

The Ugly Duckling



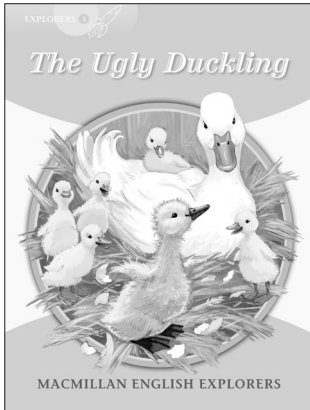
The story

One day on the farm, Mother Duck hatches six eggs. Five of them are ducklings but one is a funny bird. It has big feet and strong legs, spiky wings and a long neck. It's an ugly duckling. The hens start to peck him so he runs away. He runs a long way and finds a pond where he meets some geese. The geese are friendly and he stays with them. But one day a hunter comes, so the ugly duckling decides to move on. He comes to a house where there is an old woman. But the old woman has a cat and a little bird and they don't like the duckling so he moves on. He comes to a lake and he sees some swans. He thinks they are beautiful. But it's very cold and the next day the duckling is stuck in the ice. A woodcutter saves him and takes him home. He stays with the woodcutter and his family, but one day the woodcutter's wife says he is too big, and he must go.

He goes back to the lake and sees the swans again. He swims in the lake and looks down into the water. He sees that now he is a swan, too.

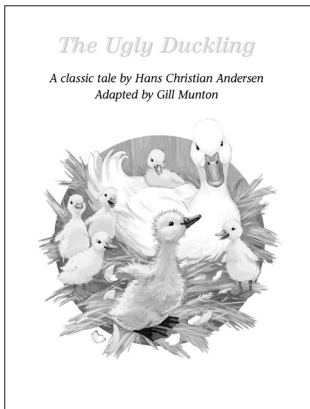
Introducing the book

The cover



- Hold up the book and point to the cover. Read the title to the class. Read it again and encourage the children to repeat it after you.
- Ask them to look at the picture and ask *What do you think the story is going to be about?*

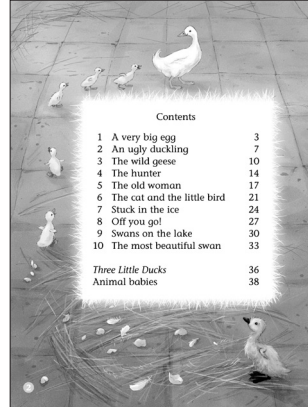
The title page




- Ask the children to turn to the title page. Hold up your own book and point to the picture. Ask *What sort of animals are these?* Elicit the words *duck* and *duckling*. Elicit from the class anything they know about ducks.
- Point to the picture again. Ask *Where is the ugly duckling?* and elicit from the children that he is the big duckling at the front.
- Ask *How do you think the other ducks feel about the ugly duckling?*
- Ask *What do you think the story is going to be about?*

- Explain that the story is a classic (famous) story by the Danish writer Hans Christian Andersen. Point to his name. Other famous stories by Andersen include *The Snow Queen* (Explorers 4). Explain that the story has been retold by another writer. Point to her name.

The contents page

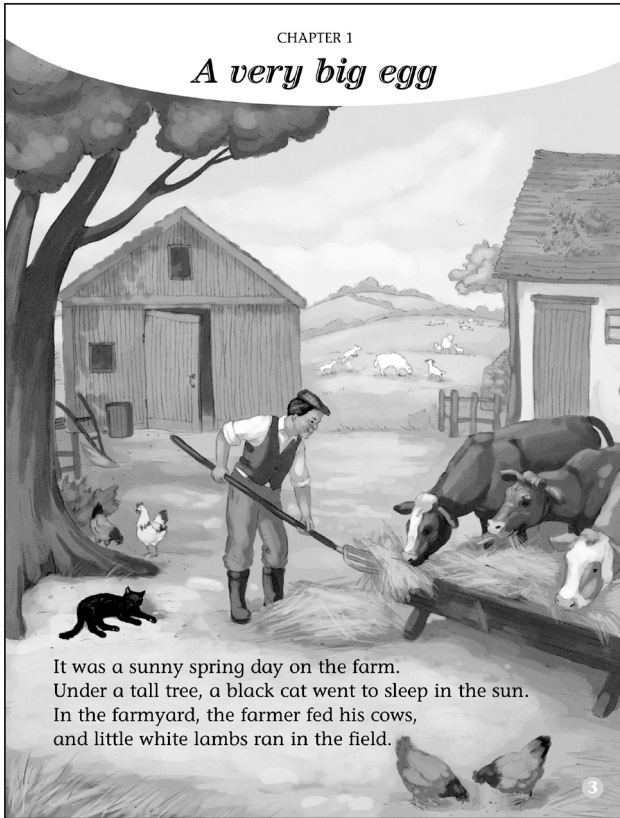


- Ask the children to turn to the contents page. Explain that the Contents list tells us what is in the book.
- Ask *How many chapters are there?*
- Read the chapter titles to and with the class. Briefly explain any unfamiliar words.
- Read the last two sections of the contents page *Three Little Ducks* and *Animal babies*.
- Explain that *Three Little Ducks* is a song, and that the *Animal babies* section gives information about a number of animals and their babies.
- Read the chapter titles again and ask questions about them to stimulate the children's interest, for example.
- Chapter 4: What does a hunter do? What can he do in this story?
- Chapter 7: How can an animal get stuck in the ice?
-  You can play the audio download of the story at any time you choose. See <http://www.macmillanyounglearners.com/readers/macmillan-english-explorers>

