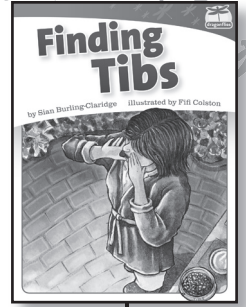


Finding Tibs

by Sian Burling-Claridge

illustrated by Fifi Colston



Overview

Zara's cat Tibs is a special member of her family. One morning, Tibs goes missing. Being blind doesn't stop Zara from helping, and she uses her special skills to find Tibs.

Suggested purposes

This text supports the comprehension strategies of making connections with real-life experiences, noting details in illustrations, and understanding the author's purpose. The repetition provides support for less confident readers, while the engaging and descriptive vocabulary provides rich opportunities for exploring language.

Text features (Focus on only one or two per session.)

- the theme of the importance of family, including pets, co-operation and of overcoming difficulties
- the use of simile for description – *his tongue was rough, like sandpaper*
- the relationship between Zara and her cat
- the way Zara resolves the situation through perseverance
- the strong narrative and satisfying ending
- the word endings – *ed, ing*
- the contractions – *I've, isn't, wasn't, didn't*
- the repetitive text
- the adjectives – *dark, fuzzy, silky, soft*
- the content related/cat verbs – *rubbed, nudged, licked, sleeping, pat*
- the diagraphs -gh – *rough*; -dg – *nudged*; -tch – *scratch, switched*
- the soft detailed illustrations
- the use of commas for phrasing
- the compound words – *sandpaper, cupboard*

Setting the scene

Tell the students that they are going to read a story about pets. Discuss the pets they own or those they know of. Discuss the pros and cons of owning a pet including the responsibility that goes along with it.

The first reading

Look at the front cover and read the title together. Study the illustration and draw attention to the detail. *What or who do you think Tibs might be? Make predictions and links between the illustration and the title. Why might the woman be looking for Tibs? What might have happened to Tibs?*

Read the names of the author and the illustrator.

Back cover – Read aloud the preview question. Help the students to make connections with the preview question and their own experiences. *How does it feel to lose a pet? What would you do in this situation?*

Title page – Read the names of the author and illustrator.

Pages 2 and 3 – *What does Zara like about Tibs? How does Tibs let her know what he wants? How does Zara know that Tibs likes her? What do they do together?*

Focus on the word “nudge” and demonstrate that there is often more than one way to work out unfamiliar words. Explain that it’s easier to break this word into two syllables. Discuss the meaning of “nudge” especially in the context of cats. *Can you find any other words on these pages that relate to cats?*

Pages 4 and 5 – Encourage the students to predict what may have happened to Tibs. *Where do you think Tibs might be? What can the family do to find him? How do you think this story may end? Why do you think that?* Write some of the students’ predictions on the board.

Pages 6 and 7 – Ask the students to look at the illustrations on these pages. *What is different about them? Who is the focus in them?*

Read page 6. Ensure that the students understand what being blind means. *Do you know anyone who is blind? How do you think Zara’s life is different from yours? What can Zara see? Why do you think the author wrote this story?*

Examine the word “fuzzy”, discussing the double “zz” sound and the “ee” ending.

Page 7 – Write the word “switched” on the board. Tell the students that a clue in the sentence and the illustration will help them decode this word.

Pages 8 and 9 – Look at the illustration. *What is Zara doing on page 8? Draw the students’ attention to the word “scratch” on both pages. What kind of sounds might she be hearing that starts with “scr”?*

Pages 10 and 11 – *Where do you think Tibs may be? How do you think he may have got there?*

Page 12 – Ask the students to read aloud what Zara says to her mum. *How do you think Zara feels about having found Tibs?*

Revisit the predictions made at the beginning of the lesson. *Were there any surprises?*

Ideas for revisiting the text (Choose only one or two per session.)

- Listen to the students reread the text, observing their ability to read expressively and fluently and their confidence with the content words. Focus on the use of commas to support phrasing and pace, and practise reading pages 4 and 5 together.
- Discuss the narrative structure. Identify the introduction, the problem, the surprise on page 6, and the ending.
- Focus on the use of adjectives. Draw out the idea that the adjectives add interest and allow us to see what Zara is experiencing through her blindness, for example, “soft”, “silky”.
- Focus on the initial consonant blends or digraphs that caused difficulty. Locate examples in the text and list other words that start the same way.
- Write “nudge”, “walk”, “wait”, and “sleep” on the board. Identify that these are present-tense verbs. Discuss how to change them to the past tense and ask the students to find other examples in the text.
- Introduce the concept of a simile. On page 2, Tibs tongue is compared with sandpaper. Encourage the students to think of other examples to describe a cat such as “its fur is as soft as ...”, “its whiskers are as long as ...”

Suggestions for further activities

- Reinforce the students' understanding of adjectives and verbs by identifying their use and purpose in the text, such as "dark, fuzzy shadows" on page 6, and "soft and silky" on page 11. Encourage them to construct sentences of a similar structure, such as "The trip to the pool was long and slow."
- Rewrite the story from Tibs' point of view. *How did he get stuck in the cupboard?*
- Have the students pretend to be blind so they can experience what it's like. Blindfold them and ask them to move around the class or school. They can then record what they see, hear, and feel.
- BLM word activity: use descriptive language

The students can reinforce their understanding of descriptive adjectives and verbs by identifying them in the text. They can then complete the sentences using other descriptive words.

- BLM comprehension activity: make connections

The students can write their thoughts about Zara and Tibs and how they would feel if they lost Tibs.