

# The Riddle of the Camel Race

## Vocabulary

anxious, approached, camel, castle, challenge, cruel, duo, exist, failure, gestured, guarding, kingdom, lest, loser, prison, route, silver, subjects, sultan, sword, tattoo, tension, toenails



## Before Reading

### Motivation / Purpose

The purpose of this text is to entertain the reader with a story about a cruel sultan who set *tr* of his subjects to a seemingly impossible challenge in a camel race.

### Text Type **Date .../.../...**

□ Draw students' attention to the:

- author and illustrator
- title and chapter headings
- blurb.

□ Ask, 'What type of book is this?' (Narrative).

□ **Visual Literacy** **Date .../.../...**

Look at the front cover and discuss what these two characters are doing.

Browse the first few pages. Where and when do you think this story is set? What visual clues lead you to these ideas? What does this landscape remind you of?

### Background Knowledge **Date .../.../...**

Read the chapter headings. What is a sultan? What does iron-fisted mean? Do you think he really has an iron fist? Explain the difference between literal and figurative language. What does the figurative meaning of 'iron-fisted' tell you about the sultan's personality?

### Phonological Awareness **Date .../.../...**

Make sure students know the following phonological sounds:

- long o: cruel (p.4), ruled (p.5), Bamboo (p.11), loser (p.14), route (6)

- /ar/: fist! (p.4), fast (p.6), guarding (p.8)

- /ow/: although (p.4), toenails (p.8), approached (p.20), know (p.19)

- /er/: birthday (p.10), heard (p.13), person (p.14), ged (p.22)

Create lists of words that contain the phonological sounds listed above. Use words from the text and their own knowledge (e.g. fast, guarding, asked, harder, last). What sound is common to each word? Underline the letters representing the sounds. Repeat with these phonological sounds and letter patterns: meant, afraid, course, down.

□ **High Frequency Words** **Date .../.../...**

although, birthday, course, enough, exactly, leapt, meant, neither, once, ordered, roared, thought, trouble

Write the words on cards. Select four or more cards. Students read the words and then close their eyes while you remove one card. Students write the missing word.

Hide the high frequency words in a string of letters (i.e. course netron ceistenou gherstroublegal). Ask students to circle words they see.

□ **During Reading**

#### Vocabulary in Context

Write the vocabulary words on cards. Ask students to place them in alphabetical order, then locate them in a dictionary. Read and discuss their definitions. What other words could be used in their place? Which words have more than one meaning (e.g. subjects)? How do you know which meaning is relevant to the story?

□ **Checking for Meaning**

#### Literal: **Date .../.../...**

Why does the sultan literally have an iron fist? (Because he lost one hand in a sword fight and had an iron hand fitted to the end of his arm.)

Why is the sultan cruel? (Because he puts in prison those subjects who don't do exactly what he orders.)

What challenge does the sultan set Ali and Baboo? (To take part in a camel race in which the winner is the person who comes last.)

What does Shiraz tell them to do in the race? (To swap horses)

#### Inferential: **Date .../.../...**

Why does the term 'iron-fisted' describe the sultan's

Why don't Ali or Baboo want to finish ahead of the other man?

Why does Shiraz's advice rescue Ali and Baboo?

Who loses the race?

Make sure students understand the difference between literal and inferential information.

**Response:** **Date .../.../...**

How do you think the sultan would react if he found out what Ali and Baboo had done?

What do you think would happen if there were another chapter to the story?

### Grammatical Patterns **Date .../.../...**

□ Make sure students understand the following components of a narrative:

- Orientation - introduces the main characters and the setting: Once upon a time a cruel sultan challenged his subjects to a challenge every year on his birthday. (pp.4-9)
- Complication - the sequence of events develops a problem for the main characters: Ali and Baboo are set a challenge in a camel race. The loser goes to prison and gets tattooed. (pp.10-19)
- Resolution - the problem is resolved: Shiraz helps them by telling them to get on to each other's camel so that neither of them can lose. (pp.20-24)
- Use of nouns referring to the characters and things the story is about: *sultan* (p.4), *subjects* (p.6), *camels* (p.16), *Shiraz* (p.20)
- use of adjectives to describe nouns and build noun groups: *an ironfist* (p.5), *a huge grin on his face* (p.14), *the kingdom's wisest person* (p.20)
- Use of adverbial words and phrases of time, manner and place to build story information: *once upon a time* (p.4), *in a land so far away* (p.4), *faster and faster* (p.22)
- Use of action verbs and verb groups describing actions: *guarding* (p.8), *gestured* (p.20), *urged* (p.22)
- Use of saying and thinking verbs and adverbial phrase

to describe speech: *roared the sultan to the shaking duo* (p.12), *thought* (p.12), *whispered* (p.20)

□ **Fluency / Punctuation Patterns**

**Date .../.../...**

In this text commas separate phrases that further describe a noun or noun group. *But, once a year, on his birthday, the sultan had a bit of fun.* (p.9) *The kingdom's wisest person, a woman named Shiraz, approached the men* (p.20). Identify the nouns being described. Read the sentences pausing at the commas, and changing the expression of the voice to highlight the phrases.

These punctuation patterns occur in the text:

- Commas separate to connectives, and repeated

- Brackets indicating additional information: (*although, of course, supersonic jets didn't exist back then*) (p.4)
- Apostrophes of possession: *kingdom's prisons* (p.6), *sultan's next birthday* (p.10)
- Apostrophes in contractions: *doesn't* (p.12), *hadn't* (p.11)
- Quotation marks indicating direct speech: *"If one of you does so, you will both be sent to prison."* (p.17)

□ **Critical Literacy** **Date .../.../...**

Read the opening sentence. What ideas about the story do you have when you read this beginning? What humour does the author add to the story?

□ **Linking Visual and Written** **Date .../.../...**

Compare the sizes of the characters. Why do you think the sultan has been drawn so large? Why is his toenail clipper so small? Why are Ali and Baboo smaller than the sultan? How does this size contrast mirror the characters' status in the text?

## After Reading

Identify the series of events in the complication stage that develop the plot. How would changing the series of events affect the story ending? What if Ali or Baboo had let the other win? What if they took another route? What if Shiraz hadn't helped Ali and Baboo?

### Activities

Students will:

- choose phrases that best complete sentences
- write words containing common phonological sounds
- write vocabulary words in dictionary order and write definitions
- complete a writing guide to identify the orientation, complication and resolution.

Comprehension (meaning)    Vocabulary (structure)    Phonics (visual)    Writing (structure)

