

Big Reading

MINI MISSIONS



The Teachers' Guide
& **MINI MISSIONS**

by Sarah Threlkeld-Brown & Ros Wilson



Big Reading: The Teachers' Guide & Mini Missions

Everything you will need to support the
precision planning, teaching and assessment
of reading comprehension

**by Sarah Threlkeld-Brown
&
Ros Wilson**



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teaching and assessment of reading comprehension

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Introduction

Welcome to 'Big Reading: The Teachers' Guide & Mini Missions'. This publication is a comprehensive guide to teaching reading comprehension!

Why Big Reading? Because:

- **B** - Bringing the teaching, pleasure and magic of reading to life!
- **I** - In-depth and detailed steps of progression in the development of reading comprehension skills.
- **G** - Guaranteed to raise standards of reading in your school!

A Book With:

- an explanation as to the background of Big Reading and why it is designed as it is;
- a definition of the five 'key skills' of reading that every child needs to master;
- a journey through each of the five 'key skills' of reading;
- a Big Reading lesson format that leads and supports the teacher in planning for the needs of their class;
- sample lesson plans to enable the teacher to begin teaching Big Reading with confidence;
- references to the 'Oxford Reading Criterion Scale' (ORCS) that is at the heart of Big Reading and each child's personal reading learning journey;
- the key that will turn 'decoders' into 'readers'.
- a comprehensive guide to organising your reading week within the classroom;
- a plethora of practical Big Reading activities known as **Mini Missions**, which will support further the precision planning, teaching and assessing of reading in the classroom;

- a rationale for why the 'Mini Mission' support materials have been created and why it will become an **integral part of your day-to-day planning and teaching practice**;
- an explanation about how the Mini Mission support materials can be used flexibly within your classroom, both within and beyond the Big Reading session;
- a list of Mini Missions each linked to a point on the 'Oxford Reading Criterion Scale' (ORCS) from the beginning of Reception to the end of Key Stage 2; and
- a Mini Missions activity guide explaining many of the Mini Mission reading activities, as well as other Big Reading activities and strategies that can be used within and beyond the Big Reading session.

A Software Disc With:

- an interactive guide to finding the exact Mini Missions you will need for each child, or group of children, in your class, at the correct 'Standard' for their current reading ability;
- over 450 Mini Missions ranging from Reception to the end of Key Stage 2, covering the vast majority of the individual 'Oxford Reading Criterion Scale' points within each Standard;
- over 150 printable resources to support you and your children completing the Mini Missions. These are an optional extra. Please do not feel driven to 'death by worksheet'. This is not the intention. These printables can be used as worksheets but can also be used to show teachers and children different options in organising their responses to the Mini Missions;
- templates so that you can create your own Mini Missions;

- templates so that you can create Mini Mission Challenges for your class; and
- templates for 'Reading SPIES Log Book' book covers.

Why Teach Big Reading?

Think back to when you were taught to read. Can you remember? If so, what do you remember? Many teachers recall a 'read this extract and answer the questions' type of approach; the extract may have been in a text book or, depending upon the era of education, chalked onto a blackboard! Even now in the 21st century, with many advances in education, many teachers still feel that they are 'doing' reading rather than 'teaching' reading.

Because of the many recent educational foci on 'raising standards in writing', the 'teaching' of reading has taken a back seat. 'The National Literacy Framework' (2006) developed a 'three phase' model for a unit of work. This was developed after research into how boys best learn to write. There were potential flaws in this model; the flaw for reading was that it was side-lined. The focus was on writing and getting children ready to write and although reading was mentioned, the explicit teaching of reading skills was under-utilised.

As educational fashion and foci come and go in reading we maintain that there must be a continuous H.O.R.I.S. (Big Reading terminology - see next column) approach in the classroom, both for monitoring pupils' exposure to reading and the approach to teaching reading across the curriculum.

