

Teaching Guide

Flex Picture Ebook

"Ben wants a bat"

Dear readers, dear companions,

As you know, you have in your hands an illustrated digital book, in which anyone can adjust the legibility of the text and illustrations, choose audio playback and activate sound and visual animations.

The book is accompanied by this guide, produced with the help of suggestions from children, young people, educators, therapists and teachers who have read this EPUB before you, and who have also helped us to refine it.

There are lots of suggestions in this guide, so it's up to you to decide whether to adopt one, a few or none of them!

Most of the tips can be useful to all readers, but some have been designed specifically for readers with specific needs.

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INDIVIDUAL READING

Here are a few tips that accompanying adults can give children to make reading easier:

BEFORE READING

GETTING TO KNOW THE APPLIANCE

If the child has never used a tablet/iPad before...

1. Before switching on the tablet, take the time to explore the object with your child. How big is it? What shape, colour and weight does it have?
2. Let the child explore the different buttons freely. If necessary, present the buttons and let the child press them.
3. It is important to familiarise the child with the use of the tablet and the functions of the EPUB3 format. Explain how to connect to the book, how to open it, how to change pages, adjust the font size, etc.
4. You may be able to find an online tutorial aimed at children in general and children with disabilities in particular (at the time of writing this guide, we had not found one).

If your child has difficulty understanding the vocabulary associated with setting the parameters for text, illustrations and animations ("confirm", "view", "zoom") or needs help to do so...

1. Explain the meaning of words and give examples that the child can understand.

2. Introduce the words by associating them with the corresponding gestures, getting the child to practise them.

If the child has difficulty finding the buttons: actor's voice button, visual and sound animation button, etc.

1. Show the child where these buttons are and discuss where they are on the screen.
2. Ask the child to practise pressing the buttons.
3. If the child is blind, show them how to use specialist screen-reading applications.

If the child does not know the main symbols/icons (arrow for forward, read, loudspeaker)...

Introduce the symbols/icons and their functions, getting children to practise using them.

Idea: create cards with the symbol or icon on the front and the corresponding function on the back. Put the cards face up on a table and ask the child to choose one and then to say which function corresponds to the symbol printed on the card. The child can then check their answer by turning the card over.

If the child is not independent in choosing the level of simplification of the images, because he or she does not yet know the numbers 1 to 5...

Briefly present the levels, choosing an order:

- From the most complex to the simplest

by pointing out what is gradually disappearing

- From the simplest to the most complex

noting what is gradually added

- Using level 3 as an intermediate starting point

moving to the left, the drawing becomes more complete, moving to the right, it becomes simpler (this mode, starting from the centre, is the same as the one used to introduce the possibility of adjusting the speed of the narrator's voice and the spacing between letters, words and lines in the Thorium reading application)

- Starting with the level considered most appropriate

then leaving it up to the child to develop a more complex or simpler concept

If the child has difficulty moving on...

1. Discuss the shape of the tablet with the child and identify where the edges are.
2. Show the child the different ways of turning the page: by touching the right-hand edge of the tablet with the finger, by sliding the finger to the left-hand side, or by clicking once on the right-hand edge of the screen.

PREPARATION AND CONFIGURATION

Remember to make adjustments according to your child's needs:

- **The ambient light...**

1. Regulate natural light (via blinds and curtains).
2. Adjust the artificial lighting by choosing the dimming level of the lights if possible, otherwise by switching the various light sources on and off.

- **Screen brightness...**

Adjust the brightness of the screen with your child.

- **The size and colour of the mouse pointer (if used on a computer).**

Choose the size and colour of the mouse pointer with the child.

- **The position of the shelf.**

1. If necessary, place the tablet on a reading surface so that the child does not have to bend over to read the book.
2. Make sure that the table surface is not slippery. If necessary, use a non-slip mat.

PRESENTATION OF THE STORY

If the child doesn't know what a kitchen glove, a bat, a cave or an octopus is, because they haven't experienced them yet...

Prepare objects, miniatures and tactile models to supplement the information in the text.

For example: a real oven mitt, a bat figurine or cuddly toy, a tactile model of a cave. These objects should not be presented before the reading, but kept close at hand and used if necessary.



Figure 1 Representation of the cave, created by the team at the Institut des Jeunes Aveugles (IJA) in Toulouse (France)



Figure 2 Bat puppet made by the Lietuvos Aklujų ir Silpnaregių Ugdymo Centras (LASUC) team in Vilnius (Lithuania).

