

Fiction/Non-Fiction/Poetry			Text: <i>The owl who was afraid of the dark</i> by Jill Tomlinson – excerpt from Chapter 1					
	Focus skill	Opening task	Follow-up					
Monday	Decoding and fluency	Read the excerpt with the children. Children to: - echo read (adult reads and child repeats) - paired read (take turns to read)	Ask chn to sound out and blend the sounds in any words they don't recognise, or identify tricky parts in tricky words. Then, underline any words they need help to decode. Discuss these and support with sounding out and blending. Break apart longer words into chunks and decode each chunk before blending.					
Thursday	Vocabulary	Re-read the text, making a note of any new or less familiar vocabulary, including: <table><tr><td>ruff</td><td>knackety</td><td>mumbled</td><td>firmly</td><td>patience</td></tr></table>	ruff	knackety	mumbled	firmly	patience	Find out/discuss what the words mean (ruff = feathers around the neck, like a neck frill on an old-fashioned shirt) and say each one in a new sentence. Also discuss any other words which were unfamiliar. The author describes Plop as fat and fluffy. Can you think of other adjectives to describe him? Can you find synonyms for these words? Discuss the phrase, 'knackety knees'. What do we think it means? What makes 'knackety' an effective adjective, even though it's a made up word? (Discuss the alliteration.)
ruff	knackety	mumbled	firmly	patience				
Friday	Retrieval	often, we can find answers to questions by looking for a key word in the text and then reading around it to locate the answer. Find the key word (highlighted) from each question and locate the answer by reading around it in the text. <i>How are Plop's eyes described?</i> <i>What was Plop afraid of?</i> <i>Why did Mrs Barn Owl say, "Oh dear"?</i>	<i>Who was Plop?</i> <i>Where did Plop live and who with?</i> <i>What made Plop unusual?</i> <i>Why was Mrs Barn Owl going to need a lot of patience?</i> <i>How do you think she will help Plop to overcome his fear?</i> <i>What can we learn about barn owls from the excerpt?</i> <i>Is the story written in past tense or present tense? How do you know?</i> <i>Give examples from the text.</i>					

Chapter 1

Dark is exciting

Plop was a baby barn owl, and he lived with his mummy and daddy at the top of a very tall tree in a field.

Plop was fat and fluffy. He had a beautiful heart-shaped ruff. He had enormous, round eyes. He had very knackety knees. In fact he was exactly the same as every baby barn owl that has ever been – except for one thing. Plop was afraid of the dark.

“You can’t be afraid of the dark,” said his mummy. “Owls are never afraid of the dark.”

“This one is,” Plop said.

“But owls are night birds,” she said.

Plop looked down at his toes.

“I don’t want to be a night bird,” he mumbled. “I want to be a day bird.”

“You are what you are,” said Mrs Barn Owl firmly.

“Yes, I know,” agreed Plop, “and what I are is afraid of the dark.”

“Oh dear,” said Mrs Barn Owl.

It was clear that she was going to need a lot of patience. She shut her eyes and tried to think how best she could help Plop not to be afraid. Plop waited. His mother opened her eyes again.

