

REALBOOK NEWS

for adults helping children
learn English as a foreign language
or additional language

May and November

distributed free

download Issues from www.realbooks.co.uk

20 Titles all available in the UK

Reading in a Foreign Language - page 3

REALBOOK NEWS BOOK LIST

BOOK selection from Issue 1 to Issue 7 now available from the Editor by Email or post.

Website: www.realbooks.co.uk **email:** opald@clara.net

From the Editor

I continue to get enthusiastic response to REALBOOK NEWS as more and more teachers appear to be looking for suitable books to use with children in the early stages of learning language. Teachers and parents comments on how they used a book are always interesting and provide opportunities to learn new ideas. Please continue to let me know your thoughts and experiences by Fax or Email.

Issue 7, like Issue 6, introduces 20 different titles selected from both big and small Publishers and all can be purchased in the UK. ISBN Numbers are quoted for each book to make ordering easier. This issue also lists some Publishers' Websites for those of you who have Internet and have time to browse. Websites are still a new item and some Publishers have not yet made their own Website pages.

The response to the *Feature Article* Issue 6 **Developing Visual Literacy** was positive. Some readers confessed that they had never thought about the importance of reading pictures - visual decoding. Issue 7 continues to introduce different and challenging styles of illustration. Unless children are exposed to REALBOOKS, they are unlikely to be exposed a range of illustration styles, which is essential if they are to build up visual decoding skills and develop their own imagination and creativity.

The *Feature Article* in this Issue deals with learning to read in a foreign language. Children today, who write in a different script from the roman alphabet, are exposed within their own society to many more adverts and notices in English than the previous generation. Although this may help them in their first stages of reading text, the choice of book is important, as they should be able to read it successfully and so develop positive attitudes to reading. *I can read it* rather than *I can't*. With this in mind REALBOOK NEWS selection is classified into 3 levels to meet Young Learner's developing foreign language reading skills.

. Beginners 1a Post Beginners 1b Early Readers 2 Reference- Level 2

Issue 7 includes several picture books illustrating well-known songs. Unfortunately the books do not include the music and when I asked the Publishers, they could not help! If you cannot find the music in a Children's Song Book, ask a friend who has been educated in English to sing or hum it to you. These songs are part of Anglo-Saxon children's culture, so most likely they will be able to help you.

The long-awaited report by The Nuffield Languages Inquiry will now be published during May. The Inquiry has taken longer than anticipated when work began in October 1998. More in Issue 8 next November as Issue 7 has gone to print before the report has been published.

Some publishers now offer E-commerce on their website and also have request forms for catalogues. Not all publishers have websites. The following selection may be of interest.

Barefoot Books

www.barefoot-books.com

Bloomsbury Publishing plc

www.bloomsbury.com

Orchard Books and Franklin Watts

www.wattspub.co.uk

Puffin Books

www.puffin.co.uk

Ragged Bears Ltd

www.ragged-bears.co.uk

Random House

www.randomhouse.co.uk

Scholastic Children's books

www.scholastic.co.uk

HarperCollins

www.Fireandwater.com

Feature Article - **Reading in a foreign language**

Learning to read a foreign language is a fairly rapid process for an average ability child who can already read in his/her own language. Certainly it is not as laborious as learning to read in the first language. Why? Simply because the child has already understood the concept of reading - what reading is all about - so he only needs to decode the foreign language on the page. Once he has decoded the foreign language text, the words will convey a message with some meaning. I still remember the delight on a Japanese child's face when he found that he could read in English as well as Japanese. He decoded a phrase in roman letters and, after a few seconds delay, he realised that it said something he understood as he already knew the language orally. His success was partly due to the fact he decoded text he already knew orally.

Each child is an individual and develops his own set of skills for reading. How he reads text mirrors his own individual skills, his reading experience in his own language as well as the way reading is taught at school and used within his own society. (cf Arabic and Chinese societies) Included in the ability to decode text to obtain meaning, it is also important to include the ability to decode pictures. (Visual Literacy Issue 6). When a child reads, he uses an amalgam of many skills to work out how to read a word or phrase. In reading a story book some of these clues may be contextually based on previous language or on information from pictures. Decoding is a skill, which many children enjoy.