'H.O.R.I.S.' is not a teacher's imaginary friend, (although that idea could be used effectively in the classroom - see Big Writing) but is:

How **O**ften **R**ead
Is **S**een

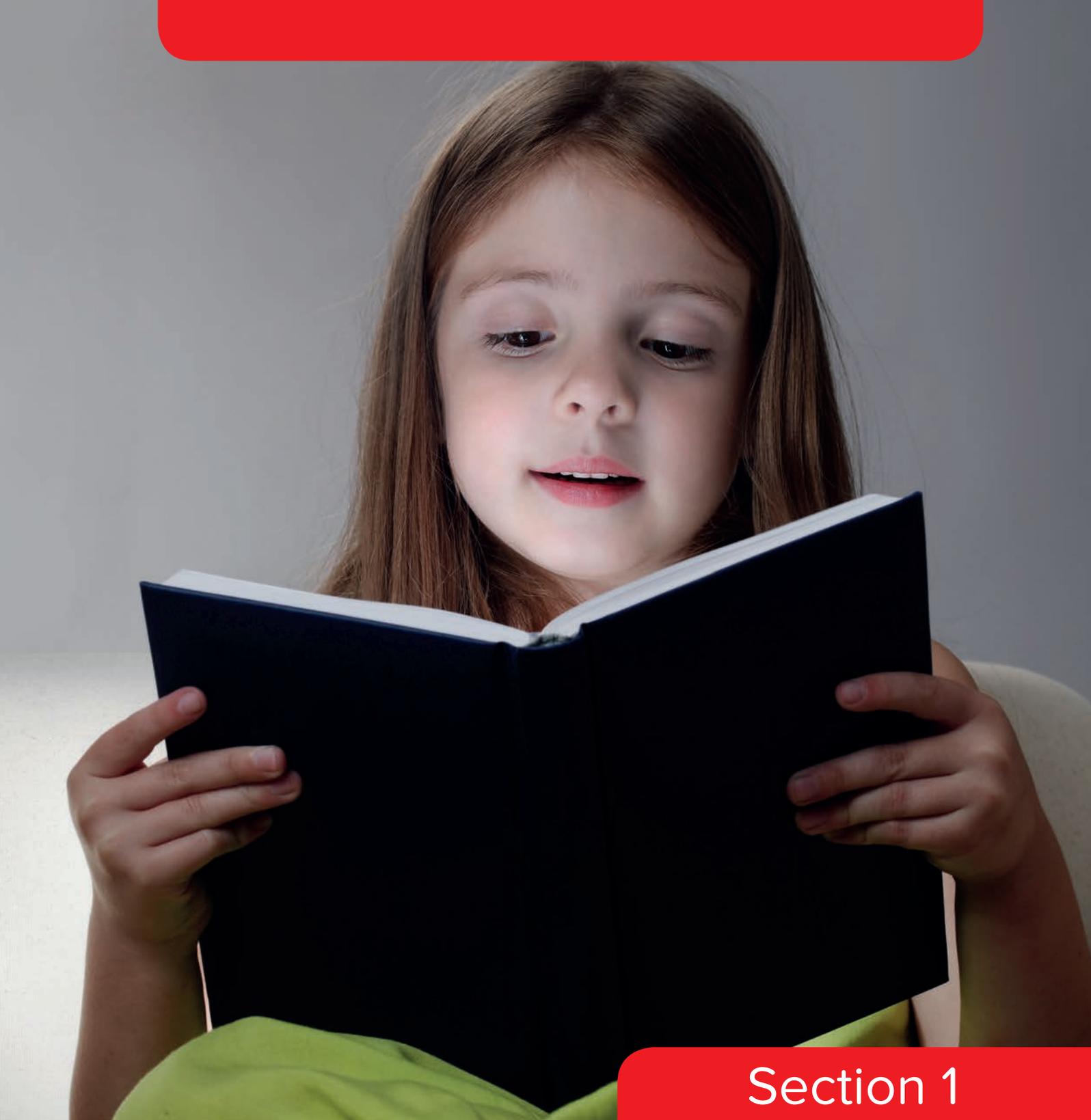
'H.O.R.I.S.' - 'How Often Reading Is Seen' - means scrutinising how often children are being taught reading skills and then given opportunities to practise and reinforce those reading skills within the school day and across the curriculum.

Inspection guidelines are now focused on looking at how rigorously reading is systematically taught through school, the standards in reading across school and those 'H.O.R.I.S.' opportunities.

At this point, it should be noted that 'Big Reading' was developed and trialled over a period of seven years culminating in the spring of 2013. The messages in this book are fundamentally what Andrell Education Limited believes to be the true essence of high quality teaching of reading.

All true educationalists would wish to bring 'Reading for Pleasure' back to the forefront of education. However, with a highly prescriptive and content heavy curriculum, many teachers worry about the management of daily and weekly timetables and how to fit it all in.

As a result, the daily 'read aloud for pleasure' session is often an innocent victim, being unintentionally omitted from the end of the day in many classrooms. Big Reading is both the teaching of reading and reading for pleasure.