If children need to get to know the character before they can concentrate on the story...

Introduce Ben and his character, for example :

"This is the story of Ben, a very determined, even a little stubborn, child. If he sets his mind to doing something, no one can change his mind! In this story, he insists on having a pet at home, but not a dog, or a cat, or a goldfish, but... a bat!"

If the child needs help understanding the story...

Create a bank of images to work on the vocabulary covered in the story before reading, for all the unusual words (octopus, mosquito, bat, cave, etc.). Print and laminate the pictures so that the child can handle them. Print and laminate the words too, then ask the child to match the words with the pictures.

- *Download some examples of image banks from the Flex Picture Ebook website, in the "resources" section <https://flexpictureebook.eu/>.*

DURING PLAYBACK

If the child does not understand the differences between the levels of simplification of the image...

Explore each level with the child, explaining its characteristics, for example :

- Level 1: Complete drawing
- Level 2: Drawing without superfluous elements (shadow, pattern, decor)
- Level 3: Drawing without colour shading or perspective.
- Level 4: The scenery disappears, leaving only the characters.
- Level 5: The final details, such as the characters' noses, disappear! Only the essential elements remain.

If the child has difficulty maintaining attention throughout the reading and gets distracted...

Incorporate into the reading body movements that imitate those present in the story at that moment. For example, by imitating the flight of the bat, the buzzing of the mosquitoes, turning the light on and off or imitating Ben's facial expressions.

And don't forget to take breaks!

If the child is not active in reading...

Ask them questions that encourage them to explore the text, images and sounds independently, going back to the text if necessary.

If the child chooses a level of simplification of the image that is too simple or too complex for them...

Let the child choose the initial level of simplification. If the level proves inadequate during reading, the child can then change it.

If they ask you for help in choosing the level, you can show the child level 5 of the first picture in the story and ask them to describe what they see, then move on to level 4 and ask them the same question, and so on down to level 1. This will enable you to identify the level that seems to correspond best to the child, and also to identify precisely what the child sees or doesn't see.

If the child chooses to read the story himself, but then asks to switch to the narrative voice...

Accept this choice, as the child may gradually tire. They may discover that the story is longer than they thought and therefore want to use the narrator's voice.

If a child can read but has an attention span of less than five minutes...

The interactive story is very helpful, because it is motivating even when the child usually has great difficulty concentrating. Let them explore the images to get to know the story through the animations, without forcing them to read.

If your child has difficulty understanding the text and images...

Keep the bank of images that you have created and worked on with the child before reading nearby. It can be used to develop the vocabulary relating to caves, bats, mosquitoes, octopuses, etc.

If the child is just beginning to decipher...

Zoom in on the sentences in the actor's voice so that they appear larger than the rest of the text.

If children learn syllabically...



Create SOUNDS / SYLLABES / PICTURES labels to help him merge sounds.

If keeping your hands busy helps children to maintain their attention...

Print out the colouring pages, which can be downloaded from the Flex Picture Ebook website, in the *"resources"* section <https://flexpictureebook.eu/> . The child can colour it in while reading, or interrupt the reading for a few minutes.

If children need to integrate the limits of their body...

Organise sessions to raise awareness of the body schema by creating correspondences between the animal's body parts and the child's body (teeth, claws, nails, wings, arms, etc.).

If children are discovering the animal world...

Provide an information sheet on each animal. Present their characteristics in the form of a riddle (for example: what is the octopus's habitat?) Create cards that draw comparisons between the animals and their anatomical differences.

➤ *Find out more about bats at the end of this guide*

If your child is blind or partially sighted and needs to explore and understand images...

With a visually impaired child, start by using detail level 3, rather than detail levels 1 or 2.

With a blind child :

- Bring along objects, stuffed animals and 3D models to play with during the reading.

Make relief drawings (relief ink, thermogonflage, or PIAF oven) using the highest level of illustration simplification (level 5). You will have made a selection of the illustrations you need to understand.

We advise you to represent :

- The main characters, respecting the notion of scale between them, or an element that allows the scales to be compared, for example with a sample object that is represented with each character).
 - A few plates of illustrations from the book, enabling blind and partially sighted children to share the same illustrations. Blind children have the same illustrations as the others, so they can use them in a collaborative way.
- ***Download a few files of ready-to-use relief drawings related to this story from the Flex Picture Ebook website, in the "resources" section <https://flexpictureebook.eu/>***

AFTER THE READING

Once the reading is over, the accompanying adult can check that the child has understood the story...

