

I Want to Be an Acrobat



alphakids

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How to use this book

The Alphakids Plus teacher editions support teachers as they guide children's reading and thinking during one or more guided reading sessions. Teachers can observe children as they read and choose from the given suggestions to suit individual needs.

Before reading

Setting the context, front cover and title page:

The suggestions help teachers to set the scene and prepare children for reading the book. Prompts help to determine children's prior knowledge. Where necessary, background information is provided. Teachers are encouraged to check that children understand the vocabulary listed and to discuss the meanings and/or the structures of these words. Previous experiences with similar text types may also be discussed.

During reading

Predict, Read, Reflect:

Questions encourage children to engage with the text by making predictions. They then read a section of the text and reflect on what they have read. The focus is on the content, language and text features of the book.

Observe and support:

Prompts help teachers to focus on the strategies children use as they read. Teachers can then select from and adapt the suggestions according to the needs of the individual child. The suggestions aim to develop a child's reading abilities. Interruptions to the child's reading should be minimal.

After reading

A selection of reading and writing activities:

The last pages of the teacher edition provide follow-up activities and include the assessment focus.

Selected text features

- Language associated with the circus is used throughout: acrobat, tricks, tightrope, trampoline, hoop, trapeze artists, juggles, juggling, acrobatics, contortionist
- Multiple photographs of the same image are used to indicate movement

Vocabulary

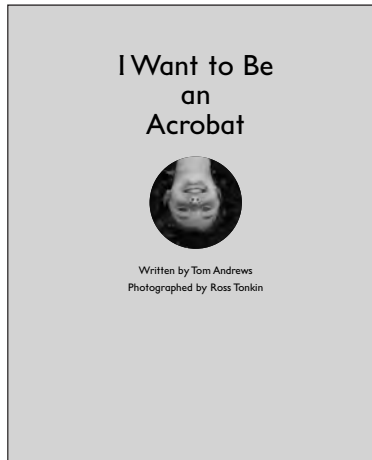
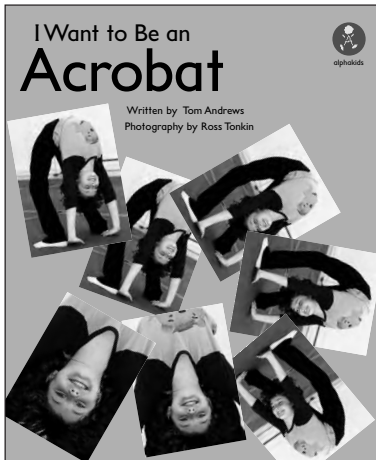
acrobat, circus, contortionist, hula hoops, muscles, tightrope, trampoline, trapeze artists

Setting the context

Have you ever been to a circus? What did you see?

How did the people in the circus learn to do their tricks?

Would you like to learn circus tricks?



Front cover

This is Alex. What is she doing in the photographs?

Why have the photographs been used in this way?

What type of book do you think this will be? Why?

Title page

Who is the author?

Can you tell me the photographer's name?

● **Predict**

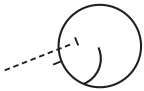
Who do you think will be telling this story?

What do you think that Alex is learning to do?

● **Read** to the end of page 3.

● **Reflect**

Were you right? What are the children practising for?



Observe and support

Can the child say who is telling the story?

Who is telling us this story? How do you know?



I'm Alex and I want to be an acrobat.
Every week I go to my circus class to learn tricks.

At the end of the year we will have a big
performance to show our family and friends all
the tricks we have been practising.

Then I'll really feel like an acrobat.



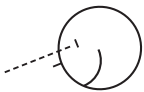
● **Predict**

*What do you think the children are doing in these pictures?
What are some of the skills they might be learning?
Would you like to do any of these things?*

● **Read** to the end of page 7.

● **Reflect**

*Why do they need to do a warm-up?
What are Matt and Carmen learning to do?
Do you think this would be hard?*



Observe and support

Can the child understand the literal meaning of the text?

*Why is the tightrope close to the ground?
Why do the children need to do a warm-up?*

Each week our circus class starts with a warm-up. We do lots of exercises and stretches to warm up our bodies.

It is important to warm up muscles well for circus training. Otherwise it is easy to hurt yourself.



After the warm-up, we break up into groups for skills training.

Each group is learning something different.

Matt and Carmen are learning how to walk along the tightrope. When they practise, the tightrope is not very far off the ground so they won't hurt themselves if they fall.

For the performance, Carmen wants to walk along the tightrope carrying Matt on her shoulders. They still need a lot of practice!



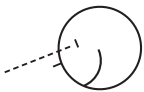
● **Predict**

What are some of the other skills that the children are learning in the circus class?

● **Read** to the end of page 11.

● **Reflect**

*How do Adam and Leo learn to dive through hoops?
Why is Alex best at acrobatics?*



Observe and support

Ask one child to read aloud to you while the others are reading silently and check for phrased and fluent reading.

