

4 Reading

Good readers enjoy reading, get better at it, read more, and consequently improve both their reading skills and their general language ability. When children have difficulties with reading, however, they start to dislike it, read less, don't improve, and consequently have more reading problems and grow to dislike it even more. To prevent spiralling negative attitudes, we need to help children to improve their reading skills and learn to enjoy reading from the very beginning.

One way to help children improve their reading skills is to train them to use the sub-skills involved, such as skimming and scanning. Poor readers have often learnt only one style of reading, usually intensive reading. The inability to differentiate between reading skills usually makes readers slow and dependent on every single word they read, whereas good readers are fast, and are able to predict content and guess the meaning of words from the overall context of the passage. These are skills that can be developed by training.

Because we believe that assessment should be a continuation of the work done in the classroom, we recommend that reading assessment be done in an interesting, contextualized, fun, and authentic way. We have also included assessment of extensive reading. Even though it has been argued that extensive reading should not be assessed because it diminishes the children's enjoyment and can eventually put them off reading altogether, our argument is that it is an important skill and an invaluable learning resource. If it is assessed in a positive and child-friendly way it will not create negative feelings in children. On the contrary, it can help them realize that it is important and may result in more extensive reading in the English lesson.

4.1 Problems at the zoo

LEVEL	Beginners
AGE GROUP	6 and above
TIME	10 minutes
DESCRIPTION	The children match words with pictures.
LANGUAGE	Animal names: <i>fox, lion, elephant, pony, crocodile, giraffe, hippo, snake, gorilla, penguin</i>

SKILLS

Reading: recognizing animal words.

**ASSESSMENT
CRITERIA**

The children should be able to recognize the written form of selected vocabulary items.

MATERIALS

Worksheets 4.1a and b (see back of book); an enlarged copy of the worksheet; A3 card to make a set of cards with the names of the animals; Blu-Tack; prize stickers (optional)

PREPARATION

- 1 Photocopy Worksheets 4.1a and b for each child.
- 2 Prepare a set of cards with the vocabulary you are assessing.

IN CLASS

- 1 Give out Worksheet 4.1a to each child.
- 2 Explain in the mother tongue that there has been a big storm and that all the letters have fallen off the signs at the zoo. They have to put the signs back by drawing lines to match the signs with the animals.

FEEDBACK

- 1 Put the enlarged worksheet on the board. Hand out the animal name cards you made. Invite the children with the cards to come out and take turns sticking the words on the right signs.
- 2 Go round the class and check that the children are correcting their work. If one of the children at the board makes a mistake, make sure the others point it out in a calm, friendly, and non-threatening way and that he/she is given a second chance before another child gives the answer.
- 3 When the children have finished the activity and their self-assessment (see Assessment of Outcome below), discuss how they know when they are 'doing well' and when they 'need to work harder'.

FOLLOW-UP

- 1 The children play a memory game, using the names of all the animals they have learnt up to now. The game can be played either with the whole class or in groups of five or six.
- 2 One child starts by saying the name of an animal, for example, *a lion*. The next child repeats the animal already mentioned and adds another one for example, *a lion and a penguin*. The next adds another, and so on, until a child can't name another animal or until the last child repeats everyone else's animals, adds his/her own, and wins.

VARIATION 1

When you are going to assess animal words, ask the children to name their favourites. You can decide to assess those instead of the ones listed above. If the children come up with a lot of animals, you might decide together on which names should be assessed.

VARIATION 2

You can also use this task to assess copying skills if you ask the children to copy the words on the appropriate sign rather than draw

a line. In this case make sure that your marking reflects what you are testing, in this case reading and writing. (You could allocate half or a quarter of the marks to copying, depending on the importance you attach to this skill).

