

Helpful or Harmful?

by Nic Bishop

Summary

This non-fiction text describes the relationships between various forest plants and animals, explaining why they are helpful or harmful.

Features of the Text

- Report
- Contents page, glossary, index
- Fact boxes
- Photographs with captions
- Glossary words in bold text
- Diagram
- Specialised vocabulary – *deciduous*, *ecosystem*, *photosynthesis*, *producers*, *consumers*, *recyclers*, *parasites*, *habitats*

Purpose

Helpful or Harmful? can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- S** exploring specialised vocabulary;
- S** exploring cause and effect;
- S** restating the information in a text.

The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Exploring specialised vocabulary
- S** Exploring cause and effect

Introducing the text

Discuss the title of the book and the photographs on the cover.

- *What is the squirrel doing?*
- *How could this be helpful? How could it be harmful?*
- *In what way is the bee helping the flower?*

Explain to the students that the purpose of this text is to explore the ways in which some relationships between plants and animals are helpful and others are harmful.

Read and discuss the contents page. Ask the students to use the glossary on page 16 to find the meaning of “ecosystem”.

- *What is an ecosystem?*

Reading and discussing the text

Ask the students to read the introduction on page 2.

- *What do you think “deciduous” means?*

Encourage them to use the glossary to check whether their definition is correct. Discuss their understanding of an ecosystem.

Ask the students to read to the end of page 5. When they have finished, discuss the relationships shown in the ecosystem diagram. Then ask the students to name a producer, a consumer, and a recycler in the forest ecosystem.

The students can now read pages 6 and 7.

- *What is a “help yourself” relationship? Give two examples.*

Together, look at the photographs on pages 8 to 11, then ask the students to read the text.

- *In what ways do you think these partners help each other?*
- *Do you know of any other relationships that are like this?*

Ask the students to read pages 12 to 14. Discuss the effects that parasites have on their hosts. The students can then read page 15. They should think about why the destruction of rainforests causes problems and what could be done to solve them. Refer back to the ecosystem diagram on pages 4 and 5 so that the students understand the relationship between producers, consumers, and recyclers.



Following Up

The students can:

- use the blackline master on page 21 to explain the relationships between three pairs of animals and plants in the forest ecosystem
- design a poster that explains the effects of rainforests being destroyed
- research other habitats, such as a marine or desert ecosystem
- create a chart to explain the process of photosynthesis.