Section 1

What is Big Reading?

In the fast-paced, digital age we live in, it is worth considering for a moment why reading is so important and why books are such an important tool.

Numerous international research studies have found that the most important factor in academic success was the amount of time pupils spend reading - not whether books, magazines, newspapers, websites and so on, but that they were actually reading. This research also showed the amount of time spent reading books specifically was the most profitable in the increase of academic success.

This is backed up by research that looked at the amount of time children read each day, comparing this to the number of words per year that children are exposed to, dependent upon the amount they read. The difference is staggering:

Achievement percentile	Minutes of reading per day	Words read per year
90th	40.4	2,357,000
50th	12.0	610,000
10th	1.6	51,000

Source: P.I.R.L.S 2007

In the 'Big' approach to teaching, we firmly believe that **'Words Are Power'**. The more words a person knows, potentially the better their life chances could be.

Although many children enjoy reading, there are lots of children who have not yet found the joys that reading can bring. For them, reading is boring. There are many reasons why this may be the case, including:

- The child has not yet been taught the basic skills needed to read.

- The child has not yet found the right book to 'hook' them into reading.
- The child is reading books that are too difficult, therefore reading is hard work with little reward.
- The child has not yet been able to apply the reading skills they have learnt into 'real-time' reading.
- The child sees reading as uncool.
- The child has little experience of role models in reading, be it at home or elsewhere.

Therefore, it is absolutely essential that all teachers ensure 'reading for pleasure' is at the heart of a school's curriculum, at the heart of a school day and at the heart of a reading lesson. Until we unlock the key to the pleasure of reading, many children will never find the treasure that lies beneath as they get no further than 'barking at print'.

The 'Pleasure Principle' of Reading

Hook Books (*Big Reading terminology*)

'Hook Books' are books that 'hook' children into reading. These are the books that children will find irresistible, funny, compelling and moving. Thus children find they can relate to them. If a child has not yet found the right book for them, 'Hook Books', are a way in, to show children the wide range of attractive books that are on offer to read. Books are not 'stuffy' and boring, but a source of huge entertainment, escapism, information, awe and wonder.

Once a child is 'hooked on reading', other more diverse texts can be introduced to widen their reading repertoires, however, using 'hook books' is extremely important on the journey to becoming a reader.

In Big Reading sessions, short sections of text from longer, quality texts are usually used. This does not bring back the use of the extract which became popular after the introduction of the original National Literacy



Section 5

MINI MISSIONS

THE MINI MISSIONS

Standard 1: Reception (FS2) - Oxford Levels 1+, 2, 3, 4

4 - *Can sequence the important parts of a story that is known to the reader in order. (R)*

- **Retell** - Retell the story you are reading to a friend. You can use the illustrations to help you. (R.1.4.1)
- **My Favourite Parts** - Draw your favourite three parts of the story. Draw them in the order they happen in the story and then tell a friend what is happening in each picture. (R.1.4.2)
- **Order It** - Order illustrations the teacher gives you in the order they happened in the story. (R.1.4.3)

7 - *Can state simple likes/dislikes about familiar texts. (E)*

- **What I Like** - Tell your friend all the things you like about the text you are reading. (E.1.7.1)
- **What I Do Not Like** - Tell your friend about anything you do not like about the text you are reading. (E.1.7.2)
- **My Favourite Part** - What is your favourite part of the text? Draw your favourite part. Tell your teacher about your favourite part. (E.1.7.3)*
- **My Favourite Illustration** - What is your favourite illustration in the text? Draw your favourite illustration. Tell your teacher about your favourite illustration. (E.1.7.4)*
- **My Favourite Character** - Who is your favourite character in the text? Draw your favourite character. Tell your teacher about your favourite character. (E.1.7.5)*

8 - *Can talk about the main points/ key events in a text (e.g. main story setting, events, principle character). (R)*

- Talk about something you have seen in the text. (R.1.8.1)
- Talk about something that has happened in the story. (R.1.8.2)
- Talk about a character you have met in the story. (R.1.8.3)
- Talk about something that has happened in the poem. (R.1.8.4)
- Talk about something that has happened in the rhyme. (R.1.8.5)

9 - *Knows that information can be retrieved from different sources of information such as books, posters and computers. (R)*

- **Show Me** - Show the teacher all the different places within the classroom you can find information. Go home and search for different places you can find information. (R.1.9.1)

Standard 5: Year 4 - Oxford Levels 14, 15, 16

3 - *Can skim read texts to gather the general impression of what has been written. (R)*