Printed script

The print style may be different from what children use in early years education. This is often the case in France and other Latin-based cultures. For the Arab educated child, writing (which is in a completely different script) goes from right to left - the opposite from English script. Many Chinese children are not used to seeing the Roman Alphabet except in logos and advertisements. It is important for us to see printed script through the child's eyes and help them to make the necessary eye/hand changes needed for reading. Children can be helped by being made more aware of the English words, which they can see and hear used in their own environment.

• **The Alphabet**

- At what point is it best to introduce the Alphabet? Children need to be able to talk about the alphabet letters, otherwise how can they spell? If their script uses roman letters and they have to describe them in their own language, this hinders progress and may even lead to reading with their own accent in English.

- What do you teach? Most parents who have learned English know the Alphabet song and so know the names of the letters. Do you teach the name of the letters and also the sound of the letters? (What the letters are called and what they say?).

• **Language Awareness**

At what stage do you talk about the rhyming sounds children have heard in the rhymes you already enjoy together? Many children are fascinated by rhyming sounds and alliteration; once they have sufficient vocabulary and confidence, they often quite naturally play with sounds. We can help them by joining in and showing them how to play with them in English (sea and see, meet and eat, meat) Many people may not be aware that, although there are 26 Alphabet letters, there are 44 sounds in standard English. Sue Arnold's Book maybe of help for those wanting to increase their awareness of English and its sounds.

(A Little Alphabet Book Author Sue Arnold OUP/TES 0-19-838265-0 £4.99).

• **When to introduce reading in English?**

Children, who can already read in their own language, often ask to read in English and are disappointed if you don't go along with their request. It is important that their first efforts are successful as we are forming attitudes as to whether it is 'easy peasy' or too difficult. If a child develops a negative attitude to reading and books in English, it takes time and a great deal of effort to change his feelings. For this reason REALBOOK NEWS introduces picture books with simple text that children can easily pick-up orally and later read. As in learning to read in the first language, satisfaction and enjoyment often comes from the detailed illustration, which completes the reading experience.

Book Selection

Hello, Goodbye Author **David Lloyd** Illustrator **Louise Voce** Level 1a
Walker Books Paperback ISBN **0-7745-1348-0** £4.99

Ideal for teachers who find teaching greetings and goodbyes difficult as there is no parallel within their

children's own society. A big brown bear meets a tree and says *Hello* very loudly. Then two bees fly over and say *Hello Hello*. Then a bird does the same.

Soon voices all over the tree were saying Hello. Suddenly a drop of rain fell on the bear's nose. Splash! Goodbye.

Everyone disappears and finally the tree says very quietly *Hello rain!* This simple story easily adapts into an easy-to-perform play which, by increasing the number of animals, can give every child a role and a chance to use *Hello* and *Goodbye* in their right place.

All Kinds of People Author/Illus **Emma Damon** Level 1b
Tango Books, London Hardback/Novelty ISBN **1-85707-067-4** £7.99

What makes you or anyone special? Do you look like your best friend? No you look like you!

People come in all different skin colours. Some people have short hair. Others have long hair.

Some people like to dance. Others like to paint.

There are as many different kinds of people in this world as there are clouds in the sky and fish in the sea. But EVERY ONE IS SPECIAL, including me!

This story ends with a chart to be filled up, which includes Name. Height. Weight, Skin Colour, Hair and Hobbies with a built in mirror on the back cover to help. This humorous picture book helps children to think positively about themselves and warmly about others of different races and backgrounds. For many children this book sparks off projects. Some create their own simpler flap-up books about their family, their looks as well as likes and dislikes!

