

Bikes!

by Janice Marriott
photographs by Adrian Heke

Overview

A girl provides the reader with information about bikes, how they work, how to ride them, and how to look after them. The book concludes with comments from her family about why they like bikes. This book is available as a big book, and there is an audio version on the Ready to Read CD *Readalong 2007*.

Suggested purposes

This text supports the comprehension strategies of making connections, asking questions, summarising, and evaluating. It also provides an opportunity to practise the strategy of previewing a text. The text forms provide clear models for writing.

Text features

(Focus on only one or two per session.)

- the variety of text forms, including a report, an explanation, instructions, and speech bubbles with personal opinions
- the non-fiction text features:
 - the contents page
 - the index
 - the section headings
 - the subject-specific vocabulary
 - the use of photographs – the use of text boxes, labels, and directional arrows
 - the bullet points on page 10
- the clearly constructed paragraphs
- the use of examples on page 9 to support a main point
- the mix of factual information and first-person narration, which creates a personal link to the reader
- the sense of enjoyment and enthusiasm evident in the text and photographs
- the colloquial language “cool fun”, “the best”, and “bikes” as an abbreviated form of “bicycles”
- the descriptive language “bumpy”, “knobbly”, “strong”
- the descriptive verbs “grip”, “hooks”, “pedalled”, “pollute”, “pumped”, “push”, “steer”, “turn”, “wobbling”
- the sentences that have more than one idea.

Introducing the text

Prompt the children to use the cover to predict whether this text is likely to be fiction or non-fiction. Ask them to read the title and then to briefly share their experiences of bikes. *What are some questions that you have about bikes?* Record the children's questions in the group modelling book. Review the use of a contents page and index to locate information in a non-fiction book. *Let's read to find the answers to our questions.*

Alternatively, you could focus on the cover photograph. *I can see a girl right at the front, smiling at us – I wonder what part she will play in this book. And who are the people behind her? Let's read to find out what she has to tell us about bikes.*

During the reading

These notes are suggestions for using this book for guided reading. If you're using the big book for shared reading, encourage the children to read along with you and increase the level of support. The contents page and section headings allow you to break up the reading into more than one session. The notes follow the page sequence of the text, but you may wish to just focus on particular sections in each reading.

Read the names of the author and the photographer.

Contents page – Read the list of headings together, then have the children help you create a list (or web) of “bike words” that they expect to find in this text. Use the section headings as a guide. Have the children discuss which sections are most likely to answer their questions, or they could talk with a partner about which section they're most looking forward to reading and why.

Pages 2 and 3 – Help the children preview these pages before reading. Draw their attention to the structure of these pages as a report (the opening and closing sentences and the succession of green-framed paragraphs). Have the children scan the first two words of each paragraph so that they can quickly see how the paragraphs are linked. Discuss the purpose of the green lines.

Have the children read the text, supporting them with the interest vocabulary, particularly the adjectives, as necessary. Together, summarise what the children have found out. Draw out the main idea that this is a report about the different types of bikes in one family. *Who is the narrator? How do you know?*

Ask the children to read the rest of the text silently, pausing at various points for discussion or clarification. Be prepared to vary your approach to meet the needs of the children as they attempt the different text forms. Encourage them to attend to visual (print) information to decode unfamiliar words, but you might want to provide a high level of support or tell them some of these words to avoid slowing the reading and losing meaning. Refer to the “bike words” list or the list of questions after reading every few pages, putting a tick next to the words (or questions) as the children find examples of the words and answers to their predictions and adding any new words or questions.

Pages 4 and 5 – Read the labels and discuss the functions of each part of the bike, noting any questions that may be answered on subsequent pages. *Why are there two arrows for some items?*

Pages 6 and 7 – Allow the children time to examine the photographs and then have them explain what they think the arrows are showing. Have them close their eyes and make a picture in their heads of the bike working, opening their eyes if they need to check if they're right or to get more information. Clarify that it's only the back wheel that is made to turn and push the bike forward. You can return to this concept later if you feel the children need a more practical demonstration.

Page 8 – Encourage the children to make connections to their experiences of learning to ride or of watching older siblings learn. You may need to model the phrasing of the complex sentence on this page – *Listen to how the commas can help you to read it smoothly.*

Page 9 – Clarify the structure and purpose of this page – that it has a main point and then two examples of what the main point means. Ask the children to read and then summarise the information. *How can you check that your bike is the right size?* Have them identify the main point. Link this to what they know about the main point of a paragraph usually being stated in the first sentence.

Pages 10 and 11 – Discuss and list the children's ideas about bike safety, then have them read the text and compare this information with their list. If necessary, clarify that the photographs on these pages are illustrating the bullet points. Encourage the children to match them up. *Why has the handbrake been pointed out?* Discuss why these safety rules are important.

