



# Ticking-clock quicksand

Verity Croker

## Focus phonics

ur as in surf, turns, further, fur, turn

ar as in starts, bark, far, arms, hard, barks, start, smart, harder

ai as in wait, tail, waits

## Tricky words

all, are, as, be, come, do, go, has, he, her, here, his, I, into, is, like, little, loves, me, my, no, of, oh, one, onto, our, out, pull, push, put, says, she, so, some, the, there, to, we, what, when, you

## Book summary

Bud the dog has got stuck in quicksand on the beach. His owners try to get him out, but they need the help of many friends in order to finally bring him to safety.

## Learning intention

**Phonics:** To decode words with the r-controlled vowel sounds /ar/, /ur/ and the vowel digraph /ai/ that feature in the story, and extend to other known words with the same phonemes. Also mention adjacent consonants when appropriate, e.g. smart. /s/ /m/ /ar/ /t/

### Comprehension:

- Explain the meaning of words in context
- Make inferences from the text
- Make connections
- Answer questions
- Visualise

### Fluency:

- Pay attention to punctuation when reading, pausing and changing tone as appropriate, especially for different characters
- Read with appropriate emphasis and intonation to support the meaning of the text

## Before reading

**Story discussion:** Look at and discuss the cover. Ask: What do you think is happening in the illustration? Share ideas. Read the title together. Ask: What is 'quicksand'? (sinking sand) What is meant by the words 'Ticking-clock'? (time could run out) Where do you think this story takes place? Look at the title page to compare the illustration to the cover. Ask: What is different in this illustration? (the dog is in the sand) Who is the author? (Verity Croker) Have you read any other stories by Verity? If so, say the title and what you thought of it. Look at the back cover. Read the blurb and discuss its meaning.

**Quick phonics warm-up:** Read the words on the inside front cover with the focus phonemes /ur/, /ar/ and /ai/. Flip through the story to find and read words with these same focus phonemes. Build the focus word *surf* with letter cards. Think of words that rhyme with *surf*. List these to read together, e.g. *turf*, *smurf*. Point out any with adjacent consonants like *smurf*.

**Vocabulary check:**

object (noun) p 10 a thing that can be seen or touched

inch (verb) p 13 to move along slowly and carefully

**Morphology:** suffix -ing is added to a verb to make the present tense, e.g. grinning, clapping p 24. These two words also have adjacent consonants. Say the words slowly decoding the sounds: /g/ /r/ /i/ /n/ /i/ /ng/, grinning; /c/ /l/ /a/ /p/ /i/ /ng/, clapping. Look for more words in the story with the -ing suffix, e.g. gripping, getting. (Notice the consonant sometimes doubles after a short vowel sound when adding -ing, e.g. grin/grinning.)

**Etymology:** Quicksand is loose wet sand that sucks things into it; it is not fast moving but is called 'quick' because things that move look like they are alive. Quick is an old word meaning 'living, alive'. From Middle English *quyksande*, from Old English *cwecesand* ('quicksand'), equivalent to quick ('living') + sand. Think of other words starting with quick. (quickstep, quickfire) In these cases the word *quick* does mean fast.

**Tricky word practice:** Display the tricky words *like* and *has*. Ask: What are the tricky parts of these words? i-e is the tricky part of *like* as it says /igh/; *like* says /l/ /igh/ /k/; s is the tricky part of *has* as it says /z/; *has* says /h/ /a/ /z/. Practise saying and spelling these tricky words.

## During reading

**Read the story:** If you want to break the reading into two sessions, the end of p 13 is a good point to stop. Students can finish the reading in a second group session or for homework. Reading could follow one or more of the following approaches:

- Start by reading the text to students, then invite them to take over the reading. On p 3, ask: What made Bud the dog run off? (he was chasing gulls) How does Emma know that he is in quicksand? (she sees Bud sinking in the sand) Which words tell you in the text? (sink, sinking, sunk, deeper and deeper) How far did Bud sink? (to the tops of his legs) On pp 4-5, what are Emma and Trent trying to do? (creep along the sand to reach Bud) What stops them reaching Bud? (fear of sinking in the sand) How can you tell they are afraid? (their faces in the illustration and the text) What do they need? (help) On pp 6-7, ask: What can you say about Bud? (he is sinking further and he looks scared) Ask: What does 'fear oozing from him' mean? (Bud looked really scared) How can you tell Bud is scared? (the look on his face)
- Students read silently at their own pace; listen to each student in turn as they read a brief passage.

