Off to the Beach

Author: Rob Alcraft
Teacher’s Notes author: Karra McFarlane
Text types: narrative; non-chronological report
Curriculum link: Understanding the world

Synopsis
This book looks at different beaches around the world. The characters travel by boat and look at coral, mangrove and ice beaches. They explore the different creatures that live in each location.

Extended text
This longer version of the book gives extra details and information to support children with comprehension.

- The characters in this book travel by boat from Cornwall, to Belize, to Hawaii, and then to Antarctica, exploring the different types of beaches that can be found around the world. Along the way, they learn about some of the creatures that are found in the different locations.
- The journey begins in Cornwall. From the boat, the characters can see shags and puffins nesting on the cliffs, and crabs on the beach. A herring gull and a limpet are shown in close-up panels.
- The characters then travel to a mangrove beach in Belize, where they spot a Forbes’ silkmoth and a proboscis bat. They can also see a leaf-toed gecko, a golden silk orb-weaving spider, a mangrove tree crab and a praying mantis.
- Next, they stop at a sandy beach in Hawaii. The children go snorkelling and see a great barracuda, a parrot fish and an emperor angelfish amongst the brightly coloured coral. A blue and yellow macaw sits in the palm trees on the beach.
- The boat’s last stop is an ice beach in Antarctica, where a Weddell seal and her pup are snoozing. The characters also spot a shoal of Antarctic cod in the water. An Arctic tern flies above them while Adélie penguins and emperor penguins waddle across the snow.

Group/Guided reading
Introducing the book

- Read the title together and ask: What might you see at a beach? Encourage the children to list things that might be at a beach (e.g. sand, boats, fish, ice cream).
- Look at the picture on the cover together and ask: Would you like to visit this beach? Why? Support the children to understand that the picture shows both the beach and the fish underneath the sea.
- Look together at the map on p2. Ask the children to trace the dotted line with their finger. Ask: Do you recognize any of the places on the map? Point out that the journey begins in England.
- (Predicting) Support the children to read the Contents page. Say: I wonder why ‘Ice’ is listed in a book about beaches. Encourage the children to give suggestions.
- (Predicting) Point out the boat in the bottom right corner of the Contents page and read the speech bubble together. Ask: Where do you think the boat is going?
**Strategy check**

- As they read, encourage the children to sound out and blend new words, e.g. ‘r-o-ck-s’.
- This book includes many decodable words, providing lots of opportunities for children to practise the skill of sounding out and blending new words. There is also a high-frequency tricky word in the book. Support the children with this word, explaining that it is tricky but also very common and useful. If the word is too difficult, simply read it for them:
  - **we**

- There are a number of topic words used in the book. These include common words that may not conform to the phonics teaching that children will have learned at this point, and subject-specific vocabulary that may be unfamiliar. They are listed and defined on the inside front cover. Explain to the children that these words may be challenging but they are important for the topic. Read these words for the children if necessary, to help build familiarity before they read the book independently:
  - **beach**  
  - **mangrove**  
  - **coral**  
  - **ice**

**During reading**

- Ask the children to read the book aloud and help them where necessary. Praise and encourage them as they read.

- On pp4–5, ask: **What animals can you see in the picture?** Ask the children to point to all the animals. Ask: **Do you know what they are called?** Encourage the children to read the labels.

- **(Summarizing)** Read the text on pp6–7 together, then ask: **How is this beach different from the beach on the previous page?** Support them to understand that the beach has mud instead of sand. Ask: **Can you spot a moth and a bat?**

- After reading pp8–9, point to the ‘coral’ label and explain that coral is a colourful sea creature which looks a bit like a knobbly rock. Ask: **Can you spot fish in the coral?**

- On pp10–11, say: **I’ve never seen an ice beach before!** Ask: **Can you think of any words to describe the beach? How do you think it would feel to be on the beach?**

- **(Predicting)** After reading p11, point to the boat in the bottom right corner and read the speech bubble together. Mention that the boat is pointing in the opposite direction to previous pages. Ask: **Where do you think the boat is going now?** Turn to p12 and ask if they would like to change their answer after seeing the map.

**Returning to the book**

- **(Summarizing)** Look together at the map on p12. Ask the children to follow the boat’s journey across the map with their finger and to describe the journey in their own words.

- **(Questioning)** Ask the children to pair up with someone else. Encourage them to ask each other what their favourite beach from the book is, and why. They could then ask each other some more questions about their favourite beach. You could model this for them by thinking aloud, e.g. say: **I wonder what animals are found there. I wonder what the weather is like.**

**Independent reading**

- Introduce the book as in the Group/Guided reading section above.

- Encourage the children to read the book as independently as possible. Remember to give them lots of encouragement and praise.

- As they read, encourage the children to sound out and blend new words, e.g. **c-l-i-f-f-s**, **l-i-m-p-e-t**, **f-i-sh**.

- This book also contains a number of topic words, which children may need more support with at this stage, but which enrich the book. They are listed and defined on the inside front cover. If a word is too difficult, simply read the word for them.

- Remind the children to use the pictures to support their comprehension when reading the text.
Speaking and listening

- Working in small groups, ask the children to select two beaches from the book and to discuss the similarities and differences between the two.
- Invite the children to share some of their ideas with the rest of the class.

Writing activity

- Ask the children to select one of the beaches from the book and to draw pictures of some of the animals they might find on it.
- Ask them to add some simple labels to their drawings, looking back through the book to help them.

