipses are now regularly used in non-fiction.
- En rules are now widely used in non-fiction and regularly used in fiction.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences where two clauses are connected by a relative clause** (e.g. *These animals all have features that help them survive in their habitats.*).
- Multi-clause (compound) sentences where two main clauses are joined by a **coordinating conjunction** (e.g. "But hurry up," said Chip, "or it will be too late.").
- **Fronted adverbials** (e.g. *Over the years, remains of the ship have been found on the ocean floor.*).
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences with one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses,** joined together by a **subordinating conjunction** (e.g. *They wanted it to glow because it had not glowed for a long time.*).
- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *Dinosaurs roam the earth.*).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *We're looking for the thieves.*).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *Mission accomplished!*).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *They had never heard his voice before that night.*).

"I have some exciting news," said Mrs Andrew to her class one morning. "You have all been matched with a pen pal in Japan."

"What's a pen pal?" asked Matthew.

"A pen pal is someone that you write to, in a faraway place," said Mrs Andrew. "You can tell them about where you live."

2

"That sounds like fun!" replied Matthew.

"When I was your age, pen pals posted letters to each other," said Mrs Andrew. "Now, most pen pals use email."

Then Mrs Andrew told Matthew that he would be writing to a boy called Koji.

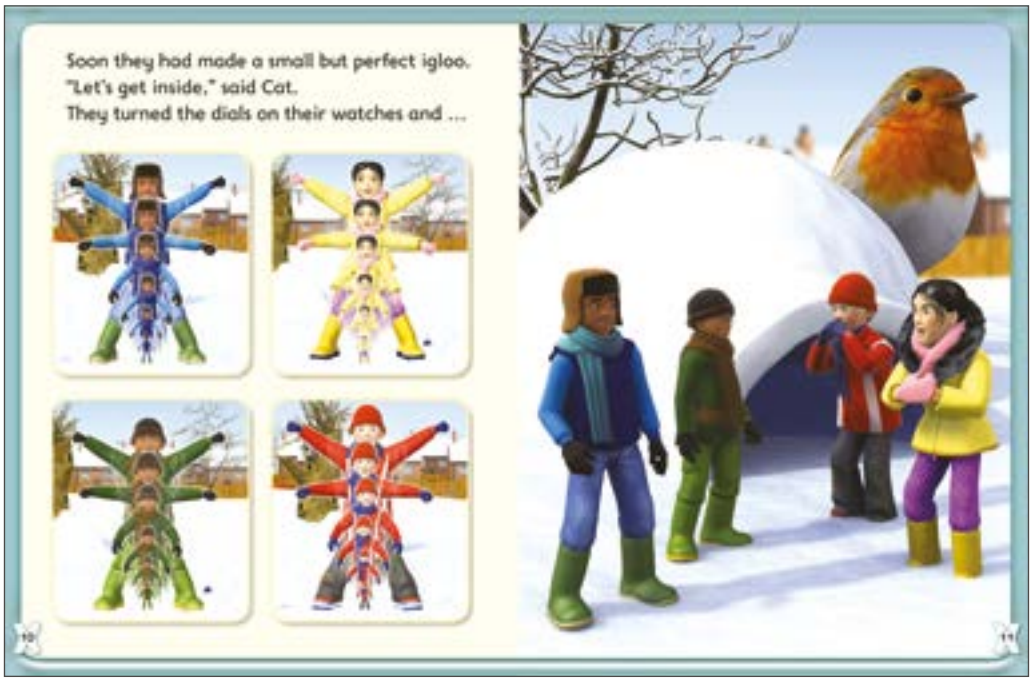
3

Oxford Reading Level 8: Oxford Reading for Comprehension Decodables: *New Pen Pals*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

Key Stage 1 Level 8	Key Stage 2 Level 8
◎ Stories can be humorous, but more serious subject matter is also tackled (e.g. facing a fear, a planet in trouble). ◎ In fiction, some peril or mild danger may be involved (e.g. being chased by a wolf). ◎ Adventure/fantasy stories are common. ◎ Age-appropriate and familiar concepts are used regularly; for example: messages and communication, imagination, food, growing/making things (e.g. a pizza, a raft), games/sports, competition and winning, animals, fish and insects, drawing comics/art, fashion, friendship, raising money for charity. ◎ Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are being used more regularly in fiction and non-fiction; for example: music/composers/geniuses, history/ancient history (e.g. the Victorians, Vikings, Aztecs, Queens), extreme environments/polar regions, the body and how it works, modern explorers, sailing/shipwrecks, ice and icebergs, biographies, the gold rush, unusual buildings, dinosaurs.	◎ Stories can still be light-hearted and humorous although more serious subject matter is also tackled. ◎ Familiar concepts are still used in fiction and non-fiction; although there are fewer familiar topics covered than in Key Stage 1. ◎ Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are regularly used in fiction and non-fiction (there's a greater range of age-appropriate, unfamiliar topics in Key Stage 2); for example: biographies/other people's lives/family history, artists/galleries, the sky/Northern Lights, countries/nations/identity. ◎ **NEW:** Jokes are sometimes used in fiction and non-fiction.



Oxford Reading Level 8: Project X Origins: *The Snow Den*

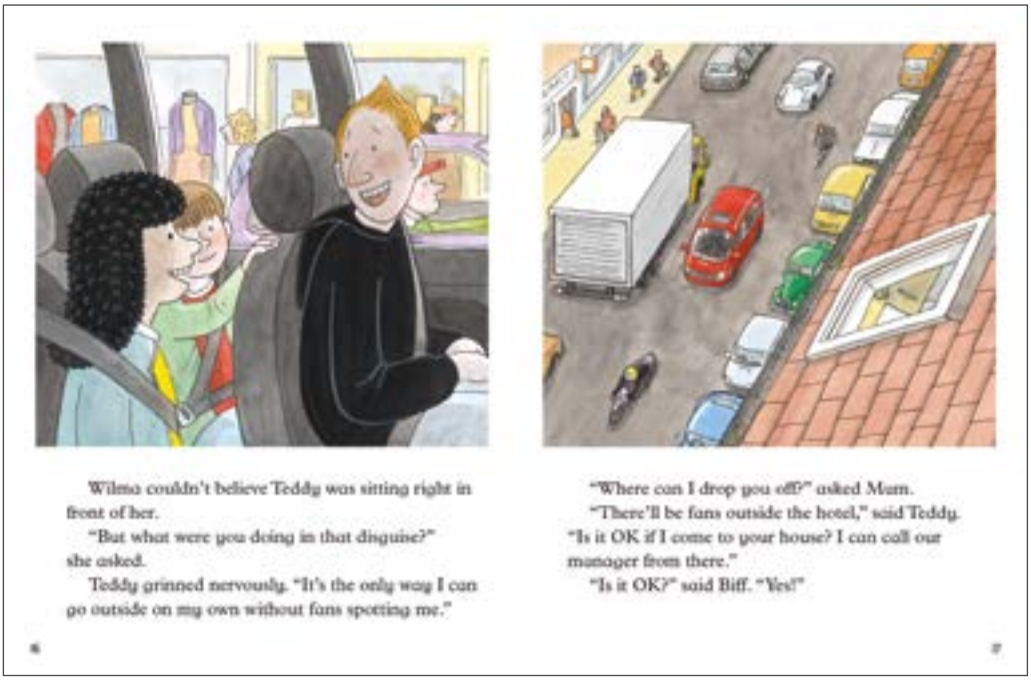
NOTE: For more information on the rationale for having the same level at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, **see Supporting transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.**

Themes

Overview:

- As well as a main theme, sub-themes are explored.
- Fiction is starting to be more thematically driven, whereas non-fiction remains more subject matter-led.
- Examples of themes include:

Key Stage 1 Level 8:	Key Stage 2 Level 8:
Action & adventure	**Action & adventure**
NEW: Rescues **NEW:** Righting wrongs **NEW:** Wishes (the idea that you might not want what you wish for)	**NEW:** Saving the day **NEW:** Bad luck
Conflict & decision-making	**Conflict & decision-making**
Characters encounter arguments with other characters Characters playing (friendly) jokes or tricks on each other	Characters deceiving others and/or being duplicitous (e.g. villains in disguise) **NEW:** Good prevailing over evil
Relationship & emotion	**Relationship & emotion**
Characters struggling at school Overcoming a specific fear or overcoming adversity **NEW:** Forgiveness **NEW:** Wanting to be a grown up	**NEW:** Making amends for wrongdoing **NEW:** Pride before the fall **NEW:** Characters not listening/paying attention and then having some mishap as a result **NEW:** Self-belief



Wilma couldn't believe Teddy was sitting right in front of her.

"But what were you doing in that disguise?" she asked.

Teddy grinned nervously. "It's the only way I can go outside on my own without fans spotting me."

"Where can I drop you off?" asked Mum.

"There'll be fans outside the hotel," said Teddy. "Is it OK if I come to your house? I can call our manager from there."

"Is it OK?" said Biff. "Yes!"

Oxford Reading Level 8: Oxford Reading Tree Decode and Develop: *The Secret Pop Star*

Plot and structure

Key Stage 1 Fiction:

- Stories have **linear narratives**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- The story should make sense without the need for images, although images will still support the text.
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- **NEW:** The occasional two-part stories may be used.
- **NEW:** Continuous story arcs are developed further and may span multiple books in some series.
- **NEW:** Passages of time are used (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).

Key Stage 2 Fiction:

- More events can take place within one story than at Key Stage 1 Level 8, which can make stories feel faster-paced.
- **NEW:** Simultaneous action may be used (i.e. in one book, different characters can be doing different things in different places at the same time).
- **NEW:** Other characters' perspectives may be featured (e.g. a villain's perspective).

Non-fiction:

- The text in the book should now convey all the meaning and the concepts, although the images will still support the text.
- Contents pages, glossaries, and indexes are used in all non-fiction.
- **NEW:** Features that may be used include: size and other comparison charts/diagrams, recipes, tips, simple 'blueprint' style drawings and cross sections (e.g. for buildings), simple family trees.
- **NEW:** Illustrations can be used to help lighten serious topics.

Plot/book devices

- First person narrative may occasionally be used.
- Emails, letters, and other forms of communication may be used.
- Story recaps (e.g. 'The story so far ...') may feature at the front of a book in series where there is a continuous story arc.
- **NEW:** Cliffhangers may be used at the end of chapters.
- **NEW:** Devices like 'Later that day ...' may be used to indicate a passage of/break in time.
- **NEW:** In Key Stage 2, devices to indicate simultaneous action are introduced (e.g. Meanwhile ...); a break in chapters can have the same effect.

Setting

- In fiction, stories can include up to two main settings.
- Characters can have adventures in far-flung places.
- Fiction book settings range from very everyday, familiar settings to different countries and worlds. In Key Stage 2, the range of locations is broader than Key Stage 1.
- Two different stories may be set in the same location.
- Non-fiction can look at a range of different locations/ countries within the same book.
- **NEW:** At Key Stage 2, in fiction, stories can include two or three main settings.

Character/s

- In fiction, stories can feature up to five main characters, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Project X with Max, Cat, Ant, and Tiger) although many stories tend to still focus on one or two **protagonists**.
- **Antagonists** may include: villains and their sidekicks, conflict antagonists, and inner conflict (**NEW**).
- **NEW:** At Key Stage 2, we may occasionally see a scene from a villain's perspective.
- **NEW:** At Key Stage 2, characters can split up and have simultaneous adventures in the same book.

Dialogue

- Dialogue is widely used in fiction.
- Speech bubbles are not often used in fiction now (unless for a particular effect). In non-fiction they may still be used.

NOTE: For more information on the rationale for having the same level at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, **see Supporting transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.**

Oxford Reading Level 9

Oxford Reading Level 9

What students can do

Word reading

Students continue to apply their phonics knowledge increasingly confidently and automatically, including tackling words that are unfamiliar, subject-specific, or not completely decodable. They can read most common exception words (CEWs) on sight. Some students still need support and practice with certain aspects of phonics. They can usually read levelled texts silently or aloud, without overt sounding out and blending, reserving sounding out and blending for words that are unfamiliar or tricky to decode. They usually remember to take basic punctuation into account, and they understand the use of apostrophes, hyphens, and speech marks as well as commas and the full range of final punctuation. They expect text to make sense and will normally re-read and self-correct if their reading does not make sense.

Comprehension

Students are getting used to an increasing range of text features, and can identify and understand features such as simple diary extracts, newspaper reports, etc. They know how to use a range of straightforward non-fiction features to help them find information, including maps, diagrams, tables, and charts. They can navigate non-fiction pages with more complex layouts than previously, usually understanding how subheadings and headings relate to the main text. They can follow occasional more sophisticated fiction features such as **flashbacks** and simultaneous action (e.g. 'Meanwhile ...') when these are clearly signposted. They can read and understand text with simple **figurative language** including descriptive language and occasional **similes** and **metaphors**. With prompting as necessary, they are often able to give a brief reasoned opinion about texts, explaining in simple terms why they like or dislike them and giving straightforward ideas about aspects such as character motivation in fiction, key points in non-fiction, etc. They are beginning to give simple reasons for their judgements when comparing texts, e.g. 'I like this book best because ...'. They continue to use a range of simple strategies to work out the meanings of new and unfamiliar words, including context cues, discussion, and analogy with known words. They continue to develop their reading stamina by reading slightly longer books.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: becoming a more fluent reader, relying less on sounding out and reading aloud; ability to take punctuation into account whether reading aloud or silently; continuing to develop comprehension skills including using inference, deduction, and prediction; giving reasons for opinions.

NEW at this level: reading slightly longer books that may be structured in a more sophisticated way, including a wider range of features such as simple diaries and newspaper extracts.

Oxford Reading Level 9: Oxford Reading for Comprehension: *Sugar Plum Scary*

Vocabulary

- Texts provide opportunities to practise and apply phonics knowledge and skills previously learned and to practise reading words with rare/unusual grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs).
- Texts give opportunities to read polysyllabic words and words with some common word endings, prefixes, and suffixes.
- Vocabulary is still mostly familiar, but texts include a broader range of words with a higher proportion of new/interest words.
- Pronunciation devices to break down hard vocabulary may occasionally be used in fiction and non-fiction (e.g. a book on chocolate may have: It's about something called theobromine (say: thee-o-bro-mine)).
- In fiction, richer language may occasionally be used such as: **alliteration** (e.g. *Your marvellous Majesty*), **onomatopoeia** (e.g. *splosh, bang*), and some similes (e.g. *Fir trees glimmered as though sprinkled with diamond.*).
- Sentence openers like 'Just then,' and 'Suddenly,' are used to indicate and increase tension or drama within a narrative.
- **NEW:** At Key Stage 2, the occasional metaphor may be used (e.g. *Something was tugging at the back of her mind.*).
- **NEW:** At Key Stage 2, in fiction, short detailed descriptions create vivid **imagery** and are occasionally used to help construct a **sense of place** (e.g. *A waterfall poured over dark, gloomy rocks.*).

The ship broke through a layer of thick cloud. It plunged down towards the surface of the planet.
"Whoa!" gasped Tiger, as he saw the glittering rocks below.
"Hold on!" Nok yelled. "It's going to be a rough landing."

The ship thudded along the ground. Nok did his best to steer between the huge crystals.
Finally, they came to a juddery halt.

Oxford Reading Level 9: Project X Alien Adventures: *The Crystal Planet*

NOTE: For more information on the rationale for having the same level at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, **see Supporting transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.**

Sentence structure

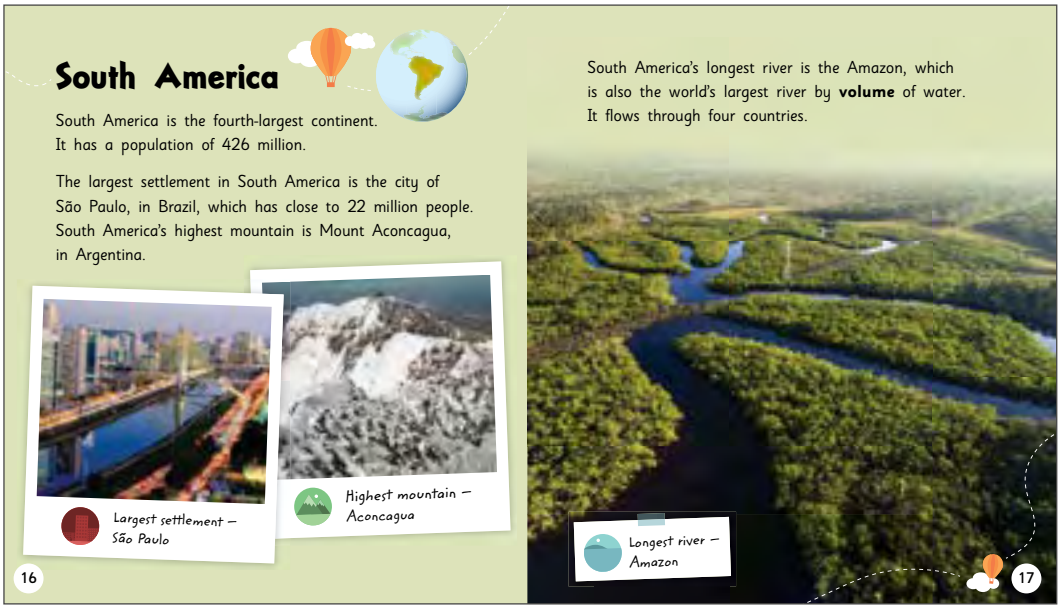
- On average, there are 8 words per sentence in fiction books and 10 words per sentence in non-fiction books (although non-fiction books tend to have fewer sentences per page).
- Most sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound, complex) sentences** are used occasionally.
- Generally, the past tense is more common than the present tense in both fiction and non-fiction.

Punctuation:

- Ellipses are now used more widely in non-fiction.
- At Key Stage 2, semicolons are introduced and used occasionally (non-fiction only) (they are not introduced until Level 11 in Key Stage 1).

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences where two clauses are connected by a relative clause** (e.g. *Human chocolate is very bad for dogs, which is why they have their own safe chocolate made just for them.*).
- Multi-clause (compound) sentences where two main clauses are joined by a **coordinating conjunction** (e.g. *The friends were not happy about it, but they knew it was their only hope.*).
- **Fronted adverbials** (e.g. *On stage, there is a red and black table with an old-fashioned suitcase on top.*).
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences with one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses,** joined together by a **subordinating conjunction** (e.g. *Max, Cat, Ant and Tiger clapped loudly as the tournament ended.*).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *These fungi are growing on a fallen log.*).
- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *Cat chewed some candyfloss.*).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *Tiger grunted.*).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *He flung the rope like a lasso.*).

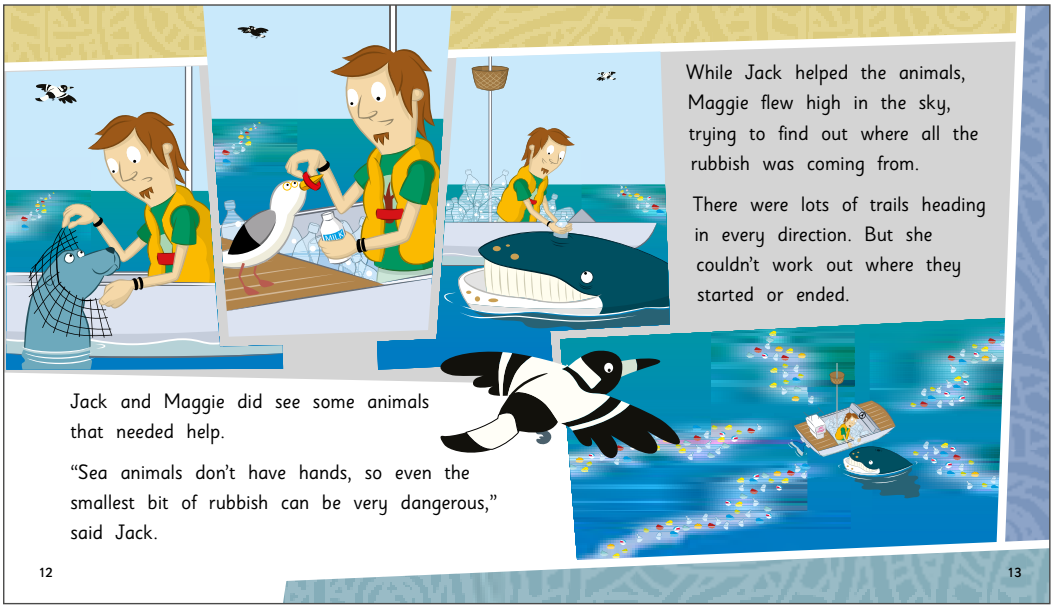


Oxford Reading Level 9: Oxford Reading for Comprehension: *The Continents of the World*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

Key Stage 1 Level 9	Key Stage 2 Level 9
● Stories can be humorous, but more serious subject matter is also tackled (e.g. facing a fear, a planet in trouble). ● In fiction, some peril or mild danger may be involved (e.g. being chased by a wolf). ● Adventure/fantasy stories are common. ● Age-appropriate and familiar concepts are used regularly; for example: sleep, games/sports/competitions (e.g. martial arts, football), animals and insects, pets and how to look after them, tricks and secrets/how to do something (e.g. magic tricks), school-life (in different countries), school trips, friendship, making plans. ● Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are being used more regularly in fiction and non-fiction; for example: sculptures/pottery, history/ancient history, the body and how it works, comparing different environments/continents, flight, materials/springs, space, boats, conservation/animal rescue, environmental issues and disasters.	● Stories can still be light-hearted and humorous, and jokes are sometimes used in fiction and non-fiction. ● Familiar concepts are still used in fiction and non-fiction; although there are fewer familiar topics covered than in Key Stage 1. ● Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are regularly used in fiction and non-fiction (there's a greater range of age-appropriate, unfamiliar topics in Key Stage 2); for example: 'Did you know' facts, historical themes (e.g. Vikings, history of chocolate), sporting facts/achievements, mythical creatures, jobs (e.g. in television), records (e.g. highest, fastest ...), difference between rights and responsibilities (e.g. at school), knights and castles.



Oxford Reading Level 9: Oxford Reading for Comprehension: *The Sea of Rubbish*

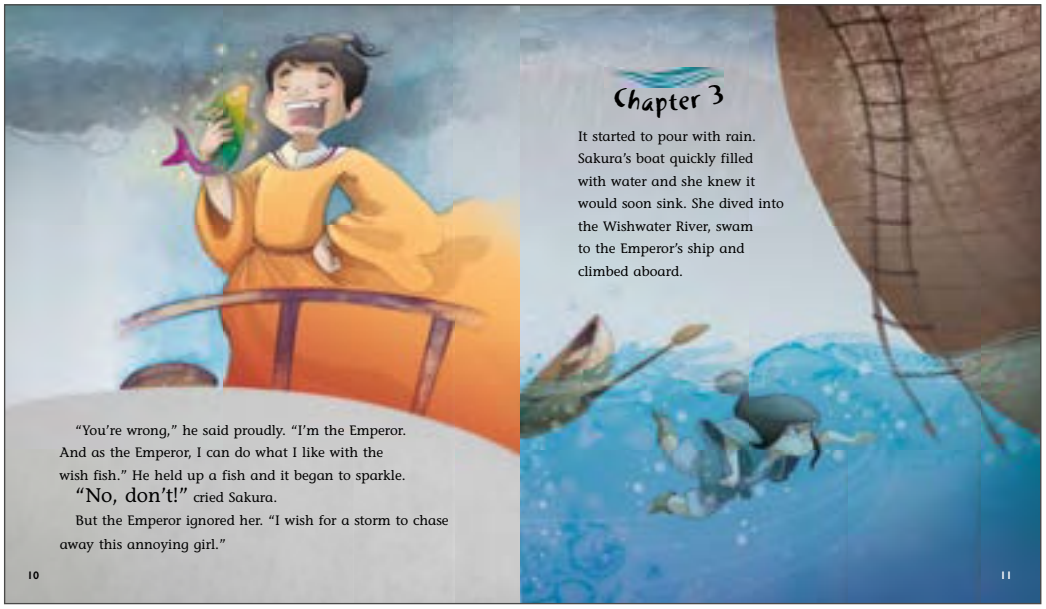
NOTE: For more information on the rationale for having the same level at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, **see Supporting transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.**

Themes

Overview:

- As well as a main theme, sub-themes are explored.
- Fiction continues to be more thematically driven, whereas non-fiction remains more subject matter-led.
- Examples of themes include:

Key Stage 1 Level 9:	Key Stage 2 Level 9:
Action & adventure	**Action & adventure**
• Rescues • **NEW:** Characters given false leads	• **NEW:** Curiosity over common sense (i.e. characters being curious and this leading to trouble) • **NEW:** Something that turns out to be completely different to what was first thought (e.g. a cannon ball that's really an egg) • **NEW:** Things that come alive (e.g. paintings)
Conflict & decision-making	**Conflict & decision-making**
• **NEW:** Characters deceiving others and/or being duplicitous (e.g. villains in disguise) • **NEW:** Revenge (in a light-touch/humorous way)	• **NEW:** Characters foiling the plans of others • **NEW:** Sibling rivalry • **NEW:** Speaking up/saying 'no' when something doesn't feel/seem right
Relationship & emotion	**Relationship & emotion**
• Characters helping others • **NEW:** Perseverance	• **NEW:** Good intentions that go wrong



Oxford Reading Level 9: Oxford Reading for Comprehension: *The Wish Fisher*

Plot and structure

Key Stage 1 Fiction:

- Stories have **linear narratives**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- The occasional two-part stories may be used.
- Continuous story arcs are developed further and may span multiple books in some series.
- The story should make sense without the need for images, although images will still support the text.
- Passages of time are used (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- **NEW:** Simultaneous action is introduced (i.e. in one book, different characters can be doing different things in different places at the same time).

Key Stage 2 Fiction:

- Most stories will have linear narratives, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- More events can take place within one story than at Key Stage 1 Level 9, which can make stories feel faster-paced.
- Other characters' perspectives may be featured (e.g. a villain's perspective).
- **NEW:** Occasional **non-linear narratives** may occur where flashbacks are used.

Non-fiction:

- The text in the book should now convey all the meaning and the concepts, although the images will still support the text.
- Layouts may vary throughout the book.
- Contents pages, glossaries, and indexes are used in all non-fiction.
- Features that may be used include: size and other comparison charts/diagrams, recipes, tips, simple 'blueprint' style drawings and cross sections (e.g. for buildings), simple family trees.
- Illustrations can be used to help lighten serious topics.
- **NEW:** At Key stage 2, quiz boxes or pages may be used.

Plot/book devices

- Cliffhangers may be used at the end of chapters.
- First person narrative may occasionally be used.
- Emails, letters, and other forms of communication may be used.
- Story recaps (e.g. 'The story so far ...') may feature at the front of a book in series where there is a continuous story arc.
- Devices like 'Later that day ...' may be used to indicate a passage of/break in time.
- **NEW:** At Key Stage 2, flashbacks may occasionally be used.

Setting

- In fiction, stories can include up to two main settings (two or three main settings in Key Stage 2).
- Characters can have adventures in far-flung places.
- Fiction book settings range from very everyday, familiar settings to different countries and worlds. In Key Stage 2, the range of locations is broader than Key Stage 1.
- Two different stories may be set in the same location.
- Non-fiction can look at a range of different locations/countries within the same book.

Character/s

- In fiction, stories can feature up to five main characters, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Project X with Max, Cat, Ant, and Tiger) although many stories tend to still focus on one or two **protagonists**.
- Characters can split up and have simultaneous adventures in the same book.
- **Antagonists** may include: villains and their sidekicks, conflict antagonists, and inner conflict.
- At Key Stage 2, we may occasionally see a scene from a villain's perspective.

Dialogue

- Speech bubbles are not often used in fiction now (unless for a particular effect). In non-fiction they may still be used.
- **NEW:** Dialogue is extensively used in fiction.

NOTE: For more information on the rationale for having the same level at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, **see Supporting transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.**

Oxford Reading Level 10

Oxford Reading Level 10

What students can do

Word reading

Students continue to use their phonics knowledge when reading new or unfamiliar words, either silently or aloud. Most students rarely need to sound out and blend words aloud, though some still need further practice and support with certain aspects of phonics. Students can read most common exception words (CEWs) on sight. They usually take the full range of basic punctuation into account when reading, either silently or aloud, often varying intonation appropriately when reading aloud (though some students still require further practice with this). Most students automatically self-correct when reading. Students are now building reading stamina and are reading longer texts, sometimes over several sessions.

Comprehension

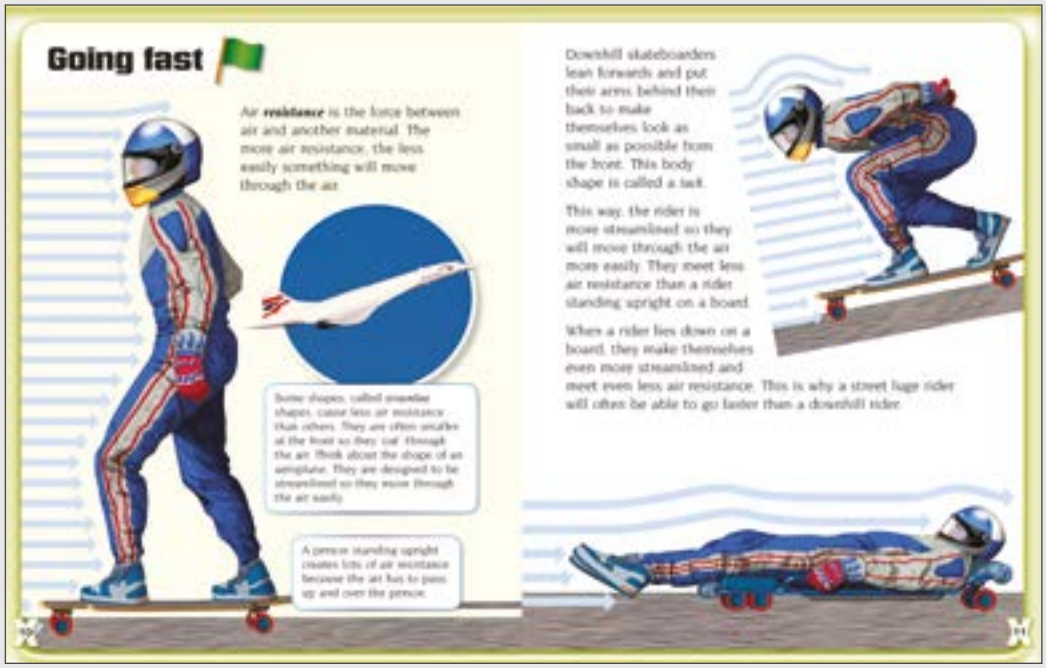
Students are developing their ability to retrieve answers to questions about a text after they have finished reading it. They can talk about some possible reasons why things happen in stories, beginning to use inference more automatically to understand why characters act as they do. They can follow and sometimes explain a more complex sequence of events in fiction. They can understand text with a slightly more sophisticated use of **figurative language**, including some **alliteration**, **onomatopoeia**, occasional **similes** (and **metaphors** at Key Stage 2), and occasional passages of descriptive/evocative language (though most language in books at this level is still familiar and straightforward).

They recognize and can talk about some features of different non-fiction text types, and can demonstrate how to use non-fiction books. They can also bring their own questions to non-fiction texts and look for the answers while they read. They are beginning to understand how items of information in non-fiction are connected, including in books on topics that are unfamiliar or that contain previously unknown facts.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: reinforcing and consolidating skills from Oxford Reading Level 9, in the context of books that are slightly longer and more complex in structure.

NEW at this level: developing reading stamina with longer books that are less likely to be finished in a single session; understanding and identifying slightly more sophisticated descriptive/figurative language; understanding non-fiction on less familiar topics.



Oxford Reading Level 10: Project X Origins: *Downhill Racers*

Vocabulary

- Texts provide opportunities to practise and apply phonics knowledge and skills previously learned and to practise reading words with rare/unusual grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs).
- Texts give opportunities to read polysyllabic words and words with some common word endings, prefixes, and suffixes.
- Vocabulary is still mostly familiar, but texts include a broader range of words with a higher proportion of new/interest words.
- Pronunciation devices to break down hard vocabulary may occasionally be used in fiction and non-fiction (e.g. a book on animals may have: Okapi (say: *oe-ka-pee*)).
- In fiction, richer language may be used such as: alliteration (e.g. *the sea's so salty ...; muttered Mrs McNurdle ...*) and some similes (e.g. *She was as bouncy as a ping-pong ball.*). At Key Stage 2, occasional metaphors are used (e.g. *Max's hopes were shattered*). Onomatopoeia (e.g. *spling, splang, splong*) is used, but less so at Key Stage 2.
- There is some scope for evocative language/ **imagery**, such as short descriptions to help create a **sense of place** (e.g. *They continued through the sickly looking forest*).
- Sentence openers like 'Just then,' and 'Suddenly,' are used to indicate and increase tension or drama within a narrative.
- **NEW:** At Key Stage 2, short descriptions including evocative language/imagery are used occasionally to convey how characters are feeling (e.g. *Max was dragging his feet.*).
- **NEW:** At Key Stage 2, in fiction, some words or phrases may be italicized for added emphasis (e.g. 'It doesn't look as if *anything* could survive here for long,' said Ant.).

Oxford Reading Level 10: Oxford Reading for Comprehension: *Annabel and the Artist*

NOTE: For more information on the rationale for having the same level at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, **see Supporting transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.**

Sentence structure

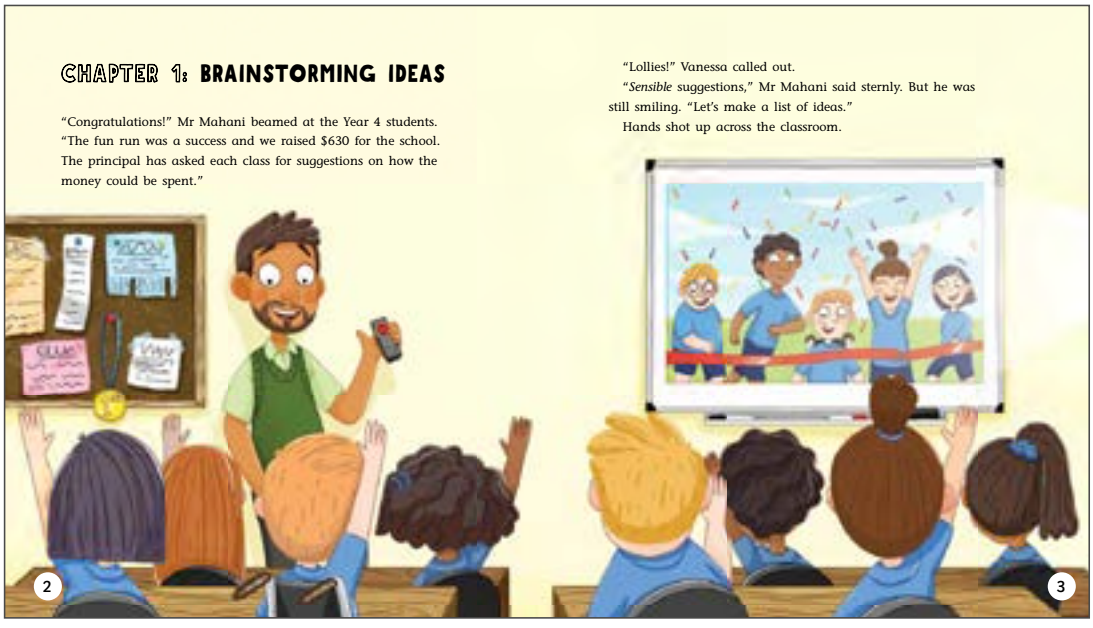
- On average, there are 8 words per sentence in fiction books and 11 words per sentence in non-fiction books (although non-fiction books tend to have fewer sentences per page).
- Most sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound, complex) sentences** are used regularly.
- Generally, the past tense is more common than the present tense in both fiction and non-fiction.