- **Skimming For Treasure** - Find as many pieces of 'treasure' as you can by skim-reading the text. Make a note of what it says and the page number it appears on. (R.5.3.1)*
- **Skim-Read** - Give a friend a piece of text you have already read. Ask them to skim-read the text then sum up what they have read. Give your friend a mark for each point they pick up. (R.5.3.2)

4 - *Can scan texts to locate specific information. (R)*

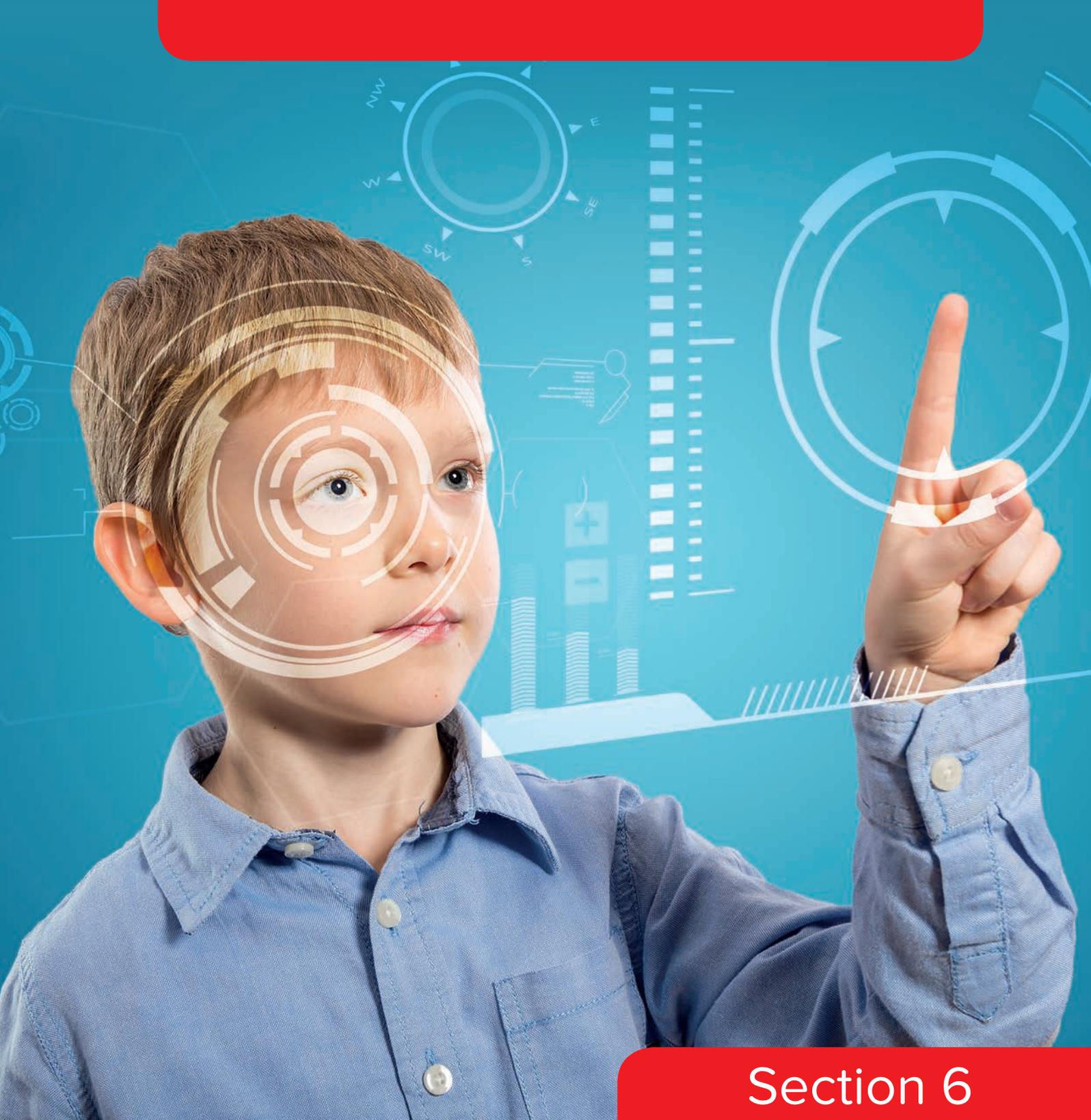
- **Scan It** - Scan the text you have read for adjectives. How many can you find? (R.5.4.1)
- **Scan It** - Scan the text you have read for adjectives. How many can you find? Make a note of your favourites in your 'Swag Bag'. (R.5.4.2)*
- **Scan It** - Scan the text you have read for different ways of opening sentences. How many different ways can you find? (R.5.4.3)
- **Scan It** - Scan the text you have read for different ways of opening sentences. How many different ways can you find? Make a note of your favourites in your 'Swag Bag'. (R.5.4.4)*
- **Scan It** - Scan the text you have read for _____. How many can you find? (R.5.4.5)*