Ask a few simple questions, such as:

1. Where are the bats and Ben in the cave?
2. What sounds can you hear in the cave?
3. What happens in the picture when Ben turns off the light?
4. What do bats eat?
5. What is Ben's idea at the end of the story?

READING IN CLASS OR IN SMALL GROUPS

This digital book can be used collectively.

Each child in the group can follow the same story, but with different text and illustration settings to suit their specific needs.

As part of a group activity, if you ask the children questions and the answer is also in level 5 of the illustration, all the children will be able to answer the question.

GROUP READING WITH AT LEAST ONE VISUALLY IMPAIRED CHILD

Some suggestions for preparing the session :

Individually:

- First present the book individually to the visually impaired child, before presenting it to the class, so that they can familiarise themselves with the EPUB functions and use the computer or tablet independently.
- Teach it to use all the functions.

In class, if the visually impaired child so wishes :

- He or she can introduce the various EPUB functions to the class, playing an active guiding role.

- At the end of the reading, they can ask their classmates comprehension questions (like those asked by the adult, for example: "How will Ben convince his parents to adopt the octopus?" or "What animal would you like to have?").

If the visually impaired child gets too close to the interactive whiteboard on which the EPUB is projected with Thorium, this can give them a fragmented view of the text and images...

Follow the story in parallel on a computer or tablet.

If the tactile surface is too large for the child to interact with the projected image...

The child can point to the area on the interactive whiteboard and the teacher can press the area from their computer or tablet.

GROUP READING WITH PUPILS WITH COMPREHENSION DIFFICULTIES

Present each page starting with image simplification level 5 and working down (4 - 3 - 2 - 1), so that the images gradually become more complex.

At each change of level, ask the children questions: Where is Ben? What is he doing? What is he doing? When? How? What's going on?

Ask questions about identifying the elements:

Example: Is this a potholder? A ski glove (Vocabulary)

It is very important to gather the children's perceptions of what is explicit and implicit in the image, which are often linked to the decorative elements.

Ask the children what helped them to understand the illustration.

This activity can be extended by asking the children :

- Does the image add information to the text?
- Does the image only contain decorative elements?
- What in the image helped you to understand the story better?
- What in the story helped you to better understand the image?

This reading can be organised over several sessions...

1-hour sessions, every morning for 1 week, for example. The list of questions to ask, relating to the different elements that would be zoomed in and/or out, should be prepared in advance.

The presentation of the story can be divided into several stages. Here's a suggestion:

- The first 5 pages of text and illustrations :
 - From: "Today... Ben wants a bat". ... à
 - To : "One that sleeps upside down. A bat!"
- The following 6 pages of text and illustrations:
 - From: "But really, Ben, that's not possible" ... to
 - Until: "Okay. The cave, he gets it. He's willing to let it go."
- The following 2 pages of text and illustrations:

- From: "But at night, it's easy..." to
- Until: "And then, you know, bats eat little mice!"
- The following 4 pages of text and illustrations:
 - From: "Ben frowns. That's not true" to
 - Until: "He's looking for something to say, but frankly, he's run out of ideas."
- The following 4 pages of text and illustrations, right to the end:
 - From: "Anyway, Ben, I don't even see why I'm arguing. ... à
 - Until : "A much better idea..."

This reading can be organised in small groups...

Present the book in the same way, dividing the class into groups of 4 or 5 children. This allows the children to respond more individually.

ACTIVITIES

TO TAKE YOU FURTHER

Search and find (vocabulary, enumeration...)

Choose an illustration showing Ben in the living room.

1. Ask the child to list the objects they see in the illustration. When they name an object, they can press and hold it down to make it appear larger.
2. Press and hold down an object to make it appear large on the screen and ask the children to name it (table, lamp, cushion, vase, etc.).
3. Name an object and ask the child to find it in the picture.
4. Ask the child to look for the same object in the house as the one they have named and make it appear large on the screen.
5. For blind or partially-sighted children: the adult names an object in the story and the child looks for it among a series of 3D objects.

Body expression

1. Like Ben, mime the bat (when it flaps its wings, when it sleeps upside down...). Use the animations to imitate the character's movements.
2. Using the audio only and the written text (without showing the illustrations), ask the child to mime the story, using the narrator's indications of Ben's body language (when he thinks, when he sulks, etc.).

