



Oxford Level 9

# Cosmo for Captain

**Author:** Jonathan Emmett

**Illustrator:** Peter Rutherford

**Teaching notes author:** Gill Howell

**Book type:** novel

## About *All Stars*

*All Stars* is a series of chapter fiction books written specifically for able readers aged 5 to 7 years. The books offer engaging, content-appropriate stories for infants at reading levels that will motivate and challenge your high-ability readers. *All Stars* are primarily for independent reading, but can be used in a variety of ways, including in able-reader guided reading sessions and in speaking, writing and drama activities.

*All Stars* is endorsed by Potential Plus, a leading charity which supports children with high learning potential. You can find out more about Potential Plus at [www.potentialplusuk.org](http://www.potentialplusuk.org).

## Synopsis

Cosmo, the smallest dinosaur in Dinosaur Valley, loves playing boulder ball but is sad because the other dinosaurs say he is too small to be captain. Cosmo's friend Patty is also sad, because she is too slow to play. But when Tyro, the terrible Tyrannosaurus, comes into the valley, all the dinosaurs hide except for Cosmo and Patty. Together, they trick Tyro into the lake. Tyro can't swim, so Cosmo and Patty rescue her and make her promise to leave them all alone. The other grateful dinosaurs agree that Cosmo will make the best captain.

## Group/Guided reading

### Introducing the story

- (Clarifying / Predicting) Look at the cover and read the title. Ask: *How are the two dinosaurs different? Which one do you think might be Cosmo?*
- (Predicting) Turn to the back cover and read the blurb. Ask: *What do you think might happen in this story?*
- (Clarifying) Look at the illustration on page 6. Ask: *Why might the dinosaurs on the left be sad?*
- (Predicting) Look at the illustration on page 11. Ask: *What sort of dinosaur do you think this is? Is it friendly?*
- (Clarifying / Predicting) Turn to page 17. Ask: *What do you think Cosmo is doing here?*
- Some of the more challenging words and their definitions are listed on the front inside cover of the book. Encourage the children to look at these words and talk about their meaning to help build familiarity before children read the story.
- Here are some additional tricky words that may be useful:
  - shrieked – cried out with a high, sharp sound
  - stomped – walked with noisy, heavy steps
  - hesitated – paused before an action

## Reading the story

- Ask the children to read the story aloud and help where necessary. Praise and encourage them as they read.
- *(Clarifying / Summarizing)* At the end of page 8, ask: *What sort of game is boulder ball? Is it similar to any game that you play? Why was it difficult for Cosmo and for Patty?*
- *(Clarifying)* Pause at the end of page 9. Point out the exclamation marks and the verbs 'wailed' and 'shrieked'. Ask children to use the punctuation and the verbs in reporting clauses to use an expressive tone as they read the story.
- *(Summarizing / Clarifying / Predicting)* At the end of page 10, ask children to summarize the story so far. Ask: *What sort of character is Cosmo? Why do you think Cosmo tells Patty it will 'be all right'? What do you think they will do?*
- *(Questioning / Clarifying)* At the end of page 16, ask: *What questions do you have for Cosmo at this point in the story? Why do you think Cosmo shouted out to Tyro? Was he brave or foolish?*
- *(Clarifying / Predicting)* At the end of page 21, ask: *How did Tyro react to being called names? How do you react if someone calls you names? What do you think will happen to Cosmo?*
- *(Predicting)* On page 23, ask: *Why do you think the island is moving?*
- *(Clarifying / Summarizing)* At the end of the story, ask: *Why do the other dinosaurs ask Cosmo and Patty to be the team captains? How does that make you feel?*

## Returning to the story

- *(Clarifying / Summarizing)* Ask: *How do you think Cosmo and Patty felt when they were last to be picked for a team in boulder ball? What told you this? Have you ever been last to be picked? How did you feel?*
- *(Clarifying / Summarizing)* Ask: *How did the dinosaurs react when Tyro came into the valley? Why?* Find some words and phrases that show how scary Tyro is in the beginning of the story.
- *(Clarifying)* Ask: *Why did Cosmo pretend that he wasn't frightened of Tyro? Do you ever pretend not to be frightened when you really are? Why?*
- *(Clarifying / Predicting)* Ask: *What could have gone wrong with Tyro's plan? How would the ending of the story be different if the plan had failed?*
- *(Summarizing)* Ask: *What part of the story did you enjoy the most? Why?*
- *(Questioning)* Ask: *Do you have any questions for Tyro?* If children struggle, say: *I wonder why she scares the other dinosaurs or how she feels at the end of the story?*

## Independent reading

- Introduce the story as in the Group/Guided reading section above.
- Encourage the children to read the story as independently as possible. Remember to give them lots of encouragement and praise.
- Encourage the children to use a dictionary to look up any unfamiliar words.
- Encourage the children to answer the questions on the inside covers of the book.
- Able readers often read quickly but sometimes skim parts or do not fully understand what they are reading. Try:
  - stopping the children from time to time and asking them to explain what is happening in the story at that point, or who a character is,
  - asking the children to examine the pictures and speech bubbles (if present). Encourage the children to tell you what information the pictures or speech bubbles give us,
  - reminding children to look out for the difference between what is being said and what is being thought by the characters. Can they show you an example?
- Prompt more able readers to think about alternative language choices when exploring the text. For example, 'Can you think of any other words the author could have used to describe how this character felt here?'

