



Pie in the sky

Evan Croker

Focus phonics

igh written as ie as in pie, flies, tries, pies

igh written as y as in sky, why, my, try, by, fly, flying

oa written as ow as in window, follow, slow, low, following, show, own

Tricky words

again, could, everywhere, many, nowhere, should, their, there, thought, want, where, work

Book summary

A graphic novel. Dad has made meat pie for dinner but before Patty and Bill can eat it, the pie flies out of the window. The family chase it to the local sports ground where it seems that everyone's dinner is hovering in the air. After they finally eat their pies, dessert pies appear in the sky too, along with a cloud of cream that rains down onto them.

Learning intention

Phonics: To decode words with the phonemes /igh/ spelt ie and y; and /oa/ spelt ow, that feature in the story and extend to other known words with the same phoneme, e.g. cries, cry; tow, mow.

Comprehension:

- Explain the meaning of words in context
- Summarise main ideas
- Make inferences from the text
- Make connections (text to self, text to text, text to world)
- Ask questions
- Visualise

Fluency:

- Pay attention to punctuation when reading, pausing and changing tone as appropriate

Before reading

Story discussion: Look at and discuss the cover and read the title together. Ask: Who is the author? (Evan Croker) Have you read any of his books before and what did you think of them? (Evan has written other books in the Reading Road series such as Ducks in a row) What do you see in the illustration? Do you think this will be a fiction or non-fiction story? Could a pie really fly in the sky? Do you think it will in this story? Have you heard the saying "pie in the sky" before? What does it mean? (something that can't really happen) Sometimes a person has a plan but thinks it probably won't work, so they say it's a "pie in the sky" idea. Look at the back cover. Read the blurb and discuss what it means. Flip through the book to get a sense of the story and the style, too. Discuss the graphic novel style and how it is slightly different to read. Ask: Who has read a graphic novel before? What is it similar to? (a comic) Look at p 2 and discuss where to start

reading. (Read the text at the top first and then the speech bubbles. Then read the next piece of text followed by the speech bubbles from the top down, then move to the top of p 3.)

Quick phonics warm-up: Read the words on the inside front cover together, with the focus phonemes of /igh/ written as ie and y; and /oa/ written as ow. Flip through the story to find and read words with these same focus phonemes. Build the focus word *show* with letter cards. Think of words that rhyme with *show*. List these to read together, e.g. bow, tow, follow. Point out any with adjacent consonants like *slow*, *flow*.

Vocabulary check:

cutlery p 15 utensils to eat with, like knife, fork and spoon

dessert p 21 pudding, something sweet eaten after the main course of dinner

Morphology: suddenly p 5 – the suffix -ly shows how something is done. When -ly is added to an adjective (sudden), the word is changed into an adverb (suddenly), telling us how the pie moves into the air. "All of a sudden, the pie lifts into the air." Other examples of -ly words are: sadly, quickly, slowly.

Etymology: mustard p 3 a yellow or brown sauce or paste made from the seeds of the mustard plant. Middle English: from Old French moustarde, from Latin mustum "must" (mustard being originally prepared with grape must). Grape must is fresh grape juice with skin etc still in it.

Tricky word practice: Display the tricky words *many* and *work*. Ask: What are the tricky parts of these words?

many – the tricky part is a which says /e/.

work – the tricky part is or which says /ur/.

Practise reading and spelling these tricky words.

During reading

Read the story: This book may not fit into a single reading session. The end of p 13 is a good point to break the reading. Students can finish the book in a second group session or for homework.

Reading could follow one or more of the following approaches:

- Start by reading the text with students, then invite them to take over the reading. Make sure they are reading in the correct direction for a graphic novel. Discuss which speech bubble should be read first, next and so on. Ask: How would you read "loves" on p 3? Why is it in bold print? (Bill really likes mustard so the word needs to be emphasised) Practise reading the sentence with different emphasis to hear what sounds best. On p 7, ask: Why does Dad want to have a try to reach the pie? (because he's the tallest) Does he succeed? (no)
- Students read silently at their own pace; listen to each student in turn as they read a brief passage.