Punctuation:

- Brackets are used more regularly in fiction.
- En rules are used extensively in non-fiction.
- At Key Stage 2, semicolons are now regularly used (non-fiction only) (they are not introduced until Level 11 at Key Stage 1).

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences where two clauses are connected by a relative clause** (e.g. *It had a hood of green that he could pull over his head when he needed to hide among the bushes.*).
- Multi-clause (compound) sentences where two main clauses are joined by a **coordinating conjunction** (e.g. *Most drones are flown by remote control but some can fly by themselves.*).
- **Fronted adverbials** (e.g. *At the age of 76, Junko was still climbing mountains.*).
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences with one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses,** joined together by a **subordinating conjunction** (e.g. *It went faster and faster, until Hoodwink was just a blur inside.*).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *Train announcements echoed in the distance.*).
- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *Nimbus nudged her.*).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *Invisiboy grinned.*).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *Leonardo sketched his ideas in notebooks.*).



CHAPTER 1: BRAINSTORMING IDEAS

"Congratulations!" Mr Mahani beamed at the Year 4 students. "The fun run was a success and we raised $630 for the school. The principal has asked each class for suggestions on how the money could be spent."

"Lollies!" Vanessa called out.

"*Sensible* suggestions," Mr Mahani said sternly. But he was still smiling. "Let's make a list of ideas."

Hands shot up across the classroom.

2

3

Oxford Reading Level 10: Oxford Reading for Comprehension: *The $630 Vote*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

Key Stage 1 Level 10	Key Stage 2 Level 10
● Stories can be humorous, but more serious subject matter is also tackled (e.g. facing a fear, a planet in trouble). ● In fiction, some peril or mild danger can be involved (e.g. a sofa that comes alive). ● Adventure/fantasy stories are common. ● Age-appropriate and familiar concepts are still used, although increasingly the information presented will be unfamiliar to readers even if they know something about a topic (particularly in non-fiction); comics, animals and insects/pets, different animal environments, concepts (e.g. what 'peace' means), competitions/winning, chocolate, sports and activities (e.g. surfing, football), drama/dancing, robots. ● Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are being used more regularly in fiction and non-fiction; how things are made (e.g. books, films), history/ancient history (e.g. the history of flight), survival, skeletons, animal journeys (e.g. the Arctic tern), fossil hunting/dinosaurs, biographies (e.g. Leonardo da Vinci, Mary Ellis, Junko Tabei, Nelson Mandela).	● Stories can still be light-hearted and humorous, and jokes are sometimes used in fiction and non-fiction. ● Familiar concepts are still used in fiction and non-fiction; although there are fewer familiar topics covered than in Key Stage 1. ● Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are regularly used in fiction and non-fiction (there's a greater range of age-appropriate, unfamiliar topics in Key Stage 2); for example: lost cities, fast modes of travel, extreme sports (e.g. downhill skateboarding), how to make a book, life cycles, Greek myths (e.g. heroes and monsters), fame/celebrities, the body (e.g. the skeleton, the brain), magic tricks/illusions, space/planets/stars, geology and soil, history and fiction (e.g. looking at *The Prince and the Pauper* and the context of Tudor history).

Oxford Reading Level 10: Project X Hero Academy: *Operation Bubble Wrap*

NOTE: For more information on the rationale for having the same level at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, **see Supporting transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.**

Themes

Overview:

- As well as a main theme, sub-themes are explored.
- Fiction continues to be more thematically driven, whereas non-fiction remains more subject matter-led.
- Examples of themes include:

Key Stage 1 Level 10	Key Stage 2 Level 10
Action & adventure	**Action & adventure**
NEW: Being rewarded for doing a good deed **NEW:** Saving a/the planet	**NEW:** Foiling crimes
Conflict & decision-making	**Conflict & decision-making**
NEW: Wanting to be the best/competitions/winning **NEW:** Life stories (e.g. an Arctic tern)	**NEW:** Tricks backfiring **NEW:** Pretending to be something you're not
Relationship & emotion	**Relationship & emotion**
NEW: Team spirit/teamwork **NEW:** Sibling rivalry **NEW:** Being able to tell truth from lies/trust **NEW:** Sharing responsibility (e.g. voting)	Being the 'odd one out' **NEW:** Peace and peace-making **NEW:** Being greedy **NEW:** Being brave/bravery **NEW:** Something that seems like it will be disastrous/dull, but turns out ok **NEW:** Accepting difference/learning to live together

Oxford Reading Level 10: Oxford Reading for Comprehension: *Colourful festivals of the world*

Plot and structure

Key Stage 1 Fiction:

- Stories have **linear narratives**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- The occasional two-part stories may be used.
- Continuous story arcs are developed further and may span multiple books in some series.
- The story should make sense without the need for images, although images will still support the text.
- Passages of time are used regularly (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- Simultaneous action may be used (i.e. in one book, different characters can be doing different things in different places at the same time).
- Other characters' perspectives may be introduced (e.g. a villain's perspective).

Key Stage 2 Fiction:

- Most stories will have linear narratives, with a clear beginning, middle, and end; occasional **non-linear narratives** may occur where **flashbacks** are used.
- More events can take place within one story than at Key Stage 1 Level 10, which can make stories feel faster-paced.

Non-fiction:

- The text in the book should now convey all the meaning and the concepts, although the images will still support the text.
- Layouts may vary throughout the book.
- Contents pages, glossaries, and indexes are used in all non-fiction.
- Features that may be used include: size and other comparison charts/diagrams, recipes, tips, simple 'blueprint' style drawings and cross sections (e.g. for buildings), simple family trees.
- At Key Stage 2, quiz boxes can be used.
- **NEW:** Features that may be used include: comic strips/pages.

Plot/book devices

- Cliffhangers may be used at the end of chapters.
- First person narrative may occasionally be used.
- Emails, letters, and other forms of communication may be used.
- Story recaps (e.g. 'The story so far ...'), may feature at the front of a book in series where there is a continuous story arc.
- Devices like 'Later that day ...' can be used to indicate a passage of/break in time.
- At Key Stage 2, flashbacks may occasionally be used.

Setting

- Characters can have adventures in far-flung places.
- Fiction book settings range from very everyday, familiar settings to different countries and worlds. In Key Stage 2, the range of locations is broader than Key Stage 1.
- Two different stories may be set in the same location.
- Non-fiction can look at a range of different locations/ countries within the same book.
- **NEW:** In fiction, locations may include up to two or three main settings at Key Stage 1 and three or four main settings at Key Stage 2.

Characters

- In fiction, stories can feature up to five main characters, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Project X with Max, Cat, Ant, and Tiger) although many stories tend to still focus on one or two **protagonists**.
- Characters can split up and have simultaneous adventures in the same book.
- **Antagonists** may include: villains and their sidekicks, conflict antagonists, and inner conflict.

Dialogue

- Dialogue is now extensively used in fiction.
- Speech bubbles are not often used in fiction now (unless for a particular effect). In non-fiction they may still be used.

NOTE: For more information on the rationale for having the same level at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, **see Supporting transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.**

Oxford Reading Level 11

Oxford Reading Level 11

What students can do

Word reading

Students continue to use their knowledge of phonics when reading new or unfamiliar words, either silently or aloud, usually without overtly sounding out and blending. Most students can read all previously taught common exception words (CEWs) on sight. When reading appropriately-levelled text aloud, they can usually read fluently and are beginning to use appropriate expression more consistently, accounting for the full range of basic punctuation. Most students automatically self-correct when reading, and they continue to extend their stamina by reading slightly longer texts, often spread over several sessions.

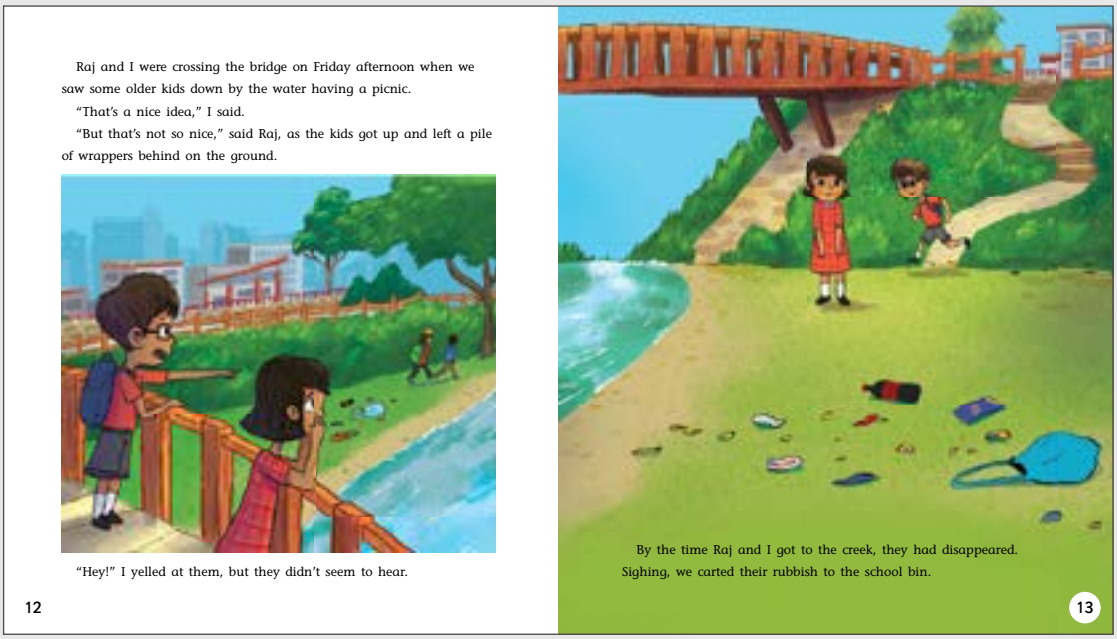
Comprehension

Students are becoming more experienced in using inference to understand characters' actions and motivation in fiction, and to identify how facts and ideas are related in non-fiction. They are becoming more confident in reading slightly more complex texts, including stories with subplots and shifts of character and location, and can usually identify the main points in a passage of non-fiction. They are beginning to read between the lines to explore texts more deeply, and they may be able to identify simple underlying themes and ideas. Their predictions about texts are increasingly confident and may be rooted in their own experience and clues from the text. They can contribute to discussions, sometimes identifying and quoting evidence to support their views. They continue to develop their understanding of simple **figurative language**, including **alliteration**, **onomatopoeia**, occasional **similes**, and **metaphors**, and occasional passages of descriptive/evocative language (though most of the language they read is still familiar and straightforward). They can sometimes comment on examples of descriptive and/or figurative language (though prompting may be needed).

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: reinforcing and consolidating skills from Oxford Reading Level 10, in the context of books that are longer and more varied.

NEW at this level: understanding and identifying slightly more sophisticated descriptive/figurative language including occasional metaphors; at Key Stage 2, students are acquiring more experience and confidence in reading, understanding, and talking about texts.


Raj and I were crossing the bridge on Friday afternoon when we saw some older kids down by the water having a picnic.

"That's a nice idea," I said.

"But that's not so nice," said Raj, as the kids got up and left a pile of wrappers behind on the ground.

"Hey!" I yelled at them, but they didn't seem to hear.

12

By the time Raj and I got to the creek, they had disappeared. Sighing, we carted their rubbish to the school bin.

13

Oxford Reading Level 11: Oxford Reading for Comprehension: *Creek Clean Up*

Vocabulary

- Texts provide opportunities to practise and apply phonics knowledge and skills previously learned and to practise reading words with rare/unusual grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs).
- Texts give opportunities to read polysyllabic words and words with some common word endings, prefixes, and suffixes.
- Vocabulary is still mostly familiar, but texts include a broader range of words with a higher proportion of new/interest words.
- Pronunciation devices to break down hard vocabulary may be occasionally used in fiction and non-fiction (e.g. a book on food may have: kuku sabzi (say: *koo-koo sub-zee*)).
- In fiction, richer language may be used such as: alliteration (e.g. *large, lethal-looking ...*), some similes (e.g. *One of them was plump as a pumpkin and the other thin as a beanstalk.*), occasional metaphors (e.g. *Max drummed his fingers on the desk.*), and onomatopoeia (e.g. *twit toowooo*).
- There is some scope for evocative language/**imagery**, such as short descriptions to help create a **sense of place** (e.g. *Yellow sand stretched out around them as far as they could see.*). At Key Stage 2, these are used occasionally to convey how characters are feeling (e.g. *A cunning smile spread over Doghouse Dave's face.*).
- Sentence openers like 'Just then,' and 'Suddenly,' are used to indicate and increase tension or drama within a narrative.
- At Key Stage 2, in fiction, some words or phrases may be italicized for added emphasis (e.g. '*Interesting*,' he said to himself.).
- **NEW:** At Key Stage 2, **verbs** are occasionally used to increase complexity and make actions more descriptive and interesting (e.g. ... *a hedgehog lumbered onto the lawn.*).
- **NEW:** At Key Stage 2, speech tags can include more interesting verbs and expressive **adverbs** at the end (e.g. *he stammered*; *Cat said, impatiently*).

Oxford Reading Level 11: Project X Origins: *Animal Conflicts*

NOTE: For more information on the rationale for having the same level at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, **see Supporting transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.**

Sentence structure

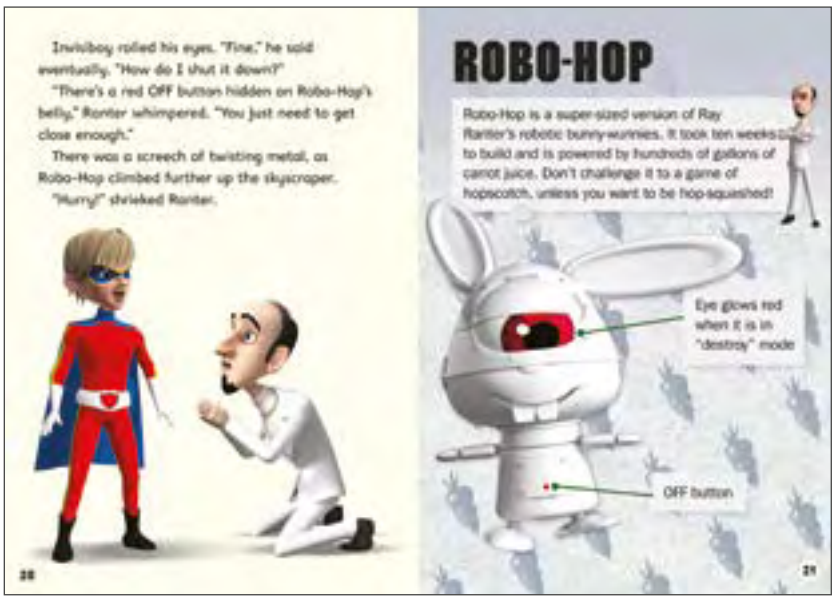
- On average, there are 8 words per sentence in fiction books and 12 words per sentence in non-fiction books (although non-fiction books tend to have fewer sentences per page).
- Most sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound, complex) sentences** are used regularly.
- Generally, the past tense is more common than the present tense in both fiction and non-fiction.

Punctuation:

- At Key Stage 1, semicolons are introduced and used occasionally.
- Brackets are now used extensively in non-fiction.
- Colons are now used widely in both fiction and non-fiction.
- Ellipses are now used widely in non-fiction.
- En rules are used extensively in both fiction and non-fiction.
- Speech marks are used regularly in non-fiction.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences where two clauses are connected by a relative clause** (e.g. *The water was used in gardens, where wheat and fruits grew.*).
- Multi-clause (compound) sentences where two main clauses are joined by a **coordinating conjunction** (e.g. *The Goblin King is really devious and this place is like a maze.*).
- **Fronted adverbials** (e.g. *Back at NASTI, Socket noticed a sign flashing on a monitor.*).
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences with one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses,** joined together by a **subordinating conjunction** (e.g. *Back in the park, the micro-friends were still cheering when the X-bots began to change again.*).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *Tiger gulped.*).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *Captain Blackbones was standing on a box.*).
- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *Blazing torches lighted some scenes.*).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *Mr Green clutched Mrs Green in delight.*).



Oxford Reading Level 11: Project X Hero Academy: *Robo-hop*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

Key Stage 1 Level 11	Key Stage 2 Level 11
● Stories can be humorous, but more serious subject matter is also tackled (e.g. facing a fear, a planet in trouble). ● In fiction, some peril or mild danger may be involved (e.g. a crash landing). ● Adventure/fantasy stories are common. ● Age-appropriate and familiar concepts are still used, although increasingly the information presented will be unfamiliar to readers even if they know something about a topic (particularly in non-fiction); for example: food around the word, insects/reptiles, pets/animal escapes, wishes, litter picks, sport (e.g. football), jobs/pocket money, robots, phones and technology. ● Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are being used more regularly in fiction and non-fiction; for example: epic journeys (e.g. across the Arctic), history (e.g. worst/weird jobs), sculpture/art and artists (including biographies), wonders of the world, life underground, bridges.	● Stories can still be light-hearted and humorous, and jokes are sometimes used in fiction and non-fiction. ● Familiar concepts are still used in fiction and non-fiction; although there are fewer familiar topics covered than in Key Stage 1. ● Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are regularly used in fiction and non-fiction (there's a greater range of age-appropriate, unfamiliar topics in Key Stage 2); for example: inventions, history (e.g. Rome, Tower of London, WWII and children/child evacuees), time, deep-sea creatures, survival/bushcraft skills, mysteries/legends (e.g. Norse gods, King Arthur/Merlin), geology (e.g. secrets of rocks), castles and battlements.

JoJo was staring at his own reflection with a silly grin on his beak.

'Hey, JoJo!' said Doghouse Dave. 'Are you coming or staying?'

'What?' replied JoJo. 'Oh, I'm coming with you, but I might need some help. I can't take my eyes off this gorgeous parrot here!'

'That's you, you barmy bird!'

'Really?' said JoJo. 'Now that *is* funny, Dave.'

28

The pirates launched the *Saucy Poll*'s rowing boat and headed towards the island. They gathered on the shore as the *Saucy Poll* disappeared from sight.

'Let's hope those pesky parrots don't come looking for us,' said Captain Kid.

JoJo shook his head. 'How are they going to steer the ship without you humans to help them? You're safe, matey!'

The pirates danced for joy. 'We're free! Hurrah!'

29

Oxford Reading Level 11: TreeTops Chucklers: *Parrots of the Caribbean*

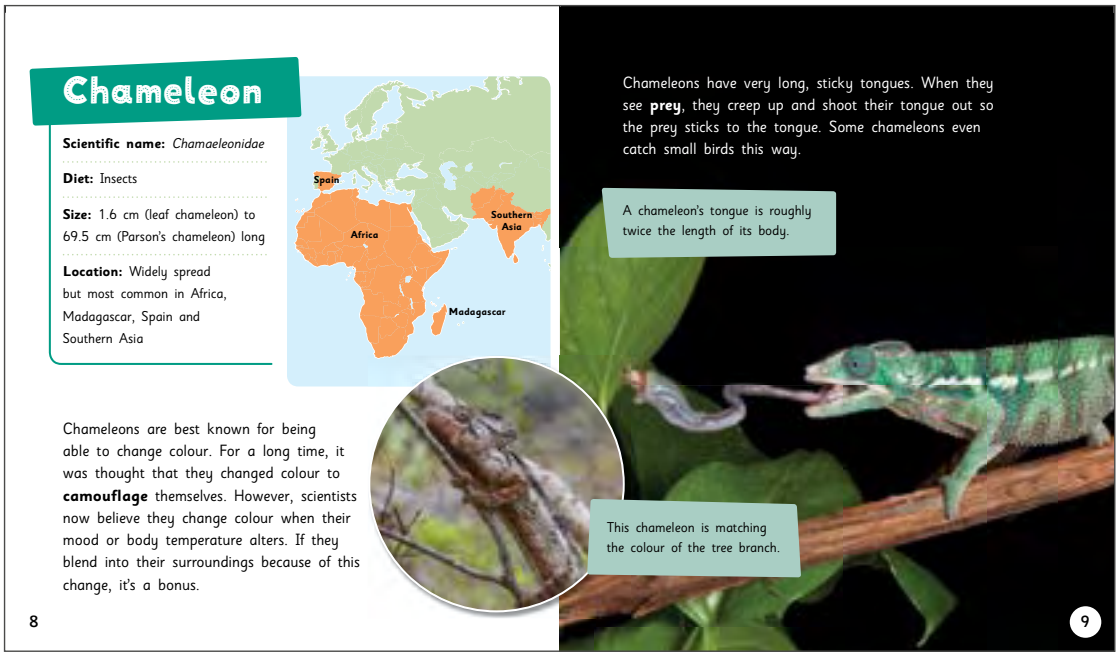
NOTE: For more information on the rationale for having the same level at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, **see Supporting transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.**

Themes

Overview:

- As well as a main theme, sub-themes are explored.
- Fiction is starting to be more thematically driven, whereas non-fiction remains more subject matter-led.
- Examples of themes include:

Key Stage 1 Level 11	Key Stage 2 Level 11
Action & adventure	**Action & adventure**
NEW: Being in the wrong place/being lost **NEW:** Epic journeys	Time pressures (i.e. 'time running out')
Conflict & decision-making	**Conflict & decision-making**
Revenge (in a light-touch/humorous way) **NEW:** Bullying	Speaking up/saying 'no' when something doesn't feel/ seem right **NEW:** Being lucky/unlucky **NEW:** Cheats and cheating **NEW:** Being under attack/defences
Relationship & emotion	**Relationship & emotion**
Lies and getting caught out/be careful what you wish for/greed **NEW:** Reputations and questioning bad reputations **NEW:** Feeling misunderstood	**NEW:** Good deeds going unnoticed **NEW:** Admitting mistakes **NEW:** Wanting to be/not wanting to be famous



Oxford Reading Level 11: Oxford Reading for Comprehension: *A World of Reptiles*

Plot and structure

Key Stage 1 Fiction:

- Stories have **linear narratives**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- The occasional two-part stories may be used.
- Continuous story arcs are developed further and may span multiple books in some series.
- Passages of time are used regularly (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- Simultaneous action may be used (i.e. in one book, different characters can be doing different things in different places at the same time).
- Other characters' perspectives may feature (e.g. a villain's perspective).
- **NEW:** The story should make sense without the need for images.

Key Stage 2 Fiction:

- Most stories will have linear narratives, with a clear beginning, middle, and end; occasional **non-linear narratives** may occur where **flashbacks** are used.
- More events can take place within one story than at Key Stage 1, which can make stories feel faster-paced.

Non-fiction:

- The text in the book should now convey all the meaning and the concepts, although the images will still support the text.
- Layouts may vary throughout the book.
- Contents pages, glossaries, and indexes are used in all non-fiction.
- Features that may be used include: size and other comparison charts/diagrams, recipes, tips, simple 'blueprint' style drawings and cross sections (e.g. for buildings), simple family trees, comic strips/pages.
- At Key Stage 2, quiz boxes or pages may be used.

Plot/book devices

- Cliffhangers may be used at the end of chapters.
- First person narrative may occasionally be used.
- Emails, letters, and other forms of communication may be used.
- Story recaps (e.g. 'The story so far ...') may feature at the front of a book in series where there is a continuous story arc.
- Devices like 'Later that day ...' may be used to indicate a passage of/break in time.
- At Key Stage 2, flashbacks may occasionally be used.

Setting

- In fiction, locations may include up to two or three main settings at Key Stage 1 and three or four main settings in Key Stage 2.
- Characters can have adventures in far-flung places.
- Fiction book settings range from very everyday, familiar settings to different countries and worlds. In Key Stage 2, the range of locations is broader than Key Stage 1.
- Two different stories may be set in the same location.
- Non-fiction can look at a range of different locations/countries within the same book.

Character/s

- In fiction, stories can feature up to five main characters, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Project X with Max, Cat, Ant, and Tiger) although many stories tend to still focus on one or two **protagonists**.
- Characters can split up and have simultaneous adventures in the same book.
- **Antagonists** may include: villains and their sidekicks, conflict antagonists, and inner conflict.

Dialogue

- Dialogue is now extensively used in fiction.
- **NEW:** Dialogue may be limited to two or three different characters speaking per page.
- **NEW:** In Key Stage 2, speech tags can include some interesting verbs and expressive adverbs at the end (e.g. *he stammered*; *Cat said, impatiently*).

NOTE: For more information on the rationale for having the same level at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, **see Supporting transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.**

Oxford Reading Level 12

Oxford Reading Level 12

What students can do

Word reading

Students can now read most level-appropriate texts fluently, either silently or aloud, independently and automatically using the phonics knowledge they have acquired. They can read most or all previously taught common exception words (CEWs), and automatically self-correct their reading when necessary. Their reading stamina is increasing along with their confidence tackling slightly longer books.

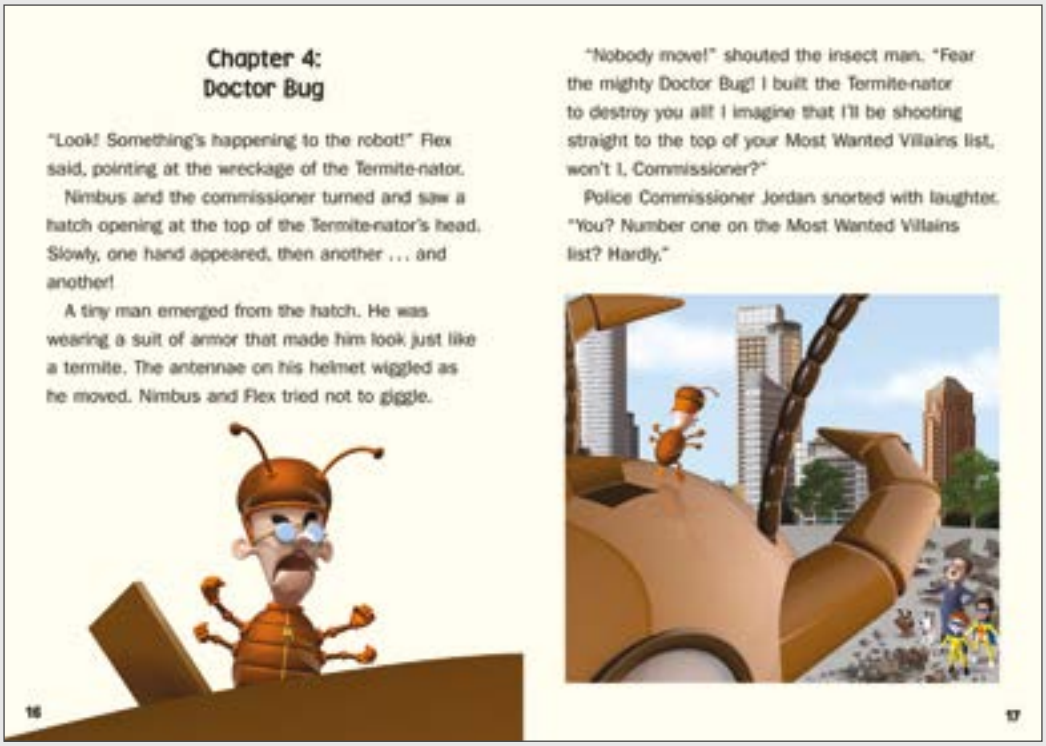
Comprehension

Students can often work out the meanings of unfamiliar words by using context clues as well as their knowledge of word structure and the meanings of similar words. They can read and understand slightly longer and slightly more complex texts, including subject matter that is unfamiliar in non-fiction, and more emotional themes in fiction. They can usually retrieve straightforward information and identify and explain the main points of a text. They can use simple inference to help them understand appropriately levelled texts. Students can make simple deductions, sometimes ranging across a text, e.g. they may be able to apply straightforward clues or information from earlier in a text, when they later become relevant. Students can confidently express a personal response, sometimes backed up with reasons or references. They are increasingly able to make simple critical comparisons between texts (sometimes with prompting). With support, they can identify and quote evidence from the text where appropriate, to back up their views about an author's ideas or language choices at a simple level, as well as about plot, character, and main ideas.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: extending reading stamina; responding to, discussing, and understanding books that are longer, more complex, and more varied in language than before.

NEW at this level: students are acquiring more experience and confidence in reading, understanding, and talking about texts.



Chapter 4:
Doctor Bug

"Look! Something's happening to the robot!" Flex said, pointing at the wreckage of the Termite-nator.

Nimbus and the commissioner turned and saw a hatch opening at the top of the Termite-nator's head. Slowly, one hand appeared, then another . . . and another!

A tiny man emerged from the hatch. He was wearing a suit of armor that made him look just like a termite. The antennae on his helmet wiggled as he moved. Nimbus and Flex tried not to giggle.

"Nobody move!" shouted the insect man. "Fear the mighty Doctor Bug! I built the Termite-nator to destroy you all! I imagine that I'll be shooting straight to the top of your Most Wanted Villains list, won't I, Commissioner?"

Police Commissioner Jordan snorted with laughter. "You? Number one on the Most Wanted Villains list? Hardly."

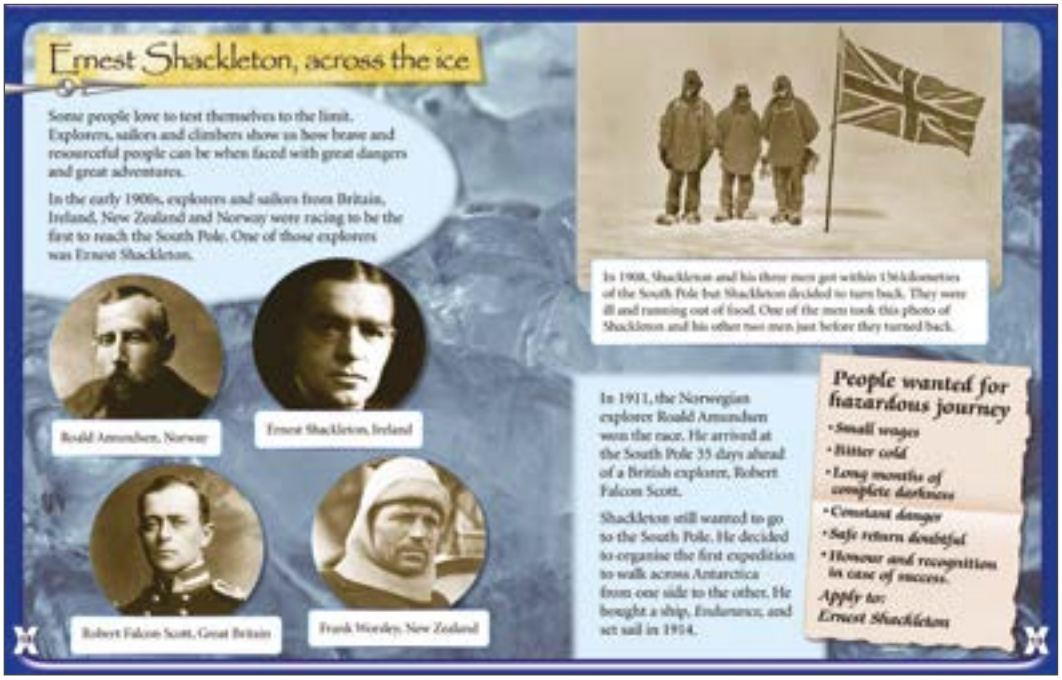
16

17

Oxford Reading Level 12: Project X Hero Academy: *The Termite-nator*

Vocabulary

- Texts provide opportunities to practise and apply phonics knowledge and skills previously learned and to practise reading words with rare/unusual grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs).
- Texts give opportunities to read polysyllabic words and words with some common word endings, prefixes, and suffixes.
- Vocabulary is still mostly familiar, but texts include a broader range of words with a higher proportion of new/interest words.
- Pronunciation devices to break down hard vocabulary may be occasionally used in fiction and non-fiction (e.g. a book which highlights a place name may have: This is the Coyoacan (say: *coy-o-can*) region of Mexico).
- In fiction, richer language may be used such as: **alliteration** (e.g. *slowly but surely, Swoop* ...), some **similes** (e.g. *Trudy's hair was as straight as straw.*), occasional **metaphors** (e.g. *Hamper looked at Grandad with his shiny blackcurrant eyes.*), and **onomatopoeia** (e.g. *twang, argh!, squish*).
- There is some scope for evocative language/**imagery**, such as short descriptions to help create a **sense of place** (e.g. *The thunderous noise settled down to creaks, rattles and gentle pings.*). At Key Stage 2, these are also regularly used to convey how characters are feeling (e.g. *Memories of it caused a tear to trickle slowly down his face.*).
- Sentence openers like 'Just then,' and 'Suddenly,' are used to indicate and increase tension or drama within a narrative.
- At Key Stage 2, **verbs** are occasionally used to increase complexity and make actions more descriptive and interesting (e.g. *Tiger's stomach lurched.*).
- At Key Stage 2, speech tags can include more interesting verbs and expressive **adverbs** at the end (e.g. *he muttered*; *Ant said, shakily*).
- At Key Stage 2, in fiction, some words or phrases may be italicized for added emphasis (e.g. 'Now that's something I *can* understand ...').



