

## Guided Reading Notes

# NELL AND THE CAVE BEAR

A long, long time ago, a girl lived with her tribe in a cave. As she had no parents of her own, her pet cave bear was her best friend. He followed her everywhere and comforted her whenever she grew weary of all the chores she was given. So, when Nell overhears some of the grown-ups planning to give Cave Bear to another tribe, she decides they must run away.

So together they embark on a great adventure, following the stream from their cave down the mountain to wherever it will lead them. Together they encounter huge mammoths and wild hunters, face hunger and thirst, all the time hoping to find somewhere safe to be together.

This heart-warming story is beautifully and simply told, with a delightfully gentle humour, and exquisitely illustrated

These notes are designed to be adapted for the children you are working with.

MARTIN BROWN

Guided sessions:	Independent activities:
<p>Pre-reading: What do you think this story is going to be about?</p>	<p>Complete a 'Tell Me' Grid for the book cover. Complete a comprehension about or research the author/illustrator, Martin Brown.</p>
<p><b>Prologue (pages 3-5)</b> What is a 'prologue'? Where was an 'everlasting sea of ice'? What does the word 'everlasting' suggest? Why is the river running fast? What do the words 'swallowing soil' suggest? Why has the author put the word 'Meow' at the bottom of page 3? Explain what is happening to the tree. Which word suggests that the current is strong? How does the reader know that this is an old tree? Who do you think the 'single occupant' is?</p>	
<p><b>Chapter One (pages 7-20):</b> Name three activities that people were busy with. Which word means 'lighting up'? When do you think this book is set? What clues are there? Which word tells the reader how often the trip to the hunting grounds took place? Why couldn't the clans meet if the snow melted too late? Give two reasons why the Sea Clan would have to stay home. Name 2 things which the mums were trying to do. Who was telling the other Clan members what to do? Name 4 things Nell was expected to do. What initial impression does the reader get of Nell? Why does everyone act like Nell's parents? What is Cave Bear doing to help? How many times that morning has Nell gone down the cave's terrace? Why can't Nell be seen by the pool? Name three things we learn about Nell on page 14. Who was talking in the entrance to the cave above Nell? Find a word on page 16 which is similar in meaning to a 'custom' Which word on page 16 implies that the Cave Clan were not too happy with the gift of fish? What is Leeum's news? Give three reasons why Mayv thinks this is 'brilliant'. Why does Leeum think that hunting the mammoths might be a bit of a problem? What do the words 'Nell froze' suggest?</p>	<p>Complete a comprehension about or research Cave Bears.</p> <p>Write a diary entry about the events in Chapter One as if you were Nell. Think about how you are feeling.</p>
<p><b>Chapter 2 (pages 21-30):</b> When did Nell and Cave bear first meet? Why has the author chosen the words 'bundle of fur' to describe the cub? According to the text, when are bear cubs usually born?</p>	<p>Draw a 'cave painting' showing the plan for the hunt on page 26.</p>