**Phonics support:** Remind students to sound out and blend the letters as necessary to read any unfamiliar words, but encourage them to read words with familiar letters and sounds fluently on sight if they can, without sounding out. If students get stuck on a word, model how to sound out and blend the sounds in the word. Encourage students to help each other with sounding out and blending and praise good use of this strategy especially with words containing the focus phonemes /ur/, /ar/ and /ai/ along with adjacent consonants.

Find words that rhyme in the story, e.g. licks/flicks; grip/slip; link/sink. Say the words slowly to hear each sound and then blend, e.g. /l/ /i/ /k/ /s/, licks.

Locate or display these words: Trent's legs p 11, Bud's tail p 11, Linda's cord p 24, and ask: What

do the apostrophes tell us in these words? (this is a possessive apostrophe showing something belongs to someone) Make up a phrase about something personal for yourself using an apostrophe, e.g. Jane's hat.

Find comparatives in the story with -er on the end. These occur when two things are compared, e.g. p 13 nearer, p 15 higher. Look for more examples in the text. Read the words and remember that er sounds like /u/.

**Comprehension support:** Pause occasionally to talk about the text and encourage students to look for connections. On p 7, ask: How do Trent and Kim look? (worried) How would they say the words in the speech bubble? Read the words as though you are them.

On p 13, why is it hard to grip Bud? (because his fur is short and wet) How would you feel if you were Emma? Visualise yourself. What would you be doing?

## After reading

**Apply learning:** Discuss the text. Ask: What have you learned from this story? Which page is your favourite? Why do you say that? How do you connect with it? Do you think this is a fiction or a non-fiction text and why? Could it have been based on a true story? What did Verity (the author) need to know before writing this text?

**Comprehension:** Ask: What was the problem and solution in this story? How many people were needed in the human chain to pull Bud out? (8) What were the main things that helped pull out Bud in the end? (the cord Linda brought and Baxter as he was big and strong) How should the word 'pull' be read on pp 21 and 23? (loudly as it's in bold and it tells everyone to pull at the same time) Read the sentence on p 21 together. "'Keep pulling! 1, 2, 3, **pull!**" yells Baxter'. Review the text together retelling the sequence of events and the order that people came to help. Who was first? Next? Was there a funny part to the story? (pp 22-23 when they all fall on top of each other) How did they all feel on p 24? (happy and relieved) Read and discuss the questions on the inside back cover.

**Fluency:** Choose a passage from the book and model how to read it fluently, paying attention to punctuation when reading, pausing and changing tone as appropriate for different characters. Notice and reflect the speech marks and quotation marks in your reading. Students read the same passage, copying your reading. (echo-reading) Choral-read part of the text together to build fluency and self-confidence. Students then choose another brief passage and read it fluently with expression to their partner, then swap over. They practise speed-reading the list of focus words on the inside front cover to encourage automaticity.

**Spelling and writing through dictation:** Read out the following passage for students to write. It uses words and sentences from the text as these are decodable. The focus is on encoding (spelling) rather than creating content.

(page 13)

"Can you ring for help? I do not think we can do this with just us," I tell her.

Erin nods, then rings Caz.

"Quick, Caz, quick!" says Erin. "And bring Fred."

Soon Caz and Fred are running up to us. We all get flat on the sand, Caz gripping Fred, Fred gripping Erin, Erin gripping Kim, Kim gripping Trent, and Trent gripping me tight. I inch nearer to Bud. I am near now, but I cannot get a grip on his short wet fur.

## Follow-up activities

Students complete the follow-up activities:

### **Worksheet 1: Phonics**

Word sort – ur, ar words. Sort, read and write words.

### **Worksheet 2: Comprehension**

Fill in a story framework. Find out meanings of words.

### **Worksheet 3: Science**

Do a quicksand experiment.

### **Worksheet 4: Geography**

Read information about quicksand. Where does quicksand occur?

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## Worksheet 1: Phonics

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. Word sort

Use a highlighter to highlight the /ur/ or /ar/ vowel sounds in the words below. Then read the words aloud.

surf

barks

turn

smart

bark

start

starts

harder

turns

further

hard

fur

far

arms

### 2. Sort the words into the correct list and then read them to a partner.

ur	ar

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## Worksheet 1: Phonics - continued

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Write words with /ur/ and /ar/.