Oxford Reading Level 12: Project X Origins: *A Matter of Life and Death*

NOTE: For more information on the rationale for having the same level at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, **see Supporting transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.**

Sentence structure

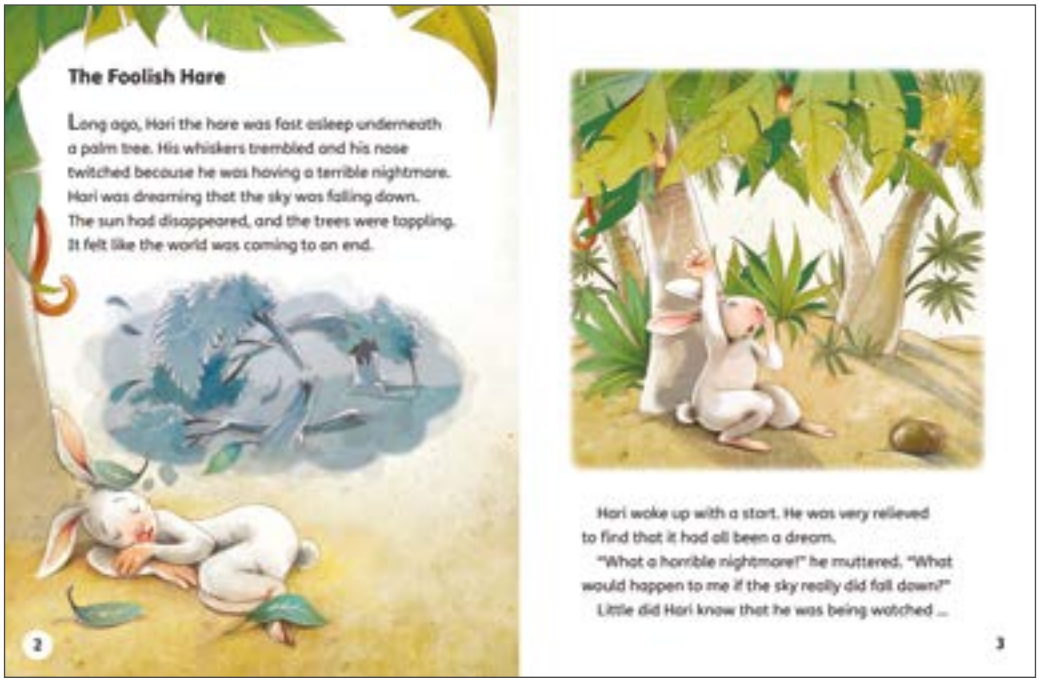
- On average, there are 6 words per sentence in fiction books and 11 words per sentence in non-fiction books (although non-fiction books tend to have fewer sentences per page).
- Most sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound, complex) sentences** are used regularly.
- Generally, the past tense is more common than the present tense in both fiction and non-fiction.

Punctuation:

- Colons are now used extensively in both fiction and non-fiction.
- At Key Stage 2, bullet points are now used widely in non-fiction.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences where two clauses are connected by a relative clause** (e.g. *I couldn't think what to say fast, like they do on the TV when they have to do a cover up, so I just cried instead*.).
- Multi-clause (compound) sentences where two main clauses are joined by a **coordinating conjunction** (e.g. *Mr Trainer tried to do the same with his tennis racket, but he ended up covered in custard*.).
- **Fronted adverbials** (e.g. *Around the year AD 400, tribes of invaders began to arrive on the shores of Britain*.).
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences with one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses,** joined together by a **subordinating conjunction** (e.g. *She exaggerated her eyebrows and other features because she did not want to hide any details about herself*.).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *Fires burned*.).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *The Saturn rocket could explode on take-off*.).
- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *Squeaky Malloy narrowed his eyes*.).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *He locked himself into a cubicle*.).



Oxford Reading Level 12: Oxford Reading Tree Word Sparks: *The Foolish Hare and The Mango Tree*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

Key Stage 1 Level 12	Key Stage 2 Level 12
● Stories can be humorous, but more serious subject matter is also tackled (e.g. facing a fear, a planet in trouble). ● In fiction, some peril or mild danger may be involved (e.g. a bridge about to collapse). ● Adventure/fantasy stories are common. ● Age-appropriate and familiar concepts are still used, although increasingly the information presented will be unfamiliar to readers even if they know something about a topic (particularly in non-fiction); for example: circuses, animals/animals behaving badly/ pets going missing, shadows, music. ● Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are being used more regularly in fiction and non-fiction; for example: sinkholes, history (e.g. Roman finds), environmental issues/conservation/litter, optical illusions, sculpture/ art and artists (including biographies), meteors, animal discoveries.	● Stories can still be light-hearted and humorous, and jokes are sometimes used in fiction and non-fiction. ● Familiar concepts are still used in fiction and non-fiction; although there are fewer familiar topics covered than in Key Stage 1. ● Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are regularly used in fiction and non-fiction (there's a greater range of age-appropriate, unfamiliar topics in Key Stage 2); for example: natural disasters, buildings and construction, doppelgangers, inventors and inventions, animation/special effects/film making, history (e.g. Black history, epic sea journeys, Anglo-Saxons, stone age to iron age, Vikings), chaos, shipwrecks, news reporting, adverts and advertising, virtual reality.

Oxford Reading Level 12: TreeTops inFact: *Big Weather*

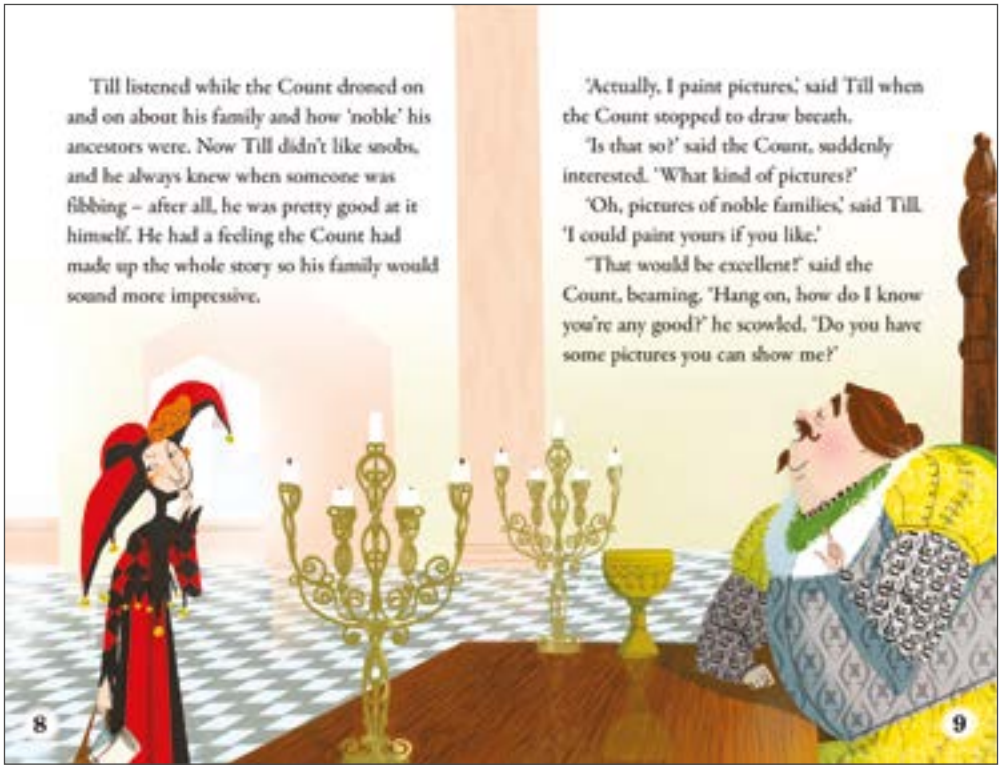
NOTE: For more information on the rationale for having the same level at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, **see Supporting transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.**

Themes

Overview:

- As well as a main theme, sub-themes are explored.
- Fiction is starting to be more thematically driven, whereas non-fiction remains more subject matter-led.
- Examples of themes include:

Key Stage 1 Level 12	Key Stage 2 Level 12
Action & adventure	**Action & adventure**
Being rewarded for doing a good deed **NEW:** Misuse of superpowers	Characters given false leads
Conflict & decision-making	**Conflict & decision-making**
Revenge (in a light-touch/humorous way) Bullying	Being lucky/unlucky **NEW:** Poverty and hardship **NEW:** Bragging, lies, and liars **NEW:** Taking a stand/teaching someone a lesson
Relationship & emotion	**Relationship & emotion**
NEW: Lack of confidence/feeling like a failure **NEW:** Exam stress	**NEW:** Problem-solving/thinking rather than using force **NEW:** The power of stories **NEW:** Embarrassing relatives



Oxford Reading Level 12: TreeTops Greatest Stories: *Mischief Makers*

Plot and structure

Key Stage 1 Fiction:

- Stories have **linear narratives**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- The occasional two-part stories may be used.
- Continuous story arcs are developed further and may span multiple books in some series.
- The story should make sense without the need for images.
- Passages of time are used regularly (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- Simultaneous action may be used (i.e. in one book, different characters can be doing different things in different places at the same time).
- Other characters' perspectives may feature (e.g. a villain's perspective).

Key Stage 2 Fiction:

- Most stories will have linear narratives, with a clear beginning, middle, and end; occasional **non-linear narratives** may occur where **flashbacks** are used.
- More events can take place within one story than at Key Stage 1, which can make stories feel faster-paced.

Non-fiction:

- The text in the book should now convey all the meaning and the concepts, although the images will still support the text.
- Layouts may vary throughout the book.
- Contents pages, glossaries, and indexes are used in all non-fiction.
- Features that may be used include: size and other comparison charts/diagrams, recipes, tips, simple 'blueprint' style drawings and cross sections (e.g. for buildings), simple family trees, comic strips/pages.
- At Key Stage 2, quiz boxes or pages may be used.
- **NEW:** At Key Stage 2, texts are asking more of the reader, i.e. they are starting to pose more open, reflective questions, when there is not necessarily a clear-cut answer (e.g. What's your verdict on A versus B?).

Plot/book devices

- Cliffhangers may be used at the end of chapters.
- First person narrative may occasionally be used.
- Emails, letters, and other forms of communication may be used.
- Story recaps (e.g. 'The story so far ...') may feature at the front of a book in series where there is a continuous story arc.
- Devices like 'Later that day ...' may be used to indicate a passage of/break in time.
- At Key Stage 2, flashbacks may occasionally be used.

Setting

- Characters can have adventures in far-flung places.
- Fiction book settings range from very everyday, familiar settings to different countries and worlds. In Key Stage 2, the range of locations is broader than Key Stage 1.
- Two different stories may be set in the same location.
- Non-fiction can look at a range of different locations/countries within the same book.
- **NEW:** In fiction, locations may include up to four main settings.

Character/s

- In fiction, stories can feature up to five main characters, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Project X with Max, Cat, Ant, and Tiger) although many stories tend to still focus on one or two **protagonists**.
- Characters can split up and have simultaneous adventures in the same book.
- **Antagonists** may include: villains and their sidekicks, conflict antagonists, and inner conflict.

At Key Stage 2:

- **NEW:** Antagonists become more apparent/take more of an active role.
- **NEW:** Internal monologue and self-reflection are starting to feature more.
- **NEW:** Readers might find out information/come to realizations (e.g. to do with plot) that the characters can't see/aren't aware of.
- **NEW:** Characters might say one thing but mean another.

Dialogue

- Dialogue is now extensively used in fiction.
- Dialogue may be limited to two or three different characters speaking per page.
- In Key Stage 2, speech tags can include some interesting verbs and expressive adverbs at the end (e.g. *he muttered*; *Ant said, shakily*).

NOTE: For more information on the rationale for having the same level at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, **see Supporting transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.**

Oxford Reading Level 13

Oxford Reading Level 13

What students can do

Word reading

Students continue to read most level-appropriate texts with confidence and fluency, using the phonics knowledge they have acquired. They can read aloud fluently with appropriate expression, generally taking into account all the punctuation marks they meet. They can usually apply some knowledge of word structure as well as phonics when tackling new or unfamiliar words. Their reading stamina is increasing, and they can often read for a period of around 20 to 30 minutes, picking up from where they left off when they return to a book.

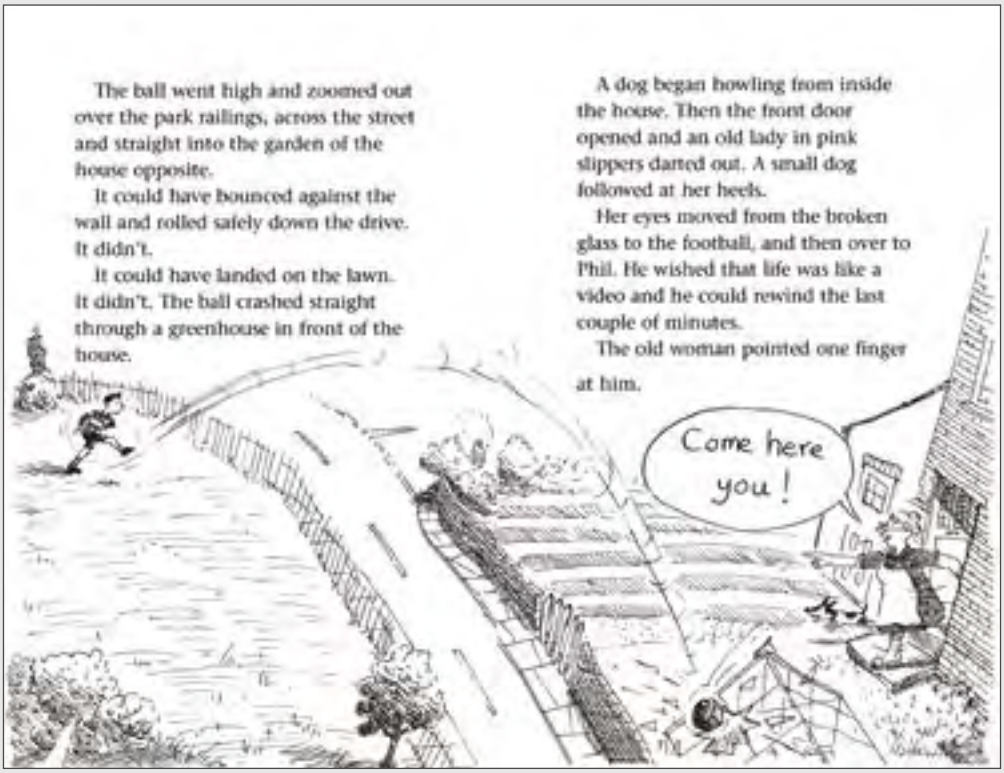
Comprehension

Students can use most non-fiction text features effectively and cross-refer to different features to understand a text. With prompting, they can use some different techniques (such as skimming and scanning) to find information. They are often able to read on, as well as back, in a text to understand it. They can usually identify and explain the main points in a straightforward piece of text at the appropriate level. They can discuss a text with others and may confidently express a personal response. They may back up their response with reasons and/or evidence (sometimes with prompting). When prompted, students may comment on grammatical or language features of different types of text (e.g. spotting **adverbs** in a descriptive passage, imperative **verbs** in instructions, or very short sentences used for effect). They may identify and comment on some text specific language choices when prompted, e.g. technical words in non-fiction, use of verbs to build suspense, etc.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: becoming a more reflective reader, giving clear reasons for their reactions to a text; starting to identify techniques and features that are used for effect and explaining those effects; looking for connections and related ideas from different parts of a text.

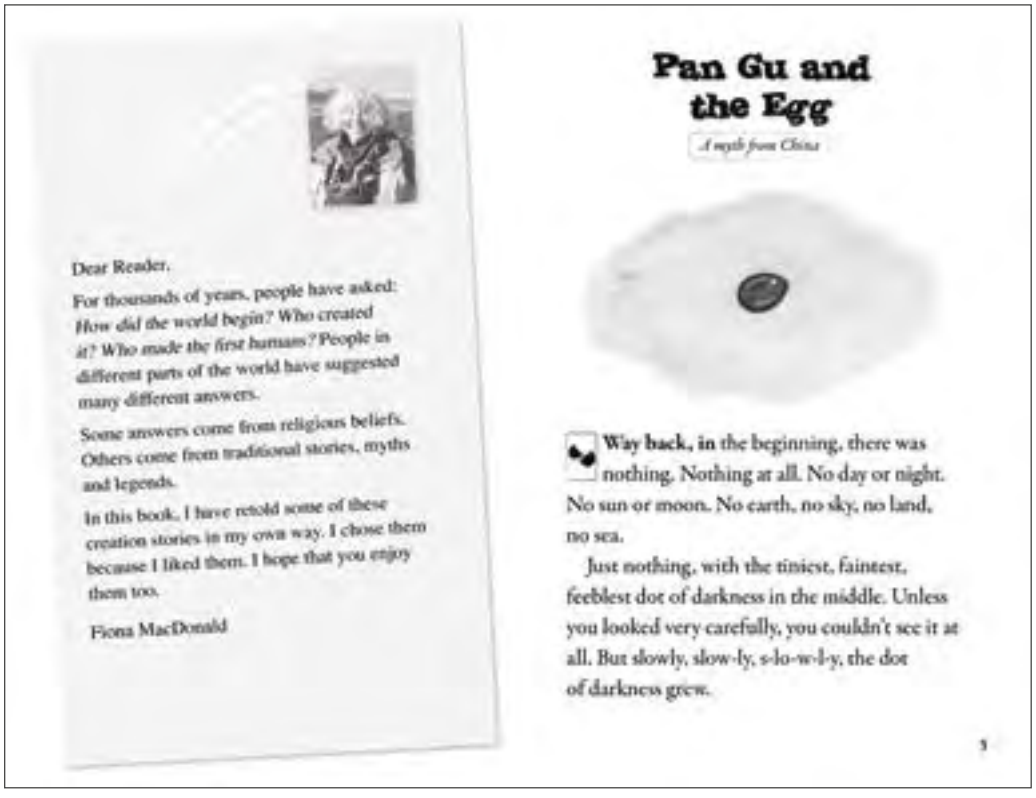
From this point, the differences for readers between levels are mostly about the confidence with which they tackle the text; it's not so much about new skills being introduced, but the gradual development of the same skills across the levels.



Oxford Reading Level 13: TreeTops Fiction: *The Goalie's Secret*

Vocabulary

- Texts provide opportunities to practise reading words with rare/unusual grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs).
- Texts give opportunities to read polysyllabic words and words with some common word endings, prefixes, and suffixes.
- Vocabulary is still mostly familiar, but texts include a broader range of words, with a higher proportion of new/interest words.
- Pronunciation devices to break down hard vocabulary may be used (e.g. Once there was a girl called Arachne (say: *uh-rak-nee*)).
- Richer language is widely used in fiction, such as: **alliteration** (e.g. *Kit Kane, Kid Detective*), **similes** (e.g. *The truth hit Debbie like a speeding train*), some **metaphors** (e.g. *There was a whirlpool of thoughts in my head*), and **onomatopoeia** (e.g. *zoooooom!*; *whirr*).
- Short, detailed descriptions create vivid **imagery** and are widely used to help construct a **sense of place** or convey how a character is feeling.
- Verbs are regularly used to increase complexity and make actions more descriptive and interesting (e.g. *... and not fritter my precious money away.*).
- Sentence openers like 'Just then,' and 'Suddenly,' may be used to indicate and increase tension or drama within the narrative.
- Some words or phrases may be italicized for added emphasis (e.g. *And* he had learned how to dive without being afraid.).
- **NEW:** Setting descriptions may be used to begin chapters and signify a change of time/scene.
- **NEW:** Short, detailed descriptions are used to increase tension in the plot.
- **NEW:** **Rhetorical questions** may be used (e.g. *Was there no way out?*).



Dear Reader,

For thousands of years, people have asked: *How did the world begin? Who created it? Who made the first humans?* People in different parts of the world have suggested many different answers.

Some answers come from religious beliefs. Others come from traditional stories, myths and legends.

In this book, I have retold some of these creation stories in my own way. I chose them because I liked them. I hope that you enjoy them too.

Fiona MacDonald

Pan Gu and the Egg

A myth from China

Way back, in the beginning, there was nothing. Nothing at all. No day or night. No sun or moon. No earth, no sky, no land, no sea.

Just nothing, with the tiniest, faintest, feeblest dot of darkness in the middle. Unless you looked very carefully, you couldn't see it at all. But slowly, slow-ly, s-lo-w-l-y, the dot of darkness grew.

Oxford Reading Level 13: TreeTops Myths and Legends: *How the World Began*

Sentence structure

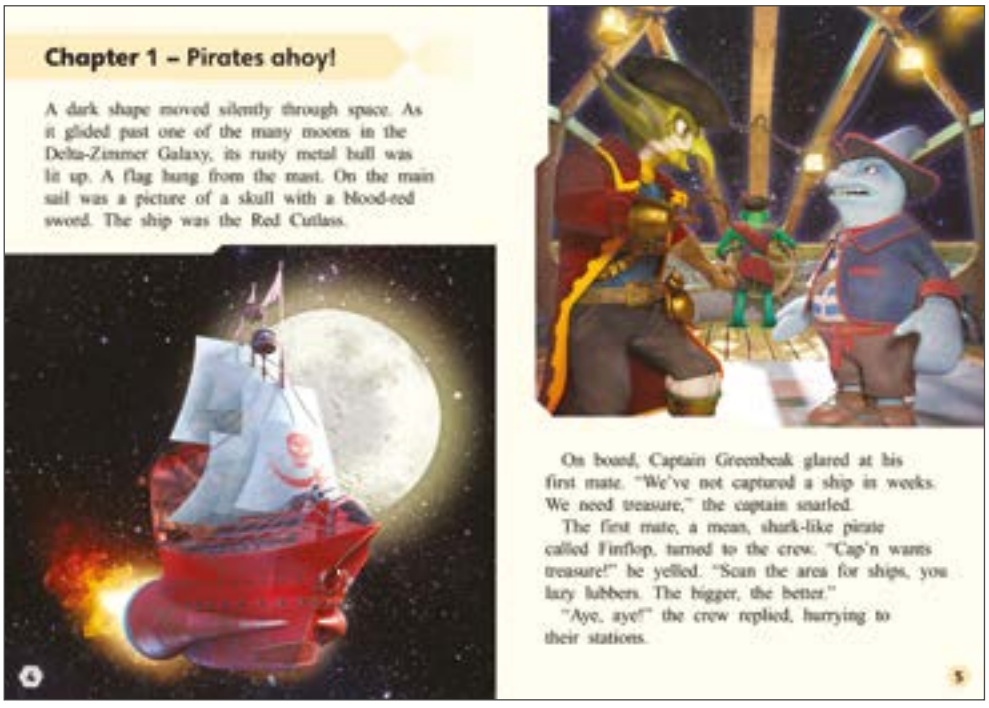
- On average, there are 8 words per sentence in fiction books and 11 words per sentence in non-fiction books (although non-fiction books tend to have fewer sentences per page).
- The majority of sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound, complex) sentences** are used regularly.
- Generally, the past tense is more common than the present tense in both fiction and non-fiction.

Punctuation:

- Semicolons are now widely used in non-fiction and occasionally used in fiction.
- Ellipses and colons are both now extensively used in fiction and non-fiction.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences where two clauses are connected by a relative clause** (e.g. *There is a network of space garages across the universe where intergalactic travellers can stop to refuel or to have repair work carried out.*).
- Multi-clause (compound) sentences where two main clauses are joined by a **coordinating conjunction** (e.g. *I urged Lucy to go faster, but instead she slowed down.*).
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences with one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses,** joined together by a **subordinating conjunction** (e.g. *This was also digested once, although it doesn't look like it now.*).
- **Fronted adverbials** (e.g. *Now, I'm not a wimp.*).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *He edged closer.*).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *Cat nodded.*).
- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *He typed NUMBER1.*).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *I found it on the bottom.*).



Chapter 1 – Pirates ahoy!

A dark shape moved silently through space. As it glided past one of the many moons in the Delta-Zimmer Galaxy, its rusty metal hull was lit up. A flag hung from the mast. On the main sail was a picture of a skull with a blood-red sword. The ship was the Red Cutlass.

On board, Captain Greenbeak glared at his first mate. "We've not captured a ship in weeks. We need treasure," the captain snarled.

The first mate, a mean, shark-like pirate called Finflop, turned to the crew. "Cap'n wants treasure!" he yelled. "Scan the area for ships, you lazy lubbers. The bigger, the better."

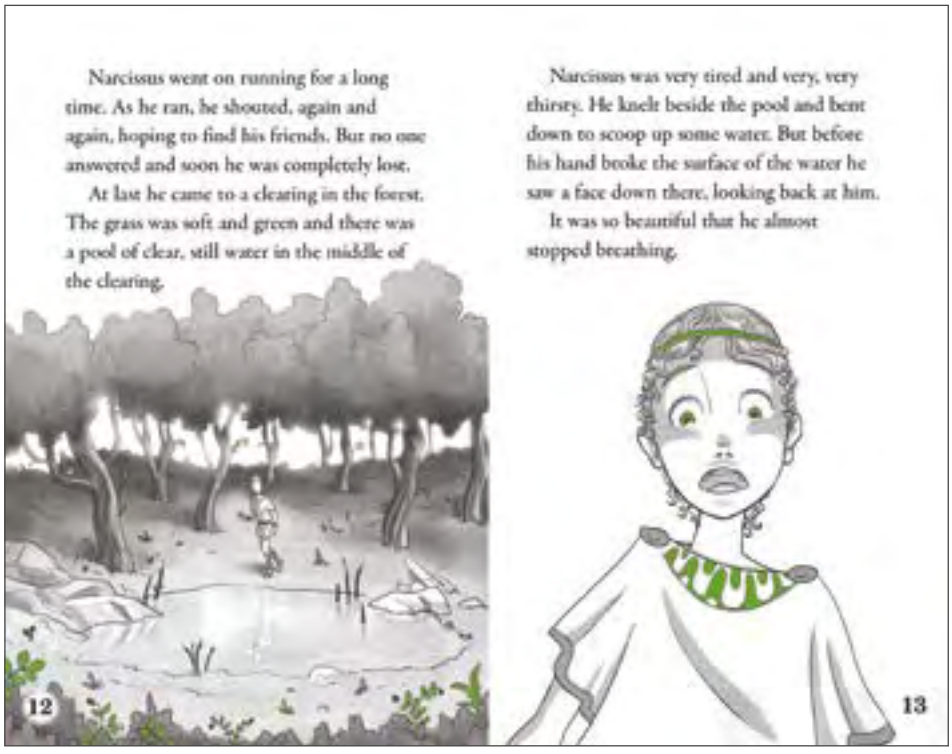
"Aye, aye!" the crew replied, hurrying to their stations.

Oxford Reading Level 13: Project X Alien Adventures: *The Red Cutlass*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

- Stories may still be light-hearted and humorous, and jokes are sometimes used in fiction and non-fiction, but more serious subject matter is also tackled (e.g. animal rehabilitation).
- In fiction, some peril or danger may be involved (e.g. being marooned on an island).
- In fiction, adventure/fantasy books are common.
- Familiar concepts are still used; although much of the information presented will be unfamiliar to readers even if they know something about a topic, particularly in non-fiction; concepts include: hidden treasure, sport (e.g. football, running, races), school, plays, trips, not having friends/wanting friends, clothes/trainers, pets/animals (e.g. racing pigeons, ex-racing dogs), keeping a diary.
- Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are widely used in fiction and non-fiction; for example: history (e.g. slavery, WWII prisons, rotten jobs), science (e.g. electricity, microtechnology, invasive species), time (e.g. life in different time zones), music, language and words, geography/geology (e.g. coastlines, volcanoes), environmental issues.
- **NEW:** In fiction, thematically driven **everyday life** and **real life stories** are becoming more common.
- **NEW:** Stories about relationships (e.g. friendship breakdowns) are common.



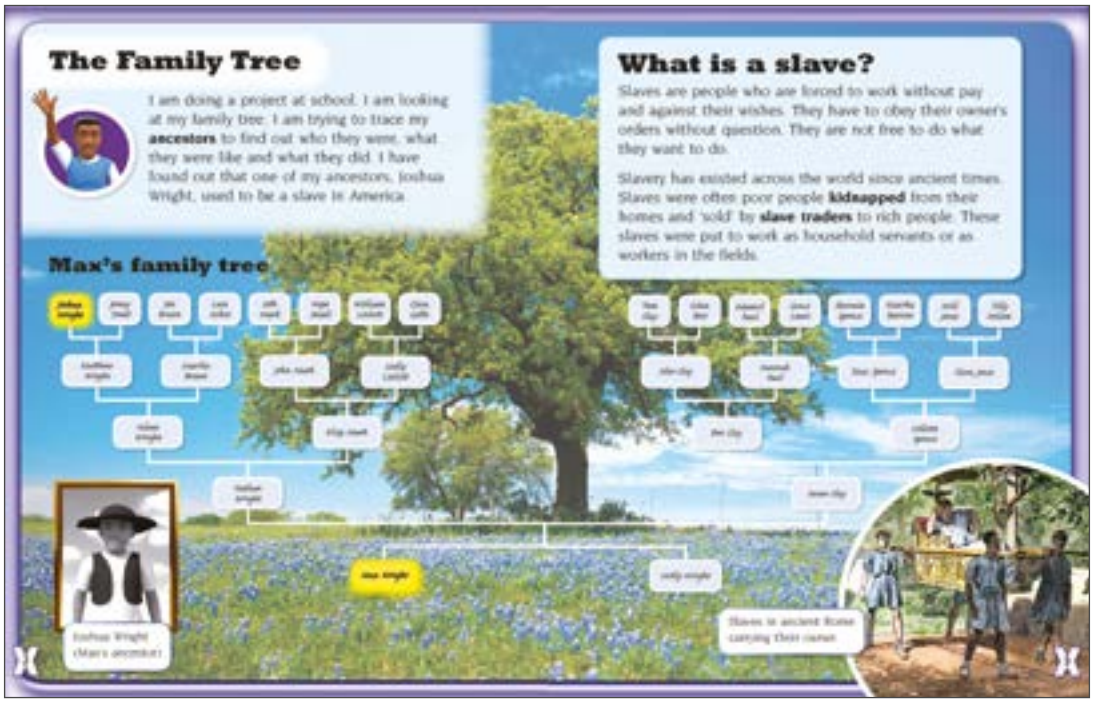
Oxford Reading Level 13: TreeTops Greatest Stories: *Changing Shape*

Themes

Overview:

- As well as a main theme, sub-themes are regularly explored (and often revolve around emotional issues in fiction).
- Examples of themes include:

Action & adventure	Conflict & decision-making	Relationship & emotion
Saving a/the planet **NEW:** The idea of *not* being able to get something for nothing	Bragging, lies, and liars **NEW:** Making promises/ resolutions, keeping promises	Greed **NEW:** Courage **NEW:** Vanity



Oxford Reading Level 13: Project X Origins: *Escaping Slavery*

Plot and structure

Fiction:

- Stories will predominantly have **linear narratives**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end; **non-linear narratives** may occur where **flashbacks** are used.
- The story should make sense without the need for images.
- First person narrative is occasionally used.
- The occasional two-part stories may be used.
- Passages of time are used regularly (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Simultaneous action may be used (i.e. in one book, different characters can be doing different things in different places at the same time).
- Other characters' perspectives may feature (e.g. a villain's perspective).
- **NEW:** There may be a number of key events within one story.
- **NEW:** Texts are asking more of the reader: some stories require the use of greater reflection and inference skills (e.g. when a character says one thing but means another).

Non-fiction:

- The text in the book should now convey all the meaning and the concepts, although the images will still support the text.
- Texts are asking more of the reader, i.e. they are regularly posing open, reflective questions, when there is not necessarily a clear-cut answer (e.g. What's your verdict on A versus B? What do you think?).
- Layouts may vary throughout the book.
- Contents pages, glossaries, and indexes are used in all non-fiction.
- Several non-fiction features can be used on a single page and may include: quiz boxes or pages, comparison charts/diagrams, recipes, tips, cross sections (e.g. for buildings), timelines, family trees, comic strips/pages.
- **NEW:** Features that can be used now include: dials as measures and stylized fact boxes/files.

Plot/book devices

- Story/plot recaps are used (e.g. 'The story so far ...'), where there is a broader story arc.
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- Cliffhangers may be used at the end of chapters.
- Emails and other forms of communication to friends/relatives may be used.
- Passages of time are used regularly (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Flashbacks may be used.

Setting

- In fiction, the settings range from very everyday, familiar settings to settings in different countries and even different worlds.
- Characters can have adventures in far-flung places.
- Two different stories may be set in the same location.
- Non-fiction can look at a range of different locations/countries within the same book.

Character/s

- In fiction, stories can feature up to five main characters, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Project X with Max, Cat, Ant, and Tiger) although many stories tend to still focus on one or two main **protagonists**.
- Characters can split up and have simultaneous adventures in the same book.
- **Antagonists** take more of an active role.
- Antagonists may include: villains and their sidekicks, conflict antagonists, and inner conflict.
- Internal monologue and self-reflection may be used.
- Readers might find out information/come to realizations (e.g. to do with plot) that the characters can't see/aren't aware of.
- Characters might say one thing but mean another.

Dialogue

- Dialogue is now extensively used in fiction.
- Depending on word count, up to three different characters may be speaking per page.
- Speech tags can include some interesting verbs and expressive adverbs/**adjectives** at the end (e.g. *I enquired; he said, disappointed*).

Oxford Reading Level 14

Oxford Reading Level 14

What students can do

Word reading

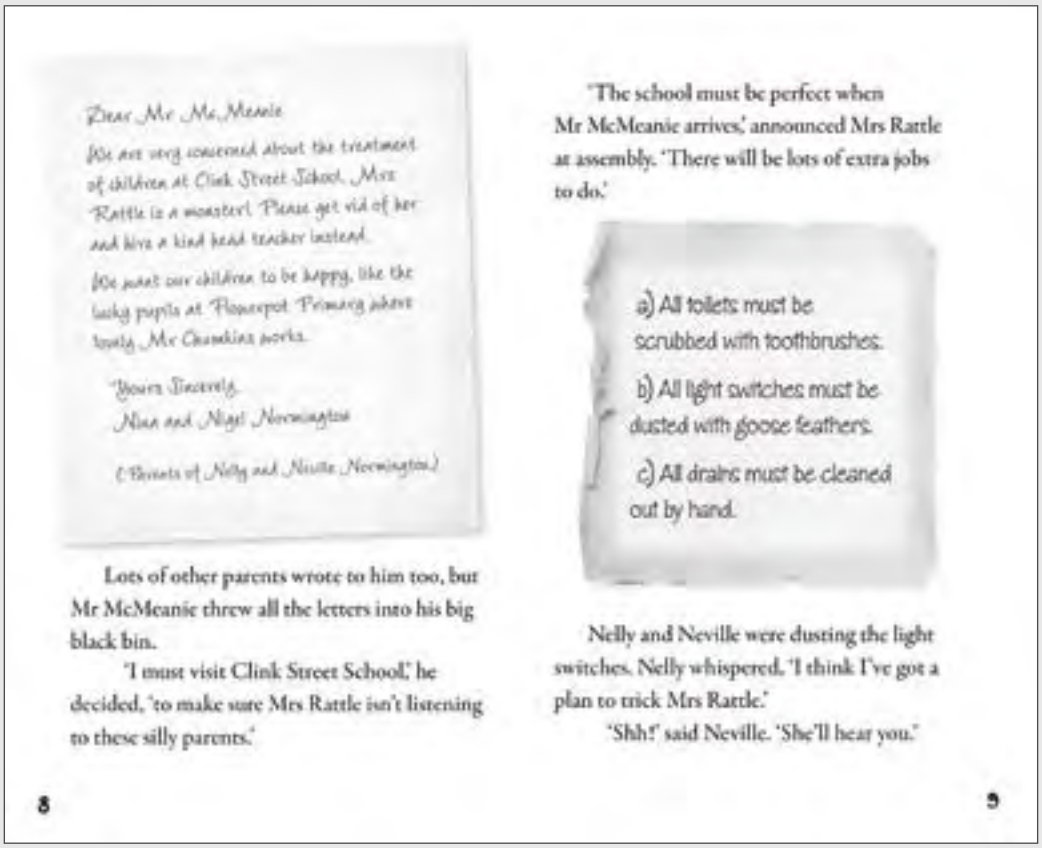
Students continue to read most level-appropriate texts with confidence and fluency, using the phonics knowledge they have acquired. They can read aloud fluently with appropriate expression, taking into account all punctuation marks. They are often able to apply knowledge of word structure as well as phonics when tackling new or unfamiliar words. Their reading stamina is increasing and they can often read for 30 minutes or longer, picking up from where they left off and remembering key elements when they return to a book.