Phonics support: Remind students to sound out and blend the letters as necessary to read any unfamiliar words, but encourage them to read words with familiar letters and sounds fluently on sight if they can, without sounding out. If students get stuck on a word, model how to sound out and blend the sounds in the word. Encourage students to help each other with sounding out and blending and praise good use of this strategy, especially words with the focus phonemes of /igh/ written as ie and y; and /oa/ written as ow. Talk about the base word of *tallest* (p 7 – tall). *Tallest* is the superlative. *Taller* is the comparative form of *tall*. Find the words *better* and *best* on pp 26-27. What is their base word? (*good* or *well*) Which is the comparative (*better*) and superlative (*best*)? (superlative is for comparing three or more items, comparative is for two items)

Comprehension support: Pause occasionally to talk about the story and encourage students to find and retrieve key details from the text. Ask: What do you know about the characters so far? On p 20, what does appetite mean? What gives you an appetite? What gave Dad an appetite? On p 24, what do you notice about the words "Flying cream! It's like a dream"? (cream and dream rhyme – use of assonance where the same vowel sound is repeated)

After reading

Apply learning: Discuss the story. Ask: What kind of story is it? What's another word for fiction? (fantasy, imaginative, fairy tale, not true) Ask: What could *fantastical* mean? (almost unbelievable, crazy, dream-like, unreal) Ask: Are these words you would use to describe this story? What have you learned about the characters? Which page is your favourite? Why do you say that? How do you connect with it? What did Evan Croker (the author) need to know before writing this text? How does it compare to any of his other books? Is it similar or different? Ask: How does Dad feel at the end of the story? (happy with their nice dinner but doesn't think Bill's mustard will be a good topping for a dessert pie) Why is there a big crowd in the sports arena? Do they end up eating pies too? How would you feel if your meal started to fly away? Can you imagine how the crowd must have felt seeing all those pies in the sky? What words would you use to describe their feelings? Do you think Bill put mustard on his dessert pie at the end or was he just joking?

Comprehension: Why do you think Bill likes mustard so much? Have you ever tasted mustard? What do you like on pies? (Tomato sauce? Mustard? Salt and pepper? Soy sauce?) What does Dad think about Bill using mustard on the pies? Retell the story from Dad's point of view, including all the places they followed the pie to. Discuss the questions on the inside back cover.

Fluency: Choose a passage from the book and model how to read it fluently/with appropriate accuracy, rate and prosody (the three elements of fluency). Students read the same passage, copying your reading. (echo-reading) Students choose another brief passage and read it fluently/with expression to their partner. Make sure they follow the punctuation and adjust their voices for the different characters. Ask: What does an exclamation mark mean? (emphasis) Talk about the words that are in bold and how they would be read. (e.g. before p 2, loves p 3, is p 4, attacking p 18). Students practise speed-reading the focus words from the inside front cover to encourage automatic recall (words that can be recalled automatically have been orthographically mapped to students' long-term memory).

Spelling and writing through dictation: Read out the following passage for students to write. It uses words and sentences from the text as these are decodable. The focus is on encoding (spelling) rather than creating content.

(pages 2-4)

Bill and Patty are hurrying home for dinner. "What do you think Dad will cook for dinner tonight, Patty?" "Meat pie, I hope!" But Bill needs a snack before dinner! "Do you ever stop eating?" "No! Why should I?" And Bill loves mustard. Maybe too much. "Why do you always add that stinky mustard?" "It's the best, that's why!" Bill and Patty think Dad's meat pie dinners are the best, too. "I hope it is meat pie time!" "Me too." "Me three!" They are in luck. It is a big meat pie for dinner today.

Follow-up activities

Students complete the follow-up activities:

Worksheet 1: Phonics

/igh/ spelt y. /oa/ spelt ow.

Worksheet 2: Comprehension

Answer questions about the text.

Word meanings.

Suffixes.

Write a short story.

Worksheet 3: Maths

Divide a pie into fractions.

Do a favourite pie survey and create a bar chart.

Worksheet 4: Creative Writing

Design a new pie filling and write about it.