Chapter 1

A very big egg

Pages 3 to 6



Active vocabulary

cat crack egg excited farm hatch nest pond spring swim/swam

Passive vocabulary

cow field lamb tree

Before reading

- Pre-teach vocabulary, and practise new items.
- Look at page 3. Ask the children which animals they can see and how many of each.
- Look at page 4. Ask *What is Mother Duck doing? What will happen to her eggs?*
- Look at page 5. Ask *What is happening?*
- Look at page 6. Ask *Where are they? What is Mother Duck doing?*

During reading

- Read page 3 (or play the audio). Do not stop to explain or ask questions. Ensure that the children are following in their books.
- Read page 3 again, and encourage the children to read along with you. Repeat if necessary.
- Read again, a paragraph at a time. Explain any difficulties. Encourage the children to use the pictures to help with understanding.
- Repeat these steps with pages 4, 5 and 6.

Stage 1 comprehension

Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity.

- 1 What time of year was it in the story?
- 2 Where did Mother Duck live?
- 3 How many eggs did she have in her nest?
- 4 What came out of the big egg?
- 5 Where did Mother Duck take the ducklings?
- 6 Which duckling was the best swimmer?

- Finally, ask the children to re-read short sections of the story aloud.

After reading

Stage 2 comprehension

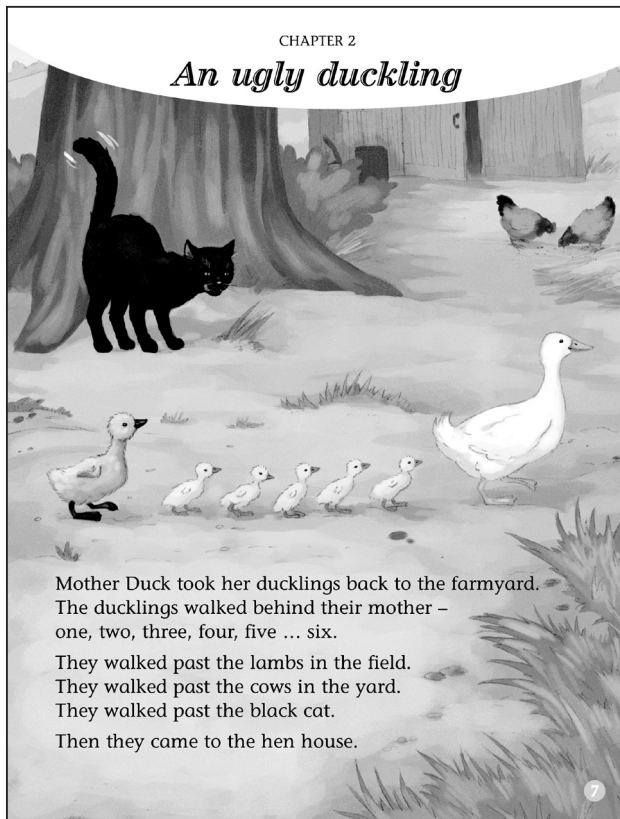
Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity. Encourage the children to give reasons for their suggestions.

- 1 Why is one egg different to the others?
 - 2 How did Mother Duck feel when the big egg hatched? Was she happy or sad?
 - 3 Why did Mother Duck take the ducklings to the pond?
- Write some animals from the chapter on the board and check that the children understand them. Ask if they are adults (like *duck*) or children (like *duckling*). Elicit the adult and child form for each.
 - Ask *What do you think will happen next? What will happen when the big duckling gets bigger?*

Chapter 2

An ugly duckling

Pages 7 to 9



Active vocabulary

cluck! find hen neck peck spiky
squawk! ugly wing

Passive vocabulary

behind sad stay too

Before reading

- Pre-teach vocabulary, and practise new items.
- Read the title of Chapter 2. Ask *What do you think this chapter will be about?*
- Look at page 7. Ask *What is Mother Duck doing? Who is following her? Who is watching them?*
- Look at page 7. Ask *What are the hens doing? What are Mother Duck and the five other ducklings doing?*

During reading

- Read page 7 (or play the audio). Do not stop to explain or ask questions. Ensure that the children are following in their books.
- Read page 7 again, and encourage the children to read along with you. Repeat if necessary.
- Read again, a paragraph at a time. Explain any difficulties. Encourage the children to use the pictures to help with understanding.
- Repeat these steps with pages 8 and 9.

Stage 1 comprehension

Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity.

- 1 Where did Mother Duck take the ducklings?
 - 2 Who did they walk past?
 - 3 What did the hen say about the five ducklings?
 - 4 What did she say about the big duckling?
 - 5 What did the hens do to the ugly duckling?
- Finally, ask the children to re-read short sections of the story aloud.