Comprehension

Students may be starting to make clearer connections between different parts of a text, sometimes using ideas from across the text to build an overall picture of a topic, or to help them follow a more complex plotline. They can usually identify and explain the main points in a piece of text at the appropriate level. In fiction, they understand that the reader may know things that a character doesn't and can pick up some clues about characters that may not be directly stated. Students can express an opinion on a text and may back it up with quotations or personal reasons based on reading or experience. Students may comment on grammatical or language features of different types of text when prompted (e.g. spotting effective strong **verbs**, or good use of persuasive language).

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: becoming more adept at using inference to understand different aspects of texts; identifying and commenting on language and text features; developing and explaining their own opinions and reactions to a text.



Dear Mr. Mc. Meanie

We are very concerned about the treatment of children at Clink Street School. Mrs Rattle is a monster! Please get rid of her and hire a kind head teacher instead.

We want our children to be happy, like the lucky pupils at Flowerpot Primary where lovely Mr Chambers works.

Yours Sincerely,
Nina and Nigel Newmington

(Parents of Nelly and Neville Newmington)

Lots of other parents wrote to him too, but Mr McMeanie threw all the letters into his big black bin.

'I must visit Clink Street School,' he decided, 'to make sure Mrs Rattle isn't listening to these silly parents.'

8

'The school must be perfect when Mr McMeanie arrives,' announced Mrs Rattle at assembly. 'There will be lots of extra jobs to do.'

a) All toilets must be scrubbed with toothbrushes.

b) All light switches must be dusted with goose feathers.

c) All drains must be cleaned out by hand.

Nelly and Neville were dusting the light switches. Nelly whispered, 'I think I've got a plan to trick Mrs Rattle.'

'Shh!' said Neville. 'She'll hear you.'

9

Oxford Reading Level 14: TreeTops Chucklers: *Absolutely Awful Adults*

Vocabulary

- Texts provide opportunities to practise reading words with rare/unusual grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs).
- Texts give opportunities to read polysyllabic words and words with some common word endings, prefixes, and suffixes.
- Vocabulary includes a broad range of words, with a higher proportion of new/interest words.
- Pronunciation devices to break down hard vocabulary may be used (e.g. for a character name like Maldwyn (say: *mold-win*)).
- Richer language is widely used in fiction, such as: **alliteration** (e.g. *Mr McMeanie*), **similes** (e.g. *It was dry like a biscuit but hard as rock*), **metaphors** (e.g. *Time crawled by*), and **onomatopoeia** (e.g. *boing*; *ba-bump*).
- Longer, detailed descriptions create vivid **imagery** and are widely used to help construct a **sense of place**, increase tension in the plot, or convey how a character is feeling.
- Verbs are widely used to increase complexity and make actions more descriptive and interesting (e.g. *A small cloud of black ash puffed around his feet as he landed.*).
- Sentence openers like 'Just then,' and 'Suddenly,' may be used to indicate and increase tension or drama within the narrative.
- Some words or phrases may be italicized for added emphasis (e.g. She was *livid*.).
- **Rhetorical questions** may be used (e.g. *Can't you see I'm busy*?).
- **NEW:** Where ambitious vocabulary is introduced, sentences are kept short to account for their complexity.

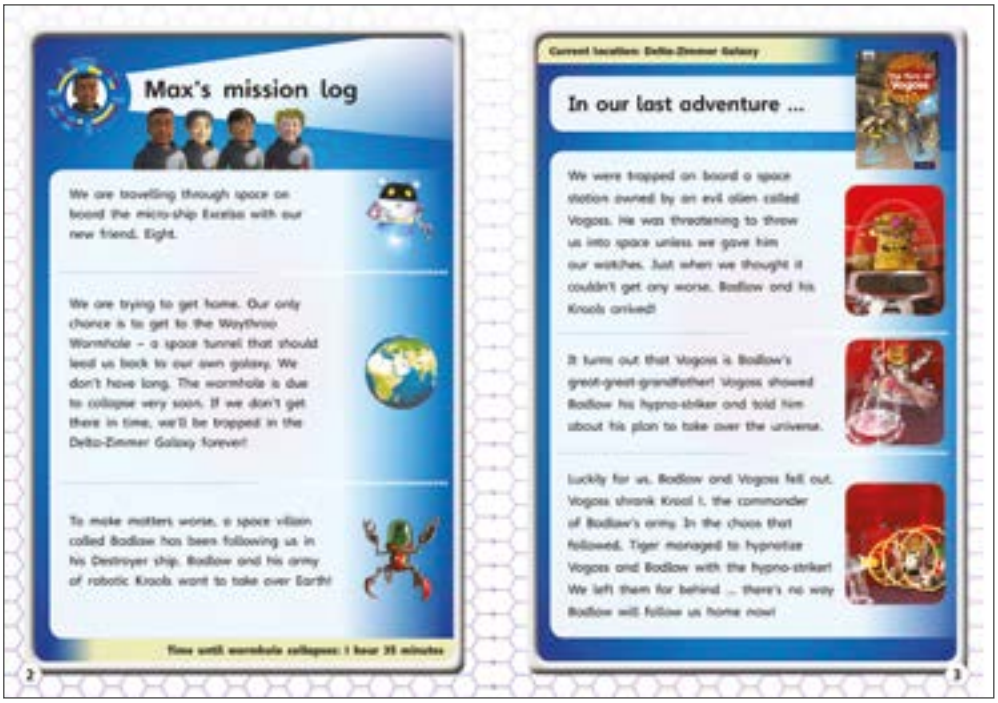
Oxford Reading Level 14: TreeTops inFact: *Step Away from the Kitten!*

Sentence structure

- On average, there are 8 words per sentence in fiction books and 12 words per sentence in non-fiction books (although non-fiction books tend to have fewer sentences per page).
- The majority of sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound, complex) sentences** are used regularly.
- Generally, the past tense is more common than the present tense in both fiction and non-fiction.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences where two clauses are connected by a relative clause** (e.g. *I found out that Dr Gooch had a strict and severe manner, but that he was a good man – a most kind man – when you got to know him.*).
- Multi-clause (compound) sentences where two main clauses are joined by a **coordinating conjunction** (e.g. *Some people think it has lost its way or is not feeling well, but it's very hard to say why it is here.*).
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences with one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses,** joined together by a **subordinating conjunction** (e.g. *They were bending down to examine the thing in the black bag, when Jamie hurtled round the corner and ran straight into them.*).
- **Fronted adverbials** (e.g. *Soon, I'm climbing up to the walls with some honey cakes.*).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *The girl agreed straight away.*).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *Pinocchio gasped.*).
- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *Girls must keep their promises.*).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *Max took charge of the situation.*).

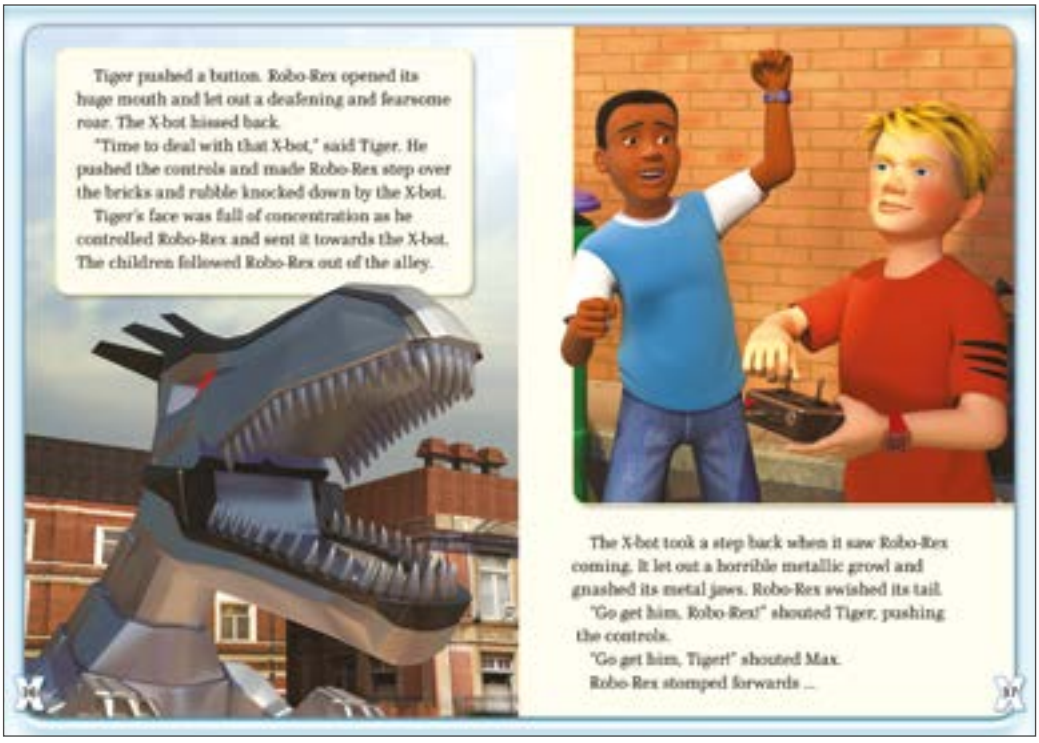


Oxford Reading Level 14: Project X Alien Adventures: *The Waythroo Wormhole*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

- Stories may still be light-hearted and humorous, and jokes are sometimes used in fiction and non-fiction, but more serious subject matter is also tackled (e.g. facing a fear).
- In fiction, some peril or danger may be involved (e.g. being caught up in an air raid).
- In fiction, thematically driven **everyday life** and **real life stories** are becoming more common.
- Stories about relationships (e.g. friendship breakdowns) are common.
- In fiction, adventure/fantasy books are common.
- Familiar concepts are still used; although much of the information presented will be unfamiliar to readers even if they know something about a topic, particularly in non-fiction; concepts include: animals (e.g. looking after injured or wild animals, animal rescues), schools (e.g. headmasters, school dinners), sport (e.g. football), headlice.
- Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are widely used in fiction and non-fiction; for example: history (e.g. letters and letter writing, fashion, being a chimney sweep/a maid, air raids), science (e.g. the Moon, a science exhibition), maps and measurements, forces of nature (e.g. extreme weather), explorers (historical and modern), survival, biographies (e.g. William Kamkwamba), film stunts.
- **NEW:** There may be some historical fiction stories.



Oxford Reading Level 14: Project X Origins: *Robot Rampage*

Themes

Overview:

- As well as a main theme, sub-themes are regularly explored (and often revolve around emotional issues in fiction).
- Examples of themes include:

Action & adventure	Conflict & decision-making	Relationship & emotion
• Saving the day • **NEW:** Escapes and rescues	• Being lucky/unlucky • Making promises/resolutions, keeping promises • **NEW:** Taking what's not yours, cruelty (in classic stories)	• Vanity • **NEW:** Laziness • **NEW:** Honour • **NEW:** Loss

Oxford Reading Level 14: TreeTops Greatest Stories: *Pinocchio*

Plot and structure

Fiction:

- Stories will predominantly have **linear narratives**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end; **non-linear narratives** may occur where **flashbacks** are used.
- There may be several key events within one story.
- The story should make sense without the need for images.
- Texts are asking more of the reader: some stories require the use of greater reflection and inference skills (e.g. when a character says one thing but means another).
- First person narrative is regularly used.
- The occasional two-part stories may be used.
- Passages of time are used regularly (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Simultaneous action may be used (i.e. in one book, different characters can be doing different things in different places at the same time).
- Other characters' perspectives may feature (e.g. a villain's perspective).
- **NEW:** There may be the occasional plot twist.
- **NEW:** A 'story-within-a-story' may be told.

Non-fiction:

- The text in the book should now convey all the meaning and the concepts, although the images will still support the text.
- Texts are asking more of the reader, i.e. they are regularly posing open, reflective questions, when there is not necessarily a clear-cut answer (e.g. What's your verdict on A versus B? What do you think?).
- Layouts may vary throughout the book.
- Contents pages, glossaries, and indexes are used in all non-fiction.
- Several non-fiction features can be used on a single page and may include: quiz boxes or pages, comparison charts/diagrams, recipes, tips, cross sections (e.g. for buildings), timelines, family trees, dials as measures, stylized fact boxes/files, comic strips/pages.

Plot/book devices

- Story/plot recaps are used (e.g. 'The story so far ...'), where there is a broader story arc.
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- Cliffhangers may be used at the end of chapters.
- Emails and other forms of communication to friends/relatives may be used.
- Passages of time are used regularly (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Flashbacks may be used.
- **NEW:** Dramatic statements like 'STOP READING NOW!' are occasionally used (e.g. in humorous stories), designed to get you to do the opposite, or 'NO ENTRY!' (e.g. in dramatic stories), designed to increase tension.

Setting

- In fiction, the settings range from very everyday, familiar settings to settings in different countries and even different worlds.
- Characters can have adventures in far-flung places.
- Two different stories may be set in the same location.
- Non-fiction can look at a range of different locations/countries within the same book.

Character/s

- In fiction, stories can feature up to five main characters, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Project X with Max, Cat, Ant, and Tiger) although many stories tend to still focus on one main **protagonist**.
- Characters can split up and have simultaneous adventures in the same book.
- **Antagonists** take more of an active role.
- Antagonists may include: villains and their sidekicks, conflict antagonists, and inner conflict.
- Internal monologue and self-reflection may be used.
- Readers might find out information/come to realizations (e.g. to do with plot) that the characters can't see/aren't aware of.
- Characters might say one thing but mean another.
- **NEW:** Antagonists may include: environmental forces.

Dialogue

- Dialogue is now extensively used in fiction.
- Speech tags can include more interesting verbs and expressive adverbs/**adjectives** at the end (e.g. *he growled*; *he asked, fascinated*; *Max said, decisively*).
- **NEW:** Depending on word count, up to four different characters may be speaking per page.

Oxford Reading Level 15

Oxford Reading Level 15

What students can do

Word reading

Students can read level-appropriate texts with confidence and fluency, automatically using the phonics knowledge they have acquired. They can read aloud fluently with appropriate expression, taking into account a wide range of punctuation. They are often able to apply knowledge of word structure and the meanings of similar words, as well as phonics, when tackling new or unfamiliar words. Their reading stamina is increasing and they can often read several chapters independently at a sitting, picking up from where they left off and remembering key elements when they return to a book.

Comprehension

Students may be able to use inference to identify how characters develop and change across a text, and make straightforward deductions from clues in the text. They may be able to make some basic judgements about how an author has chosen to present a character, using inference as well as direct information from the text. They know how to locate information quickly in a non-fiction text, by using techniques such as skimming and scanning, and book features such as headings, index, and contents list. They can usually identify and explain the main points in a piece of text at the appropriate level. They can quote from a text to support their viewpoint, and may do this without prompting. They are able to give an opinion about the effect of a particular use of language in a text (e.g. short, clear sentences with conjunctions of time in an instructional text, or sentences whose length is varied for effect in fiction).

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: extending use of inference and deduction, quoting from a text to explain own views or reactions; increasing range of methods to locate information in a text; continuing to develop and explain own opinions and reactions to texts, sometimes backed up by evidence.

Oxford Reading Level 15: TreeTops inFact: *The Craft of Paper*

Vocabulary

- Texts provide opportunities to practise reading words with rare/unusual grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs).
- Texts give opportunities to read polysyllabic words and words with some common word endings, prefixes, and suffixes.
- Vocabulary includes a broad range of words, with a higher proportion of new/interest words.
- Pronunciation devices to break down hard vocabulary may be used (e.g. for a character name like Tchang (say: *ch-ung*)).
- Richer language is widely used in fiction, such as: **alliteration** (e.g. ... *with wide lawns and winding walks.*), **similes** (e.g. *teeth as curved and sharp as scimitars*), **metaphors** (e.g. *Before the door was shut, he gave me a poisonous look*), and **onomatopoeia** (e.g. *stomp, stomp*; *ping, ping*; *oops*).
- Longer, detailed descriptions create vivid **imagery** and are widely used to help construct a **sense of place**, increase tension in the plot, or convey how a character is feeling.
- **Verbs** are widely used to increase complexity and make actions more descriptive and interesting (e.g. *Chanticleer stretched his noble neck and crowed with all his might.*).
- Sentence openers like 'Just then,' and 'Suddenly,' may be used to indicate and increase tension or drama within the narrative.
- Some words or phrases may be italicized for added emphasis (e.g. Frog is *absolutely* and *totally* amphibious.).
- **Rhetorical questions** may be used (e.g. *Who knows what will happen now?*).
- **NEW: Adverbs** and **adjectives** are being used regularly to add complexity and interest (e.g. *Phileas Fogg raised a luxuriantly bushy eyebrow*).

3

In which Phileas Fogg admires some folding

As Phileas Fogg left the Reform Club, it was not the eighty days ahead that worried him, but the seventy-two minutes before the train to Dover. It was all the time he had left, in which to find a new servant.

The events of the morning had been very trying. His servant had suggested, rather rudely, that if Fogg wanted his socks folded at a particular angle, he should do it himself.

'I,' the man had shrieked, running from the house, 'am not a sock!'

It had been a most peculiar remark.

Turning into Pall Mall, he began counting his footsteps. The regularity of it was pleasing. Usually it was 575 steps to his home. Tonight, he would need to visit his banker and he calculated it would take about 800 steps to get there, then 900 more to return home.

He would have to count to be sure.

In the event, it was 803 steps to his banker, who, though surprised, provided the £20,000 Fogg requested, packing it into a carpet bag.

Fogg set off towards his house in Saville Row. A slight boy, with a mess of hair and wearing rags, was selling newspapers at the corner.

'Robbery, sir? All the latest.'

'I've had quite enough of the robbery, thank you,' said Fogg.

'A big bash on the head, sir, it says here.'

12

13

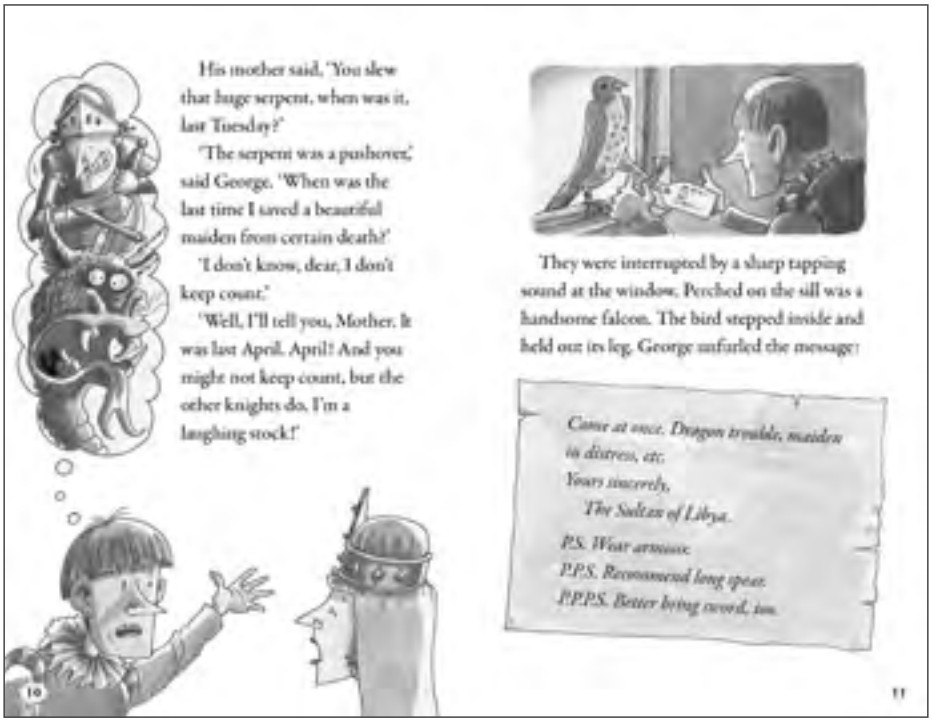
Oxford Reading Level 15: TreeTops Greatest Stories: *Around the World in 80 Days*

Sentence structure

- On average, there are 8 words per sentence in fiction books and 13 words per sentence in non-fiction books (although non-fiction books tend to have fewer sentences per page).
- The majority of sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound, complex) sentences** are used regularly.
- Generally, the past tense is more common than the present tense in both fiction and non-fiction.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences where two clauses are connected by a relative clause** (e.g. *He wasn't far from the top when a cold shock went through him – he had reached up his hand, but there was no gap between the stones in which his fingers might lodge*.).
- Multi-clause (compound) sentences where two main clauses are joined by a **coordinating conjunction** (e.g. *Gradually, her cries subsided and the tendrils became still*.).
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences with one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses**, joined together by a **subordinating conjunction** (e.g. *Anil said I couldn't hang out because he and Rajesh and Rory Foster are in a secret society*.).
- **Fronted adverbials** (e.g. *After a while, Ant stopped and looked around, a puzzled expression on his face*.).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *It's starving!*).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *Green shoots were sprouting everywhere now*.).
- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *An anaconda can swallow an elephant whole*.).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *A referee gives a hand signal for time-out*.).

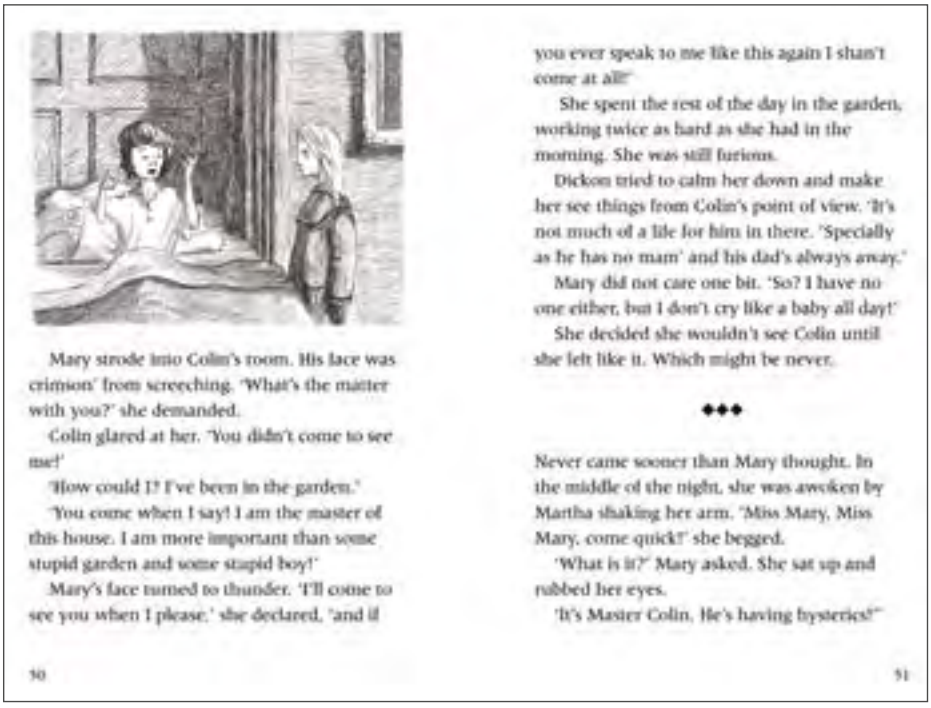


Oxford Reading Level 15: TreeTops Myths and Legends: *Dragon Tales*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

- Stories may still be light-hearted and humorous, and jokes are sometimes used in fiction and non-fiction, but more serious subject matter is also tackled (e.g. facing a fear, battles).
- In fiction, some peril or danger may be involved (e.g. being caught up in a sea battle).
- In fiction, thematically driven **everyday life** and **real life stories** are becoming more common, as is historical fiction.
- Stories about relationships (e.g. friendship breakdowns) are common.
- In fiction, adventure/fantasy/alternative reality books are common.
- Familiar concepts are still used; although much of the information presented will be unfamiliar to readers even if they know something about a topic, particularly in non-fiction; concepts include: moving home/ unexpected guests, animals (e.g. in jungles, wolves), shadows, sport (e.g. football), school (e.g. being picked on/difficult teachers).
- Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are widely used in fiction and non-fiction; for example: history (e.g. sailing/ sea battles), science (e.g. robots, eyes), biographies, environmental issues (e.g. saving whales, bees, the Amazon), meteorites, codes and code-breaking/spies, rescues/danger/survival.



Mary strode into Colin's room. His face was crimson from screeching. 'What's the matter with you?' she demanded.

Colin glared at her. 'You didn't come to see me!'

'How could I? I've been in the garden.'

'You come when I say! I am the master of this house. I am more important than some stupid garden and some stupid boy!'

Mary's face turned to thunder. 'I'll come to see you when I please,' she declared, 'and if you ever speak to me like this again I shan't come at all!'

She spent the rest of the day in the garden, working twice as hard as she had in the morning. She was still furious.

Dickon tried to calm her down and make her see things from Colin's point of view. 'It's not much of a life for him in there. 'Specially as he has no mam' and his dad's always away.'

Mary did not care one bit. 'So? I have no one either, but I don't cry like a baby all day!'

She decided she wouldn't see Colin until she felt like it. Which might be never.

◆◆◆

Never came sooner than Mary thought. In the middle of the night, she was awoken by Martha shaking her arm. 'Miss Mary, Miss Mary, come quick!' she begged.

'What is it?' Mary asked. She sat up and rubbed her eyes.

'It's Master Colin. He's having hysterics!'

50 51

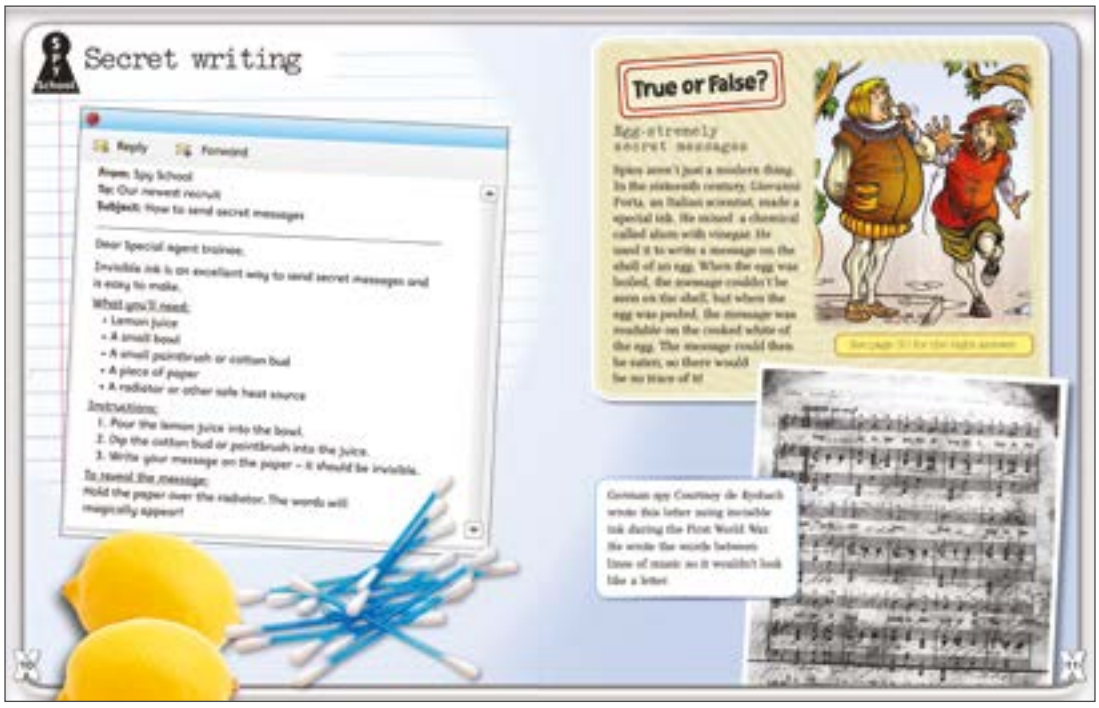
Oxford Reading Level 15: TreeTops Classics: *The Secret Garden*

Themes

Overview:

- As well as a main theme, sub-themes are regularly explored (and often revolve around emotional issues in fiction).
- Examples of themes include:

Action & adventure	Conflict & decision-making	Relationship & emotion
• Escapes and rescues • Righting wrongs	• Taking a stand/teaching someone a lesson • Making promises/resolutions, keeping promises • Taking what's not yours, cruelty (in classic stories)	• Courage/bravery/heroism • Vanity • Greed • Loss



Oxford Reading Level 15: Project X Origins: *The Spy's Secret Handbook*

Plot and structure

Fiction:

- Stories will predominantly have **linear narratives**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end; **non-linear narratives** may occur where **flashbacks** are used.
- There may be several key events within one story.
- There may be the occasional plot twist.
- The story should make sense without the need for images.
- Texts continue to ask more of the reader: some stories require the use of greater reflection and inference skills (e.g. when a character says one thing but means another).
- First person narrative is regularly used.
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- Passages of time are used regularly (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Simultaneous action may be used (i.e. in one book, different characters can be doing different things in different places at the same time).
- Other characters' perspectives/different points of view may be shown within a book (e.g. a villain's perspective).
- A 'story-within-a-story' may be told.
- **NEW:** Occasionally stories may have open endings.

Non-fiction:

- The text in the book should now convey all the meaning and the concepts, although the images will still support the text.
- Texts are asking more of the reader, i.e. they are regularly posing open, reflective questions, when there is not necessarily a clear-cut answer (e.g. What's your verdict on A versus B? What do you think?).
- Layouts may vary throughout the book.
- Contents pages, glossaries, and indexes are used in all non-fiction.
- Several non-fiction features can be used on a single page and may include: quiz boxes or pages, comparison charts/diagrams, recipes, tips, cross sections (e.g. for buildings), timelines, family trees, dials as measures, stylized fact boxes/files, comic strips/pages.

Plot/book devices

- Story/plot recaps are used (e.g. 'Previously ...'), where there is a broader story arc.
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- Cliffhangers may be used at the end of chapters.
- Emails and other forms of communication to friends/relatives may be used.
- Passages of time are used regularly (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Flashbacks may be used.
- Dramatic statements like 'STOP READING NOW!' are occasionally used (e.g. in humorous stories), designed to get you to do the opposite, or 'NO ENTRY!' (e.g. in dramatic stories), designed to increase tension.

Setting

- In fiction, the settings range from very everyday, familiar settings to settings in different countries and even different worlds.
- Characters can have adventures in far-flung places.
- Two different stories may be set in the same location.
- Non-fiction can look at a range of different locations/countries within the same book.
- **NEW:** Settings may be within different points in time (past/present/future).

Character/s

- In fiction, stories can feature up to five main characters, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Project X with Max, Cat, Ant, and Tiger) although many stories tend to still focus on one main **protagonist**.
- Characters can split up and have simultaneous adventures in the same book.
- **Antagonists** may include: villains and their sidekicks, conflict antagonists, environmental forces, and inner conflict.
- Internal monologue and self-reflection may be used.
- Readers might find out information/come to realizations (e.g. to do with plot) that the characters can't see/aren't aware of.
- Characters might say one thing but mean another.
- **NEW:** Antagonists may include: technology.

Dialogue

- Dialogue is now extensively used in fiction.
- Depending on word count, up to four different characters may be speaking per page.
- Speech tags can include some interesting verbs and expressive adverbs/adjectives at the end (e.g. *said Fogg, smiling modestly*; *demanded Robert*; *Max said, with irritation*).

Oxford Reading Level 16

Oxford Reading Level 16

What students can do

Word reading

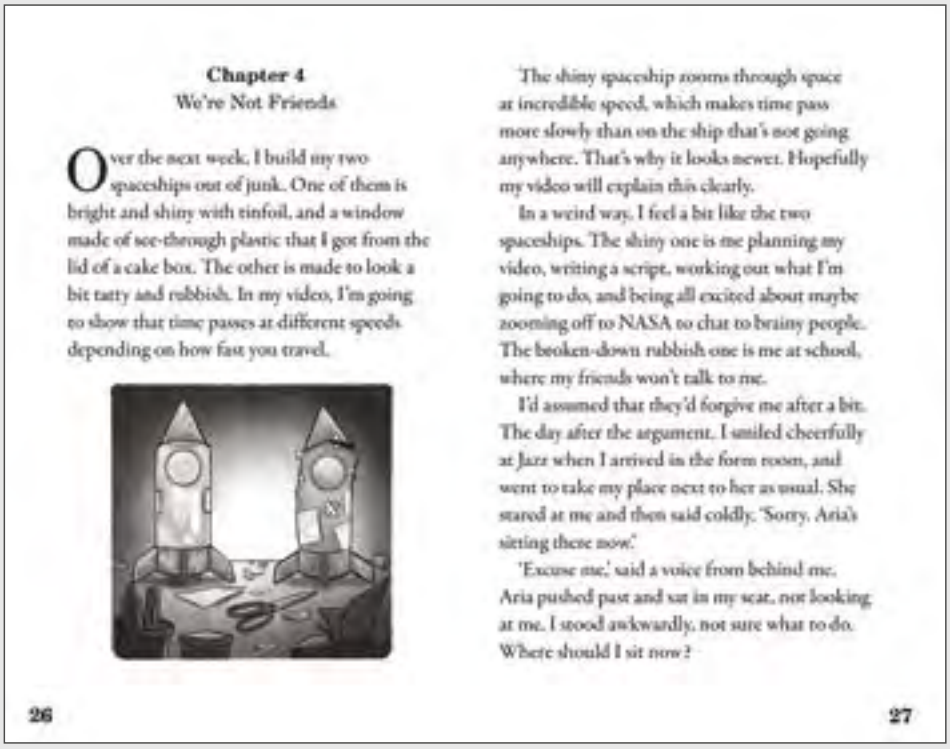
Students can read level-appropriate texts with confidence and fluency. They can read aloud fluently with appropriate expression, accounting for a wide range of punctuation. They can apply knowledge of word structure and the meanings of similar words, as well as phonics, when tackling new or unfamiliar words. Their reading stamina is increasing and they can usually read several chapters independently at a sitting, picking up from where they left off and remembering key elements when they return to a book.

Comprehension

Students are becoming more confident in using inference to understand characters' actions and motivation in fiction. They are aware that characters may be depicted in different ways (e.g. through dialogue or action as well as through direct description). They can sometimes identify an author's point of view in fiction or non-fiction. They may be able to identify multiple character perspectives in a story or retell a story from the point of view of a different character. They can usually locate information quickly in a non-fiction text, by using techniques such as skimming and scanning, and book features such as headings, index, and contents list. They can identify some aspects of authors' language choices, for instance the use of strong **verbs** to add detail. They are becoming more adept at comparing and contrasting texts, and may quote from texts to support their viewpoints.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: more confident and independent use of inference, deduction, and information retrieval skills; increasing ability to identify and explain an author's text or structural choices and identify an author's viewpoint.