- Even able readers may need to pause to work out a new or tricky word. Encourage them to reread the whole sentence again to make sure they understand the context of the word.
- Find even more books for your able readers at BookMatch, the children's book recommendation tool specially designed for teachers, available free on Oxford Owl. Filter by year group and Oxford Level to find age-appropriate books to stretch your most able: [www.oxfordowl.co.uk](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk)

## Speaking, listening and drama activities

- Hot-seating Cosmo.
  - Children sit in the hot seat as Cosmo. The other children ask Cosmo questions about the events in the story.
  - Encourage children to ask open questions to draw out Cosmo's thoughts and feelings.
  - Provide them with questions starters to help them, e.g. *How did you feel when ... What did you think when ...*

## Writing activities

- Please don't feed the dinosaurs!
  - Children imagine that they could visit Dinosaur Valley.
  - They independently write a short description to promote it as a tourist attraction.
  - Prompt them to include information on what visitors would see, hear and feel during the experience.

## Cross-curricular suggestion

### Science

- Research the dinosaurs featured in the story using the Internet and books.



# Cosmo for Captain

## Curriculum links and assessment

### Links to Oxford Reading Criterion Scale

- Can read aloud and is beginning to use expression to show awareness of punctuation. (RCS Standard 2, 1)
- Can talk about texts, expressing opinions about things they like and dislike in stories, poems and non-fiction texts. (RCS Standard 2, 3)
- Can make plausible predictions about the plot of an unknown story, using the text and other book features. (RCS Standard 2, 9)
- Can relate stories/texts to their own experiences, including story settings and incidents. (RCS Standard 2, 22)

### ENGLAND The National Curriculum in England: English Programme of Study, Year 1

	National Curriculum objectives	Book-related assessment pointers
<b>Spoken language</b>	participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates (SpokLang.9)	Can the children ask open questions? Can they answer questions in role?
<b>Reading: Word reading</b>	apply phonic knowledge and skills as the route to decode words (Y1 ReadWord.1)	Do the children work out words by using their phonic knowledge?
<b>Reading: Comprehension</b>	being encouraged to link what they read or hear read to their own experiences (Y1 ReadComp.1ii)	Can the children use their own experiences to empathize with Cosmo?
	making inferences on the basis of what is being said and done (Y1 ReadComp.2iv)	Can the children give reasons for the actions of the characters?
	predicting what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far (Y1 ReadComp.2v)	Can the children make plausible suggestions about what happens next?
<b>Writing: Composition</b>	sequencing sentences to form short narratives (Y1 WritComp.1iii)	Do the children organize their description logically?

### SCOTLAND Curriculum for Excellence: Literacy and English experiences and outcomes, First Level

	Experiences and outcomes	Book-related assessment pointers
<b>Listening and talking</b>	When I engage with others, I know when and how to listen, when to talk, how much to say, when to ask questions and how to respond with respect. (LIT 1-02a)	Can the children ask open questions? Can they answer questions in role?
<b>Reading</b>	I can use my knowledge of sight vocabulary, phonics, context clues, punctuation and grammar to read with understanding and expression. (ENG 1-12a)	Do the children work out words by using their phonic knowledge?
	I can share my thoughts about structure, characters and/or setting, recognize the writer's message and relate it to my own experiences, and comment on the effective choice of words and other features. (ENG 1-19a)	Can the children use their own experiences to empathize with Cosmo? Can the children give reasons for the actions of the characters? Can the children make plausible suggestions about what happens next?
<b>Writing</b>	I can write independently, use appropriate punctuation and order and link my sentences in a way that makes sense. (LIT 1-22a)	Do the children organize their description logically?

## WALES Curriculum for Wales: Foundation Phase Framework, Year 1

	Framework objectives	Book-related assessment pointers
<b>Oracy</b>	adopt a role using appropriate language (Y1_OracSpea.7)	Can the children ask open questions? Can they answer questions in role?
<b>Reading</b>	apply the following reading strategies with increasing independence – phonic strategies to decode words (Y1_ReadStrat.5i)	Do the children work out words by using their phonic knowledge?
	use personal experience to support understanding of texts (Y1_ReadComp.4)	Can the children use their own experiences to empathize with Cosmo?
	look for clues in the text to understand information (Y1_ReadStrat.12)	Can the children give reasons for the actions of the characters?
	use prediction in stories, adding more detail (Y1_ReadComp.5)	Can the children make plausible suggestions about what happens next?
<b>Writing</b>	sequence content correctly, e.g. instructions, recipes (Y1_WritStru.1)	Do the children organize their description logically?

## NORTHERN IRELAND Levels of Progression in Communication across the curriculum: Levels 1 and 2

	Levels of Progression	Book-related assessment pointers
<b>Talking and listening</b>	ask and answer questions to develop understanding (L2_com_talk.2ii)	Can the children ask open questions? Can they answer questions in role?
<b>Reading</b>	understand that words are made up of sounds and syllables and that sounds are represented by letters (L1_com_read.2i)	Do the children work out words by using their phonic knowledge?
	talk about what they read and answer questions (L1_com_read.5)	Can the children use their own experiences to empathize with Cosmo?
	use visual clues to locate information (L1_com_read.3ii)	Can the children use illustrations to help them answer the questions?
	express opinions and make predictions (L2_com_read.5ii)	Can the children make plausible suggestions about what happens next?
<b>Writing</b>	show a sense of structure and organisation (L2_com_writ.2ii)	Do the children organize their description logically?