

AFTER ONE YEAR AT SCHOOL

ILLUSTRATING THE READING STANDARD

A Good Idea by Bill Nagelkerke; illustrated by Jeffy James

This text is levelled at Green 3.

This humorous narrative is about four animals who want to find some relief from the blazing African sun. The setting may be outside the direct experience of most students, but it is likely to link to their indirect experience of Africa through television, movies, and video.

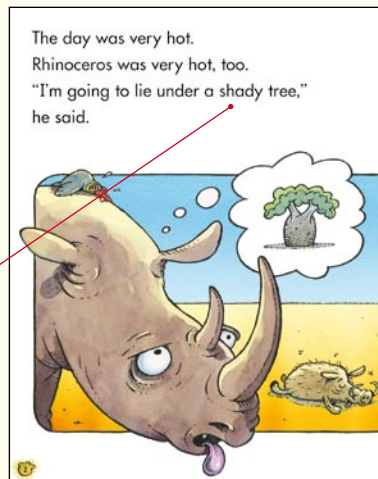
The text has a repetitive, cumulative structure, and much of the story is conveyed through dialogue. The illustrations and other visual language features, such as thought bubbles, speech bubbles, and the use of colour (yellow for heat and blue for shade) support the meaning and add to the humour.

Because *A Good Idea* is available as a big book as well as a small book, students are likely to have been introduced to it within a shared reading lesson.

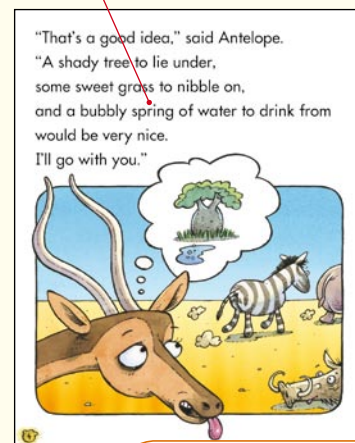
The story's theme is the importance of thinking and co-operation to solve problems.

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.

The student uses their accumulated understanding of the story, their knowledge of language structures, and their knowledge that "y" at the end of a word can have an "ee" sound (as in the familiar word "very") to help them work out the unfamiliar words "shady", "bubbly", and "plenty".

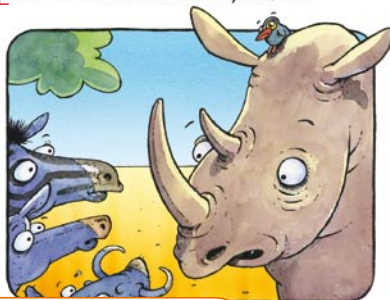


The student works out the meaning of the word "spring" (in this context) by noticing the clues in the rest of the sentence ("bubbly"; "of water to drink from") and by using the illustration.



The student uses the punctuation, including commas and speech marks, to help them with phrasing and to see the links between the ideas in this complex sentence.

"Well..." said Rhinoceros.
"There is enough sweet grass for all of us.
There is lots of water in the bubbly spring.
There is plenty of mud.
And, if you do what I say,
there will be shade for everyone, too."



Rhinoceros made them all get up.
Then he lay down under the shady tree.
"Now you've taken all the shade!"
cried the other animals.

The student may notice that each animal has something to add to the ideas and may use this pattern to make predictions as they read.

The student, perhaps with some teacher prompting, can use what they have already noticed about Rhinoceros in the text and the illustrations to predict what his idea might be and whether the other animals should trust him.

The student notices the repeated sentence structure and also the similarity of meaning in "enough", "lots of", and "plenty".

The student can explain how Rhinoceros's idea worked.

The student can express an opinion about why the author chose to call the text *A Good Idea* when there are actually many ideas in the text.