Chapter 4
We're Not Friends

Over the next week, I build my two spaceships out of junk. One of them is bright and shiny with tinfoil, and a window made of see-through plastic that I got from the lid of a cake box. The other is made to look a bit tatty and rubbish. In my video, I'm going to show that time passes at different speeds depending on how fast you travel.

The shiny spaceship zooms through space at incredible speed, which makes time pass more slowly than on the ship that's not going anywhere. That's why it looks newer. Hopefully my video will explain this clearly.

In a weird way, I feel a bit like the two spaceships. The shiny one is me planning my video, writing a script, working out what I'm going to do, and being all excited about maybe zooming off to NASA to chat to brainy people. The broken-down rubbish one is me at school, where my friends won't talk to me.

I'd assumed that they'd forgive me after a bit. The day after the argument, I smiled cheerfully at Jazz when I arrived in the form room, and went to take my place next to her as usual. She stared at me and then said coldly, 'Sorry, Aria's sitting there now.'

'Excuse me,' said a voice from behind me. Aria pushed past and sat in my seat, not looking at me. I stood awkwardly, not sure what to do. Where should I sit now?

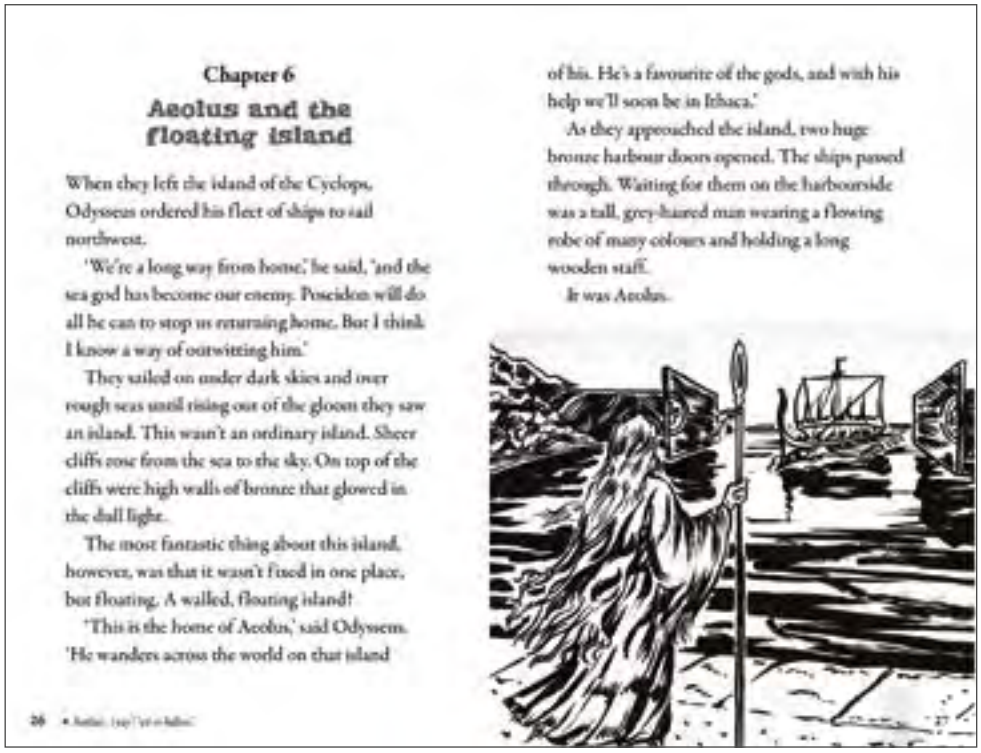
26

27

Oxford Reading Level 16: TreeTops Reflect: *Geeks Can't Dance*

Vocabulary

- Texts give opportunities to read polysyllabic words and words with a wide range of word endings, prefixes, and suffixes.
- Vocabulary includes a broad range of words, with a higher proportion of new/interest words.
- Pronunciation devices to break down hard vocabulary may be used (e.g. for a character name like Odysseus (say: *uh-diss-ee-oos*)).
- Richer language is extensively used in fiction, such as: **alliteration** (e.g. *It was dismal, dark and dreary*), **similes** (e.g. *Her voice was like the snicker of sharp scissors*), **metaphors** (e.g. *... and listening to the English teacher droning on about metaphors*), and **onomatopoeia** (e.g. *wham!*; *thunk, thunk*).
- Longer, detailed descriptions create vivid **imagery** and are extensively used to help construct a **sense of place**, increase tension in the plot, or convey how a character is feeling.
- Verbs are extensively used to increase complexity and make actions more descriptive and interesting (e.g. *They were itching with curiosity*).
- **Adverbs** and **adjectives** may be used to add complexity and interest (e.g. *A voice spoke softly but clearly.*).
- Sentence openers like 'Just then,' and 'Suddenly,' are used to indicate and increase tension or drama within the narrative.
- Some words or phrases may be italicized for added emphasis (e.g. I like ballgowns *and* physics.).
- **Rhetorical questions** may be used (e.g. *How could such an animal even exist?*).
- **NEW: Idioms**/expressions are occasionally used (e.g. *Light moves too quickly for the naked eye to see.*).



Chapter 6

Aeolus and the floating island

When they left the island of the Cyclops, Odysseus ordered his fleet of ships to sail northwest.

'We're a long way from home,' he said, 'and the sea god has become our enemy. Poseidon will do all he can to stop us returning home. But I think I know a way of outwitting him.'

They sailed on under dark skies and over rough seas until rising out of the gloom they saw an island. This wasn't an ordinary island. Sheer cliffs rose from the sea to the sky. On top of the cliffs were high walls of bronze that glowed in the dull light.

The most fantastic thing about this island, however, was that it wasn't fixed in one place, but floating. A walled, floating island!

'This is the home of Aeolus,' said Odysseus. 'He wanders across the world on that island of his. He's a favourite of the gods, and with his help we'll soon be in Ithaca.'

As they approached the island, two huge bronze harbour doors opened. The ships passed through. Waiting for them on the harbourside was a tall, grey-haired man wearing a flowing robe of many colours and holding a long wooden staff.

It was Aeolus.

Oxford Reading Level 16: TreeTops Myths and Legends: *The Journey of Odysseus*

Sentence structure

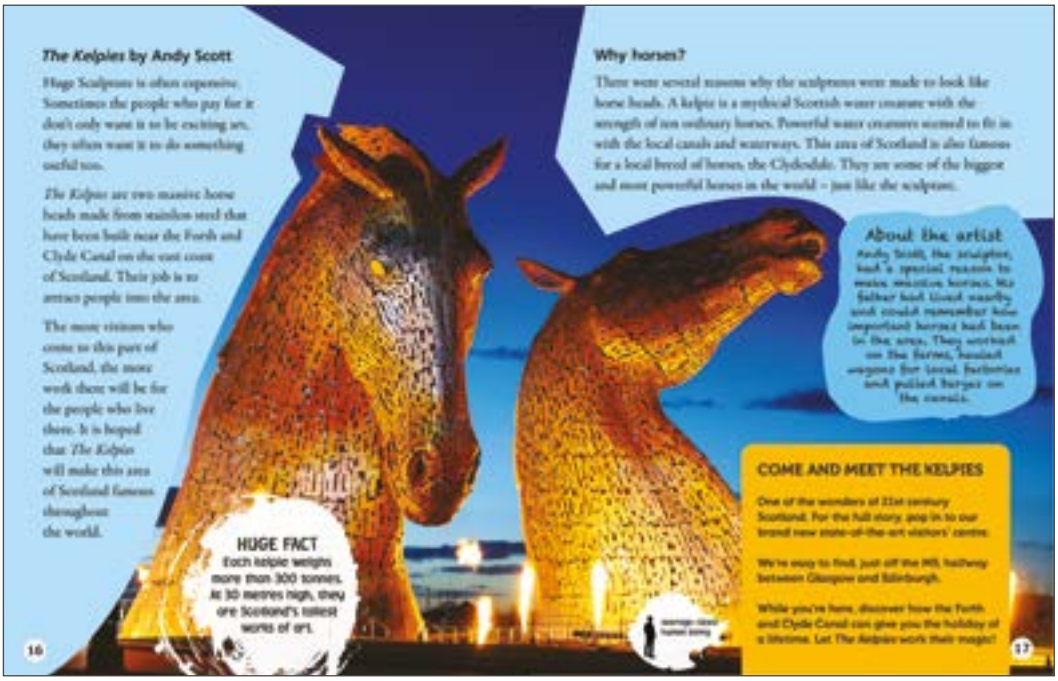
- On average, there are 8 words per sentence in fiction books and 13 words per sentence in non-fiction books (although non-fiction books tend to have fewer sentences per page).
- The majority of sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound, complex) sentences** are used regularly.
- Generally, the past tense is more common than the present tense in both fiction and non-fiction.

Punctuation:

- Speech marks are extensively used across fiction and non-fiction.
- Em rules are introduced and used occasionally.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences where two clauses are connected by a relative clause** (e.g. *The water came close to the cliffs here, and so we agreed that the safest place would be back on the raft, which Hans had rebuilt*.).
- Multi-clause (compound) sentences where two main clauses are joined by a **coordinating conjunction** (e.g. *The plesiosaurus's huge neck waved in the air and then fell*.).
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences with one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses,** joined together by a **subordinating conjunction** (e.g. 'He says he's worried because he's seen you run off.').
- **Fronted adverbials** (e.g. *Inside these organs, chemicals mix with oxygen to make a soft, blue light*.).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *Odysseus shivered*.).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *Huygens worked almost perfectly*.).
- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. 'We have reached the plateau!').
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *Chillies play a trick on your brain* ...).

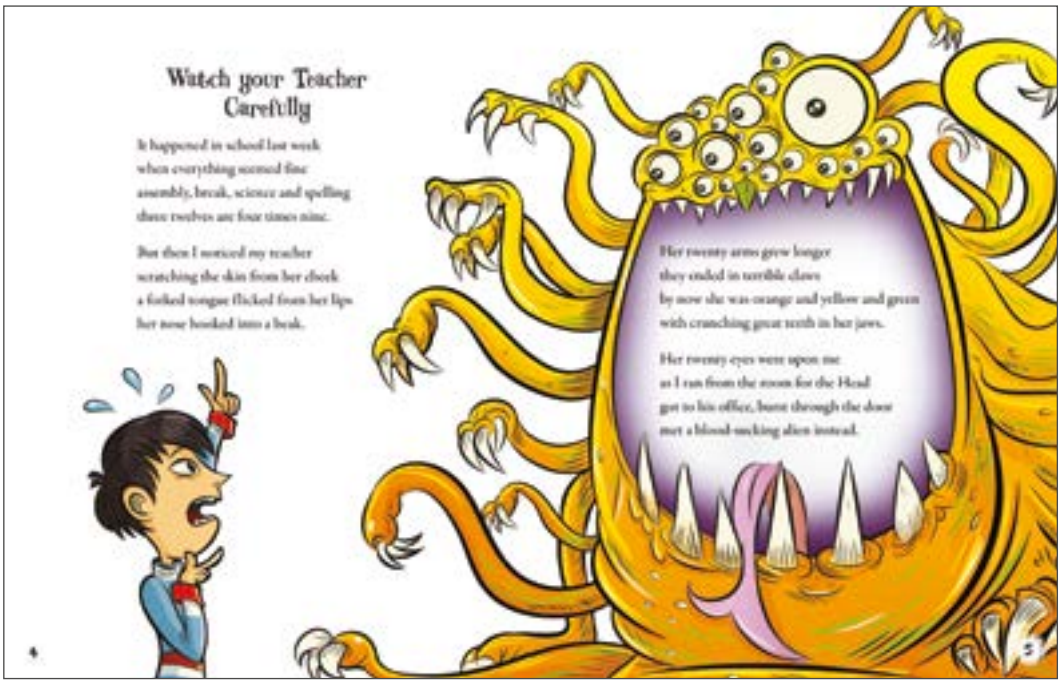


Oxford Reading Level 16: TreeTops inFact: *Huge Art*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

- Stories may still be light-hearted and humorous, and jokes are sometimes used in fiction and non-fiction, but more serious subject matter is also tackled (e.g. facing a fear, friendship breakdowns).
- In fiction, some peril or danger may be involved (e.g. being trapped by a mythical creature).
- In fiction, thematically driven **'everyday life'** and **'real life' stories** are becoming more common, as is historical fiction.
- Stories about relationships (e.g. friendship breakdowns) are common.
- In fiction, adventure/fantasy/alternative reality books are common.
- Familiar concepts are still used; although much of the information presented will be unfamiliar to readers even if they know something about a topic, particularly in non-fiction; concepts include: cooking/spices, competitions, family/school stories, football, school talent shows, TV game shows, animal stories (e.g. fables, working animals).
- Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are widely used in fiction and non-fiction; for example: history (e.g. shipwrecks, polar explorers/ice breakers), science (e.g. explosions, Earth/life on Earth, planets/the solar system/the space race), the deep ocean, windmills, pests, plagues, biographies, art/sculpture, environmental issues (e.g. deforestation, toxic waste).



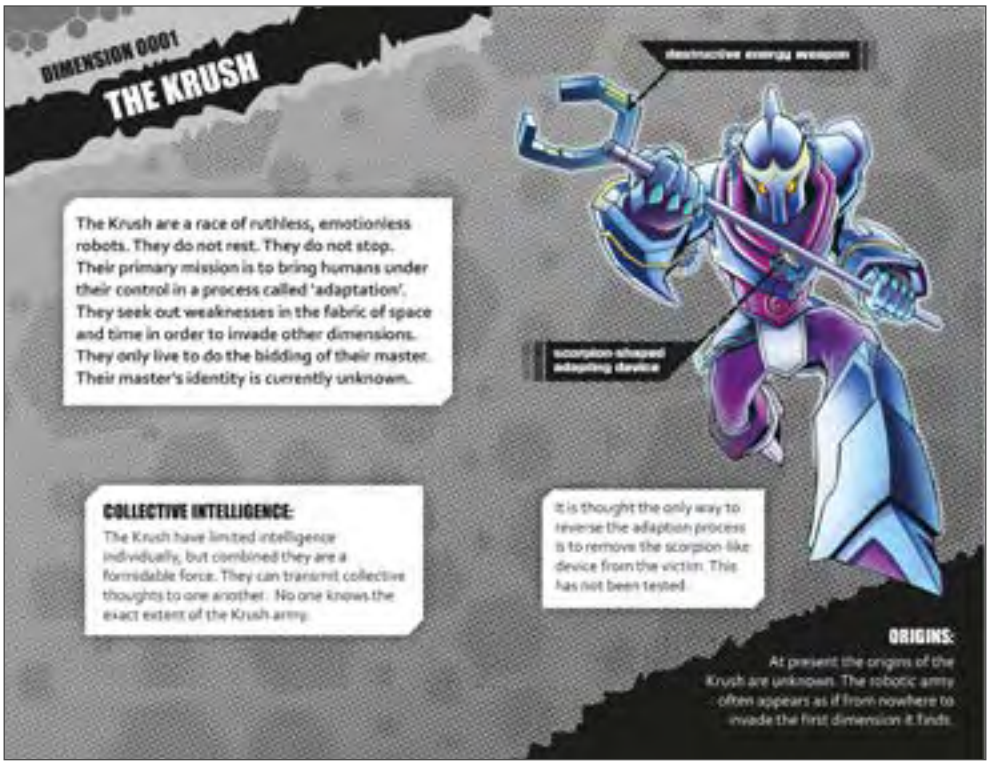
Oxford Reading Level 16: TreeTops Chucklers: *Watch your Teacher Carefully*

Themes

Overview:

- As well as a main theme, sub-themes are regularly explored (and often revolve around emotional issues in fiction).
- Examples of themes include:

Action & adventure	Conflict & decision-making	Relationship & emotion
• Righting wrongs • Characters given false leads	• Being lucky/unlucky • Taking a stand/teaching someone a lesson • Making promises/resolutions, keeping promises • **NEW:** Secrets/the weight of keeping secrets	• Honour • Empathy • People who help others



Oxford Reading Level 16: Project X Alien Adventures: *The Rip in the Wardrobe*

Plot and structure

Fiction:

- Stories will predominantly have **linear narratives**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end; **non-linear narratives** may occur where **flashbacks** are used.
- Occasionally stories may have open endings.
- There may be several key events within one story.
- There may be the occasional plot twist.
- The story should make sense without the need for images.
- Texts continue to ask more of the reader: some stories require the use of greater reflection and inference skills (e.g. when a character says one thing but means another).
- First person narrative is regularly used.
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- Passages of time are used widely (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Simultaneous action may be used (i.e. in one book, different characters can be doing different things in different places at the same time).
- Other characters' perspectives/different points of view may be shown within a book (e.g. a villain's perspective).
- A 'story-within-a-story' may be told.
- **NEW:** Texts are starting to pose greater moral questions about right and wrong and where lines are blurred (e.g. killing animals for meat).
- **NEW:** Stories may have sad endings.

Non-fiction:

- The text in the book should now convey all the meaning and the concepts, although the images will still support the text.
- Texts are asking more of the reader, i.e. they are regularly posing open, reflective questions, when there is not necessarily a clear-cut answer (e.g. What's your verdict on A versus B? What do you think?).
- Layouts may vary throughout the book.
- Contents pages, glossaries, and indexes are used in all non-fiction.
- Several non-fiction features can be used on a single page and may include: quiz boxes or pages, comparison charts/diagrams, recipes, tips, cross sections (e.g. for buildings), timelines, family trees, dials as measures, stylized fact boxes/files, comic strips/pages.

Plot/book devices

- Story/plot recaps are used (e.g. 'Previously ...'), where there is a broader story arc.
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- Cliffhangers may be used at the end of chapters.
- Emails and other forms of communication to friends/relatives may be used.
- Passages of time are used regularly (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Flashbacks may be used.
- Dramatic statements like 'STOP READING NOW!' are occasionally used (e.g. in humorous stories), designed to get you to do the opposite, or 'NO ENTRY!' (e.g. in dramatic stories), designed to increase tension.
- **NEW: Prologues** and **epilogues** may be used very occasionally.

Setting

- In fiction, the settings range from very everyday, familiar settings to settings in different countries and even different worlds.
- Characters can have adventures in far-flung places.
- Two different stories may be set in the same location.
- Settings may be within different points in time (past/present/future).
- Non-fiction can look at a range of different locations/countries within the same book.

Character/s

- In fiction, stories can feature up to five main characters, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Project X with Max, Cat, Ant, and Tiger) although many stories tend to still focus on one main **protagonist**.
- Characters can split up and have simultaneous adventures in the same book.
- **Antagonists** may include: villains and their sidekicks, conflict antagonists, environmental forces, inner conflict, and technology.
- Internal monologue and self-reflection may be used.
- Readers might find out information/come to realizations (e.g. to do with plot) that the characters can't see/aren't aware of.
- Characters might say one thing but mean another.

Dialogue

- Dialogue is extensively used in fiction.
- Depending on word count, up to four different characters may be speaking per page.
- Speech tags can include some interesting verbs and expressive adverbs/adjectives at the end (e.g. *said Fogg, smiling modestly*; *demanded Robert*; *Max said, with irritation*).
- **NEW:** There may occasionally be a line of speech where some inference is needed to work out who is talking.
- **NEW:** At this level, characters may cut in before another character has finished speaking.

Oxford Reading Level 17

Oxford Reading Level 17

What students can do

Word reading

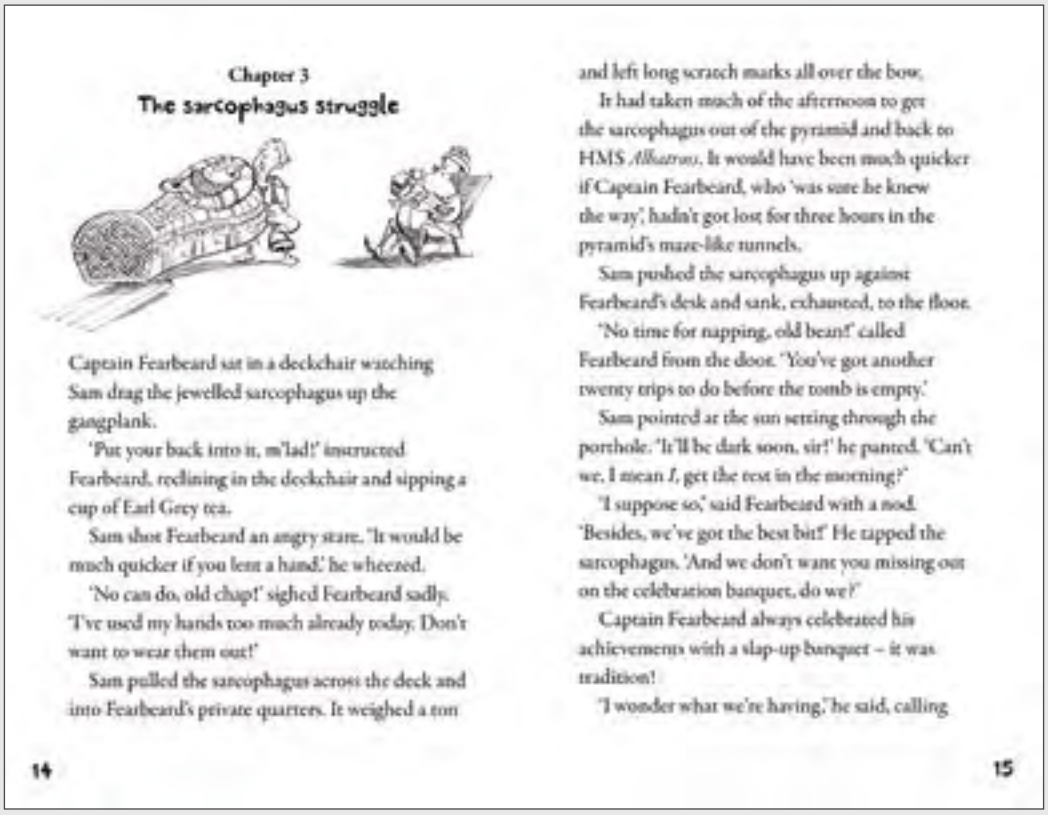
Students can read level-appropriate texts with a high degree of fluency and independence. They can read aloud fluently with appropriate expression, accounting for a wide range of punctuation. They are usually able to use knowledge of word structure and the meanings of similar words, as well as phonics, to help them read and work out the meanings of new or unfamiliar words. Their reading stamina is increasing, and they can usually read several chapters independently at a sitting, picking up from where they left off and remembering key elements and details when they return to a book.

Comprehension

Students use inference increasingly automatically to help them understand both fiction and non-fiction, sometimes referring to the text for evidence. They are often aware of the ways in which authors' language choices affect how the reader reacts to a text; for example, the extent to which the reader might like or dislike a character depending on how the author describes them, or the use of powerful **verbs** and **adverbs** to make a passage more exciting and vivid. They are becoming able to compare texts in more sophisticated ways, quoting from them to support their point of view. They are also beginning to independently identify some aspects of an individual author's style or approach. They are growing more adept at using inference and deduction to draw meaning from across a whole text, rather than just one section.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: more sophisticated and independent use of inference, deduction, and information retrieval skills; ability to identify aspects of an author's style or approach.



Chapter 3

The sarcophagus struggle

Captain Fearbeard sat in a deckchair watching Sam drag the jewelled sarcophagus up the gangplank.

'Put your back into it, m'lad!' instructed Fearbeard, reclining in the deckchair and sipping a cup of Earl Grey tea.

Sam shot Fearbeard an angry stare. 'It would be much quicker if you lent a hand,' he wheezed.

'No can do, old chap!' sighed Fearbeard sadly. 'I've used my hands too much already today. Don't want to wear them out!'

Sam pulled the sarcophagus across the deck and into Fearbeard's private quarters. It weighed a ton and left long scratch marks all over the boat.

It had taken much of the afternoon to get the sarcophagus out of the pyramid and back to HMS *Albatross*. It would have been much quicker if Captain Fearbeard, who 'was sure he knew the way', hadn't got lost for three hours in the pyramid's maze-like tunnels.

Sam pushed the sarcophagus up against Fearbeard's desk and sank, exhausted, to the floor.

'No time for napping, old bean!' called Fearbeard from the door. 'You've got another twenty trips to do before the tomb is empty.'

Sam pointed at the sun setting through the porthole. 'It'll be dark soon, sir!' he panted. 'Can't we, I mean *I*, get the rest in the morning?'

'I suppose so,' said Fearbeard with a nod. 'Besides, we've got the best bit!' He tapped the sarcophagus. 'And we don't want you missing out on the celebration banquet, do we?'

Captain Fearbeard always celebrated his achievements with a slap-up banquet – it was tradition!

'I wonder what we're having,' he said, calling

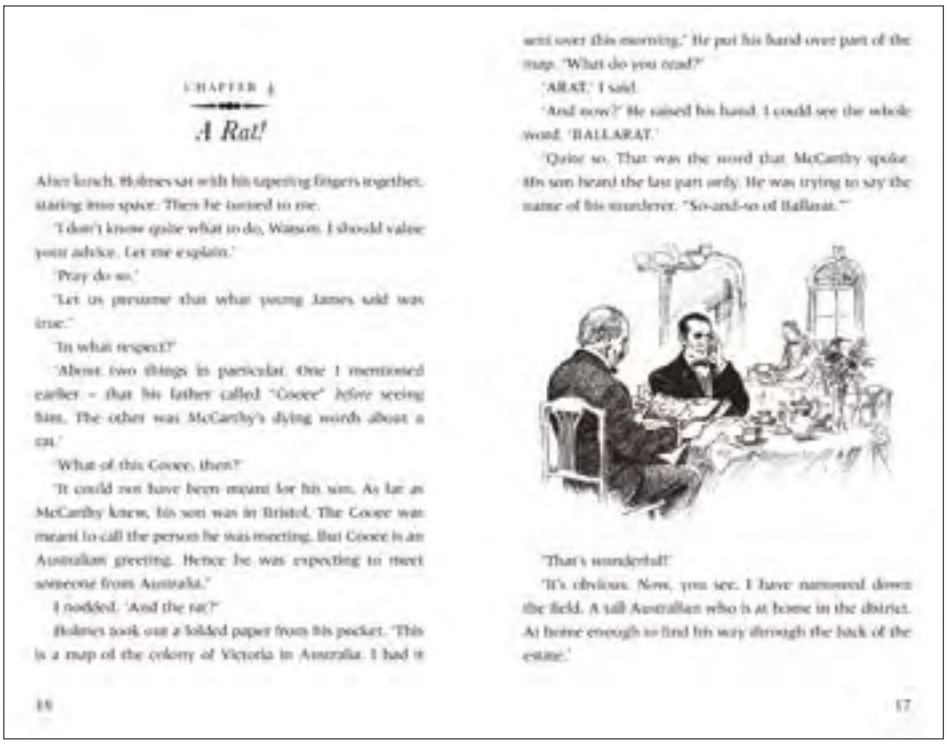
14

15

Oxford Reading Level 17: TreeTops Chucklers: *The Adventures of Captain Fearbeard*

Vocabulary

- Texts give opportunities to read polysyllabic words and words with a wide range of word endings, prefixes, and suffixes.
- Vocabulary includes a broad range of words, with a higher proportion of new/interest or ambitious words.
- Pronunciation devices to break down hard vocabulary may be used (e.g. for a character name like Gilgamesh (say: *gil-guh-mesh*)).
- Richer language is extensively used in fiction, such as: **alliteration** (e.g. *... the killer kittens of Kathmandu!*), **similes** (e.g. *Dan looked like he had just swallowed a cockroach*), **metaphors** (e.g. *The sun was shining, a golden ball of fire in a blue, blue sky.*), and **onomatopoeia** (e.g. *whoosh*; *whoop*).
- Longer, detailed descriptions create vivid **imagery** and are extensively used to help construct a **sense of place**, increase tension in the plot, or convey how a character is feeling.
- Ambitious verbs are extensively used to increase complexity and make actions more descriptive and interesting (e.g. *He played bass guitar and had a nice voice if he could be coaxed out of his shyness to sing.*).
- Adverbs and **adjectives** may be used to add complexity and interest (e.g. *Using advanced micro-science ...*).
- **Idioms**/expressions are occasionally used (e.g. *too good to be true.*).
- Sentence openers like 'Just then,' and 'Suddenly,' are used to indicate and increase tension or drama within the narrative.
- Some words or phrases may be italicized for added emphasis (e.g. 'What do you mean, *doomed*?' asked Max.).
- **Rhetorical questions** may be used (e.g. 'I mean, how bad can it be?').
- **NEW: Personification** is used to create vivid imagery (e.g. *The sea outside the room caused light to spin and swirl around inside, dancing on the walls*).
- **NEW:** Brackets may be used for parentheses to add extra details (e.g. *Frida (in another armchair on the other side of the fire, and also wrapped in blankets) was grinning at her.*).



CHAPTER 4

A Rat!

After lunch, Holmes sat with his tapering fingers together, staring into space. Then he turned to me.

'I don't know quite what to do, Watson. I should value your advice. Let me explain.'

'Pray do so.'

'Let us presume that what young James said was true.'

'In what respect?'

'About two things in particular. One I mentioned earlier – that his father called "Cooee" *before* seeing him. The other was McCarthy's dying words about a rat.'

'What of this Cooee, then?'

'It could not have been meant for his son. As far as McCarthy knew, his son was in Bristol. The Cooee was meant to call the person he was meeting. But Cooee is an Australian greeting. Hence he was expecting to meet someone from Australia.'

I nodded. 'And the rat?'

Holmes took out a folded paper from his pocket. 'This is a map of the colony of Victoria in Australia. I had it sent over this morning.' He put his hand over part of the map. 'What do you read?'

'ARAT,' I said.

'And now?' He raised his hand. I could see the whole word. 'BALLARAT.'

'Quite so. That was the word that McCarthy spoke. His son heard the last part only. He was trying to say the name of his murderer. "So-and-so of Ballarat."'

'That's wonderful!'

'It's obvious. Now, you see, I have narrowed down the field. A tall Australian who is at home in the district. At home enough to find his way through the back of the estate.'

15 17

Oxford Reading Level 17: TreeTops Classics: *Stories of Sherlock Holmes*

Sentence structure

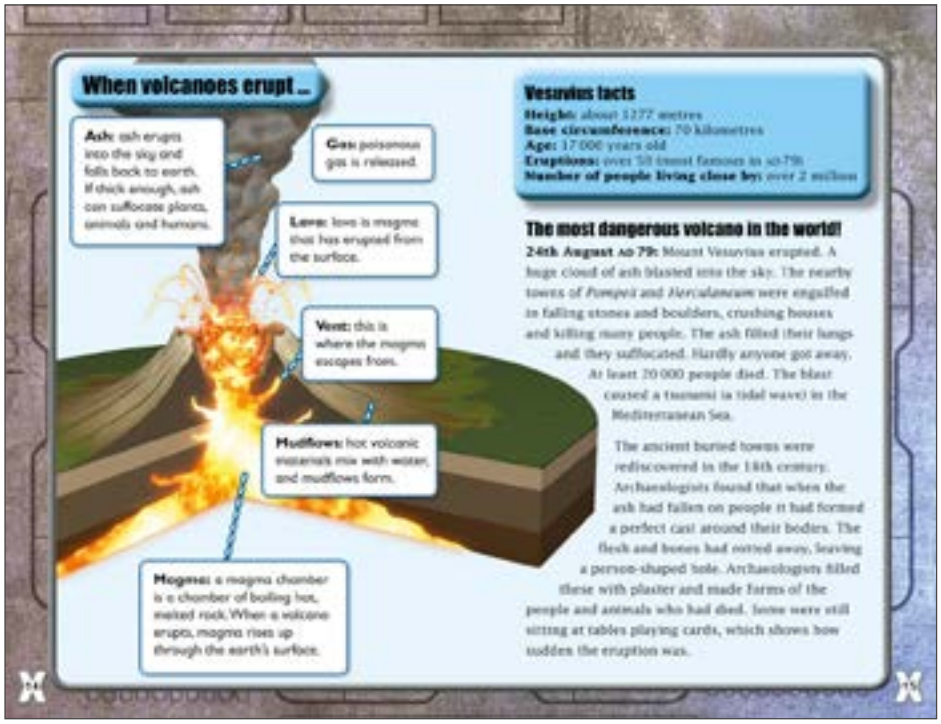
- On average, there are 9 words per sentence in fiction books and 12 words per sentence in non-fiction books (although non-fiction books tend to have fewer sentences per page).
- The majority of sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound, complex) sentences** are used regularly.
- Generally, the past tense is more common than the present tense in both fiction and non-fiction.

Punctuation:

- Semicolons are now used extensively in fiction and non-fiction.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences where two clauses are connected by a relative clause** (e.g. *The swimming world was rocked when a manufacturer launched a new racing suit a few months before the 2008 Olympics.*).
- Multi-clause (compound) sentences where two main clauses are joined by a **coordinating conjunction** (e.g. *By blending various moves, throws and locks, the martial artist uses the energy and motion of the attacker and turns it back on them.*).
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences with one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses,** joined together by a **subordinating conjunction** (e.g. *Getting stuck: caves often have tight spaces and it is possible to get stuck – although this does not happen often.*).
- **Fronted adverbials** (e.g. *Before a race starts, the team managers put a great deal of thought into deciding which tactics will help them secure a win.*).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *I disagree.*).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. 'It stands in the palace square.').
- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *The mountain was beating him.*).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *Siduri leaned all her weight against the door.*).



Oxford Reading Level 17: Project X Origins: *Volcano!*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

- Stories may still be light-hearted and humorous, and jokes are sometimes used in fiction and non-fiction, but more serious subject matter is also tackled (e.g. conflict, secrets between friends).
- In fiction, some peril or danger may be involved (e.g. being trapped in a different time).
- Historical fiction is common.
- Stories about relationships (e.g. friendship breakdowns) are common.
- In fiction, adventure/fantasy/alternative reality books are common.
- Familiar concepts are still used; although much of the information presented will be unfamiliar to readers even if they know something about a topic, particularly in non-fiction; concepts include: sport (e.g. adrenalin sports, record breaking times in sport, bike racing), animals (e.g. a pet being an emotional support), competitions (e.g. a school photography competition, TV talent shows).
- Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are widely used in fiction and non-fiction; for example: history (e.g. lost cities, time capsules), science (e.g. volcanos), survival, writing a story (e.g. a myth/legend), unusual jobs.
- In fiction, thematically driven **real life stories** are common and address deeper thoughts and feelings.