Fill in the spaces with either /ur/ or /ar/.

Write the word again underneath and read it out loud. Draw a picture in the space below the word to show you understand what the word means.

**Fill in the space with 'ur'**

f _ _  _____	t _ _ n  _____	s _ _ f  _____
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**Fill in the space with 'ar'**

b _ _ k  _____	sm _ _ t  _____	h _ _ d  _____
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## Worksheet 2: Comprehension

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Fill in the story framework below.

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Characters:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Setting:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Problem*

**What happened first?**

**Next?**

**Next?**

**Next?**

*Solution*

**How was the problem solved?**

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## Worksheet 2: Comprehension - continued

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Vocabulary

Find out the meaning of these words (you can use a dictionary or go online) and write your own definition. Draw a small picture next to the definition to show what the word means.

Word	Meaning	Picture
inch		
object		
oozing		
quicksand		
gripping		



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## Worksheet 3: Science

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Learn about quicksand

Read the following information with a friend or listen to your teacher read it aloud.

### **Quicksand**

Real quicksand is hard to get out of, but according to current studies it is impossible for a person to be completely drawn under by quicksand. In fact, humans can float in it!

### **What is quicksand made of?**

Quicksand is made of a combination of fine sand, clay and salt water.

### **The science of quicksand**

If you move your body quickly quicksand turns to liquid very fast. The faster you move the more liquid it becomes. This is why our body begins to sink if we move fast and panic in quicksand. We will never go all the way under though because the quicksand is denser (thicker, more compact) than our bodies. We will get stuck, but we won't get sucked all the way to the bottom. Our lungs also help keep us afloat because they are filled with air.

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## Worksheet 3: Science - continued

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do a quicksand experiment

### Cornflour quicksand

This is a quick and easy science experiment.

The cornflour fluid gets thicker when force is applied (e.g. if you stir it fast) and more fluid when that force is removed. The fluid simulates real quicksand. It is easy to sink into but more difficult to pull free from.

### Experiment

*You will need:*

A large bowl

Cornflour

Water

Food colouring (optional)

Wooden spoon

*Instructions:*

1. Find an area that can get a bit messy and is easy to clean up.
2. Mix 2 measures of cornflour with 1 measure of water. For example, if you have 2 cups of cornflour, mix it with 1 cup of water.
3. Add a few drops of food colouring just for fun (optional).
4. You can use the wooden spoon to stir the mixture, but it can be difficult. Use your hands to enjoy the oozy quicksand feeling.
5. Have fun exploring the Cornflour Quicksand.
6. Make it into balls, let it flow through your fingers.
7. Store the Cornflour Quicksand in a lidded container to enjoy later.
8. When you are finished, put it in a rubbish bin as it can clog up your sink.

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## Worksheet 4: Geography

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Where does quicksand occur?

Read the following information with a friend or listen to your teacher read it aloud.

Although quicksand can occur anywhere in the world, it is most likely to form in areas with natural springs, coastal areas, riverbanks, marshes and swamps.

These areas usually have loose sandy soil which can become saturated with water. When the loose sand particles mix with the water it causes a mixture known as quicksand.

2. Match the location to the definition

Draw a line to connect the location to its correct definition. If you are unsure, you can discuss with a partner or do some research on the internet.

Natural springs

An area of low-lying ground which is flooded in the wet season or high tide.

Coastal areas

An area of natural land where water collects.

River banks

A place where water from under the ground flows to the surface.

Marshes

The land along the edge of a river.

Swamps

Land or sea areas that border the shoreline.

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## Worksheet 4: Geography - continued

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Escaping from quicksand

Work with a partner to read the following pairs of suggestions for escaping from quicksand.

One of the suggestions is true and one is false. Discuss with your partner or do some research to work out which suggestion you think is true. Tick the suggestion you think is correct.

When you are free, roll onto your side and roll free of the quicksand.

OR

When you are free, get to your feet and jump across the quicksand.

Try and push yourself deeper into the quicksand.

OR

Allow your feet to become free and loose.

Breathe deeply to relax and fill your lungs with air.

OR

Hold your breath for as long as you can.

Move your body quickly, wiggle fast to escape.

OR

Relax and don't panic!

Try and take off your shoes.

OR

Keep your shoes on and put on extra heavy clothing.