



# Spider and Buffalo



## OVERVIEW

This book contains two texts. The first is a traditional tale, *Spider and Buffalo*. This tale is about the unlikely support given to a huge buffalo by a seemingly helpless little spider. The second text, *Fun Facts about the Cape Buffalo*, is a non-fiction text that explores some interesting aspects of the Cape buffalo – its horns, habitat, predators, food, and so on. It includes a glossary, a bibliography, and an index.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

The students will:

- demonstrate an understanding of some of the differences between fiction and non-fiction text
- make reasonable predictions about the likely events in a fiction text
- read a fiction text to confirm, modify, or reject predictions
- recognize and summarize the main points of specific non-fiction passages
- describe the function of non-fiction features, such as a glossary, a bibliography, and an index

## WORDS TO WATCH FOR

baobab	bovine	cud
foe	glands	grazers
matriarch	oxen	oxpeckers
predator	savannah	spindly
sybiosis	wallow	weave

## INTRODUCING THE BOOK

- Talk about the front cover and read the title together. Give the students time to flip through the book. Ask what they notice.
- Discuss the fact that this book contains both fiction and non-fiction. Ask, *Why might we find fiction and non-fiction in the same book?*
- Make a chart called *Comparing Fiction and Non-Fiction*. List the following categories: *Purposes, Fonts and Special Effects, Illustrations and Photographs, and Text Organizers* (chapters, captions, bubbles, boxes, and so on). As you explore the book with the students, ask them to suggest differences between fiction and non-fiction. Record these on the class chart.

## SPIDER AND BUFFALO

### BEFORE READING

- Remind the students of traditional tales such as *The Lion and the Mouse*. Ask, *How did the mouse help the lion?* Discuss the idea that usefulness may not be related to size, and that a small creature may sometimes be able to help a large creature.
- Read the title and page 5 of the text to the students. Ask, *How do you think the spider might help the buffalo?* Ask the students to record their predictions.

### READING THE TEXT: COMPREHENSION

Read with any students needing help.

- Say, *Read pages 6 to 8 silently to find out what the spider's problem is.* Discuss.
- Ask the students to read silently up to the last paragraph on page 9. Discuss the way in which the buffalo helped the spider. Repeat the question, *How do you think the spider might help the buffalo?*
- Ask the students to read silently from the last paragraph on page 9 to the end of page 13. Discuss their earlier predictions and the actual outcome. Give the students the opportunity to modify their predictions.
- Allow time for the students to read the last page of the story. Discuss.

### AFTER READING

- Ask, *Why do you think the author retold this traditional tale?*
- Compare this tale with the well-known tale, *The Lion and the Mouse*.
- Select some multisyllabic words from the text and show the students how to “clap the syllables”.

## FUN FACTS ABOUT THE CAPE BUFFALO

### BEFORE READING

- Ask the students what they already know about buffalo. Read pages 16 and 17 together. Discuss the use of headings, italics (to indicate a glossary entry), photographs, and maps. Discuss the fact that the fictional tale did not include these features.
- Demonstrate how to locate the important information on pages 16 and 17, and write a sentence or two summarizing the key points. Discuss.
- Discuss the use of the speech bubble on page 17. You might ask the students to read these speech bubbles as they read the text, or you might choose to ignore them until after the main text has been read. Either way, leave discussion of the speech bubbles until after the reading of the body text (as described below).
- Guide the students' browsing on pages 18 to 27. At this point, don't read the body text. The purpose is to give the students a “big picture” view of the text structure rather than detail. Read the heading on each double-page spread and guide the students to talk about the purpose of each section.
- Ask, *How do the photographs help us to understand the printed text? What information do the photographs give us?*

### READING THE TEXT: COMPREHENSION

Read with any students needing help.

- Ask the students to read pages 18 and 19 to find out what they can about the physical characteristics of the Cape buffalo.
- Ask the students to tell the group what they found out. Where appropriate, ask them to read aloud sections of the text that support their discussion.

- You could now read pages 20 to 27 with the students. Alternatively, assign different sections of text to pairs of students. After they have read their sections, ask them to share the information they gained. Say, *Read your section of text and write down one or two sentences summarizing the most important points. Be prepared to share what you have found out with the rest of the class.*
- Together, read through all the spider's speech bubbles. Challenge the students to answer the spider's questions, and then enjoy *Spider's Secrets Revealed* (pages 28 and 29).

## AFTER READING

- Revisit the text to find the words in italics. Get the students to check the meanings of these words in the glossary.
- Ask the students to use the index to find specific information about the Cape buffalo. You could ask questions such as, *Where will I find information about symbiosis?... about the Sahara desert?*
- Discuss the features of the bibliography on page 31. If you have another book about buffalo and other large animals that live in grasslands, you could show the students how to include that book in the bibliography. Discuss why a bibliography might have been included in this book, and guide the students to understand that a bibliography shows which books the author has used for research. Point out that these texts could be useful if the students were interested in finding out more about buffalo.

## REVIEWING THE BOOK

- Revisit the class chart, *Comparing Fiction and Non-Fiction*, begun earlier. Review the differences between fiction and non-fiction. Compare what was gained from reading the fiction text and the non-fiction text. Ask, *What did each text tell you about buffalo? In which text would you expect to find the most factual information?*
- If appropriate, review the use of features such as the glossary, the bibliography, and the index for the non-fiction text.
- Give a copy of the **copy master** at the end of these notes to each student and ask them to complete it independently. You could use the completed sheet for assessment.

## INDEPENDENT ACTIVITIES

The students could try these activities.

- Write some new titles for the book *Spider and Buffalo*.
- Design a poster for your school library that promotes the book *Spider and Buffalo*.
- Find some other African tales about animals. How do these tales compare with *Spider and Buffalo*? Summarize your ideas on a chart.
- Rewrite the traditional tale in *Spider and Buffalo* in comic-book format or as a play. Ask some classmates to help you act out your play for the class.
- Develop an outline for a non-fiction text called *Fun Facts about Spiders*. Include chapter headings, main points, and a glossary.
- Research buffalo that live in places other than Africa. Write a report that includes a world map showing where buffalo are found.

# Buffalo Facts

1. Find the words below in one of the two *Spider and Buffalo* texts.
2. Record the page where you found the word.
3. Explain what the word tells us about the Cape buffalo and its environment.

Word	Text Reference	What It Tells Us
Baobab	Page 9	Baobab trees grow in Africa where the Cape buffalo lives.
Bovine		
Cud		
Foe		
Grazers		
Matriarch		
Oxen		
Oxpeckers		
Predator		
Savannah		
Spindly		
Wallow		

Use with *Spider and Buffalo*.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_