<p>When must Cave Bear have been born? Everybody in the clan was delighted to have a cave bear living with them. True or false? Who was more understanding about Nell keeping Cave Bear? Explain why. What has the author chosen to insert a little picture of a bear print at the bottom of page 23? *</p> <p>What does the phrase on page 24 'start the ball rolling' mean? Explain the final plan the hunters come up with. *</p> <p>What is stopping Nell from coming up with a plan of her own? What do the words 'dancing reflections' suggest about the water? What gives Nell the idea that she and Cave Bear should run away? What makes Nell think that Cave Bear agrees with her? In what ways might the character of Nell appeal to reader? Explain fully referring to the text in your answer.</p>	<p>Look at the picture on p.28. Add thought bubbles to show how Nell and Cave Bear are feeling at this point of the story.</p>
<p><b>Chapter 3 (pages 31-40)</b> *</p> <p>What lies beyond the mouth of the cave? Where does the river widen? Who lives in this 'wild landscape'? Which tribe eat geese and eels? Where are the hunters heading? Who is at the front of the line of hunters? Name three things the mammoths are eating. Which word is similar in meaning to massive? How many men would be needed to carry a mammoth tusk back to their cave? How could the hunters tell that the mammoths were making a noise? Find and copy one word on page 38 which means 'attentively'. Which three hunters are going to circle round behind the herd? The mammoth they have chosen is brown, with small ears and big tusks. True or false? Do you think the hunt will be successful? Give reasons for your answer, using the text to support your ideas.</p>	<p>Imagine you are one of the hunters. Describe the scene where they are looking down at the mammoths. Think about how you are feeling. Use what you know from the story about the different characters to help you with your writing.</p>
<p><b>Chapter 4 (pages 41-58)</b></p> <p>How can you tell that Nell is upset at the beginning of Chapter 4? Why has the author chosen to use the word 'wriggled' to describe the river? What makes Nell forget she's angry? Find an example of alliteration/ personification on page 43. What does Nell realise as she is following the growing river? Nell's mood changes as this chapter progresses. Explain how this happens. '...canopy of bright spring leaves above...' What does this description tell the reader about the scene? <b>Find and copy</b> a group of words that shows how the light is falling through the trees on page 47. Explain why Nell calls Cave Bear a 'clever bear'. Where does the leaf disappear? Does the scene of Nell and Cave Bear dropping sticks into the water make you think of any other stories? <i>The two runaway explorers dashed through ferns and over rocks beside the brook.</i> What does the verb 'dashed' imply about how the 'explorers' are moving?</p>	<p>Look at the picture on page 49. Write a conversation which Nell might be having with Cave Bear at this point in the story. Make sure you use the correct punctuation.</p> <p>Find out about mammoths in the Stone Age and create a poster to share what you</p>

Which other verb in this section tells the reader that Nell and Cave Bear are moving quickly?  
 What allows them to catch their breath a couple of times?  
 Find two onomatopoeic words describing the noise of the waterfall.  
*The sticks shot into the misty white foam and disappeared.* What does the word 'shot' suggest about the movement of the sticks?  
 What was closer to Nell and the Cave Bear- the grazing cattle and deer or the valley floodplain?  
 At the bottom of page 55, they can hear a rumble. What do you think is causing this noise?  
 What evidence in the text on page 56 is there that the mammoth could be dangerous? Give two examples.

have found out with others.

**Chapter 5 (pages 59-68)**

What does the use of ellipses in Daev's speech suggest about how he is feeling?  
 What does the word 'monster' suggest about the mammoth Kehn and the others threw their spears at?  
 What misunderstanding has occurred?  
 Why does Dann 'look hurt'?  
 Tick true or false in the following table.

Statement	True	False
The mammoth the hunters attacked was a medium sized mammoth.		
The group of trees was very thick.		
All the spears missed the mammoth.		
The hunters decide to go home.		

What does Aydn think he saw when the mammoth charged?  
 \*  
 Explain why the words 'splashed and spluttered' have been used.  
 What makes it hard for Cave Bear to swim?  
*Cave Bear glanced back at his friend reassuringly.*  
 What does 'reassuringly' mean in this sentence?  
 What helped Nell and the Cave Bear?

**Chapter 6 (pages 69-74)**

Explain why Nell thinks being on the log is 'perfect'.  
 Give three reasons why their situation is not so bad.  
 What does Nell see which convinces her that running away was the right thing to do?  
 Write down three things the reader learns about the tiny wildcat kitten.  
 How does Nell think the kitten got onto the log?  
 \*  
 Which tribe do you think the hunter on the far side of the river belongs to? Use information from the whole story to explain your reasoning.

Imagine you are the hunter from the Woodland who spots Nell and Cave Bear on the log. Write about what you can see and how you feel about this.

**Chapter 7 (pages 75-84)**

Why does Eava miss Nell?  
 What conclusion does Eava draw from the fact that no one has seen Nell?