Listen to

Listen to the sounds of the bat's flight, the sound of the cave, the mosquito's flight and the mouse's cry from the Flex Picture Ebook website, in the "resources" section

<https://flexpictureebook.eu/>. Then ask the children to listen to one of the sounds at random (without looking at the corresponding image) and have them guess which sound it is.

Language and expression

1. Set the book to "image only" mode (in the "text and image" menu) and ask the children to tell the story in the narrator's place, using the images and animations as inspiration.
2. Play "Don't forget the words": after each page, ask the children to repeat the text read by the narrator, and if they have a memory lapse, press on the sentence to make it repeat itself.
3. Lead a debate based on the following questions: Which animal would you like to adopt? Is adopting pets good for animal welfare? Make a list of animals that can and cannot be adopted... Why or why not?

Reading

1. Read other albums about bats.
2. Organise a rally to read the albums in the Ben series: identify Ben's character and personality traits in the different books: his irony, his imagination, his repartee, his taste for mischief, his relationships with his parents and friends, etc.

Writing

1. Imagine what will happen after the end of the book: will Ben have a pet?
2. Write a dialogue in the style of Ben, with a request that is impossible to satisfy and some far-fetched arguments.

Plastic expression

1. Draw a bat or Ben's character, step by step, using the different levels of simplification to break down the image.
2. Create a bat mask with glow-in-the-dark paint!
3. Create a model of a bat cave, using papier-mâché for example.
4. Model an octopus using hardening modelling clay. Use a figurine to go from 2D (illustration in the book) to 3D (modelling).

Discovering the world and general culture

1. Use the information in the story to draw up an identity card for the bat! What does it eat? Where does it live? What sounds does it make? How does it move? And so on.
2. Research the animals and creatures in the story: bat, octopus, vampire, etc. Physical description of the animal, living environment, reproduction, lifespan, movements, food, etc.
3. If possible, visit a wildlife park to see the bats for real.
4. If possible, invite the children to touch a miniature or, alternatively, a cuddly toy representing a realistic bat, preferably with contrasting colours and textures.
5. Read a documentary.

6. Watch a video.

Presentation of bats

The great bat family

Bats are mammals belonging to the order Chiroptera. With over 1,200 described species, they are the most diverse mammals after rodents. By comparison, the order of primates, to which humans belong, comprises just 182 species! Bats are closely related to insectivores such as hedgehogs, moles and shrews, but also to pangolins and carnivores, which explains why they occasionally transmit their virus to the latter via their excrement or urine, which they drop from the tops of trees or caves where they rest.

Do you know?

Bats live between 10 and 15 years, although some can live up to 40 years!

The super-power of bats

There are two main groups of bats: microchiroptera, which live everywhere on the planet except in regions that are too cold, and megachiroptera, which are larger and only found in warmer countries. Microchiroptera are small bats, such as pipistrelles and rhinolophids, found in Europe. They overwinter in cold climates or migrate further south. They feed on insects such as mosquitoes, which they hunt at night using their sonar, known as the echolocation organ, which corresponds to the fact that they send out an inaudible, very high-pitched (very high frequency) call that comes back to them when it encounters an obstacle. This ability enables them to find their bearings and hunt at night, their main period of activity.

5 fruits and vegetables a day

Most species of micro-chiropters live in colonies of several hundred individuals, but there are also large bats or mega-chiropters found in

tropical countries, such as flying foxes or flying foxes, which have no echolocation organs. The latter can be active during the day and feed mainly on fruit.

Source: Toulouse Natural History Museum team (France)

Raising awareness of visual impairment

With a group of sighted children, use the book as a tool to raise awareness of accessibility and visual impairment:

1. Comparing digital books and original printed books: what's in it for me? Why is a digital book more accessible than a printed book? What are the differences and similarities?
2. Using glasses to simulate visual impairment: participants are divided into pairs. Each pair chooses a pair of simulation glasses. One of the two children in the pair looks at the digital book through the simulation glasses, while the other child has to configure the book to make it accessible to his or her partner.
3. Lead a debate on the following questions: What is a book (printed, digital, audio, written, etc.)? What is an inclusive society? An inclusive school?

European partners

France

Les Doigts Qui Rêvent, Talant

Ludosens, Bègles

Institute for the Young Blind (IJA), Toulouse

Austria

Johannes Kepler University, Linz

Italy

Fondazione Robert Hollman, Padova

AbilNova, Trento

Lithuania

Lietuvos Aklujų ir Silpnaregių Ugdymo Centras (LASUC), Vilnius