A dark, dark tale Author/Illus **Ruth Brown** Level 1a
A Red Fox Picture Book Paperback ISBN **0-09-987400-8** £4.99

A spooky read-aloud book first published in 1981, but still a favourite. The atmospheric pictures are powerful and exciting. The language is easy to pick-up as it includes so much repetition. Children naturally absorb the difficult prepositions of place through the language and the pictures.

Behind the door there was a dark, dark hall.

In the hall there were some dark, dark stairs.

The end may be softer than you expected. The cupboard is in fact a toy cupboard!

And in the box there was ...A MOUSE!

The House That Jack Built Author/Illus **Jenny Stow** Level 2
Frances Lincoln Paperback ISBN **0-7112-1455-7** £4.99

This version by Jenny Stow of the traditional rhyme is inspired by her stay in Antigua in the West Indies. Before you introduce the luscious vegetation and the different society, it might be better to talk about the West Indies. For this you may need an Atlas and some photographs cut from Travel Brochures. The rhyme is easy to pick up and through the pictures you will be able to transport the children into another society, which also speaks English. If you have time follow this up by making your own House that Jack Built Book set in your own society. Would your House be a flat or a house? If you are exchanging letters etc with another school, a copy of your class or a child's own book could be a nice present to send.

Cat in a flap **Author/Illus** **Shoo Rayner** Level 1b
Puffin Books **Paperback** **ISBN 0-14-054860-2** **£4.99**

A Lift-the-Flap Book about a cat who read The Cat Manual to find out how to catch mice. The Manual suggests 6 ways to catch the mice. The cat follows the suggestions carefully, but the mice are always full of clever ideas which are just one step ahead of the cat.

Number 4. *Be quick.* To which a mouse replies *He'll have to be quicker than that!*

Number 5. *Be patient.* To which the cat adds, *Very patient.*

Number 6 *If all else fails ... give up* The cat adds, *I give up* and makes friends. But how do they make friends?

Easy to pick up language especially if you let children role play the cat and the mice. Useful phrases for transfer to use in the classroom or when playing games. Try making your own book replacing the cat with a dog!

Over in the meadow **Author/Illus** **Jane Cabrera** Level 1b
David and Charles Children's Books **Hardback** **ISBN 1-86233-137-5** **£9.99**

A sing along counting rhyme. Introduce the first page and then build the song up gradually. Before you begin, turn to the last spread and identify the animals and insects and then count them. Next session tell them the story about the mother and babies who lived *in the meadow in the sand in the sun.*

Continue the rhyme reading the narration and mother language yourself and get the class to join in with the baby's response.

Dinosaur Roar! **Author-Illus** **Paul and Henrietta Stickland** Level 1a
Picture Puffins **Paperback** **ISBN 0-14-056696-1** **£2.99**

Hungry dinosaurs race across the page accompanied by rhyming text. Great for older children beginning English. They'll love the illustrations and will soon pick up the rhyme. Let them take turns to say it page by page in a form of choral speaking. A good and easy-to-perform rhyme.

I know an old lady **Author/Illus** **Colin and Jacqui Hawkins** Level 1b
who swallowed a fly
Picture mammoth **Paperback** **ISBN 0-7497-0153-6**
£4.99

A reissue of a book first published in 1987.

This may not be the version you know but you'll enjoy the lively re-telling of the well-known favourite. The fun lift-up flaps of the apron to show the inside of the stomach together with the zany asides, often in rhyme, liven up the story. In this version the old woman swallows a spider, a bird, a cat, a dog, a goat, a cow and a horse and

Then she sneezed of course! Atishoo!

However, the old woman didn't die as the mouse thought might happen. Throughout the story the little mouse acts as a spectator adding comments like *Open wider for the spider. What a throat to swallow a goat.*

Finally the mouse asks *I wonder why she swallowed that fly?* Well why did she? Your class will tell you! A pity the music wasn't included. Children I worked with enjoyed making their own books with flap-ups showing their version of the inside of the stomach. A chance to let off steam and say *Yuk!*

Noah built an Ark one day Author/Illus **Colin and Jacqui Hawkins** Level 1b
Picture mammoth Paperback ISBN 0-7497-0317-2
£4.99

Also in the same series this is the well-known song

The animals went in two by two,

The elephant and the Kangaroo.