Pages 12 and 13 – The opening sentence can be interpreted in two ways: to keep your bike in a safe place but also to make sure that the bike is in good condition so you will be safe when you ride it.

Pages 14 and 15 – Support the children in making connections with their own biking experiences. Activate their thinking by having them discuss the focus question with a partner before reading the family's opinions. Then, as they read, encourage them to evaluate the family's comments. *Which comments do you most agree with? Why? Have these comments made you think of any other ideas?*

The index – Review the purpose of an index and how to use one. *If you wanted to just read about pedals, where would you go? What if you wanted to find out about a mountain bike?*

Focus on the bike words list. Identify which words about bikes have the most ticks next to them (and therefore occurred most often in the text) and discuss or clarify the meaning of any words that were new to the children, for example, "knobbly", "grip", or "frame". Check if any of the words the children predicted before the reading were not used in the text and why that might be so.

Review the children's list of questions. Discuss what they have found out about bikes and ways of finding answers to any questions that are left.

After the reading

(Choose only one or two per session.)

Listen to the children reread the text with a partner, observing how they manage the subject-specific vocabulary and the phrasing of the sentences with more than one idea.

Summarise the information – *So, what have we learnt about bikes?* Use the section headings as a guide for organising the children’s ideas.

You could revisit the topic of bike safety. Have the children use the contents page to identify the safety section on pages 10 to 11 and reread that section. Then have them work in pairs to search for additional safety information in the whole book’s text or illustrations, for example, explicit or implied information about brakes, safe places to ride, supervision, learning to ride properly, and keeping bikes in good condition. Together, summarise what the children have found out.

Use the big book version to analyse the structure of the report on pages 2 and 3. Identify the engaging introduction, the content divided into four paragraphs, the first three each containing an introductory sentence and supporting detail, and the concluding comment. Use this as a model to create a new report, for example,

In our class, lots of us have things with wheels. Six children have skateboards. Skateboards have four wheels and a deck that you stand on.

Four children have bikes with trainer wheels. Trainer wheels help you to keep your balance.

Ben has a scooter ...

Reread page 9 and discuss the ways the writer has helped the reader understand her main point. Together, practise constructing a paragraph together that has a main point and one or two examples supporting that point.

Discuss the first-person narration. Clarify the difference between a writer and a narrator. *Why has the author chosen to use a child’s voice?* Draw out the idea that having a narrator who has something in common with the reader can make the text seem more “friendly” and enjoyable.

Study some of the sentences that have more than one idea and explore how the writer has linked the ideas. For example:

- “Racing bikes are very light, *and* they go fast.”
- “*While* I pedalled, he ran along behind me *with* one hand on the seat, *holding* the bike up.” (This sentence conveys the idea of three actions happening at the same time.)
- “*When* you sit on the seat, your toes ...”
- “Keep your bike under cover so it won’t rust.”

Draw attention to the use of commas to separate the ideas in the sentences and to support phrasing, and have the children practise reading them. Clarify the importance of looking for “joining words” and commas as signals that there may be more than one idea in a sentence; and remind the children that they should read right to the full stop to make sure they’ve got the full meaning of each sentence.

Return to the labelled photograph on pages 4 and 5. Encourage the children to make connections between different parts of the text by asking how the bike would look different if it was a mountain bike (it would be bigger and have knobby tyres) or a racing bike (it would be tall with skinny tyres). The children could use the index to help them locate the information they need to answer these questions.

Take another look at the explanation of how a bike works on pages 6 and 7 and demonstrate the process on a real bike so that the children can see the movement and make the link to the written and visual explanation. The children may also find it helpful to listen to the chanted audio version of this explanation. You could have them explain and demonstrate the process to another child.

Discuss what a noun is. Have the children work in pairs to choose one noun each from the bike words list and say what it means and why that item is important in the text. For example, "A bike has two **wheels**. Wheels are big round things with spokes and tyres. They're the part of the bike that touches the ground and holds the bike up. When the wheels go round, the bike moves forward."

Discuss the word "bikes" as a shortened form of "bicycles" and draw out the idea that we often come up with shorter or "friendlier" versions of words. Start a collection of other examples, such as "phone", "TV" or "telly", "kindy", "board" (for "whiteboard"), "bin" (for "rubbish bin"), "Skate Champs", "skaties" or "skaters" (for "skateboarders"), "fax", or "PJs".

Suggestions for further tasks

Listen to the audio version on the CD *Readalong 2007*. This features a chanted section that supports fluent reading of pages 6 and 7.

Make a display, using digital photos and speech bubbles, of the children's opinions about bikes.

Use pages 2 and 3 as a model for shared writing of a report or use the section headings as a model for collecting and organising information on a different topic.

Share-read the article "Motocross" in *Junior Journal 30* (Purple) to find out more about these special sorts of bikes and a boy who loves to ride them.