After reading

Stage 2 comprehension

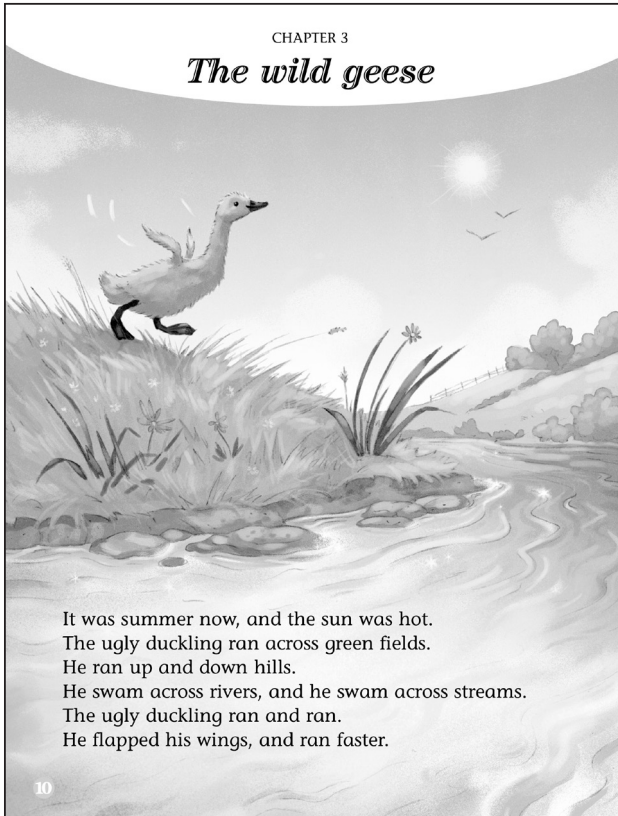
Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity. Encourage the children to give reasons for their suggestions.

- 1 Why didn't the hens like the ugly duckling?
 - 2 What did Mother Duck think about the hens? Why didn't she say anything?
- Repeat the words *cluck* and *squawk*. What other animal noises can the children think of?
 - Discuss the idea of difference with the children. Point out that the hens don't like the ugly duckling because he looks different to the others.
 - Ask *Where do you think the ugly duckling will go? How and where will he find a new home?*

Chapter 3

The wild geese

Pages 10 to 13



Active vocabulary

field goose/geese hill hiss river stream
summer wild worm

Passive vocabulary

flap frog hop jump

Before reading

- Pre-teach vocabulary, and practise new items.
- Read the title of Chapter 3. Ask *What do you think this chapter will be about?*
- Look at page 10. Ask *What time is it? Where is the ugly duckling? What is he going to do?*
- Look at page 11. Ask *What time is it? Where is the ugly duckling? What can he see?*
- Look at page 12. Ask *Where is the ugly duckling? Who is talking to him?*
- Look at page 13. Ask *What are they eating?*

During reading

- Read page 10 (or play the audio). Do not stop to explain or ask questions. Ensure that the children are following in their books.
- Read page 10 again, and encourage the children to read along with you. Repeat if necessary.
- Read again, a paragraph at a time. Explain any difficulties. Encourage the children to use the pictures to help with understanding.
- Repeat these steps with pages 11, 12 and 13.

Stage 1 comprehension

Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity.

- 1 Where did the ugly duckling run?
- 2 When did he stop running?
- 3 Why did he go to the pond?
- 4 What jumped and hopped near the pond?
- 5 Who did the ugly duckling meet in the morning?

- Finally, ask the children to re-read short sections of the story aloud.

After reading

Stage 2 comprehension

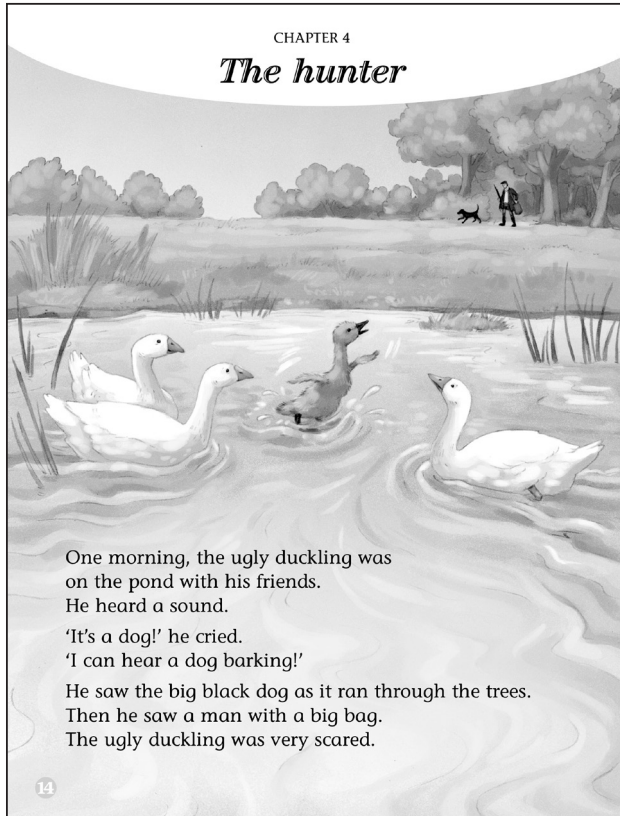
Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity. Encourage the children to give reasons for their suggestions.

