

AFTER THREE YEARS AT SCHOOL

ILLUSTRATING THE READING STANDARD

Sun Bears Are Special by Philippa Werry

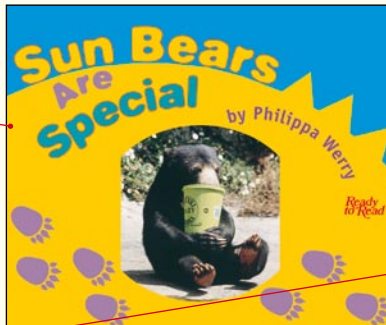
This text is levelled at Gold 1.

This report describes a family of Wellington Zoo's sun bears to illustrate the general characteristics of sun bears and the difficulties involved in breeding them.

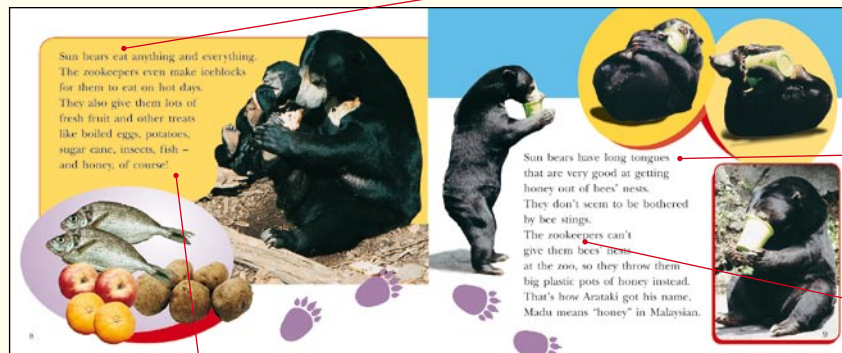
This text begins with an apparently straightforward comment about why sun bears are special and then gradually adds more and more information about their special features. The text ends with a strong statement that sun bears are endangered. Students need to identify, and make connections between, information from a number of places to fully identify why sun bears are special.

The following example highlights the sorts of reading behaviours teachers could expect to observe in students who are meeting the standard. Sometimes these behaviours will be in response to teacher prompts and questions, and sometimes they will be spontaneous as the students notice and respond to the ideas in the text. These behaviours may be during the first or subsequent readings and discussion.

After a discussion of the cover, the student can make connections to their prior knowledge of bears or of other non-fiction texts about animals to predict some words and/or information they would expect to find in a text about sun bears.



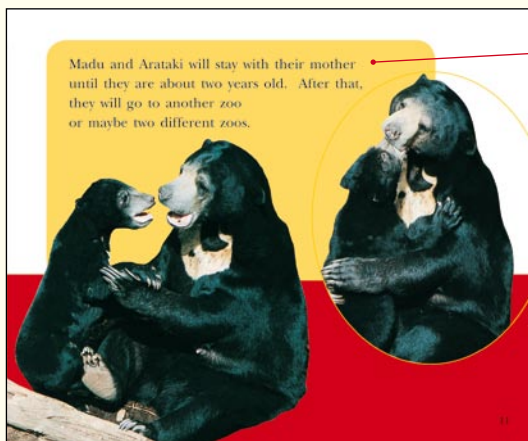
With support, the student can use clues in the text to keep track of the sequence of events. Examples are the photo of the cubs and the use of the present tense on page 2, the change to the past tense on pages 5–7 (describing the time before the cubs were born, their birth, and when they were young), the change back to the present on page 8, the description of future events on pages 11–12, and the information on the inside back cover.



The student uses their growing word knowledge and the context of the sentence to notice and clarify the mismatch between the sound and appearance of the word "tongues".

The student can identify some multi-syllabic topic words (for example, "Malaysian", "babies", "zookeepers", "adult", "enclosure", "insects") and say how they worked them out.

The student can use the information about sun bears' eating habits to infer what they would eat if they lived in the wild in Malaysia rather than in a zoo.



The student can make connections between the ideas in the text, particularly those on page 5 and the inside back cover, and with any prior knowledge they have about wild animals, to infer why the cubs won't be staying with their mother.

With support, the student uses clues such as the title, the friendly tone, the use of the word "sadly", and the information on the inside back cover to infer the author's point of view about sun bears.

The student can make connections between the pieces of information (in text, photographs, and illustrations) to support a particular idea or answer a question. For example, they can use information from the cover, the title page, and pages 8–10 to infer why sun bears are also called honey bears, or they can explain, or offer an opinion about, why sun bears are special.