Imagine you are Eava. Write a section of the story where you



How do you think Eava felt when Mayv says she thinks Nell is hiding by the spring? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.  
 What does Eava realise when she hears Mayv and Soo talking above her?  
 \*

What does the word 'intrepid' suggest about Nell, Cave Bear and the wild cat?  
 Why did the author choose the words 'fizzing bundle of energy' to describe the wild cat?  
 Why is Cave Bear not used to having another creature to play with?  
*...in a flash of fur and teeth and needle-sharp claws...* What impression of the wildcat does this description give the reader?

run back and tell Mayv and Soo what you think happened to Nell.

**Chapter 8 (pages 85-92)**  
 What does the word 'trudged' imply about the way Gordn, Soo and Porl were feeling?  
 Why had they returned to the terrace?  
 What evidence is there that Mayv is not worried about Nell?  
 \*

Describe Woodland Clan's camp.  
 Why has the author chosen the word 'crouched'?  
 What does the word 'meagre' suggest about the fire?  
 Give three words/ phrases which indicate that the Woodland Clan are not very well looked after.  
 Describe the Clan's reaction to the sighting of Cave Bear.  
 Do the older man's words make you think of anything else you might have read?

Write a description of the Woodland Clan's camp. Use details from the story as a starting point.



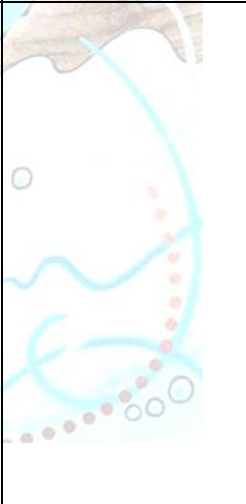
**Chapter 9 (pages 93- 108)**  
 How and where had the mighty river started its journey?  
 How does the river cut off the mammoths' escape?  
 Find and copy a word which means the mammoths were running away.  
 How can you tell that Dann was nervous about having caught up with the mammoths?  
 Based on what you know about the hunters, how successful do you think this attempt will be?  
 \*

Look at the section beginning, '*For the first time...*' and read to '*...grassland again.*'  
 Explain what this description suggests about the section of river Nell is floating on.  
 What does Nell see following the log?  
 What does the phrase 'a note of worry' suggest about how Nell is feeling at this point?  
 Give three reasons Nell thinks the people in the boats are not coming to help.  
 How do Cave Bear and the kitten behave when the canoes appear?  
 Tick true or false in the following table.

Label a picture to show the journey of a river, using knowledge from Geography work.

Statement	True	False
The people in the canoes were saying, 'Air, air, air.'		
The canoes were getting closer to the log.		
Nell paddled and the log moved faster than the canoes.		



<p>They stayed by the stumpy roots of the old tree as the canoes came closer.</p>			
<p>Name two problems with them trying to swim for the side of the river.          What evidence is there that Nell is brave and determined in the way she behaves towards the man in the first canoe?          What does the word 'lunged' suggest about the way the man moved?          Number these points from 1-5 in the order in which they happen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The woman is attacked by the wild kitten.</li> <li>Cave Bear bites the man.</li> <li>Nell takes off her food bag.</li> <li>The man in the second canoe laughs.</li> <li>The wild kitten attacks the first man.</li> </ul> <p>Which word is similar in meaning to 'gracefully'?</p>			
<p><b>Chapter 10 (pages 109-116)</b>          Why did the author choose the words 'ferocious fluffball' to describe the wild kitten?          How does Cave Bear warn Nell that the other canoes are coming?          What impression do you get of the Woodland Clan from their actions at this point of the story?          Why has the word 'plunged' been used?          Who do you think is throwing the spears? Explain your reasoning, using the text to support your ideas.          How does the mood of the Woodland Clan change at this point of the story? Use the text to support your ideas.          Which word tells the reader that everyone is so surprised they cannot speak?          What happened to the older man when the mammoth threw the spear?</p>			<p>Look at the picture on page 104. Describe how you think Nell is feeling at this point in the story.</p>
<p><b>Chapter 11 (pages 117-120)</b>          What does the phrase 'milling about in alarm' tell the reader?          Which mammoth has a spear in its shoulder?          How can you tell that Dann is scared?          Where does Daev's spear disappear to? How many hunters throw their spears?          Why did Dan throw his spear after the mammoth had moved?          Name three ways the massive mammoth shows how angry it is.          Who shrieks? Explain your reasoning, using evidence from the text.</p>			
<p><b>Chapter 12 (pages 121-130)</b>          What does the phrase 'her heart was thumping' suggest about how Nell was feeling?          Explain why Nell apologises to Cave Bear.          Give two reasons why Nell is determined to continue with her journey.          What struck Nell as being strange when she saw the hunters and the mammoths?          Which phrase indicates that the friends on the log were getting tired?          Read from the top of page 126 to '...woods.' Explain what this section suggests about Mayv.          Which word is similar in meaning to 'hopeful' or 'confident'?          Using information from the text indicate whether the following statements are true or false.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">It was early morning.</p>			