- 1 Why were the geese happy for the ugly duckling to stay with them?
 - 2 Do you think the ugly duckling will stay with the geese for a long time?
- Repeat the word *hiss* and remind children of the other animal noises they learnt.
 - Ask *What do you think will happen next to the ugly duckling?*

Chapter 4

The hunter

Pages 14 to 16



Active vocabulary

bag bark catch dark dog good luck!
hide/hid hunter scared

Passive vocabulary

catch grass hiding place sound

Before reading

- Pre-teach vocabulary, and practise new items.
- Read the title of Chapter 4. Ask *What is a hunter? What do you think the hunter will do in this chapter?*
- Look at page 14. Ask *Where is the ugly duckling? What can he see?*
- Look at page 15. Ask *What are the geese and the ugly duckling doing? Why?*
- Look at page 16. Ask *What is the ugly duckling doing? Why?*

During reading

- Read page 14 (or play the audio). Do not stop to explain or ask questions. Ensure that the children are following in their books.
- Read page 14 again, and encourage the children to read along with you. Repeat if necessary.
- Read again, a paragraph at a time. Explain any difficulties. Encourage the children to use the pictures to help with understanding.
- Repeat these steps with pages 15 and 16.

Stage 1 comprehension

Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity.

- 1 What sound did the ugly duckling hear?
 - 2 What did he see?
 - 3 Why was he scared?
 - 4 Where did the ugly duckling and the geese hide?
 - 5 When did they leave their hiding place?
- Finally, ask the children to re-read short sections of the story aloud.

After reading

Stage 2 comprehension

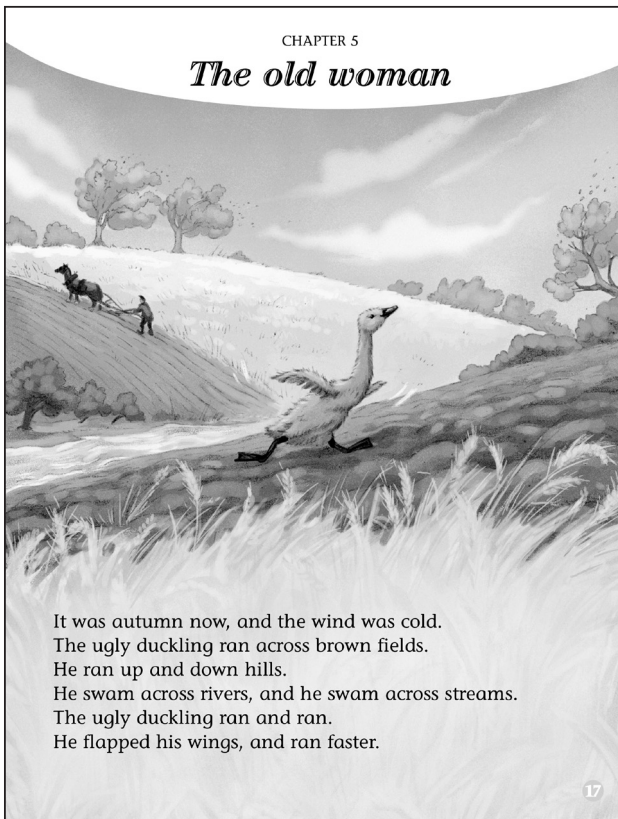
Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity. Encourage the children to give reasons for their suggestions.

- 1 What animals do people hunt? How do they catch them?
 - 2 The ugly duckling left because he was scared of the hunter. Why didn't the geese go with him?
- Repeat the word *bark* and remind children of the other animal noises they learnt.
 - Write the words *hiding places* on the board. Discuss the different hiding places that animals use.
 - Ask *Where do you think the ugly duckling will go next? What other dangers will he meet?*

Chapter 5

The old woman

Pages 17 to 20



Active vocabulary

autumn bird dark doorbell light
ring/rang window

Passive vocabulary

path

Before reading

- Pre-teach vocabulary, and practise new items.
- Read the title of Chapter 5. Ask *Where do you think the old woman lives? Do you think she can help the ugly duckling?*
- Look at page 17. Ask *Where is the ugly duckling? Why is he running?*
- Look at page 18. Ask *Where is the ugly duckling now? What can he see?*
- Look at page 19. Ask *Who is the ugly duckling talking to? Where are they?*
- Look at page 20. Ask *What animals can you see?*

During reading

- Read page 17 (or play the audio). Do not stop to explain or ask questions. Ensure that the children are following in their books.
- Read page 17 again, and encourage the children to read along with you. Repeat if necessary.
- Read again, a paragraph at a time. Explain any difficulties. Encourage the children to use the pictures to help with understanding.
- Repeat these steps with pages 18, 19 and 20.

Stage 1 comprehension

Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity.

- 1 What time of year was it?
 - 2 What time was it when the ugly duckling saw the old woman's house?
 - 3 Where was the old woman's house?
 - 4 What animals lived with the old woman?
- Finally, ask the children to re-read short sections of the story aloud.

