

The Mailbox

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Level 3

This book uses a question-and-answer format to explore the items that are likely to arrive in the family letter box. There is variation in sentence structure with some repetition. As new mail items are introduced they are identified in the supporting colour illustrations. The amount of text varies from one to four lines and is placed consistently on the page. Direct speech is introduced.

Getting ready for reading

Collect a sample of the range of postal items listed in the book. Show children the items you have collected and identify them by name: *This is a bill ... this is a card*, and so on.

Play 'What has the postman brought?' Say: *I have something from the letter box.* Children try to identify what it could be by asking: *Is it a ... [bill]?* Follow the language pattern of the book to answer: *No. It's not a ...* or *Yes. It's a ...*

Talking through the book

You could introduce the book by saying: *This is a book about some post that comes to a family's house. Everyone tries to guess what the post is.* Turn to each page and point out the thought clouds that indicate what the speaker will guess the post could be. Discuss page 10 where the sentence structure changes. You might say: *Now Sam knows what the post is, he knows what is in the parcel. He knows this because it's his birthday and his grandma always sends him a present on his birthday.*

Reading the book

Children read the book individually while the teacher observes each child's reading behaviours and prompts children to use cues to read unfamiliar words. The teacher may select an additional teaching focus based on these observations.

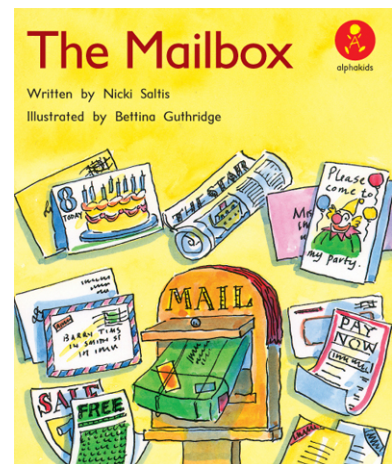
Returning to the text

Select the most appropriate teaching focus for the learning needs of the group. Choose one or more of the following.

BEING A MEANING MAKER

Discuss:

*What had the postman brought?
Who was it for?*



Check this

Teachers can observe children's emergent reading behaviours for evidence of fluent reading, linking oral language expression to text. Some prompts are:
*Read it as if you are talking.
Read it as if you are the person in the story.*

Was Sam pleased to get the parcel? How do you know?
Why did each person guess the different types of post?

BEING A CODE BREAKER

Vocabulary

- High-frequency words: *the, I, have, from, said, Mum, Dad, is, it, a, no, it's, not, an, for*
- Word families: *not – cot, dot, got, hot, lot, rot; bill – ill, dill, kill, fill, mill, pill, sill, will; an – ban, can, Dan, fan, man, pan, plan, tan; it – bit, fit, hit, lit, nit, pit, sit, wit*

Sounds and letters

- Hearing words: Children clap to indicate the beat (syllables) in mail words:

* * * *
bill mag-a-zine

- Hearing sounds: /i/ – *it, invitation*

Writing conventions

- Punctuation: upper case letters, full stops, direct speech, question marks, commas
- Grammar: a/an – *a bill, an invitation*; contractions *it's / it is*

BEING A TEXT USER

Discuss:

Is this book fiction or factual? How do you know?

BEING A TEXT CRITIC

Discuss:

Why do you think the author made Mum play the guessing game with the family instead of simply giving the present to Sam?

Literacy learning centres – follow-up activities

☺ WORD CENTRE

Children make and record words related to those in the text using onsets and rimes:

not: cot, dot, got, hot, lot, rot
bill: ill, kill, fill, mill, pill, sill, will
an: ban, can, Dan, fan, man, pan, plan, tan
it: bit, fit, hit, lit, kit, nit, pit, sit, wit

🌊 INTERACTIVE LITERACY CENTRE

Children work in cooperative groups to practise and perform the text as a readers theatre.

ABC ALPHABET CENTRE

Children play the syllable game. Provide counters and a 6-sided dice with faces marked 1, 2 and 3.

Children play in pairs to throw the dice and locate a word from the text that has the designated number of syllables. They then point to the word and read it aloud, clapping the number of syllables. One counter is won for every syllable located. The winner has most counters at the end of ten throws.