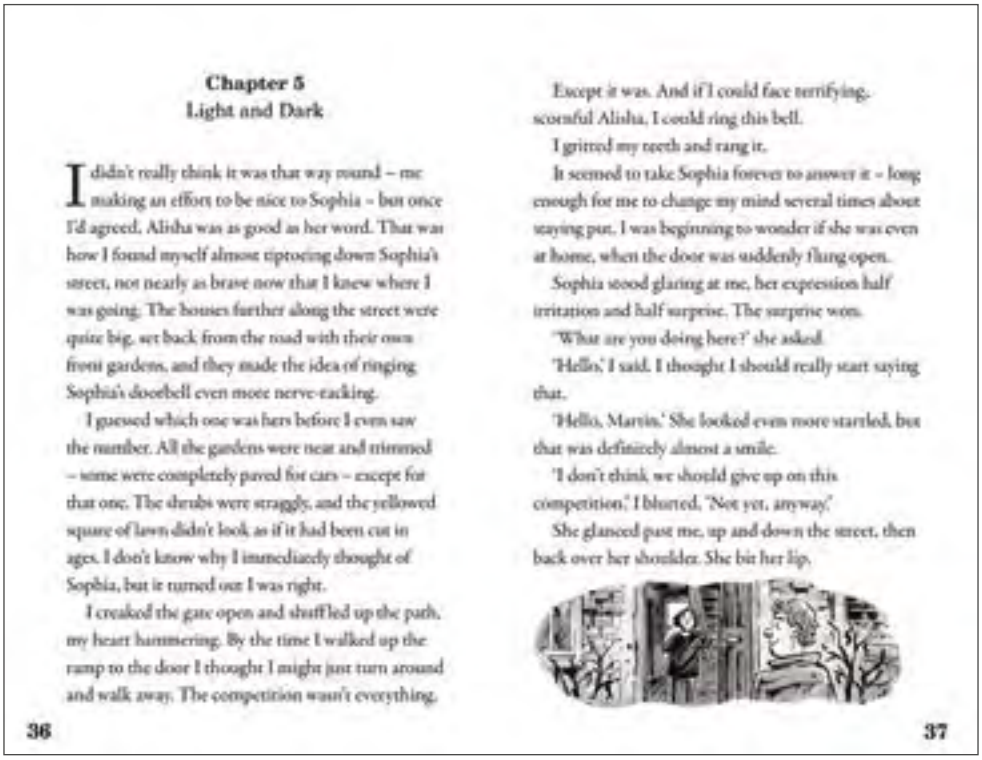
Oxford Reading Level 17: TreeTops inFact: *On Your Bike!*

Themes

Overview:

- As well as a main theme, sub-themes are regularly explored (and often revolve around emotional issues in fiction).
- Examples of themes include:

Action & adventure	Conflict & decision-making	Relationship & emotion
• Escapes and rescues (saving something or someone) • Characters given false leads	• Making promises/resolutions, keeping promises • **NEW:** Different family set ups; resolving conflicts between siblings • **NEW:** Good deeds/characters overcoming bad	• **NEW:** Different perspectives on right and wrong • **NEW:** Self-doubt and self-belief



Chapter 5
Light and Dark

I didn't really think it was that way round – me making an effort to be nice to Sophia – but once I'd agreed, Alisha was as good as her word. That was how I found myself almost tiptoeing down Sophia's street, not nearly as brave now that I knew where I was going. The houses further along the street were quite big, set back from the road with their own front gardens, and they made the idea of ringing Sophia's doorbell even more nerve-racking.

I guessed which one was hers before I even saw the number. All the gardens were neat and trimmed – some were completely paved for cars – except for that one. The shrubs were straggly, and the yellowed square of lawn didn't look as if it had been cut in ages. I don't know why I immediately thought of Sophia, but it turned out I was right.

I creaked the gate open and shuffled up the path, my heart hammering. By the time I walked up the ramp to the door I thought I might just turn around and walk away. The competition wasn't everything.

Except it was. And if I could face terrifying, scornful Alisha, I could ring this bell.

I gritted my teeth and rang it.

It seemed to take Sophia forever to answer it – long enough for me to change my mind several times about staying put. I was beginning to wonder if she was even at home, when the door was suddenly flung open.

Sophia stood glaring at me, her expression half irritation and half surprise. The surprise won.

"What are you doing here?" she asked.

"Hello," I said. I thought I should really start saying that.

"Hello, Martin." She looked even more startled, but that was definitely almost a smile.

"I don't think we should give up on this competition," I blurted. "Not yet, anyway."

She glanced past me, up and down the street, then back over her shoulder. She bit her lip.

36 37

Oxford Reading Level 17: TreeTops Reflect: *Double Exposure*

Plot and structure

Fiction:

- Stories will predominantly have **linear narratives**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end; **non-linear narratives** may occur where **flashbacks** are used.
- Stories may have open endings.
- There may be several key events within one story.
- There may be some plot twists.
- The story should make sense without the need for images.
- Texts continue to ask more of the reader: more complex reflection and inference skills are needed (e.g. when the reader has to infer something from the way a character behaves).
- Texts may pose moral questions about right and wrong and where lines are blurred (e.g. the ethics of science).
- Stories may have sad endings.
- First person narrative is widely used.
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- Passages of time are used widely (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Simultaneous action may be used (i.e. in one book, different characters can be doing different things in different places at the same time).
- Other characters' perspectives/different points of view may be shown within a book (e.g. a villain's perspective).
- A 'story-within-a-story' may be told.

Non-fiction:

- The text in the book should now convey all the meaning and the concepts, although the images will still support the text.
- Texts are asking more of the reader, i.e. they are regularly posing open, reflective questions, when there is not necessarily a clear-cut answer (e.g. What's your verdict on A versus B? What do you think?).
- Layouts may vary throughout the book.
- Contents pages, glossaries, and indexes are used in all non-fiction.
- Several non-fiction features can be used on a single page and may include: quiz boxes or pages, comparison charts/diagrams, recipes, tips, cross sections (e.g. for buildings), timelines, family trees, dials as measures, stylized fact boxes/files, comic strips/pages.

Plot/book devices

- **Prologues** and **epilogues** may be used.
- Story/plot recaps are used (e.g. 'Previously ...'), where there is a broader story arc.
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- Cliffhangers may be used at the end of chapters.
- Emails and other forms of communication to friends/relatives may be used.
- Passages of time are used regularly (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Flashbacks may be used.
- Dramatic statements like 'STOP READING NOW!' are occasionally used (e.g. in humorous stories), designed to get you to do the opposite, or 'NO ENTRY!' (e.g. in dramatic stories), designed to increase tension.

Setting

- In fiction, the settings range from very everyday, familiar settings to settings in different countries and even different worlds.
- Characters can have adventures in far-flung places.
- Two different stories may be set in the same location.
- Settings may be within different points in time (past/present/future).
- Non-fiction can look at a range of different locations/countries within the same book.
- **NEW:** A new chapter may be used to signal a change in setting.

Character/s

- In fiction, stories can feature up to five main characters, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Project X with Max, Cat, Ant, and Tiger) although many stories tend to still focus on one main **protagonist**.
- Characters can split up and have simultaneous adventures in the same book.
- **Antagonists** may include: villains and their sidekicks, conflict antagonists, environmental forces, inner conflict, and technology.
- Internal monologue and self-reflection may be used.
- Readers might find out information/come to realizations (e.g. to do with plot) that the characters can't see/aren't aware of.
- Characters might say one thing but mean another.

Dialogue

- Dialogue is now extensively used in fiction.
- Depending on word count, up to four different characters may be speaking per page.
- Speech tags can include some interesting verbs and expressive adverbs/adjectives at the end (e.g. 'No matter!' said Fearbeard, his chin whiskers wafting majestically in the Egyptian breeze.).
- There may occasionally be a line of speech where some inference is needed to work out who is talking.
- Characters may cut in before another character has finished speaking.

Oxford Reading Level 18

Oxford Reading Level 18

What students can do

Word reading

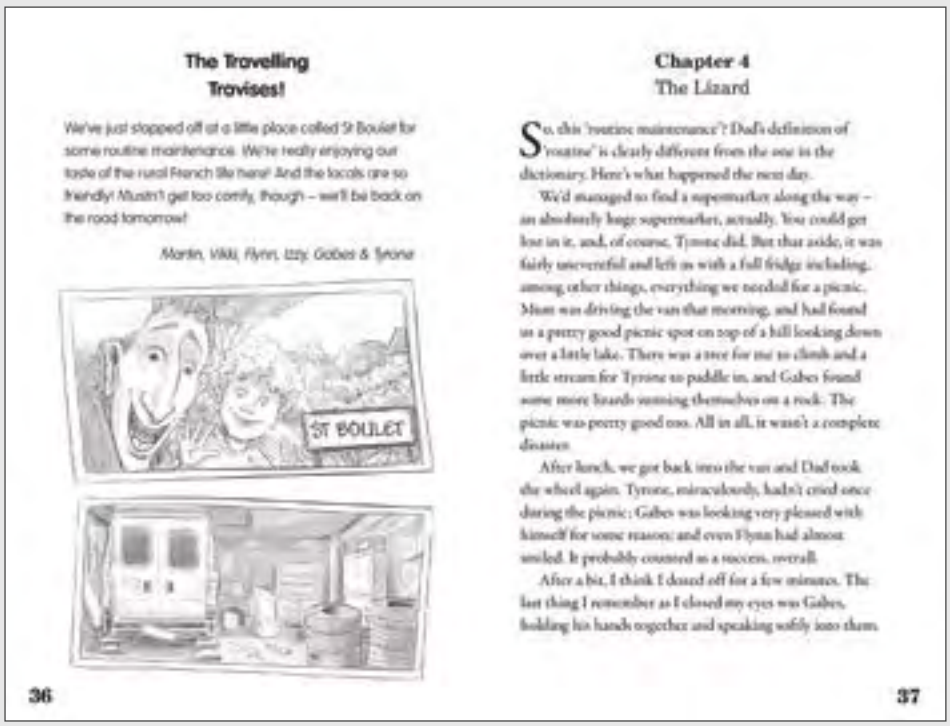
Students can read level-appropriate texts with a high degree of fluency and independence. They can read aloud fluently with appropriate expression, accounting for a wide range of punctuation. They can use knowledge of word structure and the meanings of similar words, as well as phonics, to help them read and work out the meanings of new or unfamiliar words. Their reading stamina is increasing and they can read several chapters independently at a sitting, picking up from where they left off and remembering key elements and details when they return to a book.

Comprehension

With prompting as necessary, students can often quote confidently from a text to support their ideas and inferences about it. They understand that texts may be written from different points of view and are often able to identify the point of view in a particular text (where this is fairly straightforward). They can explain how the point of view can influence how a reader reacts to a text, e.g. in a persuasive text. Students can use inference increasingly effectively to identify key themes and ideas, drawing on information from across a text, both implicit and explicitly stated. Where it is implicit, students are becoming more confident at explaining how they arrived at their inference, referring to the text. Students can express an opinion about whether a text is useful, effective, or enjoyable, and give reasons why.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: increasing ability to use inference at a more sophisticated level, referring to and quoting from the text to support own ideas and reactions; ability to identify point of view in texts; ability to give a critical response to a text at the appropriate level.



The Travelling Travises!

We've just stopped off at a little place called St Boulet for some routine maintenance. We're really enjoying our taste of the rural French life here! And the locals are so friendly! Mustn't get too comfy, though – we'll be back on the road tomorrow!

Martin, Vikki, Flynn, Izzy, Gabes & Tyrone

36

Chapter 4
The Lizard

So, this 'routine maintenance'? Dad's definition of 'routine' is clearly different from the one in the dictionary. Here's what happened the next day.

We'd managed to find a supermarket along the way – an absolutely huge supermarket, actually. You could get lost in it, and, of course, Tyrone did. But that aside, it was fairly uneventful and left us with a full fridge including, among other things, everything we needed for a picnic. Mum was driving the van that morning, and had found us a pretty good picnic spot on top of a hill looking down over a little lake. There was a tree for me to climb and a little stream for Tyrone to paddle in, and Gabes found some more lizards sunning themselves on a rock. The picnic was pretty good too. All in all, it wasn't a complete disaster.

After lunch, we got back into the van and Dad took the wheel again. Tyrone, miraculously, hadn't cried once during the picnic; Gabes was looking very pleased with himself for some reason; and even Flynn had almost smiled. It probably counted as a success, overall.

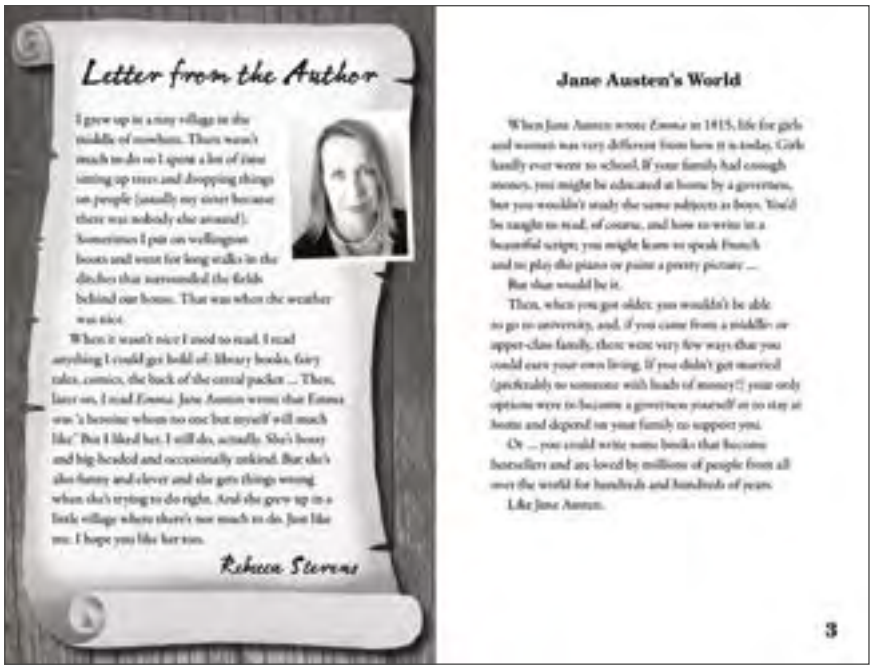
After a bit, I think I dozed off for a few minutes. The last thing I remember as I closed my eyes was Gabes, holding his hands together and speaking softly into them.

37

Oxford Reading Level 18: TreeTops Reflect: *Holiday of a Lifetime*

Vocabulary

- Texts give opportunities to read polysyllabic words and words with a wide range of word endings, prefixes, and suffixes.
- Vocabulary includes a broad range of words, with a higher proportion of new/interest or ambitious words.
- Pronunciation devices to break down hard vocabulary may be used (e.g. for a place name like Shrewsbury (say: *shrows-bury*)).
- Richer language is extensively used in fiction, such as: **alliteration** (e.g. *Herds of horses stamped and swirled ...*), **similes** (e.g. *Parnita felt as if cumbersome hippos were dancing ungracefully in her stomach*), **metaphors** (e.g. *I imagined my feelings becoming a ferocious animal ...*), **personification** to create vivid **imagery** (e.g. *... the grass, ruffled by the gentle breeze, stroked my bare shins.),* and **onomatopoeia** (e.g. *clang!*; *BOOM*; *clump-hiss*).
- Longer, detailed descriptions create vivid imagery and are extensively used to help construct a **sense of place**, increase tension in the plot, or convey how a character is feeling.
- Ambitious **verbs** are extensively used to increase complexity and make actions more descriptive and interesting (e.g. *Everyone watched as she sat down and ate her food listlessly.*).
- **Adverbs** and **adjectives** may be used to add complexity and interest (e.g. *A voice spoke softly but clearly.*).
- **Idioms**/expressions are occasionally used (e.g. *sunk like a stone*).
- Sentence openers like 'Just then,' and 'Suddenly,' are used to indicate and increase tension or drama within the narrative.
- Some words or phrases may be italicized for added emphasis (e.g. '*This* advert,' he said and Baz read ...).
- **Rhetorical questions** may be used (e.g. *Why did Miss Taylor have to go and get married when she could have stayed with him and Emma at Hartfield House forever?*).
- Brackets may be used for parentheses to add extra details (e.g. *The King, who felt he was in no position to disagree (the weight of the bear's paw had snuffed all the breath out of him) was only too ready to agree to the bear's proposition.*), or as narrative interjections for additional information and humour (e.g. *Dirk nearly jumped out of his skin. (Well, he didn't – it's actually impossible unless you're a snake or a lizard, and even then it has to be the right time of year.)*).
- **NEW:** In fiction, footnotes may be used to define more unusual, unfamiliar, or archaic vocabulary (e.g. *bustle*; *a rigid petticoat*).



Oxford Reading Level 18: TreeTops Greatest Stories: *Emma*

Sentence structure

- On average, there are 9 words per sentence in fiction books and 13 words per sentence in non-fiction books (although non-fiction books tend to have fewer sentences per page).
- The majority of sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound, complex) sentences** are used regularly.
- Generally, the past tense is more common than the present tense in both fiction and non-fiction.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

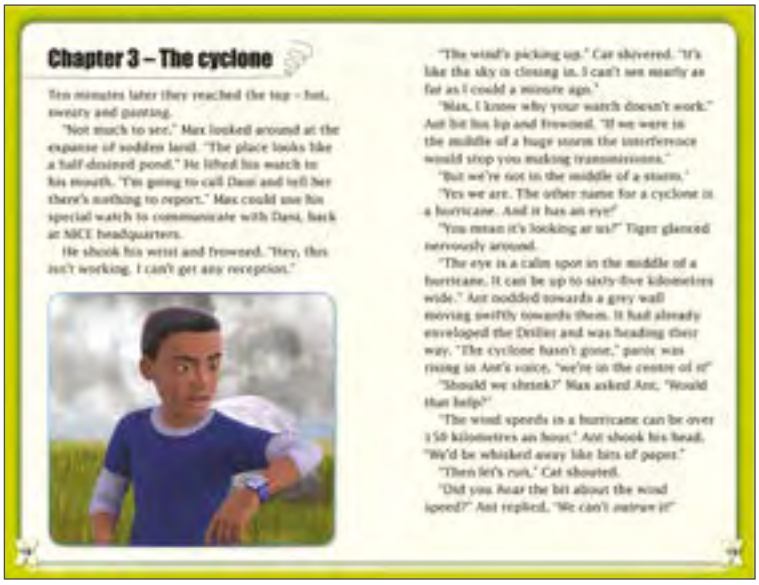
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences where two clauses are connected by a relative clause** (e.g. *Darwin's name was even given to a European Space Agency mission that planned to search for other planets where life could evolve*.).
- Multi-clause (compound) sentences where two main clauses are joined by a **coordinating conjunction** (e.g. *Even shallower seas can be treacherous, and it is difficult for humans to explore deep waters*.).
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences with one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses,** joined together by a **subordinating conjunction** (e.g. *Yet much of this watery world remains unexplored because the deepest parts of the ocean are too dangerous for humans*.).
- **Fronted adverbials** (e.g. *Whether you want a part in a school play or a West End production, you'll probably need to audition*.).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. *Charles sighed*.).
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *The friends were stunned into silence*.).
- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *I can fund your experiments*.).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum contains an art collection of world importance*.).

Oxford Reading Level 18: Project X Alien Adventures: *Out of the Flames*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

- Stories may still be light-hearted and humorous but more serious subject matter is also tackled (e.g. environmental disasters, unsettling houses).
- In fiction, some peril or danger may be involved (e.g. being caught out in extreme weather).
- In fiction, thematically driven **real life stories** are common and address deeper thoughts and feelings.
- Historical fiction is common.
- Stories about relationships (e.g. friendship breakdowns) are common.
- In fiction, adventure/fantasy/alternative reality books are common.
- Familiar concepts are still used; although much of the information presented will be unfamiliar to readers even if they know something about a topic, particularly in non-fiction; concepts include: weather (e.g. tornadoes), family holidays (e.g. going on a road trip), school (e.g. school plays).
- Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are widely used in fiction and non-fiction; for example: history (e.g. stone age cave people, alternative versions of history), science (e.g. Charles Darwin's theories on evolution), the unexplained, detective work/solving crimes/unsolved crimes, the theatre, robots.



Chapter 3 – The cyclone

Ten minutes later they reached the top – hot, sweaty and panting.

"Not much to see." Max looked around at the expanse of sodden land. "The place looks like a half-drained pond." He lifted his watch to his mouth. "I'm going to call Dani and tell her there's nothing to report." Max could use his special watch to communicate with Dani, back at NICE headquarters.

He shook his wrist and frowned. "Hey, this isn't working. I can't get any reception."

"The wind's picking up." Cat shivered. "It's like the sky is closing in. I can't see nearly as far as I could a minute ago."

"Max, I know why your watch doesn't work." Ant bit his lip and frowned. "If we were in the middle of a huge storm the interference would stop you making transmissions."

"But we're not in the middle of a storm."

"Yes we are. The other name for a cyclone is a hurricane. And it has an eye!"

"You mean it's looking at us?" Tiger glanced nervously around.

"The eye is a calm spot in the middle of a hurricane. It can be up to sixty-five kilometres wide." Ant nodded towards a grey wall moving swiftly towards them. It had already enveloped the Driller and was heading their way. "The cyclone hasn't gone," panic was rising in Ant's voice, "we're in the centre of it!"

"Should we shrink?" Max asked Ant. "Would that help?"

"The wind speeds in a hurricane can be over 150 kilometres an hour." Ant shook his head. "We'd be whisked away like bits of paper."

"Then let's run," Cat shouted.

"Did you hear the bit about the wind speed?" Ant replied. "We can't outrun it!"

Oxford Reading Level 18: Project X Origins: *Storm Chasers*

Themes

Overview:

- As well as a main theme, sub-themes are regularly explored (and often revolve around emotional issues in fiction).
- Examples of themes include:

Action & adventure	Conflict & decision-making	Relationship & emotion
• Time pressures (e.g. 'time running out') • Escapes and rescues (saving something or someone)	• Being lucky/unlucky • Taking a stand/teaching someone a lesson	• **NEW:** Dreaming/imagination (e.g. the reader distinguishing between dreams and reality) • **NEW:** Growing up • **NEW:** Challenging roles/stereotypes (e.g. gender stereotypes challenged in a historical context)

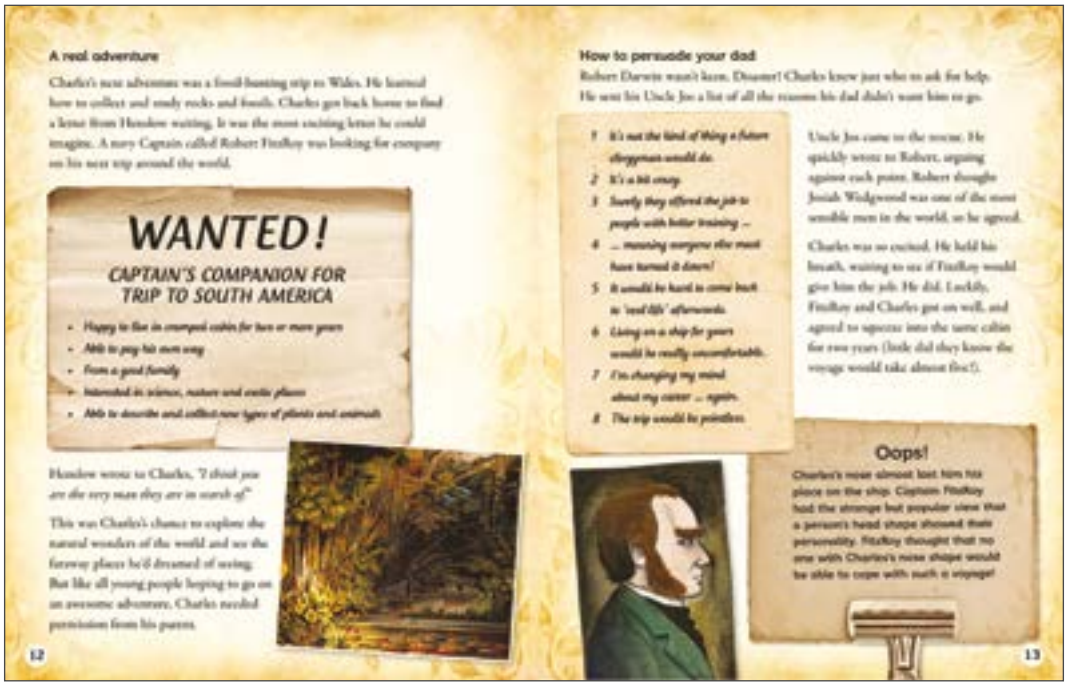
Plot and structure

Fiction:

- Stories will predominantly have **linear narratives**, with a clear beginning, middle, and end; **non-linear narratives** may occur where **flashbacks** are used.
- Stories may have open endings.
- There may be several key events within one story.
- There may be some plot twists.
- The story should make sense without the need for images.
- Texts continue to ask more of the reader: more complex reflection and inference skills are needed (e.g. when the reader has to infer something from the way a character behaves).
- Texts may pose moral questions about right and wrong and where lines are blurred (e.g. betraying your friends for the 'greater good').
- Stories may have sad endings.
- First person narrative is widely used.
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- Passages of time are used widely (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Simultaneous action may be used (i.e. in one book, different characters can be doing different things in different places at the same time).
- Other characters' perspectives/different points of view may be shown within a book (e.g. a villain's perspective).
- A 'story-within-a-story' may be told.

Non-fiction:

- The text in the book should now convey all the meaning and the concepts, although the images will still support the text.
- Texts are asking more of the reader, i.e. they are regularly posing open, reflective questions, when there is not necessarily a clear-cut answer (e.g. What's your verdict on A versus B? What do you think?).
- Layouts may vary throughout the book.
- Contents pages, glossaries, and indexes are used in all non-fiction.
- Several non-fiction features can be used on a single page and may include: quiz boxes or pages, comparison charts/diagrams, recipes, tips, cross sections (e.g. for buildings), timelines, family trees, dials as measures, stylized fact boxes/files, comic strips/pages.



Oxford Reading Level 18: TreeTops inFact: *The Misadventures of Charles Darwin*

Plot/book devices

- **Prologues** and **epilogues** may be used.
- Story/plot recaps are used (e.g. 'Previously ...'), where there is a broader story arc.
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- Cliffhangers may be used at the end of chapters.
- Emails and other forms of communication to friends/relatives may be used.
- Passages of time are used regularly (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Flashbacks may be used.
- Dramatic statements like 'STOP READING NOW!' are occasionally used (e.g. in humorous stories), designed to get you to do the opposite, or 'NO ENTRY!' (e.g. in dramatic stories), designed to increase tension.

Setting

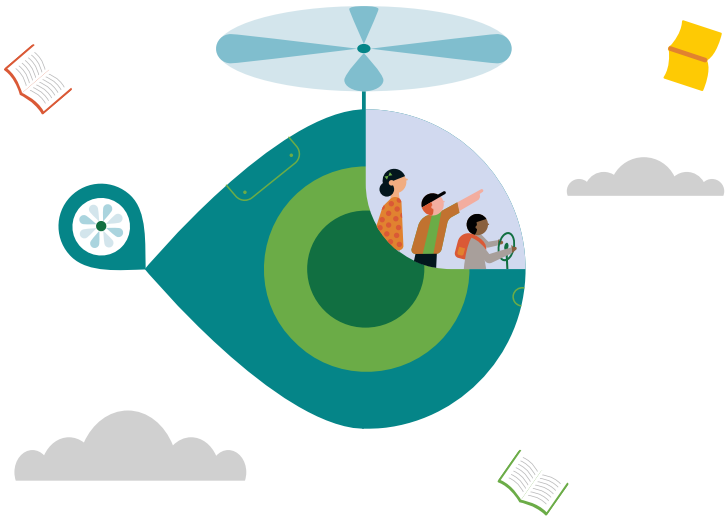
- In fiction, the settings range from very everyday, familiar settings to settings in different countries and even different worlds.
- Characters can have adventures in far-flung places.
- Two different stories may be set in the same location.
- Settings may be within different points in time (past/present/future).
- A new chapter may be used to signal a change in setting.
- Non-fiction can look at a range of different locations/countries within the same book.

Character/s

- In fiction, stories can feature up to five main characters, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Project X with Max, Cat, Ant, and Tiger) although many stories tend to still focus on one main **protagonist**.
- Characters can split up and have simultaneous adventures in the same book.
- **Antagonists** may include: villains and their sidekicks, conflict antagonists, environmental forces, inner conflict, and technology.
- Internal monologue and self-reflection may be used.
- Readers might find out information/come to realizations (e.g. to do with plot) that the characters can't see/aren't aware of.
- Characters might say one thing but mean another.
- **NEW:** Antagonists may include: authoritarian powers and the supernatural.

Dialogue

- Dialogue is now extensively used in fiction.
- Depending on word count, up to four different characters may be speaking per page.
- Speech tags can include some interesting verbs and expressive adverbs/adjectives at the end (e.g. 'Eughh!' said Frances, gagging on a silver spoon full of lark's tongue porridge.).
- There may occasionally be a line of speech where some inference is needed to work out who is talking.
- Characters may cut in before another character has finished speaking.



Oxford Reading Level 19

Oxford Reading Level 19

What students can do

Word reading

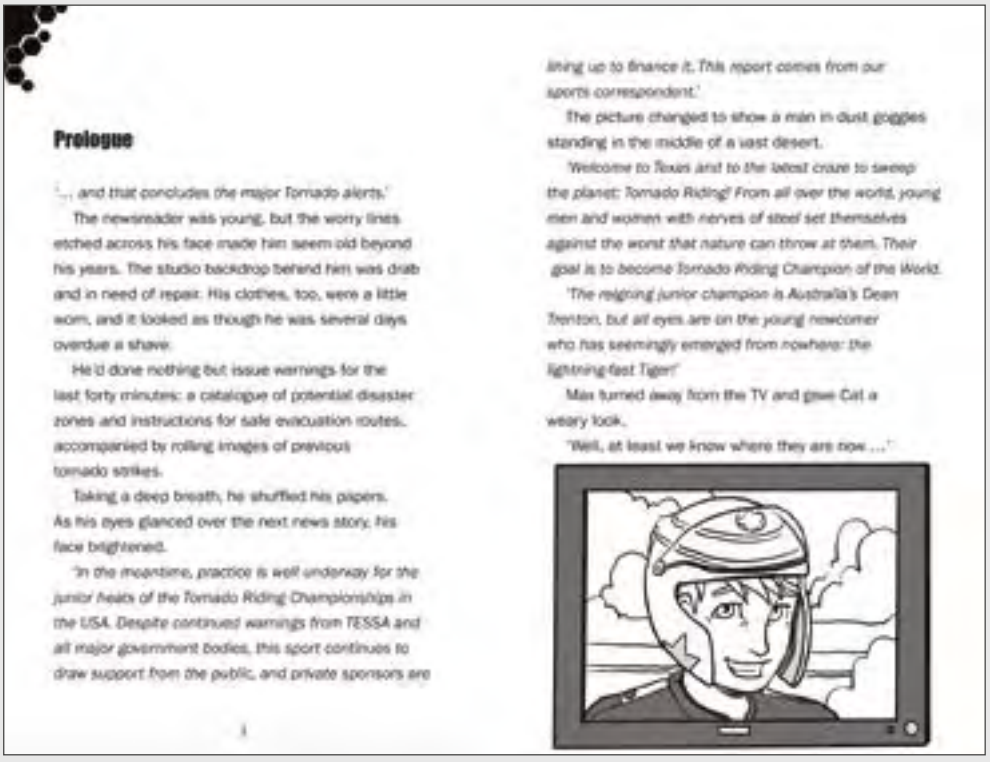
Students can read level-appropriate texts with a high degree of fluency and independence. They can read aloud fluently with appropriate expression and intonation, accounting for a wide range of punctuation. They use knowledge of word structure and the meanings of similar words, as well as phonics, to help them read and work out the meanings of new or unfamiliar words. They can read several chapters independently at a sitting, picking up from where they left off, and have good recall of key features and relevant details when they return to a book.

Comprehension

Students are increasingly able to express a personal response to a book, confidently quoting from it to support their ideas. They are aware of their own reactions to texts and understand that different reactions are possible; they can participate thoughtfully in conversations about books they have read, listening to and drawing on others' ideas. They show some understanding of authorial techniques that can add suspense, detail, humour, emotion, etc. to a text—including vocabulary and syntax choices as well as structural techniques such as cliffhangers or 'open' story endings. They continue to use inference increasingly effectively to identify key themes and ideas, drawing on information from across a text and quoting appropriately.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: continuing to develop more sophisticated use of inference and other comprehension skills; participating actively and effectively in discussions of books, giving own views supported by appropriate quotes and references.



Prologue

'... and that concludes the major tornado alerts.'

The newsreader was young, but the worry lines etched across his face made him seem old beyond his years. The studio backdrop behind him was drab and in need of repair. His clothes, too, were a little worn, and it looked as though he was several days overdue a shave.

He'd done nothing but issue warnings for the last forty minutes: a catalogue of potential disaster zones and instructions for safe evacuation routes, accompanied by rolling images of previous tornado strikes.

Taking a deep breath, he shuffled his papers. As his eyes glanced over the next news story, his face brightened.

'In the meantime, practice is well underway for the junior heats of the Tornado Riding Championships in the USA. Despite continued warnings from TESSA and all major government bodies, this sport continues to draw support from the public, and private sponsors are living up to finance it. This report comes from our sports correspondent.'

The picture changed to show a man in dust goggles standing in the middle of a vast desert.

'Welcome to Texas and to the latest craze to sweep the planet: Tornado Riding! From all over the world, young men and women with nerves of steel set themselves against the worst that nature can throw at them. Their goal is to become Tornado Riding Champion of the World.

'The reigning junior champion is Australia's Dean Trenton, but all eyes are on the young newcomer who has seemingly emerged from nowhere: the lightning-fast Tiger!'

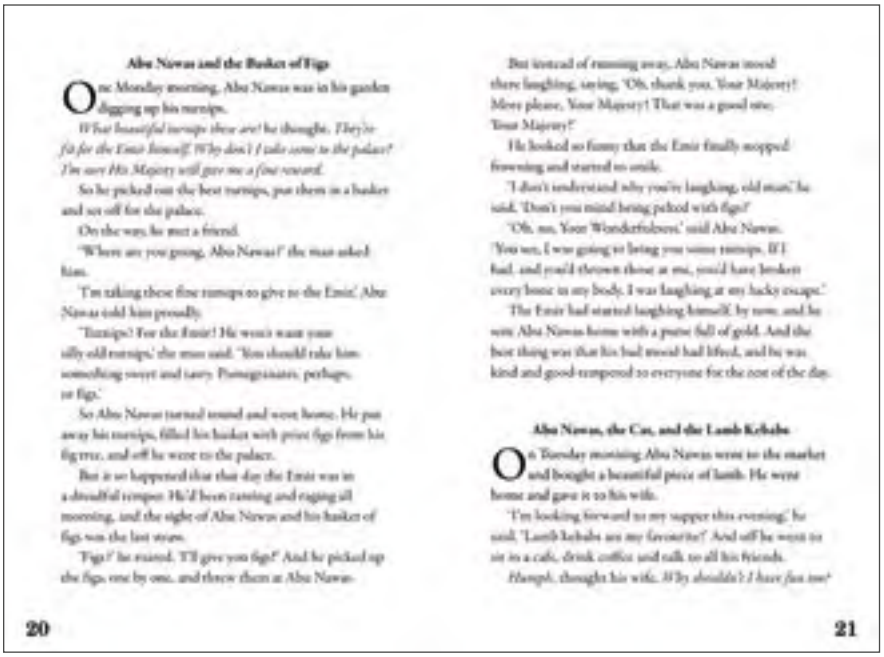
Max turned away from the TV and gave Cat a weary look.