After reading

Stage 2 comprehension

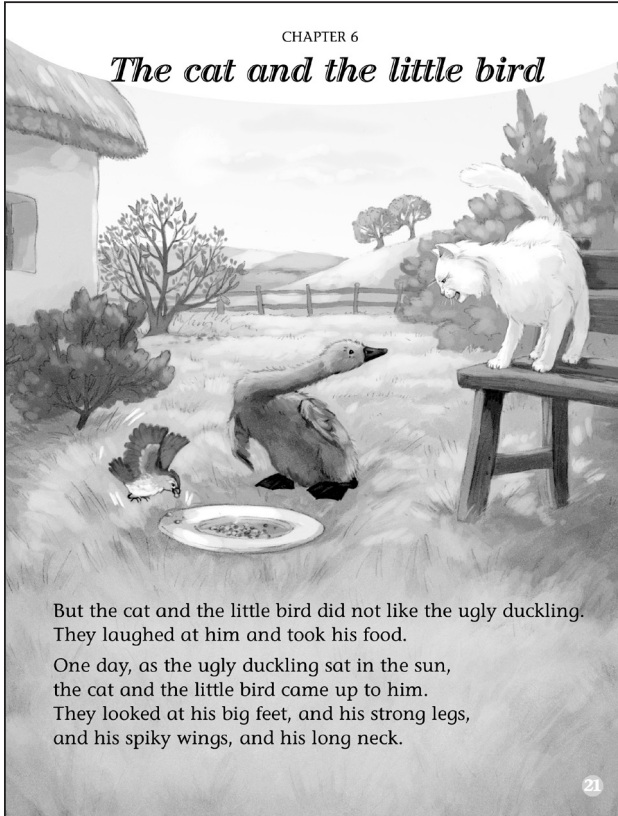
Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity. Encourage the children to give reasons for their suggestions.

- 1 Why did the ugly duckling run fast?
 - 2 Why did the old woman give the ugly duckling a home?
- Write the word *field* on the board. How many other words can the children find in the chapter with the same vowel sound? How many spellings can they find for this sound?
 - Ask *Do you think the ugly duckling will stay with the old woman?*

Chapter 6

The cat and the little bird

Pages 21 to 23



Active vocabulary

food laugh mouse/mice song

Passive vocabulary

sing

Before reading

- Pre-teach vocabulary, and practise new items.
- Read the title of Chapter 6. Ask *What do you think the cat and the little bird will do?*
- Look at page 21. Ask *Who is the ugly duckling talking to? What is the little bird doing?*
- Look at page 22. Ask *Do you think the cat is friendly?*
- Look at page 23. Ask *What is the bird doing? Is the ugly duckling happy?*

During reading

- Read page 21 (or play the audio). Do not stop to explain or ask questions. Ensure that the children are following in their books.
- Read page 21 again, and encourage the children to read along with you. Repeat if necessary.
- Read again, a paragraph at a time. Explain any difficulties. Encourage the children to use the pictures to help with understanding.
- Repeat these steps with pages 22 and 23.

Stage 1 comprehension

Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity.

- 1 What did the cat and the little bird do to the ugly duckling?
- 2 Can the ugly duckling catch mice?
- 3 Can the ugly duckling sing?
- 4 Why did the cat say 'You are no good at all.'

- Finally, ask the children to re-read short sections of the story aloud.

After reading

Stage 2 comprehension

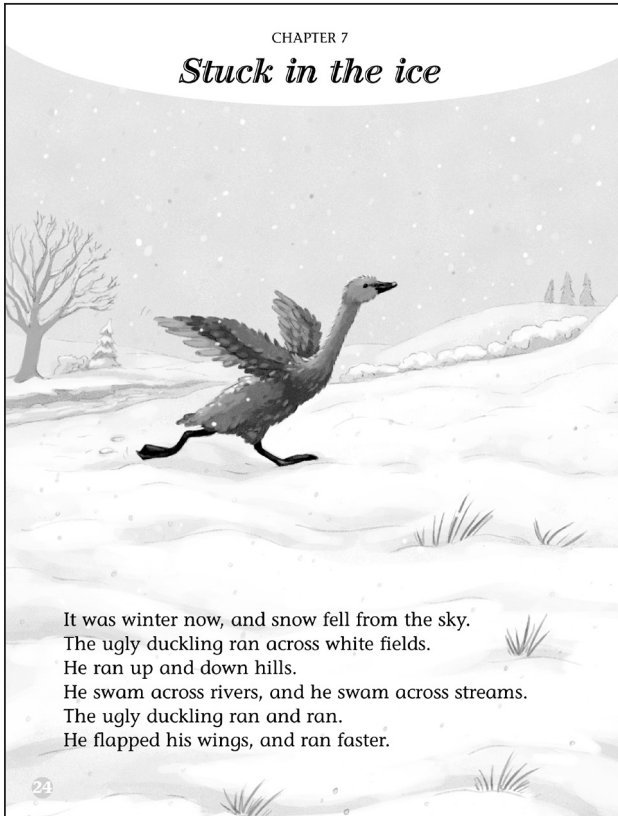
Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity. Encourage the children to give reasons for their suggestions.

- 1 Why didn't the cat and the little bird like the ugly duckling?
 - 2 Was there anything the ugly duckling could do for the old woman?
 - 3 Why did the ugly duckling want to find a new home?
- Write the words *old woman*, *cat*, *bird* and *duckling* on the board. Ask children to think of three things that each **can** do, and three things they **can't** do.
 - Ask *Where do you think the ugly duckling will go next?*

Chapter 7

Stuck in the ice

Pages 24 to 26



Active vocabulary

fire freeze/froze ice lake snow stuck swan winter

Passive vocabulary

cut wood

Before reading

- Pre-teach vocabulary, and practise new items.
- Read the title of Chapter 7. Ask *How do you think the ugly duckling gets stuck in the ice?*
- Look at page 24. Ask *Where is the ugly duckling? Why is he running?*
- Look at page 25. Ask *Where is the ugly duckling? What can he see?*
- Look at page 26. Ask *Where is the ugly duckling? What is the man doing?*

During reading

- Read page 24 (or play the audio). Do not stop to explain or ask questions. Ensure that the children are following in their books.
- Read page 24 again, and encourage the children to read along with you. Repeat if necessary.
- Read again, a paragraph at a time. Explain any difficulties. Encourage the children to use the pictures to help with understanding.
- Repeat these steps with pages 25 and 26.