5 - *Can use text marking to support retrieval of information or ideas from texts (e.g. highlighting, notes in the margin). (R)*

- **Highlight: Fiction** - Read through a chapter of your book. Use a highlighter to text mark the main and most important points (please make sure the text is photocopied first!). (R.5.5.1)
- **Highlight: Non-fiction** - Read through the text given to you by the teacher. Use a highlighter to text mark the main and most important points (please make sure the text is photocopied first!). (R.5.5.2)
- **Text 'Think' Mark** - Read through the text given to you by the teacher. Mark the text as you read with any of the following: the most important points; favourite parts; funniest parts; confusing parts, and 'WOW' wonder parts (please make sure the text is photocopied first!). (R.5.5.3)*

6 - *Can summarise and explain main points in a text. (R)*

- **VIPs** - Note down your _____ Very Important Points from the text you have read. (R.5.6.1)
- **Get The Gist** - Summarise the text you are reading in 10 words. (R.5.6.2)*
- **Story Star** - Complete a 'Story Star' to summarise and explain the main points of the story you are reading. (R.5.6.3)*
- **Story Pyramid** - Create a 'Story Pyramid' for the story you are reading. Explain your choices of vocabulary to a friend. (R.5.6.4)*



Section 6

MINI MISSIONS

Activities

THE MINI MISSION ACTIVITIES

In this section you will find descriptions of many of the Mini Mission activities found in this publication. This resource is designed to be used in conjunction with the Mini Missions and the printables on the software CD. The activity descriptions give you a brief overview as to how to play, perform or do each activity.

If the activity has an associated printable it has an asterisk (*) next to it. Also, the most appropriate key skill(s) of reading for each activity are indicated. This will support teachers in choosing the most appropriate activity for the learning identified from the ‘Oxford Reading Criterion Scale’ and ‘Mini Missions’.

The activities are ordered alphabetically so their descriptions are quick and easy to find. These activities can be used for a range of purposes:

- as Mini Missions (linked to the publication and the Software CD);
- as whole class activities as part of the Big Reading lesson;
- as learning and modelling tools in Reading SPIES Team Time;
- as an additional bank of ideas for teaching in general, outside Big Reading;
- as independent activities to support assessment; and
- as homework.

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1. A Letter To The Editor (A) *

Ask children to write a letter to the editor of a magazine, evaluating an article they have read. Make sure they include what they liked about it in terms of:

Purpose

Audience

Language

Structure

Ask them to advise the editor of how they think anything could have been improved in terms of:

Purpose

Audience

Language

Structure

2. Acrostic Poems (R, D)

Take the first name of a character your children are studying. Write an acrostic poem, describing the character, using the clues in the text to inform their poems.

Workhouse was his first home.

Orphaned because of his wolf-like looks.

Longs for a true friend.

Fearless on the surface, but hurts like every other human beneath his exterior.

(Wolfboy, by Rob Lloyd Jones)

3. Action, Description, Dialogue (R, E, D) *

When reading, we can tell a lot about a character by the way they act; the way they talk and how they are described. Ask children to observe a character in a text and gather evidence regarding their characteristics. Which clues give the reader the most evidence to make judgements about the character?

4. Adjective Explorer (E) *

Whilst reading, ask children to look out for and explore the ways in which authors describe their characters, feelings and settings. Ask them to make a collection of exciting descriptions using effective adjectives.

5. Alphagrids (R, E, A, D) *

'Alphagrids' are an exciting and motivating way to reflect on a story or passage of text. After reading, ask the children to find the important pieces of information from the text and record them on the 'Alphagrids' under the related letter of the alphabet. This can be done as a whole class, group, paired or individual grid, depending upon the needs of the learners in the class. To extend the learning further, ask the children to create a 'Quiz' whereby they create questions relating to the text read; the answers need to be found in the 'Alphagrid' somewhere.

'Alphagrids' are so versatile. They can be used for almost any learning in any curriculum area!