'Well, at least we know where they are now ...'

Oxford Reading Level 19: Project X Alien Adventures: *Tornado Riders*

Vocabulary

- Texts give opportunities to read polysyllabic words and words with a wide range of word endings, prefixes, and suffixes.
- Vocabulary includes a broad range of words, with a higher proportion of new/interest or ambitious words.
- Pronunciation devices to break down hard vocabulary may be used (e.g. for a place like Teotihuacan (say: *tay-o-ti-wa-kan*)).
- In fiction, footnotes may be used to define more unusual, unfamiliar, or archaic vocabulary (e.g. *floppy disk*).
- Richer language is extensively used in fiction, such as: **alliteration** (e.g. *Betsy is beautiful*), **similes** (e.g. *Mum had been as uptight as a soap bubble that's a nanosecond away from bursting*), **metaphors** (e.g. *The July sun soon got so hot that if Don Quixote had had any brains, they'd have melted*), **personification** to create vivid **imagery** (e.g. *With a scream of tortured metal ...*), and **onomatopoeia** (e.g. *throw-clang-plop, throw-clang-plop*).
- Longer, detailed descriptions create vivid imagery and are extensively used to help construct a **sense of place**, increase tension in the plot, or convey how a character is feeling.
- Ambitious **verbs** are extensively used to increase complexity and make actions more descriptive and interesting (e.g. *Cat pondered the implications of Goldie's words as she climbed the stairs.*).
- **Adverbs** and **adjectives** may be used to add complexity and interest (e.g. *The boy was chatting amiably ...*).
- **Idioms**/expressions are occasionally used (e.g. *Cat almost jumped out of her skin.*).
- Sentence openers like 'Just then,' and 'Suddenly,' are used to indicate and increase tension or drama within the narrative.
- Some words or phrases may be italicized for added emphasis (e.g. 'I *really* wanted to win the swimming thing,' she said.).
- **Rhetorical questions** may be used (e.g. *But first, you might be asking yourself ... what exactly is an engineer?*).
- Brackets may be used for parentheses to add extra details (e.g. *They put Sancho on his donkey (the innkeeper having taken its saddlebags in payment for their stay) and pushed Sancho, very dizzy, out of the inn.*), or as narrative interjections for additional information and humour (e.g. *He went to the 'lord-of-the-castle' (who was really the innkeeper) and beseeched the man to make him a knight so he could start some serious fighting of villains.*).



Abu Nawas and the Basket of Figs

One Monday morning, Abu Nawas was in his garden digging up his turnips.

What beautiful turnips these are! he thought. *They're fit for the Emir himself. Why don't I take some to the palace? I'm sure His Majesty will give me a fine reward.*

So he picked out the best turnips, put them in a basket and set off for the palace.

On the way, he met a friend.

'Where are you going, Abu Nawas?' the man asked him.

'I'm taking these fine turnips to give to the Emir,' Abu Nawas told him proudly.

'Turnips? For the Emir! He won't want your silly old turnips,' the man said. 'You should take him something sweet and tasty. Pomegranates, perhaps, or figs.'

So Abu Nawas turned round and went home. He put away his turnips, filled his basket with *prime* figs from his fig tree, and off he went to the palace.

But it so happened that that day the Emir was in a dreadful temper. He'd been ranting and raging all morning, and the sight of Abu Nawas and his basket of figs was the last straw.

'Figs!' he roared. 'I'll give you figs!' And he picked up the figs, one by one, and threw them at Abu Nawas.

But instead of running away, Abu Nawas stood there laughing, saying, 'Oh, thank you, Your Majesty! More please, Your Majesty! That was a good one, Your Majesty!'

He looked so funny that the Emir finally stopped frowning and started to smile.

'I don't understand why you're laughing, old man,' he said. 'Don't you mind being pelted with figs?'

'Oh, no, Your Wonderfulness,' said Abu Nawas. 'You see, I was going to bring you some turnips. If I had, and you'd thrown those at me, you'd have broken every bone in my body. I was laughing at my lucky escape.'

The Emir had started laughing himself by now, and he sent Abu Nawas home with a purse full of gold. And the best thing was that his bad mood had lifted, and he was kind and good-tempered to everyone for the rest of the day.

Abu Nawas, the Cat, and the Lamb Kebabs

On Tuesday morning Abu Nawas went to the market and bought a beautiful piece of lamb. He went home and gave it to his wife.

'I'm looking forward to my supper this evening,' he said. 'Lamb kebabs are my favourite!' And off he went to sit in a cafe, drink coffee and talk to all his friends.

Humph, thought his wife. *Why shouldn't I have fun too?*

20 21

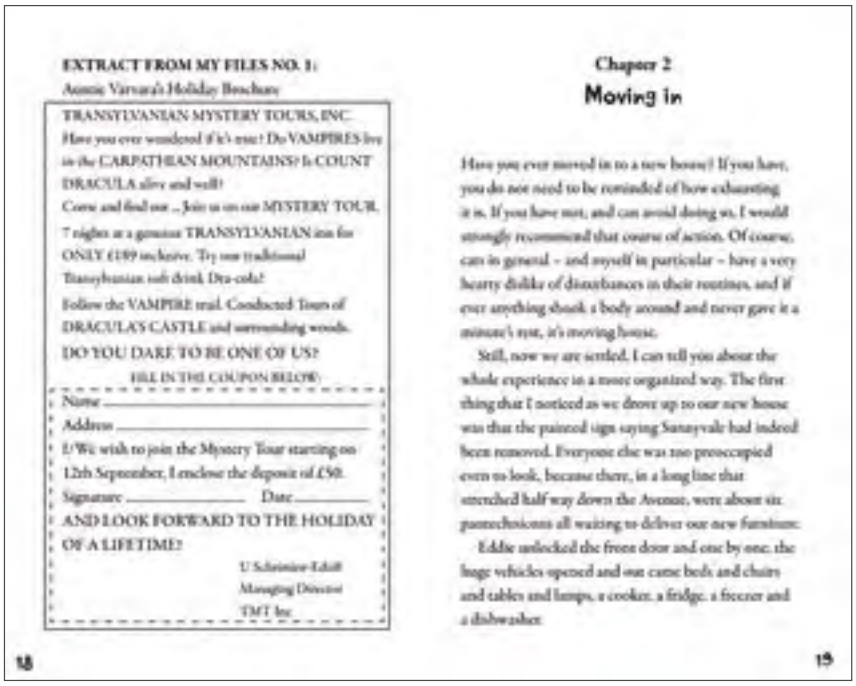
Oxford Reading Level 19: TreeTops Greatest Stories: *Jewels from a Sultan's Crown*

Sentence structure

- On average, there are 10 words per sentence in fiction books and 15 words per sentence in non-fiction books (although non-fiction books tend to have fewer sentences per page).
- The majority of sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound, complex) sentences** are used regularly.
- Generally, the past tense is more common than the present tense in both fiction and non-fiction.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences where two clauses are connected by a relative clause** (e.g. *He explained to Cat about the metal shapes that he'd glimpsed just before he was concussed.*).
- Multi-clause (compound) sentences where two main clauses are joined by a **coordinating conjunction** (e.g. *Ruth added chemicals that fastened on to the cotton and acted as 'rungs', holding the molecules in place and keeping the fabric smooth.*).
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences with one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses,** joined together by a **subordinating conjunction** (e.g. *We can prove when and where the Maya lived because of historical remains such as pyramids and carved stelae marked with dates.*).
- **Fronted adverbials** (e.g. *Rather than go inside, he crossed the road and cautiously approached the gates of the presidential palace.*).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. 'Time's wasting.').
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. *Guglielmo studied his theories.*).
- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *Seny exclaimed with delight.*).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *Queequeg sat sharpening the barb of his harpoon.*).



EXTRACT FROM MY FILES NO. 1:
Auntie Varvara's Holiday Brochure

TRANSYLVANIAN MYSTERY TOURS, INC.
Have you ever wondered if it's true? Do VAMPIRES live in the CARPATHIAN MOUNTAINS? Is COUNT DRACULA alive and well?
Come and find out ... Join us on our MYSTERY TOUR.
7 nights at a genuine TRANSYLVANIAN inn for ONLY £189 inclusive. Try our traditional Transylvanian soft drink Dra-cola!
Follow the VAMPIRE trail. Conducted Tours of DRACULA'S CASTLE and surrounding woods.
DO YOU DARE TO BE ONE OF US?
FILL IN THE COUPON BELOW:
Name _____
Address _____
I/We wish to join the Mystery Tour starting on 12th September. I enclose the deposit of £50.
Signature _____ Date _____
AND LOOK FORWARD TO THE HOLIDAY OF A LIFETIME!
U Schmirer-Edell
Managing Director
TMT Inc

Chapter 2
Moving In

Have you ever moved in to a new house? If you have, you do not need to be reminded of how exhausting it is. If you have not, and can avoid doing so, I would strongly recommend that course of action. Of course, cats in general – and myself in particular – have a very hearty dislike of disturbances in their routines, and if ever anything shook a body around and never gave it a minute's rest, it's moving house.

Still, now we are settled, I can tell you about the whole experience in a more organized way. The first thing that I noticed as we drove up to our new house was that the painted sign saying Sunnyvale had indeed been removed. Everyone else was too preoccupied even to look, because there, in a long line that stretched half way down the Avenue, were about six pantechnicons all waiting to deliver our new furniture.

Eddie unlocked the front door and one by one, the huge vehicles opened and out came beds and chairs and tables and lamps, a cooker, a fridge, a freezer and a dishwasher.

14 15

Oxford Reading Level 19: TreeTops Chucklers: *The Fabulous Fantora Files*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

- Stories may still be light-hearted and humorous but more serious subject matter is also tackled (e.g. starting a life in a new country).
- In fiction, thematically driven **real life stories** are common and address deeper thoughts and feelings.
- Stories about relationships (e.g. friendship breakdowns) are common.
- In fiction, adventure/fantasy/alternative reality books are common.
- Familiar concepts are still used; although much of the information presented will be unfamiliar to readers even if they know something about a topic, particularly in non-fiction; concepts include: nature (deadly creatures), school (e.g. struggling at school, wanting to make new friends, being late for school).
- Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are widely used in fiction and non-fiction; for example: history (e.g. ancient civilisations/Mayans, how to build a castle), science (e.g. great scientific discoveries/changing the world), phobias.
- **NEW:** In fiction, more serious storylines bring with them a sense of 'real' peril. Such threats often occur in historical fiction and fiction with an unfamiliar (other world) setting.
- **NEW:** Historical fiction is common with a story being told around a factual event/time from history.

Oxford Reading Level 19: TreeTops inFact: *How to Change the World*

Themes

Overview:

- As well as a main theme, sub-themes are regularly explored (and often revolve around emotional issues in fiction).
- Examples of themes include:

Action & adventure	Conflict & decision-making	Relationship & emotion
Righting wrongs Saving the day	Good deeds overcoming bad **NEW:** Explicit moral themes (e.g. recycling, misbehaving)	Self-doubt and self-belief **NEW:** Reflection (e.g. story of a refugee)

Plot and structure

Fiction:

- **Flashbacks** may be used.
- Stories may have open endings.
- There may be several key events within one story.
- There can be some plot twists.
- The story should make sense without the need for images.
- Texts continue to ask more of the reader: more complex reflection and inference skills are needed (e.g. when the reader has to infer something from the way a character behaves).
- Texts may pose moral questions about right and wrong and where lines are blurred (e.g. the historic rights and wrongs of whale hunting).
- Stories may have sad endings.
- First person narrative is widely used.
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- Passages of time are used widely (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Simultaneous action may be used (i.e. in one book, different characters can be doing different things in different places at the same time).
- Other characters' perspectives/different points of view may be shown within a book (e.g. a villain's perspective).
- A 'story-within-a-story' may be told.
- **NEW:** Stories can begin **in medias res**.
- **NEW:** **Linear** and **non-linear narratives** may be used.

Non-fiction:

- The text in the book should now convey all the meaning and the concepts, although the images will still support the text.
- Texts are asking more of the reader, i.e. they are regularly posing open, reflective questions, when there is not necessarily a clear-cut answer (e.g. What's your verdict on A versus B? What do you think?).
- Layouts may vary throughout the book.
- Contents pages, glossaries, and indexes are used in all non-fiction.
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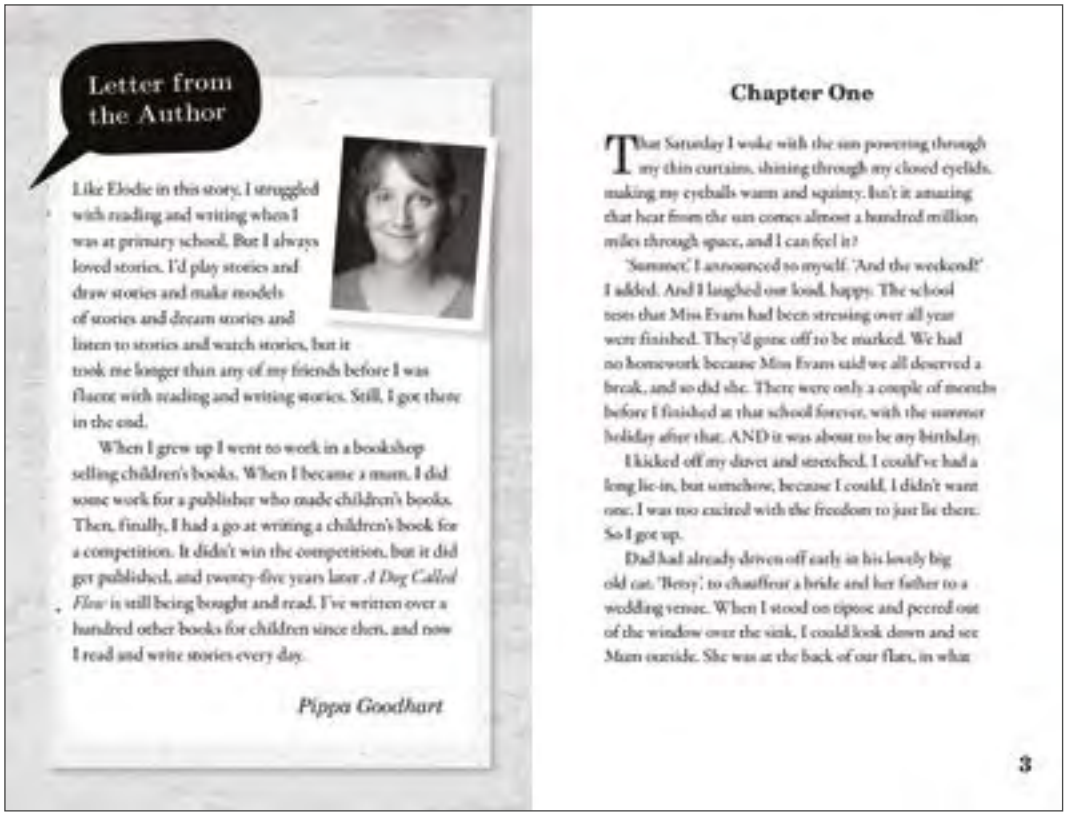

Letter from the Author

Like Elodie in this story, I struggled with reading and writing when I was at primary school. But I always loved stories. I'd play stories and draw stories and make models of stories and dream stories and listen to stories and watch stories, but it took me longer than any of my friends before I was fluent with reading and writing stories. Still, I got there in the end.

When I grew up I went to work in a bookshop selling children's books. When I became a mum, I did some work for a publisher who made children's books. Then, finally, I had a go at writing a children's book for a competition. It didn't win the competition, but it did get published, and twenty-five years later *A Dog Called Flea* is still being bought and read. I've written over a hundred other books for children since then, and now I read and write stories every day.

Pippa Goodhart

Chapter One

That Saturday I woke with the sun powering through my thin curtains, shining through my closed eyelids, making my eyeballs warm and squirmy. Isn't it amazing that heat from the sun comes almost a hundred million miles through space, and I can feel it?

'Summer,' I announced to myself. 'And the weekend!' I added. And I laughed out loud, happy. The school tests that Miss Evans had been stressing over all year were finished. They'd gone off to be marked. We had no homework because Miss Evans said we all deserved a break, and so did she. There were only a couple of months before I finished at that school forever, with the summer holiday after that. AND it was about to be my birthday.

I kicked off my duvet and stretched. I could've had a long lie-in, but somehow, because I could, I didn't want one. I was too excited with the freedom to just lie there. So I got up.

Dad had already driven off early in his lovely big old car, 'Betsy', to chauffeur a bride and her father to a wedding venue. When I stood on tiptoe and peered out of the window over the sink, I could look down and see Mum outside. She was at the back of our flats, in what

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Oxford Reading Level 19: TreeTops Reflect: *The Ups and Downs of Elodie Taylor*

Plot/book devices

- **Prologues** and **epilogues** may be used.
- Story/plot recaps are used (e.g. 'Previously ...'), where there is a broader story arc.
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- Cliffhangers may be used at the end of chapters.
- Emails and other forms of communication to friends/relatives may be used.
- Passages of time are used regularly (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Flashbacks may be used.
- Dramatic statements like 'STOP READING NOW!' are occasionally used (e.g. in humorous stories), designed to get you to do the opposite, or 'NO ENTRY!' (e.g. in dramatic stories), designed to increase tension.

Setting

- In fiction, the settings range from very everyday, familiar settings to settings in different countries and even different worlds.
- Characters can have adventures in far-flung places.
- Two different stories may be set in the same location.
- Settings may be within different points in time (past/present/future).
- A new chapter may be used to signal a change in setting.
- Non-fiction can look at a range of different locations/countries within the same book.

Character/s

- In fiction, stories can feature up to five main characters, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Project X with Max, Cat, Ant, and Tiger) although many stories tend to still focus on one main **protagonist**.
- Characters can split up and have simultaneous adventures in the same book.
- **Antagonists** may include: villains and their sidekicks, conflict antagonists, environmental forces, inner conflict, technology, authoritarian powers, and the supernatural.
- Internal monologue and self-reflection may be used.
- Readers might find out information/come to realizations (e.g. to do with plot) that the characters can't see/aren't aware of.
- Characters might say one thing but mean another.
- **NEW:** Child characters may take on more (adult) responsibility (often in classic or historical texts).
- **NEW:** The sense of peril may now seem very 'real' for characters (e.g. being chased by a wild animal), although this is handled sensitively.

Dialogue

- Dialogue is now extensively used in fiction.
- Depending on word count, up to four different characters may be speaking per page.
- Speech tags can include some interesting verbs and expressive adverbs/adjectives at the end (e.g. 'This ordinary,' replied Queequeg in his flat, unexcitable voice.).
- There may occasionally be a line of speech where some inference is needed to work out who is talking.
- Characters may cut in before another character has finished speaking.
- **NEW:** Accent/dialect is occasionally emphasized through the spelling of some words used in **direct speech** (e.g. 'What d'yer want wi' that dusty old thing?').

Oxford Reading Level 20

Oxford Reading Level 20

What students can do

Word reading

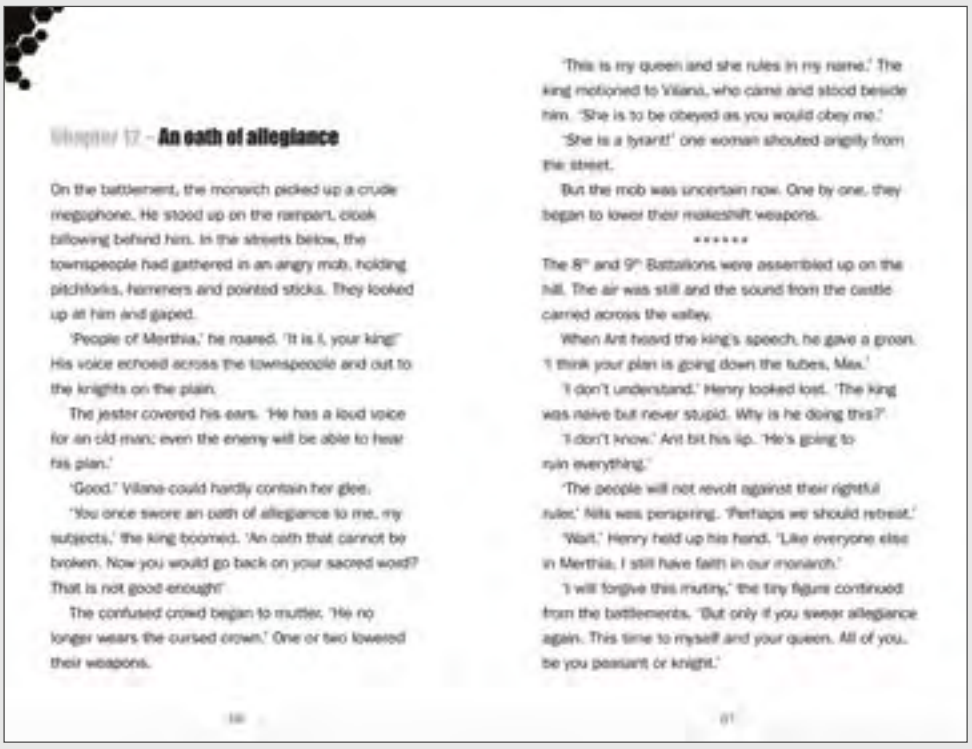
Students can read level-appropriate texts with complete fluency and independence. They can read aloud fluently, with appropriate expression and intonation, taking into account a wide range of punctuation. They consistently use knowledge of word structure and the meanings of similar words, as well as phonics, to help them read and work out the meanings of new or unfamiliar words. They can read several chapters independently at a sitting, picking up from where they left off with good recall of key features and relevant details.

Comprehension

Students can quote confidently from a text to support their ideas about it. They understand that a text may have different layers of meaning, e.g. that there may be a theme or underlying idea which is not superficially obvious. They are sometimes able to identify and describe these underlying layers, referring to the text when needed. They use inference effectively to identify key themes and ideas, drawing on information from across a text and quoting appropriately. They can also use inference to help them bring together ideas and information from more than one text (especially in non-fiction). Students are increasingly able to evaluate the quality and usefulness of a text. They contribute effectively to discussions about books they have read, listening to and responding to others' ideas, using quotes from a text to support their reasoning.

Key challenges

Key challenges for students include: continuing to develop as confident and sophisticated readers; explaining their views by referring to/quoting from the text; contributing effectively to discussions and giving a reasoned critical response.



Chapter 17 – **An oath of allegiance**

On the battlement, the monarch picked up a crude megaphone. He stood up on the rampart, cloak billowing behind him. In the streets below, the townspeople had gathered in an angry mob, holding pitchforks, hammers and pointed sticks. They looked up at him and gaped.

'People of Merthia,' he roared. 'It is I, your king!' His voice echoed across the townspeople and out to the knights on the plain.

The jester covered his ears. 'He has a loud voice for an old man; even the enemy will be able to hear his plan.'

'Good.' Vilana could hardly contain her glee.

'You once swore an oath of allegiance to me, my subjects,' the king boomed. 'An oath that cannot be broken. Now you would go back on your sacred word? That is not good enough!'

The confused crowd began to mutter. 'He no longer wears the cursed crown.' One or two lowered their weapons.

'This is my queen and she rules in my name.' The king motioned to Vilana, who came and stood beside him. 'She is to be obeyed as you would obey me.'

'She is a tyrant!' one woman shouted angrily from the street.

But the mob was uncertain now. One by one, they began to lower their makeshift weapons.

******

The 8th and 9th Battalions were assembled up on the hill. The air was still and the sound from the castle carried across the valley.

When Ant heard the king's speech, he gave a groan. 'I think your plan is going down the tubes, Max.'

'I don't understand.' Henry looked lost. 'The king was naive but never stupid. Why is he doing this?'

'I don't know.' Ant bit his lip. 'He's going to ruin everything.'

'The people will not revolt against their rightful ruler.' Nils was perspiring. 'Perhaps we should retreat.'

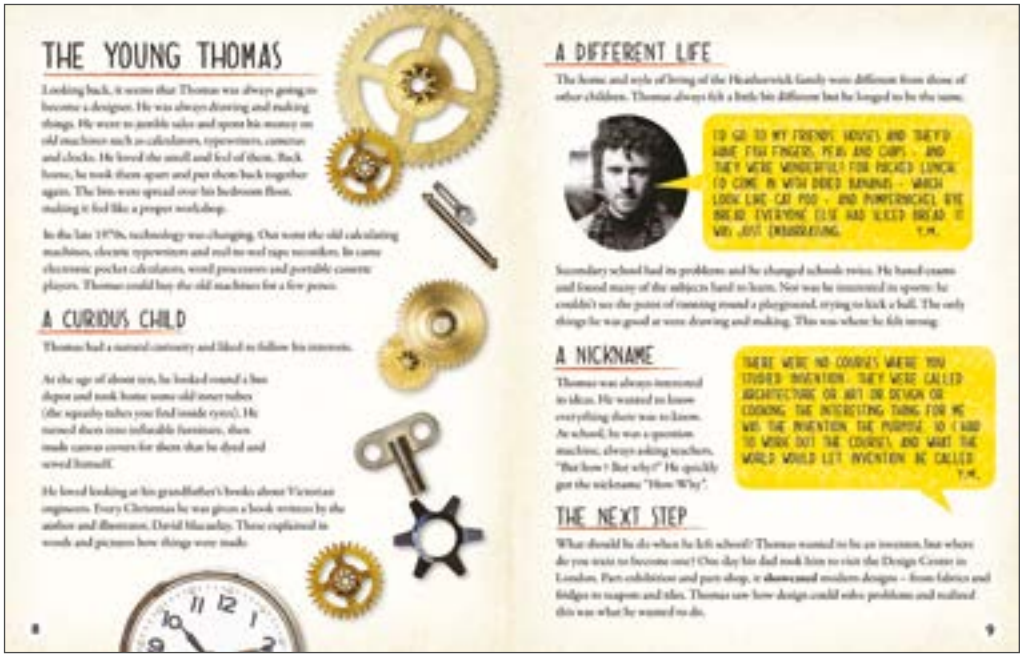
'Wait.' Henry held up his hand. 'Like everyone else in Merthia, I still have faith in our monarch.'

'I will forgive this mutiny,' the tiny figure continued from the battlements. 'But only if you swear allegiance again. This time to myself and your queen. All of you, be you peasant or knight.'

Oxford Reading Level 20: Project X Alien Adventures: *The 9th Battalion*

Vocabulary

- Texts give opportunities to read polysyllabic words and words with a wide range of word endings, prefixes, and suffixes.
- Vocabulary includes a broad range of words, with a higher proportion of new/interest or ambitious words.
- Pronunciation devices to break down hard vocabulary may be used (e.g. for a place like Popocatepetl (say: *po-po-kat-a-pe-tal*)).
- In fiction, footnotes may be used to define more unusual, unfamiliar, or archaic vocabulary (e.g. *bate* (angry); *skeins* (ball of yarn); *vittles* (food)).
- Richer language is extensively used in fiction, such as: **alliteration** (e.g. *Moving in marches* ...), **similes** (e.g. *The whole universe seemed to explode around them, breaking into multi-coloured shards like a stained-glass window smashed with a brick.*), **metaphors** (e.g. *Darker than the inside of a black sock that's been swallowed by a large bat who lives in a cave with very thick curtains.*), and **personification** to create vivid **imagery** (e.g. 'The sea,' explained Lily. 'It looks so innocent, as if it's saying that it doesn't know anything about last night. It was tucked up in bed with a book and a hot drink.'). **Onomatopoeia** may be used (e.g. *POOM!*) although it is used less frequently used at this level.
- Longer, detailed descriptions create vivid **imagery** and are extensively used to help construct a **sense of place**, increase tension in the plot, or convey how a character is feeling.
- Ambitious **verbs** are extensively used to increase complexity and make actions more descriptive and interesting (e.g. *When they talked about it afterwards, they weren't sure why Molly lunged forward the way she did. Lily caught sight of a rabbit running away and* ...).
- **Adverbs** and **adjectives** may be used to add complexity and interest (e.g. *the dog sat down obediently* ...).
- **Idioms**/expressions are occasionally used (e.g. *runs like a dream*).
- Sentence openers like 'Just then,' and 'Suddenly,' are used to indicate and increase tension or drama within the narrative.
- Some words or phrases may be italicized for added emphasis (e.g. 'That's *amazing*!' she said.)
- **Rhetorical questions** may be used (e.g. 'Looks a bit creepy up close, doesn't it?' Tiger said eventually, breaking the silence.).
- Brackets may be used for parentheses to add extra details (e.g. *The conservatory had its limitations as a jungle, the hunt for assegais proved interesting only to a certain point (assegais were unwieldy weapons and prone to bite the hand that fed them)* ...), or as narrative interjections for additional information and humour (e.g. *After a long career spreading peace throughout the universe (and only very occasionally bringing it to the brink of all-out war), he became a cake historian – or arcakeologist).*



THE YOUNG THOMAS

A CURIOUS CHILD

A DIFFERENT LIFE

A NICKNAME

THE NEXT STEP

Oxford Reading Level 20: TreeTops inFact: *Thomas Heatherwick*

Sentence structure

- On average, there are 12 words per sentence in fiction books and 16 words per sentence in non-fiction books (although non-fiction books tend to have fewer sentences per page).
- The majority of sentences are single clause (simple) sentences.
- **Multi-clause (compound, complex) sentences** are used regularly.
- Generally, the past tense is more common than the present tense in both fiction and non-fiction.

Common sentence structure patterns used:

- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences where two clauses are connected by a relative clause** (e.g. *The mouse, which had escaped from the trap the night before, was back.*).
- Multi-clause (compound) sentences where two main clauses are joined by a **coordinating conjunction** (e.g. *Because it hovers above the track, the train gives a smoother ride and is unaffected by the bad weather.*).
- **Multi-clause (complex) sentences with one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses,** joined together by a **subordinating conjunction** (e.g. *Dora must have frightened the beetles, because they were pretending to be seeds again.*).
- **Fronted adverbials** (e.g. *With a cry of fear, Tiger concentrated the beam towards the creature's eyes, temporarily blinding it.*).
- **Subject-verb** (e.g. 'You're limping.').
- **Subject-verb-adverbial** (e.g. 'I agree entirely!').
- **Subject-verb-object** (e.g. *Steve and Carol looked expectantly at him.*).
- **Subject-verb-subject complement** (e.g. *The workshop makes a prototype shelf for the kiosk.*).

Chapter 4

Galactic evilness

The spangly black Vespidrillion battleship glittered against the spangly black backdrop of space. On its bridge, Gloth – the dark lord of the Vespidrillion Empire – stared out into the universe.

'Soon,' he growled, 'all of this will be mine. Every creature on every planet will kneel before me and the might of my Vespidrillion battlefleet. We shall ride to supreme power on a tide of war and destruction. The tears of the conquered will flow like rivers into a swamp of misery ...' Gloth stopped and thought for a moment. 'Into a sea of misery? Yes, that sounds better.' He cleared his throat and started again. 'The tears of the conquered will flow like rivers into a sea of—'

Before he could finish, the door swooshed open and Vlort – his second-in-command – marched into the room.

'Your Galactic Evilness,' said Vlort, bowing his head and giving the Vespidrillion salute, which involved sticking two fingers up your nose and making a squeaking noise.

'How many times have I told you? Don't interrupt me when I'm doing The Speech!' snapped Gloth.

'What speech?' asked Vlort.

54

'You know perfectly well what speech,' said Gloth. 'The one about how every creature on every planet is going to kneel before me and the tears of the conquered will flow like rivers into—'

'A swamp of misery, yes,' said Vlort. 'I've been thinking about that and I've had an idea. Why not call it a *sea* of misery instead? I mean, after all, rivers flow into seas, don't they?'

'That's what I was *just about* to do!' said Gloth. 'Only you came barging in so I didn't have a chance.'

'There's no need to be like that – I was only trying to help,' sniffed Vlort.

'I know,' said Gloth. 'I'm sorry.'

'Well, carry on with your speech then,' said Vlort coldly, folding his arms. 'Don't mind me.'

Gloth shook his head and tried to get back into the right mood, but it was no good.

'What's the matter now?' asked Vlort.

'I've lost my place, haven't I?' said Gloth. 'Thanks a bunch! It was all going brilliantly. I had us riding to supreme power on a tide of war and destruction and now I can't remember where the swamp of misery bit goes.'

'*Sea* of misery,' corrected Vlort.

Gloth glowered at him.

'Well, now you've stopped,' said Vlort, changing the

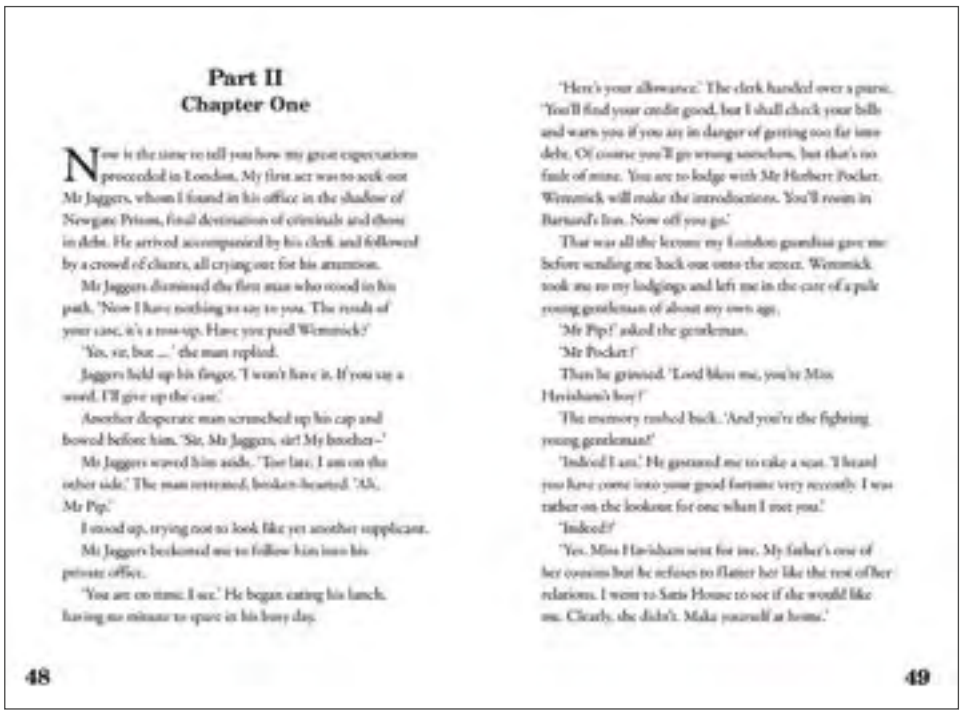
55

Oxford Reading Level 20: TreeTops Chucklers: *Space Mistakes*

NOTE: For further detail on types of sentence structure, **see Glossary**.