Stage 1 comprehension

Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity.

- 1 What time of year was it?
 - 2 Where did the ugly duckling stop?
 - 3 What did the ugly duckling see the next morning?
 - 4 How did the ugly duckling get stuck in the lake?
 - 5 Who came to help the ugly duckling?
- Finally, ask the children to re-read short sections of the story aloud.

After reading

Stage 2 comprehension

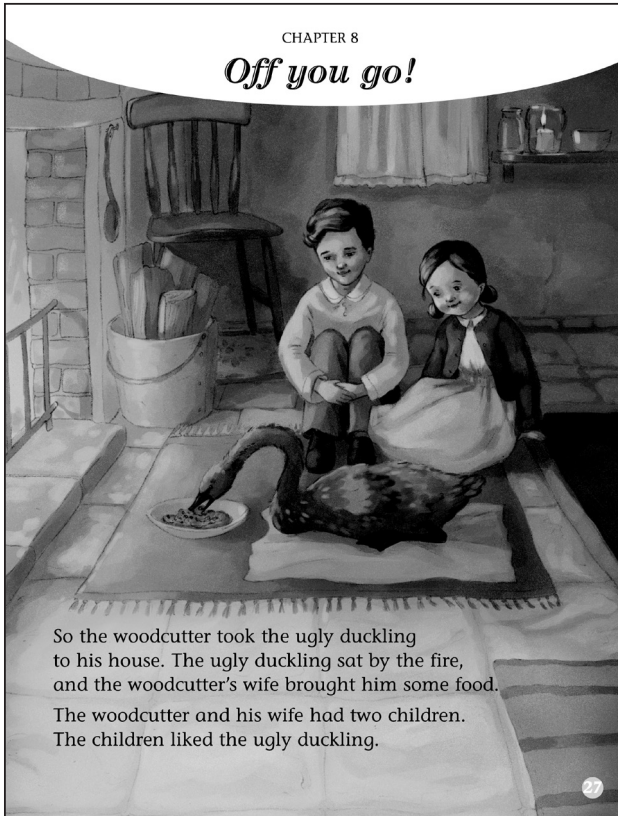
Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity. Encourage the children to give reasons for their suggestions.

- 1 Why did the ugly duckling want to see the swans again?
 - 2 Why did the man pull the ugly duckling out of the ice?
- Write the word *night* on the board. Ask the children to repeat it. How many words can the children find in the chapter with the same vowel sound? What different spellings can they find for the sound?
 - Ask *Do you think the ugly duckling will be happy in his new home?*

Chapter 8

Off you go!

Pages 27 to 29



Active vocabulary

bring/brought exciting fall/fell jug mat toy train woodcutter

Passive vocabulary

angry wife

Before reading

- Pre-teach vocabulary, and practise new items.
- Read the title of Chapter 8. Ask *What does 'Off you go!' mean? Who do you think will say it to the ugly duckling?*
- Look at page 27. Ask *Where is the ugly duckling? What is he doing?*
- Look at page 28. Ask *What is the little boy doing? What is the ugly duckling doing?*
- Look at page 29. Ask *Why is the woman angry?*

During reading

- Read page 27 (or play the audio). Do not stop to explain or ask questions. Ensure that the children are following in their books.
- Read page 27 again, and encourage the children to read along with you. Repeat if necessary.
- Read again, a paragraph at a time. Explain any difficulties. Encourage the children to use the pictures to help with understanding.
- Repeat these steps with pages 28 and 29.

Stage 1 comprehension

Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity.

- 1 Where did the ugly duckling sit?
 - 2 What did the woodcutter's wife give him?
 - 3 Did the woodcutter's children like the ugly duckling?
 - 4 What did the children play with?
 - 5 Why was the woodcutter's wife angry?
- Finally, ask the children to re-read short sections of the story aloud.

After reading

Stage 2 comprehension

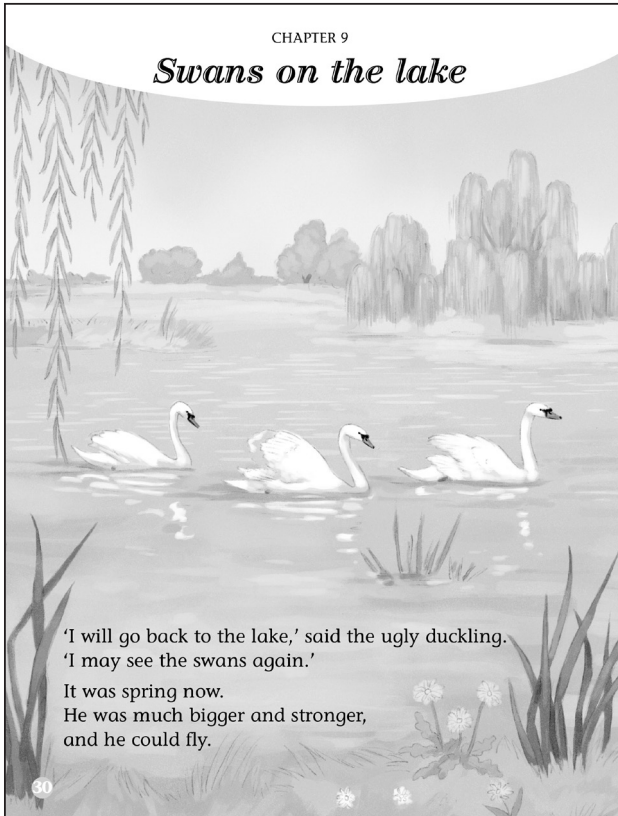
Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity. Encourage the children to give reasons for their suggestions.