The flap opens to show the animals inside the ark.

The aside jokes made by Noah and the animals, mostly in rhyming language, make the book more fun and easy to adapt for a fun end of term show.

Engines, Engines Author **Lisa Bruce** Illus **Stephen Waterhouse** Level 1b
Bloomsbury Children's Books Hardback ISBN 0-7475-4763-7 **£9.99**

Set in India this gloriously colourful counting rhyme reflects all the rich colours of the sub-continent. As the language is in rhyme the children will soon pick it up, but before you begin it is probably better to have talked about words like Visnu, Delhi, Bombay, Himalayas, Ganges. Maybe this is something you could get parents to do at home in the home language before your lesson. A good, cross-cultural activity for everyone, even the teacher! A great experience book that should remain in children's minds may be for life!

Ten Dogs in the Window Author **Claire Masurel** Illus **Pamela Paparone** Level 1a
North-South Hardback ISBN 1-55858-754-3 **£9.99p**

It is difficult to go over numbers one to ten, with older Primary School children and they soon get bored. What about a new challenge - counting down! This rhyming text repeated for each number except one, is quickly absorbed as blocks of language

10 dogs in the window for the whole wide world to see.

Look, someone is coming. (to buy a dog)

Children have fun working out which customer will buy which dog. Once children know the text, let them take turns to 'buy' a dog saying *You're the perfect dog for me!*

Read it over several times as they may want to change their choice of dog! Don't forget to have a turn yourself, as they would find it fun to see which is *the perfect dog for you!*

Polar Bear, Polar Bear, Author **Bill Martin** Illus **Eric Carle** Level 1a
What do you hear? Puffin Books Paperback ISBN0-14-054519-0 **£4.99**

Another attractive picture book by the same team as

Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you see?

For children who have read *Brown Bear*, the layout will be familiar but this time readers are asked to identify the noise they hear. Superb illustrations and a great opportunity to imitate acceptable noises and let off steam within the classroom.

Elephant, Elephant, what do you hear?

I hear a leopard snarling in my ear.

The tale ends with

Zookeeper, Zookeeper, what do you hear?

I hear children

The Happy Hedgehog Band Author Martin Waddell Illus Jill Barton

Level 1b

Walker Books Paperback ISBN 0-7445-3049-0 £4.99p

This story about hedgehogs and woodland animals of the temperate western hemisphere comes highly recommended by a colleague working in Europe.

Harry the hedgehog loved noise so he made a big drum. He was quickly copied.

Tum-tum-te-tum went one drum; that was Harry.

Diddle-diddle-dum went one drum; that was Helen.

Ratta-tat-tat went one drum; that was Norbet.

And BOOM went one drum; that was Billy. Until the whole wood was humming and tumming with drumming.

The other woodland animals liked the noise and asked how they could join in as they hadn't got drums. Harry suggested ways they could make music and created *The Happy Hedgehog Band* for all except a visitor to the wood, a dog, who danced to the music instead. The clear water colour illustrations make understanding easier and convey the feeling of joy that comes from making music together in a band. A sophisticated experience of using sounds and rhymes to make music-like noises and pretend to play instruments or just make *pop pop* with your mouth like the frog!

My cat likes to hide Author Eve Sutton Illus Lynley Dodd Level 1b**Picture Puffins Paperback ISBN 0-14-005550000242-4 £4.99**

Another trip round the world but this time to meet different peoples or rather their stereotypes.

My cat likes to hide in boxes. But The cat from France, Liked to sing and dance. And so the story continues introducing Cats from some European countries or cities dressed typically and often standing behind a recognisable national or local symbol.

Look at all these clever cats. Cats from Spain, Brazil and France, Cats from Greece, Japan and Norway, Cats who sing and fly and dance....