I liked the way you read that. It sounded like talking.

Can the child explain how the design of the book supports the text?

Why is the picture of Alex on page 11 blurry?

Adam and Leo are learning how to dive through hoops. They practise using a trampoline. It helps them to jump high in the air.

First they try without the hoop. Then they try diving through the hoop. Their trainer lifts the hoop higher and higher. They have great fun.



Kim, Sally and Emma are training to be trapeze artists. They learn to do tricks high up in the air. They can hang from their arms, knees and feet. They have to be very strong.

Lucy is learning to keep three hula hoops spinning at once. As they spin, Lucy moves each hoop from her waist up over her head. After a few moments, all the hoops are spinning around her arm.

Sam juggles with balls, clubs and rings. He can throw a ball behind his back and catch it without looking!

I practise juggling and hula hoops because I'd like to have lots of different circus skills—but I'm best at acrobatics because my body is very flexible.



● **Predict**

What is Alex doing here?

Do you think Alex enjoys circus lessons?

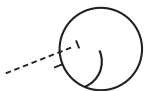
● **Read** to the end of page 13.

● **Reflect**

What does Alex want to be when she grows up?

What does she have to do each day to make her body flexible?

Do you think it would be an easy thing to do?



Observe and support

Can the child identify language that indicates that the book is written in the first person?

How do you know that Alex is telling this story?

What I really want to be is a contortionist. I stretch every day so that my body will bend into amazing shapes.

People sometimes get a surprise when they see what I can do. It's fun to make them laugh.



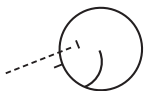
● **Predict**

*How do you think that the performance will go?
How would the performers be feeling before the show?*

● **Read** to the end of page 16.

● **Reflect**

*Was the performance a success?
Would you like to have seen the performance?
Do you think that Alex will become a contortionist? Why?*



Observe and support

*Does the child monitor their reading?
You made a mistake on that page. Can you find it?
What else could it be?*



Now it is time for our big performance.
We have all practised and practised.

I feel quite nervous. Will people enjoy seeing
what we can do? Will we make people laugh?



Our circus performance was last night.
It was fantastic! Everyone laughed and clapped
when they saw our tricks.

I feel as if I'm in a circus already. But I'm going
back to circus class next year to learn lots more.



After reading

Being a meaning maker

Encourage the children to support their answers with evidence from the book as they discuss these questions:

What is Alex learning at circus school?

What might happen if the children at the circus school don't warm up?

What is a contortionist?

What do you need to do to become a circus performer?

Being a code breaker

Explore the following language features:

- using contextual information to understand new vocabulary, e.g. What is a contortionist? How did you work that out? Do the words help you to understand? Other words to consider: acrobat, tightrope, flexible, trapeze
- different forms of the same word within the book e.g. juggles/juggling, acrobat/acrobatics

Being a text user

Consider the photos on the cover and on pages 2, 6, 8, 12 and 13.

Why are there so many photos on the page? Why are the photographs at different angles?

What did you learn by reading this book?

What other questions do you have about circus school?

How could you find out the answers to these questions?

Being a text critic

What does this writer think about the children who go to circus classes? How do you know this?

Would you like to go to circus classes? Why?

Can all children learn to do circus tricks?

Responding to text



Ask children to retell part of the text to a partner.

Children could then work with their partner to select one of the circus skills and write about how to acquire it. They could then add an illustration to support their description.



Brainstorm a list of words to describe the skills that the children in the book were learning. Ask them to select one of the photographs from the book and write about this particular scene. Children can share their descriptions with the class.



Build word lists to compare the name of the activity with the name given to a person who performs that activity. Ask children

to work with a partner to find other words to add to the list.

Example:

Activity	Person
acrobatics	acrobat
juggling	juggler
football	footballer

Writing links

Shared writing

Ask the children to imagine that they go to circus classes. *What skill are you learning?* Ask children to share these ideas with the group. Children could write a report about learning how to master this skill. These reports could be made into a class book and kept in the class library.

Independent writing

Children could write a first person account about training with a circus and preparing for a performance.

Possible assessment focus

Can the child:

- say who is telling the story in the book and how they know?
- identify language that indicates the book is written in the first person?
- explain why some photos in the book are blurred?



whole text activity



sentence activity



word activity



Teacher Edition

Topic: Circus

Curriculum link: Health, Physical Education, SOSE

Text type: Recount

Reading level: 22

Word count: 431

Vocabulary: acrobat, circus, contortionist, hula hoops, muscles, tightrope, trampoline, trapeze artists

Possible literacy focus

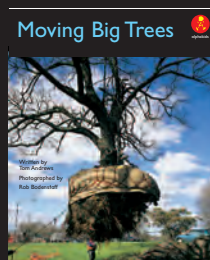
Understanding the features of a text written in the first person.

Interpreting visual devices such as the use of multiple photos to imply movement.

Summary

This book is a recount of a girl's involvement in circus classes.

Other books at this level



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