- 1 Why did the ugly duckling get so excited?
 - 2 Was the woodcutter's wife right to send the ugly duckling away?
- Write the words *bring*, *fall*, *go* and *take* on the board. They are all irregular verbs used in this chapter. Ask for the past form. Then ask the children to find more irregular verbs from earlier chapters.
 - Ask *Where do you think the ugly duckling will go next?*

Chapter 9

Swans on the lake

Pages 30 to 32



Active vocabulary

fly/flew hit

Passive vocabulary

land rush

Before reading

- Pre-teach vocabulary, and practise new items.
- Read the title of Chapter 9. Ask *Where do you think the ugly duckling will go in this chapter?*
- Look at pages 30 and 31. Ask *Where is this? What is on the lake?*
- Look at page 32. Ask *What is the ugly duckling doing? What are the swans doing?*

During reading

- Read page 30 (or play the audio). Do not stop to explain or ask questions. Ensure that the children are following in their books
- Read page 30 again, and encourage the children to read along with you. Repeat if necessary.
- Read again, a paragraph at a time. Explain any difficulties. Encourage the children to use the pictures to help with understanding.
- Repeat these steps with pages 31 and 32.

Stage 1 comprehension

Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity.

- 1 What time of year was it?
 - 2 Where did the ugly duckling decide to go?
 - 3 How did the ugly duckling get to the lake?
 - 4 What did he want to do when he saw the swans?
 - 5 What did the swans do when the ugly duckling landed on the lake?
- Finally, ask the children to re-read short sections of the story aloud.

After reading

Stage 2 comprehension

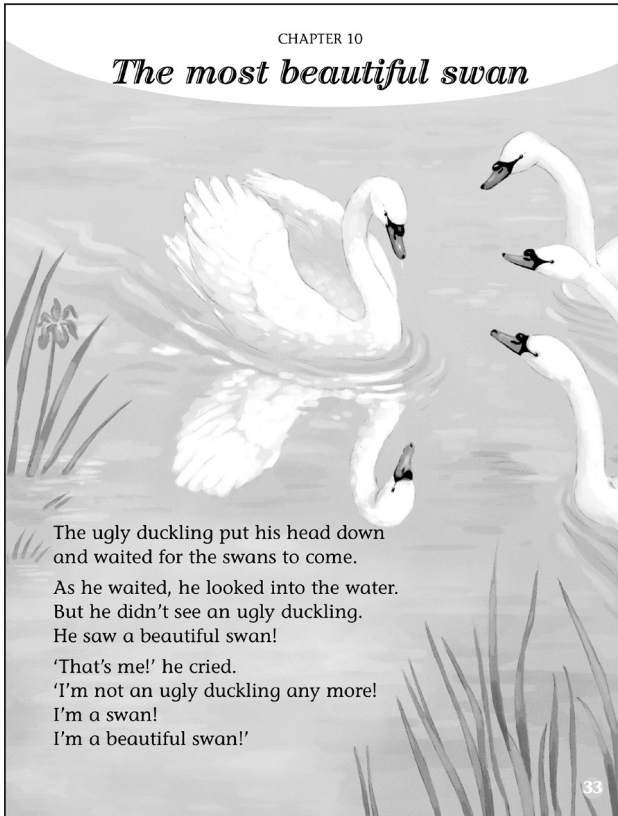
Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity. Encourage the children to give reasons for their suggestions.

- 1 How did the ugly duckling change over the winter?
 - 2 Why did he want to visit the swans again?
 - 3 Was the ugly duckling still ugly?
- Write the word *beautiful* on the board and play this game. How many words can the children make from the letters in the word (for example *table, fat, life*)? You can play the same game with the word *excited*.
 - Ask *What do you think the swans will do to the ugly duckling?*

Chapter 10

The most beautiful swan

Pages 33 to 35



Active vocabulary

feed head wait

Before reading

- Pre-teach vocabulary, and practise new items.
- Read the title of Chapter 10. Ask *Who do you think is the beautiful swan?*
- Look at page 33. Ask *Who is this? What can he see in the water?*
- Look at page 34. Ask *Who is he talking to? Do you think the swans are friendly?*
- Look at page 35. Ask *Who are the children? What are they doing?*

During reading

- Read page 33 (or play the audio). Do not stop to explain or ask questions. Ensure that the children are following in their books
- Read page 33 again, and encourage the children to read along with you. Repeat if necessary.
- Read again, a paragraph at a time. Explain any difficulties. Encourage the children to use the pictures to help with understanding.
- Repeat these steps with pages 34 and 35.

Stage 1 comprehension

Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity.