Subject matter

- Stories may still be light-hearted and humorous but more serious subject matter is also tackled (e.g. the threat of invasion).
- In fiction, more serious storylines bring with them a sense of 'real' peril. Such threats often occur in historical fiction and fiction with an unfamiliar (other world) setting.
- In fiction, thematically driven **real life stories** are common and address deeper thoughts and feelings.
- Historical fiction is common with a story being told around a factual event/time from history.
- Stories about relationships (e.g. friendship breakdowns) are common.
- In fiction, adventure/fantasy/alternative reality books are common.
- Familiar concepts are still used; although much of the information presented will be unfamiliar to readers even if they know something about a topic, particularly in non-fiction; for example: environmental issues.
- Unfamiliar topics, outside the range of students' everyday life experience, are widely used in fiction and non-fiction; for example: biographies (e.g. Alexander Selkirk, Thomas Heatherwick); environmental issues (e.g. global warming, energy generation); the future (e.g. future technology/cities/holidays).



Part II
Chapter One

Now is the time to tell you how my great expectations proceeded in London. My first act was to seek out Mr Jaggers, whom I found in his office in the shadow of Newgate Prison, final destination of criminals and those in debt. He arrived accompanied by his clerk and followed by a crowd of clients, all crying out for his attention.

Mr Jaggers dismissed the first man who stood in his path. 'Now I have nothing to say to you. The result of your case, it's a toss-up. Have you paid Wemmick?'

'Yes, sir, but ...' the man replied.

Jaggers held up his finger. 'I won't have it. If you say a word, I'll give up the case.'

Another desperate man scrunched up his cap and bowed before him. 'Sir, Mr Jaggers, sir! My brother–'

Mr Jaggers waved him aside. 'Too late. I am on the other side.' The man retreated, broken-hearted. 'Ah, Mr Pip.'

I stood up, trying not to look like yet another supplicant.

Mr Jaggers beckoned me to follow him into his private office.

'You are on time. I see.' He began eating his lunch, having no minute to spare in his busy day.

'Here's your allowance.' The clerk handed over a purse. 'You'll find your credit good, but I shall check your bills and warn you if you are in danger of getting too far into debt. Of course you'll go wrong somehow, but that's no fault of mine. You are to lodge with Mr Herbert Pocket. Wemmick will make the introductions. You'll room in Barnard's Inn. Now off you go.'

That was all the lecture my London guardian gave me. Before sending me back out onto the street, Wemmick took me to my lodgings and left me in the care of a pale young gentleman of about my own age.

'Mr Pip?' asked the gentleman.

'Mr Pocket?'

Then he grinned. 'Lord bless me, you're Miss Havisham's boy!'

The memory rushed back. 'And you're the fighting young gentleman!'

'Indeed I am.' He gestured me to take a seat. 'I heard you have come into your good fortune very recently. I was rather on the lookout for one when I met you.'

'Indeed?'

'Yes. Miss Havisham sent for me. My father's one of her cousins but he refuses to flatter her like the rest of her relations. I went to Satis House to see if she would like me. Clearly, she didn't. Make yourself at home.'

48 49

Oxford Reading Level 20: TreeTops Greatest Stories: *Great Expectations*

Themes

Overview:

- As well as a main theme, sub-themes are regularly explored (and often revolve around emotional issues in fiction).
- Examples of themes include:

Action & adventure	Conflict & decision-making	Relationship & emotion
Escapes and rescues Saving the day Saving a/the planet	Secrets/the weight of keeping secrets **NEW:** Environmental themes/the impact of human behaviour (e.g. on our planet)	Perseverance/overcoming adversity **NEW:** Death (feelings/emotions around death), although this is handled sensitively and may be tackled in a historical context.

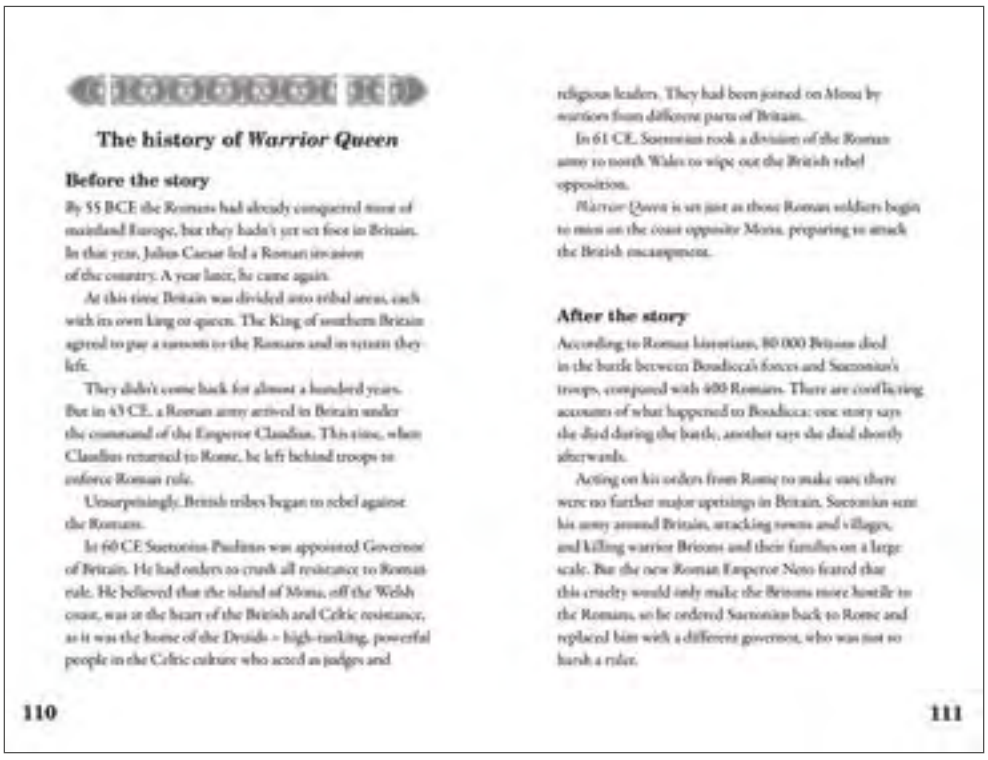
Plot and structure

Fiction:

- **Linear** and **non-linear narratives** may be used.
- **Flashbacks** may be used.
- Stories can begin **in medias res**.
- Stories may have open endings.
- There may be several key events within one story.
- There can be plot twists.
- The story should make sense without the need for images.
- Texts continue to ask more of the reader: more complex reflection and inference skills are needed (e.g. when the reader has to infer something from the way a character behaves).
- Texts may pose moral questions about right and wrong and where lines are blurred (e.g. the morality of revenge).
- Stories may have sad endings.
- First person narrative is widely used.
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- Passages of time are used widely (e.g. 'Later that day').
- Simultaneous action may be used (i.e. in one book, different characters can be doing different things in different places at the same time).
- Other characters' perspectives/different points of view may be shown within a book (e.g. a villain's perspective).
- A 'story-within-a-story' may be told.

Non-fiction:

- The text in the book should now convey all the meaning and the concepts, although the images will still support the text.
- Texts are asking more of the reader, i.e. they are regularly posing open, reflective questions, when there is not necessarily a clear-cut answer (e.g. What's your verdict on A versus B? What do you think?).
- Layouts may vary throughout the book.
- Contents pages, glossaries, and indexes are used in all non-fiction.
- Several non-fiction features can be used on a single page and may include: quiz boxes or pages, comparison charts/diagrams, recipes, tips, cross sections (e.g. for buildings), timelines, family trees, dials as measures, stylized fact boxes/files, comic strips/pages.
- **NEW:** Where an important figure is the subject of a non-fiction book, more than one angle is covered (e.g. the text will look at aspects of their personal life as well as their professional achievements).



The history of *Warrior Queen*

Before the story

By 55 BCE the Romans had already conquered most of mainland Europe, but they hadn't yet set foot in Britain. In that year, Julius Caesar led a Roman invasion of the country. A year later, he came again.

At this time Britain was divided into tribal areas, each with its own king or queen. The King of southern Britain agreed to pay a ransom to the Romans and in return they left.

They didn't come back for almost a hundred years. But in 43 CE, a Roman army arrived in Britain under the command of the Emperor Claudius. This time, when Claudius returned to Rome, he left behind troops to enforce Roman rule.

Unsurprisingly, British tribes began to rebel against the Romans.

In 60 CE Suetonius Paulinus was appointed Governor of Britain. He had orders to crush all resistance to Roman rule. He believed that the island of Mona, off the Welsh coast, was at the heart of the British and Celtic resistance, as it was the home of the Druids – high-ranking, powerful people in the Celtic culture who acted as judges and religious leaders. They had been joined on Mona by warriors from different parts of Britain.

In 61 CE, Suetonius took a division of the Roman army to north Wales to wipe out the British rebel opposition.

Warrior Queen is set just as those Roman soldiers begin to move on the coast opposite Mona, preparing to attack the British encampment.

After the story

According to Roman historians, 80 000 Britons died in the battle between Boudicca's forces and Suetonius's troops, compared with 400 Romans. There are conflicting accounts of what happened to Boudicca: one story says she died during the battle, another says she died shortly afterwards.

Acting on his orders from Rome to make sure there were no further major uprisings in Britain, Suetonius sent his army around Britain, attacking towns and villages, and killing warrior Britons and their families on a large scale. But the new Roman Emperor Nero feared that this cruelty would only make the Britons more hostile to the Romans, so he ordered Suetonius back to Rome and replaced him with a different governor, who was not so harsh a ruler.

110 111

Oxford Reading Level 20: TreeTops Reflect: *Warrior Queen*

Plot/book devices

- **Prologues** and **epilogues** may be used in fiction.
- Story/plot recaps are used (e.g. 'Previously ...'), where there is a broader story arc.
- Recounts and diary entries may be used.
- Cliffhangers may be used at the end of chapters.
- Emails and other forms of communication to friends/relatives may be used.
- Passages of time are used regularly (e.g. 'Later that day' etc.).
- Flashbacks may be used.
- **NEW: Afterwords** may be used in fiction.

Setting

- In fiction, the settings range from very everyday, familiar settings to settings in different countries and even different worlds.
- Characters can have adventures in far-flung places.
- Two different stories may be set in the same location.
- Settings may be within different points in time (past/present/future).
- A new chapter may be used to signal a change in setting.
- Non-fiction can look at a range of different locations/countries within the same book.
- **NEW:** In fiction, real life settings may be described in a non-fiction section at the back of a book.

Character/s

- In fiction, stories can feature up to five main characters, particularly where there are recurring characters (e.g. in Project X with Max, Cat, Ant, and Tiger) although many stories tend to still focus on one main **protagonist**.
- Characters can split up and have simultaneous adventures in the same book.
- **Antagonists** may include: villains and their sidekicks, conflict antagonists, environmental forces, inner conflict, technology, authoritarian powers, and the supernatural.
- Internal monologue and self-reflection may be used.
- Readers might find out information/come to realizations (e.g. to do with plot) that the characters can't see/aren't aware of.
- Characters might say one thing but mean another.
- Child characters may take on more (adult) responsibility (often in classic or historical texts).
- The sense of peril can now seem very 'real' for characters (e.g. being chased by a wild animal), although this is handled sensitively.

Dialogue

- Dialogue is now extensively used in fiction.
- Speech tags can include some interesting verbs and expressive adverbs/adjectives at the end (e.g. 'Tiger, get out of there!' Cat screamed, staggering towards him.).
- There may occasionally be a line of speech where some inference is needed to work out who is talking.
- Characters may cut in before another character has finished speaking.
- Accent/dialect is occasionally emphasized through the spelling of some words used in **direct speech** (e.g. 'She'll prob'ly never notice what we're doin'.').
- **NEW:** Depending on word count, more than four different characters may be speaking per page (but there are usually fewer).

Appendices

Appendix 1

Oxford Reading Levels and different reading series

This chart illustrates how the Oxford Reading Levels system supports many different series from Oxford University Press from Foundation/Kindergarten to Year 6.

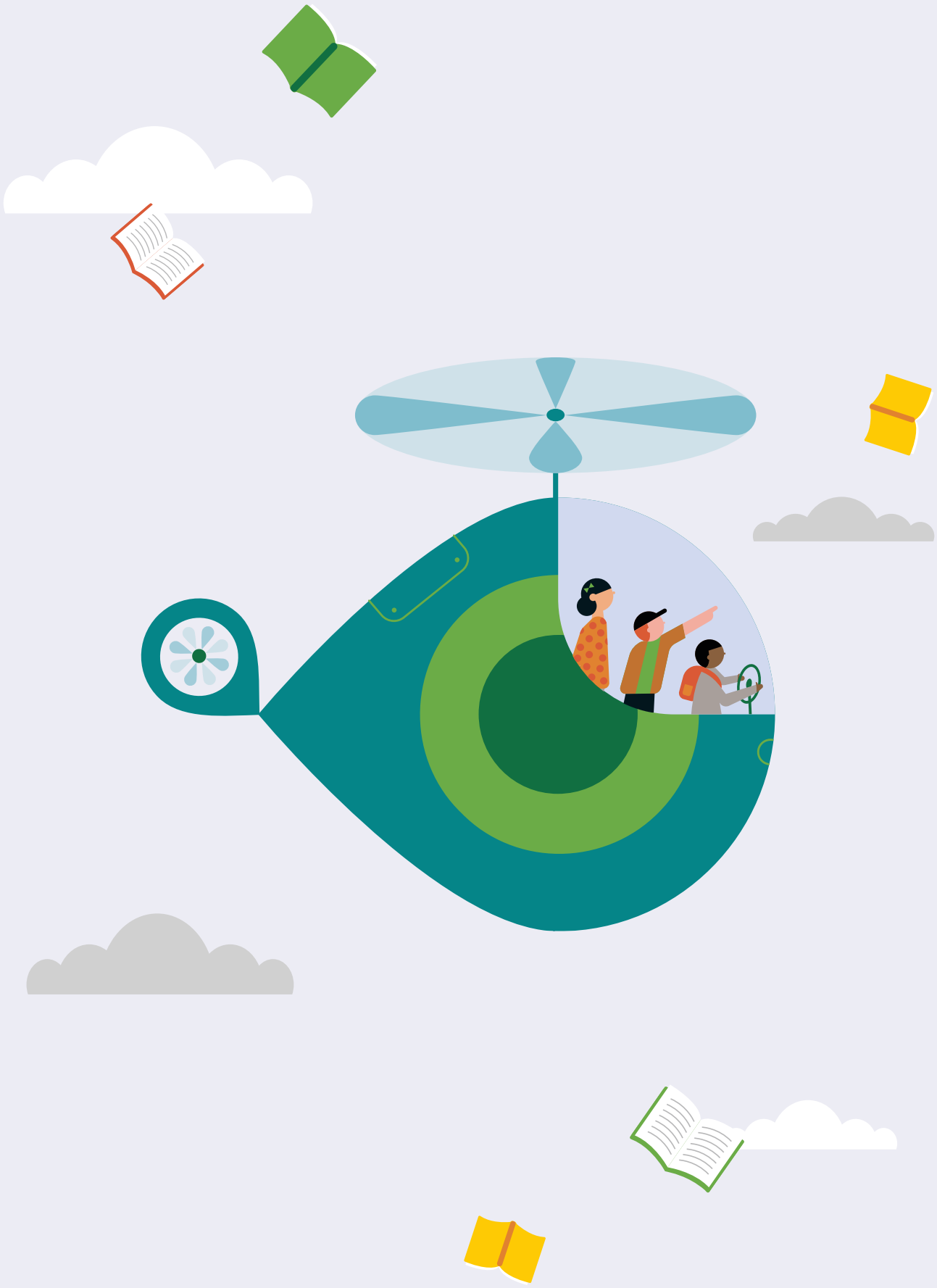
Lower Primary

Oxford Reading Levels	Fully decodable series		Phonically-based series	Richer Reading series
	Matched to Letters and Sounds (2007)	Matched to Floppy's Phonics Teaching Program		
1–6	• Little Blending Books • Oxford Reading For Comprehension Decodables • Project X: – Alien Adventures – Hero Academy – fiction and non-fiction • Oxford Reading Tree: Traditional Tales	• Floppy's Phonics Fiction • Oxford Reading Tree: Traditional Tales	• Project X Origins • Oxford Reading Tree: Decode and Develop	• Oxford Reading for Comprehension • Oxford Reading Tree: Biff, Chip and Kipper Stories
7–12	• Oxford Reading For Comprehension Decodables (Levels 7–9) • Project X: – Alien Adventures – Hero Academy – fiction and non-fiction • Oxford Reading Tree: Traditional Tales (Levels 7–9)	• Oxford Reading Tree: Traditional Tales (Levels 7–9)		• Oxford Reading for Comprehension (Levels 7–11)

Middle and Upper Primary

Oxford Reading Levels	Oxford Reading for Comprehension	Project X	TreeTops
8–20	Levels 8–11	• Origins • Origins Graphic Texts • Alien Adventures	• Chucklers • Fiction

1. Read Write Inc. (RWI) has its own unique and carefully structured progression and is not levelled using Oxford Reading Levels.
2. The books in these series are 'phonically-based' which means they align with the Letters and Sounds (2007) Phases but also include some additional, non-decodable story or information words ('taught context words') that may need to be taught to students before reading, particularly where schools are following a strict systematic synthetic phonics approach.



Appendix 2

Comprehension question stems

The question stems below can be used to help generate questions for comprehension conversations. This is not an exhaustive list!

Comprehension Skill	Additional question stems
Finding information	**Question stems for fiction:** • Where/when does the story take place? • What did he/she/they/it look like? • Who was ...? • Can you name the ...? • Who was the character that ...? • Show me where in the text you found ... • Read/write down the part that tells the reader about ... • What happened before/after ...? • Find one/two things that the main character did. • Does the setting remind you of a setting you know from another story/poem? **Question stems for non-fiction:** • Where can you find an important piece of information about ...? • Find two pieces of information that tell you about ... • What does this part of the text tell us about ...? • Would it be true/false to say ...? • Show me where in the text you found ...
Making connections and inferences	**Question stems for fiction:** • How did ... feel? • Why did ... feel/think ...? • How did his/her/their feelings change? How do we know? • Have you ever had a similar experience? How did you feel? • Who do you know who is like ...? • What happened in this part of the story? What might this mean? • What do you think will happen because of ...? • What do you think might happen next? What makes you think that? • What do we know about this character ...? • How might the ending have changed if ...? • What evidence do you have? Justify your answer. • Why was ... important in this story/play? • How did the characters help each other in this story/play? • How did one of the characters change their ideas/attitudes? **Question stems for non-fiction:** • Can you explain why ...? • How do you know that this text is trying to tell you more about ...? • How do you feel about this topic? Why? • What do you think about/is your opinion of ...? Can you support your view? • What are the important points the author is trying to get across? • Which do you think are the most important issues and why?
Understanding vocabulary	**Question stems for fiction:** • What does/do this/these words tell you about ...? (character/setting etc.) • Do you notice anything special or unusual about the words the poet/author has used here? • Which words/images in particular remind you of ...? • How did the story make you feel? Why did it make you feel like this? • Find words or phrases that show us that this character is helpful/adventurous/worried etc.

Comprehension Skill	Additional question stems
Understanding vocabulary *continued*	**Question stems for non-fiction:** • What do these words tell you about ...? • Which word(s)/phrases/types of sentences are used well in this text ...? • Which words/points do you think are the strongest/most powerful in persuading the reader to ...? • Why do you think the writer chose to use the word(s)/phrase(s)?
Using structure and organization to make meaning	**Question stems for fiction:** • Which part of the story best describes the setting/characters/action? Which words and/or phrases do this? • What do you think this story is trying to tell us? • How does this make the reader want to read on? • Do you know of any other texts with similar issues or themes? • How does the layout of this play help actors to read and perform the play? **Question stems for non-fiction:** • Which advert/text would most persuade you to buy/take part in ...? Why? • How does the diagram/caption etc. help you understand the information on this page? • What would be a good heading for this section? Why? • How do headings help you when you scan a text? • If you wanted to find out about ... how could you do it? • How does this text layout help the reader? • What is the purpose of the list/diagram/caption/subheadings in this text? • Which illustrations/instructions/texts are the easiest to follow? Why? • How could you adapt this ... for older/younger students? • What are the main ideas in this paragraph and how are they related? • Which idea in this paragraph is linked to an idea in the next paragraph?
Understanding and appreciating the author's toolkit	**Question stems for fiction:** • How has the author used words/phrases to make this character funny/sad/adventurous/clever/frightening/excited/disappointed etc.? • How has the author started this in an interesting way? • Why does the author begin a new paragraph here? • How does the author link these paragraphs together? • How does the author link this chapter to the next/previous one? • Why are brackets used in this text? • How does the punctuation help you as the reader of this text? • Can you find any repeated patterns in this poem? • How do longer and stronger sentences change the pace of the story? • What do these two stories/poems have in common? **Question stems for non-fiction:** • Is this writer an expert on ...? How do you know? • Find something that is the author's opinion, not a fact. • What does the writer think about ... in this part of the text? • Which information/facts does the writer include to make you believe that ...? • Why do you think the writer produced this article/leaflet/flyer/brochure etc.? • Why are particular words/sections within a text in bold/italics/larger print? • Why has the author used bullet points/numbers in this text? • What is the same about these two texts and what is different? • How does the writer try to persuade you to ...? • The writer says ... Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Appendix 3

Word class: verbs

The word clouds below show examples of the most frequently used speech and action verbs across all of our levels.

Speech verbs

said
asked
sighed
replied
called
cried
laughed
muttered
snapped
growled
smiled
shrieked
yelled
screamed
shouted
began
groaned
grinned
sneered
agreed
gasped
explained
whimpered
thought

Action verbs

run
breathe
dance
chase
hop
swim
bounce
creep
fight
stomp
catch
play
swoop
whirl
fly
strike
crawl
climb
squeeze
hurry
fall
twirl
race
tumble
escape
scramble
kick
jump
struggle
throw

Word class: adjectives, adverbs, and nouns

The chart below shows the most common adjectives, adverbs, and nouns used across all levels.

ADJECTIVES		ADVERBS		NOUNS[3]	
Fiction	**Non-fiction**	**Fiction**	**Non-fiction**	**Fiction**	**Non-fiction**
good	different	too	not	time	people
little	other	back	very	man	year
big	big	not	so	day	world
next	many	then	then	way	animal
last	new	now	also	head	time
other	first	just	too	friend	water
old	more	so	just	eye	day
new	good	very	now	thing	food
more	small	away	even	door	lot
long	long	here	only	child	thing
great	most	again	sometimes	dog	plant
red	such	up	back	hand	way
magic	best	down	away	something	dog
first	hot	suddenly	more	everyone	earth
sure	old	even	long	people	moon
happy	special	fast	here	home	castle
bad	little	quick	well	king	city
best	red	ill	often	boy	egg
own	famous	still	most	house	fish
hot	healthy	long	up	school	ice
terrible	huge	well	along	bed	insect
wet	human	as	ago	fish	leg

3. The list of nouns excludes character names.

Glossary

General

afterword	A short concluding section in a book written by the author or another contributor that offers additional commentary or information about the text (e.g. about the cultural or historic context). Also see *epilogue*.
alliteration	When the same letter or sound (typically consonants) is repeated for special effect (e.g. *Peter Piper Picked a Peck of Pickled Peppers*).
antagonist	A person who actively opposes or is hostile to someone or something; an adversary. Also see *protagonist*. Antagonists in literature can include: • villains, i.e. the traditional 'baddie' • conflict antagonists, i.e. people who come into conflict with the protagonist for whatever reason (e.g. flawed characters, people who seem bad but may not be, a friend who betrays the protagonist or makes a bad choice) • environmental forces (e.g. the setting such as 'a desert'; nature such as 'a storm') • inner conflict, i.e. the protagonist battling with themself • authoritarian powers (e.g. the 'state', a corrupt organisation) • technology (e.g. a robot) • the supernatural (although this is used with caution in primary reading books).
epilogue	A section at the end of a book or play that serves as a conclusion to what's happened or what might happen (e.g. to tie up loose ends of a plot, reveal the fate of a character or characters, or give a clue of what's to come if the book is part of a series). They are most commonly used in fiction and are set within the context of the narrative.
everyday life stories	Stories which focus on everyday, familiar (easily relatable) situations (e.g. putting on a school play, family squabbles etc.). Also see *real life stories*.
figurative language	Refers to words and phrases that depart from their literal use to create mental images (e.g. use of simile, metaphor, hyperbole, onomatopoeia, etc.).
flashbacks	Scenes set in a time earlier than the main story.
idiom	A group of words established by usage as having a meaning not deducible from those of the individual words (e.g. *over the moon, see the light*).
imagery	Visually descriptive or figurative language, especially in a literary work.
in medias res	Starting a story in the middle of a narrative.
linear narrative	The order of events in a story which happen in a sequential, chronological order.
metaphor	A figure of speech used to describe one thing as if it were something else, i.e. an implied comparison (e.g. *he droned on*). Also see *simile*.
non-linear narrative	A narrative technique in which the storyline is told out of chronological order.
onomatopoeia	The formation of a word from a sound associated with what is named (e.g. *cuckoo*, *sizzle*).
personification	The attribution of a personal nature or human characteristics to something non-human, or the representation of an abstract quality in human form.
prologue	A separate introductory section of a book that sets the scene (e.g. by foreshadowing events to come, or providing information about characters, setting, or plot). They are mainly used in fiction but also may be found in non-fiction.
protagonist	The lead character or one of the major characters (often the hero or heroes).
real life stories	Stories which focus on real life situations, but which are likely to be less familiar (e.g. a cave rescue). Also see *everyday life stories*.
rhetorical questions	A question asked in order to create a dramatic effect or to make a point rather than to get an answer (e.g. *Was there no way out?; I mean, how bad can it be?*).
sense of place	Descriptions which help construct an idea of what a setting is like through sights, smells, sounds, touch, etc. (e.g. *They had been winding through a hot, baked landscape of fields and hills for nearly three days ...*).
simile	A figure of speech used to compare one thing with another thing of a different kind, i.e. an implied comparison using 'like' or 'as' (e.g. *as brave as a lion*).

Word class

adjectives (classifying or non-gradable)	**Classifying adjectives** place people and things into categories or classes, e.g. the **western** hemisphere an **annual** event the **external** walls a **nuclear** weapon **Non-gradable adjectives** are those with meanings which cannot be modified by adverbs, e.g. *the **western** side of the mountain* ***electronic** devices* *a **nuclear** reactor*
adjectives (qualitative or gradable): positive/ absolute	**Qualitative adjectives** describe the qualities of a person or thing, e.g. *a fairly **tall** man* *a very **boring** film* *a really **long** holiday* *an extremely **expensive** car* Most adjectives are **gradable**. This means that their meaning can be modified (made stronger, weaker, or otherwise altered) by placing one or more adverbs in front of them, e.g. an expensive car *a **very** expensive car* *a **fairly** expensive car* *an **extremely** expensive car*
adjectives (qualitative or gradable): comparative	Comparative adjectives are used when two things are being compared, e.g. *fast, **faster*** *small, **smaller*** *quick, **quicker***
adjectives (qualitative or gradable): superlative	Superlative adjectives are used when more than two things are being compared, e.g. *fast, **fastest*** *small, **smallest*** *quick, **quickest***
adverbs	Adverbs are used to modify verbs, adjectives, other adverbs, or whole sentences. Adverbs of **manner**: *She listened **carefully** to what he said.* *It was **strangely** quiet.* Adverbs of **time**: *I'll see you **tomorrow**.* *We had finished the work **earlier**.* Adverbs of **frequency**: ***Sometimes** we have pizza for tea.* *They **often** had arguments.* Adverbs of **degree**: *We **really** tried our best, but the other team was better.* *He felt **extremely** upset.* Adverbs of **place**: *We looked **everywhere**.* *Erica came **downstairs**.*
adverbial (will include both single words and phrases)	An adverbial is an adverb, phrase, or clause that modifies a verb, e.g. *We saw him **recently**.* *We saw him **last night**.* *We saw him **in the evening**.*

Word class *continued*

conjunctions: coordinating	A conjunction links clauses. Some can also link words or phrases. Conjunctions may also be known as connectives. *for* *and* *nor* *but* *or* *yet* *so*
conjunctions: subordinating	A subordinating conjunction introduces a subordinate clause. A subordinate clause is not as important as the main clause. *after*, *although*, *as*, *as if*, *as long as*, *as much as*, *as soon as*, *as though*, *because*, *before*, *by the time*, *even if*, *even though*, *if*, *in order that*, *in case*, *in the event that*, *lest*, *now that*, *once*, *only*, *only if*, *provided that*, *since*, *so*, *supposing*, *that*, *than*, *though*, *till*, *unless*, *until*, *when*, *whenever*, *where*, *whereas*, *wherever*, *whether or not*, *while*
nouns: concrete	A concrete noun is a noun which refers to people and to things that exist physically and can be seen, touched, smelled, heard, or tasted, e.g. *dog, building, coffee, tree, rain, beach, tune.*
nouns: abstract	An abstract noun is a noun which refers to ideas, qualities, and conditions—things that cannot be seen or touched and things which have no physical reality, e.g. *truth, danger, happiness, time, friendship, humour.*
nouns: proper	A proper noun gives the particular name of a specific person, place, or organization. Proper nouns begin with capital letters, e.g. *Oxford University Press, James, Africa.*
nouns: common	A common noun is a noun that refers to people or things in general, e.g. *boy, country, bridge, city, birth, day, happiness.*
nouns: compound	A compound noun is a noun made by combining two words or more, e.g. *blackbird, firefighter, mother-in-law.*
nouns: collective	A collective noun refers to a group of people or animals, e.g. *class, audience, family, pack, crowd, team.*
nouns: countable	A noun that can form a plural and, in the singular, can be used with the indefinite article e.g. *books, a book.*
nouns: uncountable	A noun denoting something that cannot be counted (e.g. a substance or quality), in English usually a noun which lacks a plural in ordinary usage and is not used with the indefinite article, e.g. *china, happiness.*
personal pronouns	Personal pronouns refer to people or things that are already known, e.g. *he, she, they, it.*
relative pronouns	Relative pronouns introduce a clause that gives more information about a noun, e.g. *that* *which* *who* *whom* *whose*
verbs: regular	Verbs are words like *see*, *eat*, *sleep*, *sit*, *give*, *think*, *be*, or *can*. Some of them identify an action. If you can make a word into a past tense, it is a verb. Many English verbs are regular, which means that they form their different tenses according to an established pattern. Such verbs work like this: *laugh, laughs, laughing, laughed.*
verbs: irregular	There are many irregular verbs that don't follow the normal rules, e.g. *be, is, was, been, being* *do, does, did, done, doing.*
verbs: modal	Modal verbs are: *can*, *could*, *will*, *would*, *may*, *might*, *shall*, *should*, *must*, *ought*, *to.*
verbs: irregular past participles	e.g. *bite, bitten* *do, done* *drink, drank* *have, had* *put, put*

Sentences

Sentence by function	
direct speech sentences	Present tense *"That dog bites!" she yells.* *"It is fun," she says.* Past tense *"That dog bit a man!" she yelled.* *"It was lots of fun," she said.*
active voice sentences	Active voice means that a sentence has a subject that acts upon its verb. Present tense *The dog bites the man.* *Elephants love water.* Past tense *The dog bit the man.* *The elephants loved the water.*
passive voice sentences	A sentence is in the passive voice when the subject is acted on by the verb. Present tense *The man is bitten by the dog.* *Water is loved by elephants.* Past tense *The man was bitten by the dog.* *The water was loved by the elephants.*
Sentence by structure	
subject–verb	Present tense *Elephants exist.* *Ben sings.* Past tense *Dinosaurs existed.* *Ben sang*
subject–verb–object	Present tense *Elephants like grass.* *Ben sips water.* Past tense *Dinosaurs ate plants.* *Ben sipped water*
subject–verb–indirect object–direct object	Present tense *Donkeys give children rides.* *Ben takes ted home.* Past tense *Donkeys gave children rides.* *Ben took ted home.*
subject–verb–subject complement	A subject complement is the adjective, noun, or pronoun that follows a linking verb. The following verbs are true linking verbs: any form of *be* (*am, is, are, was, were, has been, are being, might have been*, etc.), *become*, and *seem*. Present tense *Elephants are animals.* *Ben is great.* Past tense *Dinosaurs were clever.* *Ben was hot.*

Sentences *continued*

Sentence by structure	
subject–verb–object–object complement	An object complement is a noun, a pronoun, or an adjective that follows a direct object to rename it or state what it has become, e.g. Present tense *Elephants make children happy.* *Ben chooses Sam as captain.* Past tense *Elephants made children happy.* *Ben chose Sam as captain.*
subject–verb–adverbial	Pattern for a sentence in which the adverbial is essential (more commonly the adverbial is optional). Present tense *Elephants live here.* *Ben is early.* Past tense *Elephants lived here.* *Ben was early.*
subject–verb–object–adverbial	Pattern for a sentence in which the adverbial is essential (more commonly the adverbial is optional). Present tense *Elephants eat grass slowly.* *Ben sings songs loudly.* Past tense *Elephants ate grass slowly.* *Ben sang songs loudly.*
fronted adverbial patterns	An adverbial is a word or phrase which gives more information about a verb or about a clause. An adverbial can be an adverb, a phrase, or a subordinate clause. Adverbials often appear at the end of the sentence, but sometimes they appear at the beginning. These are called fronted adverbials. There is usually a comma after a fronted adverbial. Common adverbs and adverbials: Adverbs of **place**: *above, here, nearby, there, below, backwards* Adverbs of **time**: **when:** *afterwards, finally, later, soon, suddenly, then* **for how long:** *always, briefly, indefinitely, overnight, permanently, temporarily* **how frequently:** *continually, never, occasionally, often, seldom, sometimes* Adverbs of **manner** (commonly formed from adjectives by adding the suffix -ly): *awkwardly, beautifully, cleverly, clumsily, doubtfully, gloomily, slowly, quickly* Adverbs of **cause**: *however, consequently, therefore* e.g. *Over the years, remains of the ship have been found on the ocean floor.*
multi-clause (compound) sentences	Where two or more clauses are joined by a coordinating conjunction (e.g. *She knew the truth, and told me.*).
multi-clause (complex) sentences with a subordinate clause	Where two or more clauses are joined, but where one clause is subordinate to the other, i.e. it cannot exist on its own as it's not a complete sentence. Subordinate clauses often begin with a subordinating conjunction (e.g. *Dora must have frightened the beetles, because they were pretending to be seeds again.*).
multi-clause (complex) sentences with a relative clause	Relative clauses are a type of subordinate clause that give us more information about a noun or help to make it clear which noun we are talking about. They may start with a relative pronoun (e.g. *The film, which was released last year, was a box-office hit; This is the cat that Boxer chased*). The relative pronoun can be left out when it is the object of the clause (e.g. *This is the cat Boxer chased*).

Glossary references have been compiled using definitions from the Oxford Dictionary of English (ODE) and Oxford School Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar Dictionary, OUP 2013.

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