But my cat is an ordinary cat and just *Likes to hide in boxes.*

The simple rhyming text is easily picked-up and, like most stereotypes provides a lead into a different culture from where children can begin exploring another culture and even looking more closely at their own.

The Hairy Toe Author-Illustrator Daniel Postgate Level 2**Walker Books Paperback ISBN 0-7445-6910-9 £4.99**

A traditional American Tale about *a woman who went out to pick beans and she found a Hairy Toe.*

That night when she was in bed *she seemed to hear a voice crying, Where's my hair -r -ry To - o -oe?*

As the wind blew stronger, the voice got nearer and nearer until it seemed as if something was bending over the old woman.

Then *in an awful voice it said:*

Where's my Hair - r - ry To - o - oe?

And guess who it was who said *You've got it?*

The story is broken up which make for easier understanding of this scary tale, which is likely to grip older primary readers, but is too frightening for very young learners..

Coral goes Swimming Author Simon Puttock Illus Stephen Lambert Level 2**Hodder Children's Books Paperback ISBN 0-340-72408-0 £4.99**

Swim around the world with Coral. A cross-cultural experience that includes concepts about the globe and the

world's environment, many of which may be familiar to children in their own language. Carol lets her imagination take her round the world as she lays back in her paddling pool in the garden.

I'm just like an island in a great big ocean

and away she floated down the Channel round Africa, to Australia and then South America, past the Caribbean Islands and across the Atlantic to get home again in time for tea. Of course Coral has some fascinating adventures on the way, which are beautifully portrayed in the illustrations. The final spread helps you to follow Coral's route around a world map.

Whose Hat is That? Author Alison Boyle Illus Simon Woolford Level 1a
Walker Books Paperback ISBN 0-7445-6973-7 £2.99

A first maze puzzle book that needs many different skills to help *Sleepy Silly Cat with her red woolly hat* find her way *through the jungle to meet bird, along the leaves to meet Giraffe, through the desert to meet snake* until she finally meets Elephant and they swap hats. Then *Sleepy Silly Cat with a silly hat on her head* needs to find *her way* through a maze of clouds *back to bed*. The repetitive language is simple and easy to follow, especially the speech bubbles, as each time cat says *Hello. I like your hat. But who is that in the yellow/ /white/pink hat? Let's go and see*, and the newest friend replies *Just you, not me!* A game book at a reasonable price from which children can absorb a lot.

I wish I were a dog Author-Illus Lydia Monks Level 1b
Picture Mammoth Paperback ISBN 0-7497-3803-0 £4.99

Kitty is fed up being a cat. She feels a dog's life is better. *I wish I were a dog. Dogs have all the fun.* Colourful illustrations take us through some of the wonderful things dogs can do including being *film stars*. Kitty is fed up and Kitty's owner tries her best to console her.

Sometimes dogs are stupid! And she explains how stupid they are to Kitty backed by humorous illustrations. She continues *Cats are clever. Cats can do lots of things*, and through the amusingly graphic illustrations the reader can compare Kitty or other cats with dogs!

And, of course cats can sleep anywhere! So you see, you are very special just as you are!

This story resulted in a great discussion between cat and dog pet owners! Several children made their own books based on the explicitly simple illustrations and their own pets! One child told me he was a cat but wished he was a goldfish instead! Interesting to know how children think.

Princess Aasta Author - Illus Stina Langlo Ordal Level 2
Bloomsbury Children's Books Hardback ISBN 0-7475-4127-2 £9.99

The book written in English by a Norwegian gives a feel of the icy winter of a Nordic country in which the little Princess called Aasta lives. Aasta so wanted a bear to love that she decided to send a letter requesting one to a newspaper. She received replies from all over the world. She chose one who came from the North Pole and invited him to meet her. After some time the bear invited Aasta home to the North Pole. With her father, the King's permission she went. She had a wonderful time, but came back home in time for supper! The outline illustrations and the varied print sizes make it a special book.

Website: www.realbooks.co.uk **email:** opald@clara.net