- 1 What did the ugly duckling wait for?
- 2 What did he see in the water?
- 3 Was he happy with what he saw?
- 4 What did the other swans say to him?
- 5 Who came to feed the swans?
- 6 What did they say about the new swan on the lake?

- Finally, ask the children to re-read short sections of the story aloud.

After reading

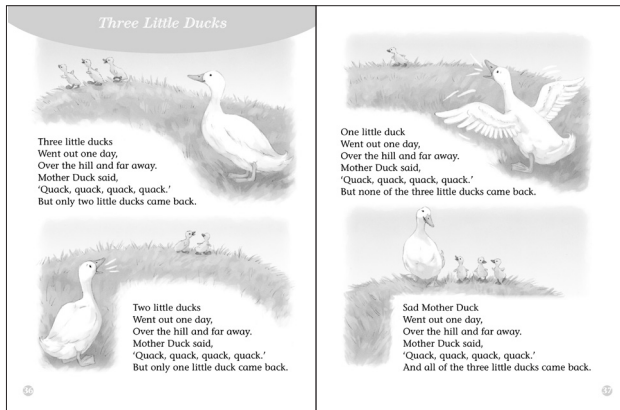
Stage 2 comprehension

Ask questions orally, or set them as a written activity. Encourage the children to give reasons for their suggestions.

- 1 Why was the ugly duckling surprised when he looked in the water and saw a swan?
 - 2 Why didn't the other swans peck or hit him?
- Write the words *swan*, *lake* and *swam* on the board. Repeat them aloud and ensure that the children understand the difference in pronunciation of the letter 'a' in each case.

Three Little Ducks

Pages 36 and 37



Before reading

- Read the title of the poem and look at the first picture. Ask the children what they think the poem will be about.
- Look at all four pictures. Ask the children what they think happens in the poem.

During reading

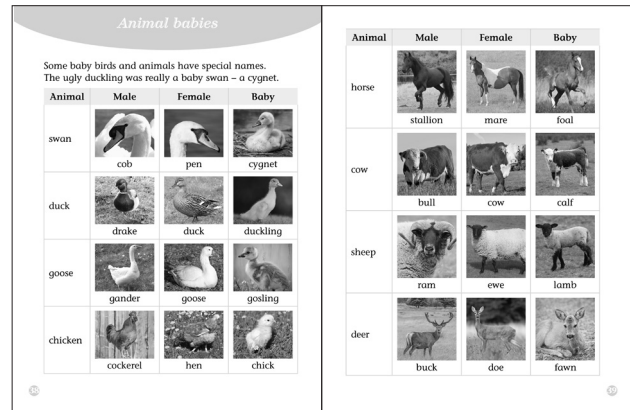
- Read the poem (or play the audio). Ensure that the children are following in their books.
- Read the poem again – this time the children should read along with you.
- Read again. Get individual students or groups of students to read each verse.

After reading

- Ask questions to check understanding.
- Ask children to give (and explain) their opinion of the poem.
- Ask about the features of the poem. There are words that rhyme, and there is a rhythm and verse structure.

Animal babies

Pages 38 and 39



Before reading

- Ask *Which of these animals did you meet in the story?*
- Ask *Which of these animals was the ugly duckling?*

During reading

- Look at the different animals with the children and read out the words for them to repeat.

After reading

- Game: Ask the students questions about each of the types of animal, for them to answer with the correct word, for example:
 - 'Male duck.' 'Drake.'
 - 'Female chicken.' 'Hen.'
 - 'Baby cow.' 'Calf.'
- The children can play the same game in pairs or in small groups. To make the game more challenging they could cover the words and use the pictures.

After reading the book

These questions are intended for oral use in class but you may ask children for written responses if you feel it is appropriate.

Response to the story

- Ask *Did you like the story? Why? Why not? Did you think it was interesting or boring? Was it exciting or too predictable? Which part of the story did you like best? Were there any parts of the story that surprised you? What did you think of the ending?*
- Talk about the way each chapter ended. Ask *Did the end of the chapters make you want to read on?* Talk about how this technique is often used in stories and other media such as TV.

Characters

- Ask the children about the main story characters. *Did you like the hens? Did you like the woodcutter's children? Why? Why not?*

Plot

- Encourage the children to retell the basic story in their own words. They can use the pictures as a framework for doing this.

Settings

- Ask *Where did the story take place?* Go through the book with the class and ask them to identify each of the story settings.

Moral issues and themes

Use any of these themes from the story as a basis for a class discussion:

- Difference. Ask *Why do some animals treat the ugly duckling badly? Is it because he is different to them or to other ducklings?*
- Beauty. Ask *How do things change when the ugly duckling becomes a beautiful swan? Do we prefer animals that are beautiful?*
- The seasons. Ask *What happens in each of the five seasons in the story? (Spring, summer, autumn, winter, spring again). Are the seasons like this in your country? What other things happen in these seasons?*

Vocabulary

- Pick out one or more words from the active vocabulary list for each chapter. Ask the children if they can remember the meanings.
- Ask the children to show their understanding of the vocabulary by using the words in sentences.

Follow-up ideas

- As a class compose a story sequel using this story as a model.
- Alphabetical animals. There are a lot of different animals in the story. Ask the class to put together an alphabet using as many animal words as possible.
- Drama. Get the children to act out the story of the ugly duckling. Give each child a part to play and they can act out the story as you read it.