<p>Mayv was keen to go and look for Nell. The hunters have returned with lots of mammoth goodies. Everyone stopped working to listen to their conversation.</p> <p>What does Mayv do when everyone starts muttering and mumbling? What does the word 'dashed' suggest about how Soo and Eava were feeling?</p>	
<p><b>Chapter 13 (pages 131-138)</b> Where was Nell when she woke up? Name three ways in which the landscape here is different. Which word on page 133 suggests that the kitten is happy? *</p> <p>What do Soo and Eava find which they think was made by Nell and Cave Bear? What conclusion do they draw from the tracks they find? What do the words 'gathering dusk' suggest? *</p> <p>Why were Nell, Cave Bear and the kitten in a huddle on the log? Where had they reached? What do you think is causing the booming noise?</p>	<p>Using pictures to help you, write a description of the open sea. Think about how you will describe the waves, the movement of the water, the colours you can see and the sounds you can hear.</p>
<p><b>Chapter 14 (pages 139-148)</b> Read the paragraph which begins 'Huge waves...'. Why were the crests turning white? What does the word 'toppling' suggest? How is the water made to seem rougher than before? How can you tell that Nell is starting to get worried? Number the following statements from 1-5 in the order in which they happen in this part of the chapter.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The wild kitten climbs back inside the log. Nell falls but manages to grab a rope. A wave breaks over them. They travel beyond the beach. Nell hauls herself back onto the boat.</p> <p>What did Nell and Cave Bear have to do to stay on the log? What can they only occasionally see? Where has the log drifted? Give two reasons why Nell thinks she might like to stop following the water. What does the phrase 'a churning confusion of water' suggest? Why does Nell realise she doesn't need to swim? According to the text, what throws Nell and Cave Bear onto the sand? Who do you think the bare feet belong to?</p>	<p>Imagine you were standing on the beach, looking out to sea when you spot a log with a little girl and a bear clinging on to it. Describe what you can see and what you are thinking/ feeling.</p>
<p><b>Chapter 15 (pages 149-159)</b> What impression does the reader get of the young woman they meet? Use the text to support your ideas. What is revealed about their relationship in this chapter? Why is Nell upset when she realises Elsa is from the Sea Clan? Why does Elsa say a bear would not be the sort of pet the Sea Clan would like? '<i>...bedraggled and blinking...</i>' Why has the author chosen these words to describe the kitten? How can the reader tell that Elsa likes the wild kitten? What are the lights in the distance? How are the Sea Clan's canoes different to those of the Woodland Clan?</p>	<p>Look at the picture on page 154. Imagine you are Elsa. What are you thinking and feeling as you look at the tiny wild cat.</p>

**Chapter 16 (pages 160-168)**

Describe the Sea Clan Camp.

What is the meaning of the word 'subsided' on page 161?

Find and copy a group of words on page 161 that describes the hunters.

Who does the grey-haired lady call 'this little fellow'?

Which hunter has a bandaged head?

Which mammoth 'did all the damage'?

Which phase tells the reader that everyone disapproves of the Woodland Clan's attempt to capture Cave Bear?

Now you have finished the story, write a review to recommend it to other readers or write a letter to Martin Brown, telling him what you thought of his story.