Cross-curricular activity

Understanding the world

- Support the children to use a globe or an atlas to find the locations marked on the map on p12.
- Ask the children to each draw one of the beaches from the book. Make a class display with the pictures, using string or markers to point to their location on a map of the world.
Off to the Beach
Curriculum links and assessment

Links to Oxford Reading Criterion Scale

- Can talk about the main points/key events in a text, e.g. main story setting, events, principal character. (R) (Standard 1, 8)
- Knows that information can be retrieved from different sources such as books, posters and computers. (R) (Standard 1, 9)
- Is beginning to blend adjacent consonants in words in a range of combinations: CVCC CCVC. (READ) (Standard 1, 13)
- Can read words with consonant digraphs: ch, sh, th, ng. (READ) (Standard 1, 15)

Letters and Sounds: Phase 3

inFact Level 2 books are designed to support children with the transition from phonic readers to richer reading with highly decodable non-fiction. These books cover non-fiction topics using natural language, with a high proportion of phonically decodable words and a selection of high-frequency words. Each book also has a limited number of non-decodable or unfamiliar topic words to enrich the language and ensure that children learn something new.

ENGLAND The National Curriculum in England: Reception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EYFS</th>
<th>Early Learning Goals</th>
<th>Book-related assessment pointers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELG 03 Speaking</td>
<td>Children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners’ needs. (ELG03.1)</td>
<td>Check the children speak clearly and link their ideas together when talking about the book.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELG 01 Listening and attention</td>
<td>Children listen attentively in a range of situations. (ELG01.1)</td>
<td>Check the children listen to others’ ideas as well as share their own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELG 02 Understanding</td>
<td>Children answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events. (ELG02.2)</td>
<td>Check the children can describe the things they see on the different beaches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELG 09 Reading</td>
<td>Children use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They also read some common irregular words. (ELG09.2)</td>
<td>Check the children use their phonic knowledge to decode unfamiliar words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read. (ELG09.3)</td>
<td>Check the children are able to explain how the beaches are similar and how they are different.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELG 10 Writing</td>
<td>Children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. (ELG10.1)</td>
<td>Check the children make phonetically plausible attempts at adding labels to their pictures.</td>
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SCOTLAND Curriculum for Excellence: Literacy experiences and outcomes, Early Level

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<th>Experiences and outcomes</th>
<th>Book-related assessment pointers</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within real and imaginary situations, I share experiences and feelings, ideas and information in a way that communicates my message. (LIT 0-09a)</td>
<td>Check the children speak clearly and link their ideas together when comparing the two beaches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I listen or watch for useful or interesting information and I use this to make choices or learn new things. (LIT 0-04a)</td>
<td>Check the children listen to others’ ideas as well as share their own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To help me understand stories and other texts, I ask questions and link what I am learning with what I already know. (LIT 0-07a / LIT 0-16a / ENG 0-17a)</td>
<td>Check the children describe the things they see on the different beaches.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reading

I explore sounds, letters and words, discovering how they work together, and I can use what I learn to help me as I read and write.
(ENG 0-12a / LIT 0-13a / LIT 0-21a)

To help me understand stories and other texts, I ask questions and link what I am learning with what I already know.
(LIT 0-07a / LIT 0-16a / ENG 0-17a)

(ENG 0-12a / LIT 0-13a / LIT 0-21a)

Check the children use their phonic knowledge to decode unfamiliar words.

Check the children are able to explain how the beaches are similar and how they are different.
Check they ask questions to support their understanding.

Writing

I explore sounds, letters and words, discovering how they work together, and I can use what I learn to help me as I read or write.
(ENG 0-12a / LIT 0-13a / LIT 0-21a)

Check the children make phonetically plausible attempts at adding labels to their pictures.

WALES Curriculum for Wales: Foundation Phase Framework, Reception

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<th>Framework objectives</th>
<th>Book-related assessment pointers</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Oracy</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>talk about things from their experience and share information (YR_OracSpea.3)</td>
<td>Check the children speak clearly and link their ideas together when comparing the two beaches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ask questions about something that has been said (YR_OracList.9)</td>
<td>Check the children can ask each other questions about their favourite beach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>answer ‘Who?’, ‘What?’, ‘Where?’ and open-ended questions relating to own experiences, stories or events (YR_OracList.8)</td>
<td>Check the children describe the things they see on the different beaches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apply the following reading strategies with support: – phonic strategies to decode simple words (YR_ReadStrat.6i)</td>
<td>Check the children use their phonic knowledge to decode unfamiliar words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use pictures to aid understanding of text (YR_ReadStrat.12)</td>
<td>Check the children are able to explain how the beaches are similar and how they are different, using the pictures in the book to support them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>copy and write letters, words and phrases, e.g. from the environment of those modelled by the practitioner (YR_WritMean.6)</td>
<td>Check the children add labels to their own drawings, using the labels in the book to help them.</td>
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NORTHERN IRELAND Levels of Progression in Communication across the curriculum: Level I

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<th>Levels of Progression</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Talking and listening</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>use vocabulary from within their experience to describe thoughts and feelings (L1_com_talk.3)</td>
<td>Check the children speak clearly when comparing the two beaches or talking about their favourite beach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listen for information (L1_com_talk.1i)</td>
<td>Check the children listen to others’ ideas as well as share their own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ask and answer questions for specific information (L1_com_talk.2)</td>
<td>Check the children describe the things they see on the different beaches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>understand that words are made up of sounds and syllables and that sounds are represented by letters (L1_com_read.2i)</td>
<td>Check the children use their phonic knowledge to decode unfamiliar words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>show understanding of the meaning carried by print, pictures and images (L1_com_read.1)</td>
<td>Check the children are able to explain how the beaches are similar and how they are different.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>write words using sound-symbol correspondence (L1_com_writ.4i)</td>
<td>Check the children make phonetically plausible attempts at adding labels to their pictures.</td>
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</table>