ASSESSMENT OF OUTCOME

- 1 Self-assessment. Give out Worksheet 4.1b and a set of prize stickers, one to each child (optional).
- 2 While the feedback is going on at the board, the children assess themselves by placing a 'happy' sticker under each word they got right or a sad sticker under each word they got wrong. If you don't have stickers, the children can draw happy/sad faces.
- 3 Monitor the children and make sure they are able to do the self-assessment. Provide help where needed.
- 4 If at the feedback stage you discussed 'doing well', the children can write a final comment for themselves. You can decide on the criteria with the children, for example:
 - 8–10 correct answers (Very good!)
 - 6–7 correct answers (Good!)
 - 3–5 correct answers (Be careful.)
 - 0–2 correct answers (You need to try harder.)
- 5 The children can take the worksheets and the assessment forms home to share their achievements with their parents.

PORTFOLIO

- 1 Once the worksheets have been returned, the children may want to include them in their portfolios along with their self-assessment forms.
- 2 If the children are using self-assessment 8.3, 'A picture of achievement', they can now add the animals in the picture as proof of having learnt the names.

4.2 Zinky's home

LEVEL

Beginners

AGE GROUP

6 and above

TIME

10 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The children read sentences and use the appropriate colours to colour a picture.

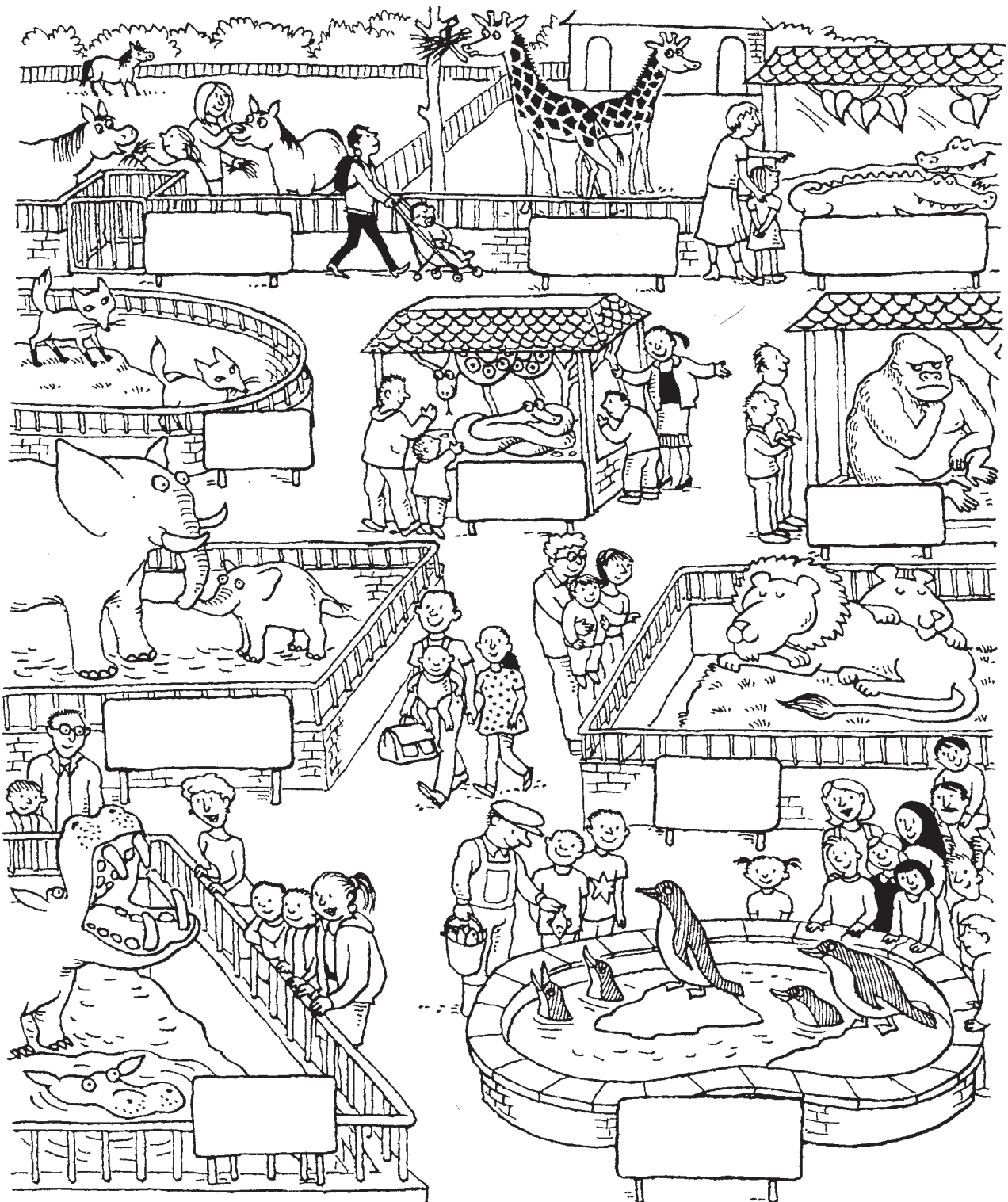
LANGUAGE

Nature vocabulary: *flowers, sky, grass, river, clouds, trees, cows*; colours.

SKILLS

Reading: comprehending simple sentences.

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____



lions

gorilla

elephants

penguins

foxes

giraffes

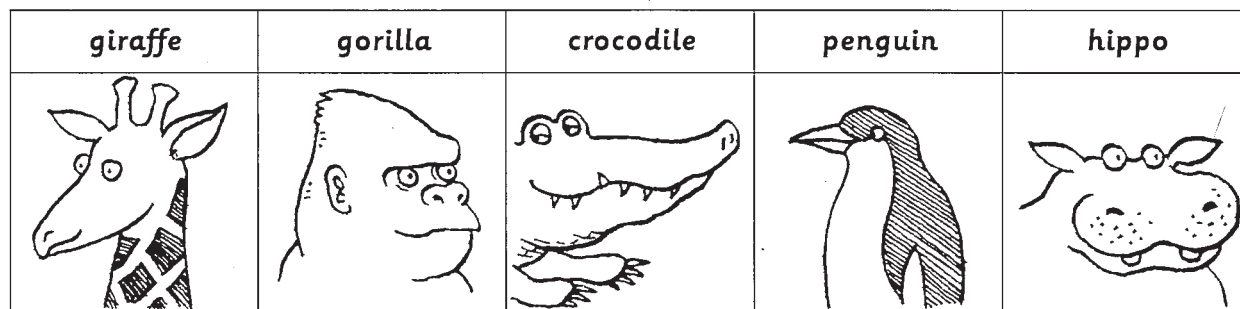
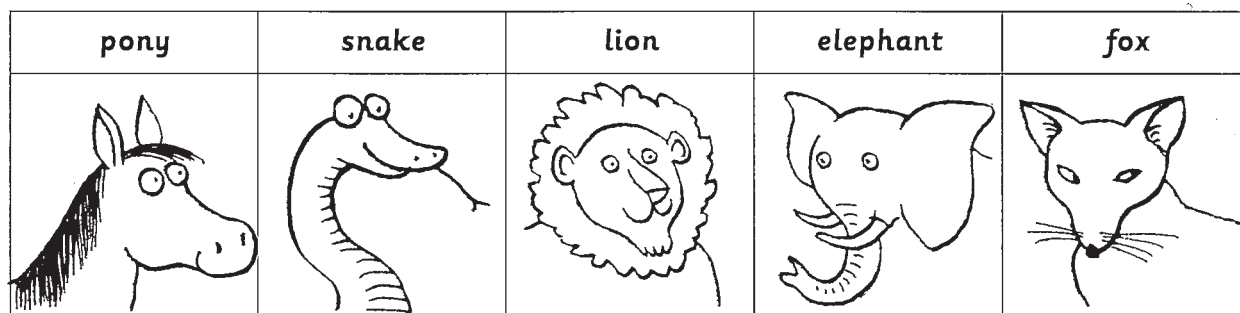
crocodiles

snakes

hippos

ponies

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____



I know these animals:

I will try harder to learn these animals:
