Fiction
It's Not My Fault

Teacher notes: *It's Not My Fault*

Curriculum references: Years 3–4

Programme of study: Reading comprehension

Children should be taught to:
- develop positive attitudes to reading and understanding of what they read, by:
  - listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks
- understand what they read, in books they can read independently, by:
  - checking that the text makes sense to them, discussing their understanding, and explaining the meaning of words in context
  - asking questions to improve their understanding of a text
  - drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
  - predicting what might happen from details stated and implied
  - identifying main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarising these.

Running the task

As this task is designed to help you understand the children's reading strategies as well as their understanding of the text, you will need to read with children individually in some cases.

- Explain that they are going to read a text about three children looking after a baby.

- Support children working towards the expected standard in writing skills or reading skills, as suggested in the introduction to this book.

- Children working independently should read the text and complete their answers. Circulate as they do so, and ask children to read aloud to you from the point in the text they have reached, so you can assess their reading fluency and expression.

Assessment guidance

Use the list below to identify the content domains that the children are working on in this task.

Typically, children working at the expected standard will:	
• retrieve key details and quotations from fiction and non-fiction to demonstrate understanding of character, events and information	**2b**
• accurately and selectively summarise main ideas, events, characters and information in fiction and non-fiction texts	**2c**
• explain and justify inferences, providing evidence from the text to support reasoning	**2d**
• make developed predictions that are securely rooted in the text.	**2e**

What to expect

1. Why did Mum want to go next door? Tick the correct answer. (2b)

Most children should answer this correctly. Some children working towards the expected standard may select the wrong part of the text and tick the first option ("*Because Dad was in bed with a cold.*").

2. Why did Mum want the children to keep quiet? (2d)

Children working towards the expected standard may say that it is because Dad is in bed with a cold and that noise will disturb him. Most children will understand that the children's father is probably asleep and may be woken by noise downstairs, and that if he doesn't sleep he may not recover as well. Some children working at greater depth within the expected standard may show awareness beyond this, e.g. "*Mum doesn't want the neighbours to be disturbed.*"

3. What makes Kitty think that William is her happiest friend? (2d)

Most children will state that he always has a smile on his face. Children working at greater depth within the expected standard will also see that "*Nothing seemed to put him in a bad mood*" and that he doesn't seem to mind looking after the baby – he is willing to help.

4. Do you think Daniel is older or younger than Kitty? Explain your answer. (2d)

Children working towards the expected standard may refer to him being able to carry the baby, so assume that he is bigger and therefore probably older. Most children will see that he is carrying the baby because he has more responsibility. They may point out that he enjoys playing games that are too young for him – as Kitty and William's games are – so this shows he is older. Some children working at greater depth within the expected standard may also point out that Daniel says he supposes he will have to help them, implying that he is an older brother.

5. Whose fault is it that the baby started to cry? (2d)

Children working towards the expected standard are more likely to say that Kitty threw the cushion that started him off; children working at greater depth within the expected standard will explain that Daniel goaded her into it.

6. Number these events from 1 to 5 in the order that they happened in the story. (2c)

Most children working at the expected standard should be able to correctly number these events. Children working towards the expected standard may not read the text correctly and may suggest that Mum went out first.

7. Why would the children be worried when the baby started to cry? (2d)

Most children will say that they might be worried because it would wake their father. Children working at greater depth within the expected standard might also suggest that their mother might hear from next door, or that they may not be able to calm him down before their mother returns, and so they will get into trouble.

8. What do you think Mum would say if she walked back in at the end of the text? (2e)

Children working at greater depth within the expected standard should give a full response, explaining that Mum would be cross and worried and explain why. Children working at the expected standard may give only one explanation and fail to elaborate further. Children working towards the expected standard may only give a simple response, which may consist of dialogue without demonstrating a clear prediction.

From *It's Not My Fault* by Bel Mooney

Mum said that Kitty and Daniel had to look after Baby Tom while she popped next door. "William's mum is so good at knitting, and I've really messed up this little jumper I was making for Tom," she said. "I need her to put me right."

"Oh, Mum, William was coming to play with me," moaned Kitty.

"All the better," said Mum. "That makes three of you to watch Tom. I want you all to stay in the sitting-room and play together. Dad's in bed with his cold, so I don't want you to make too much noise, either."

"That's boring," muttered Dan.

"The most boring thing in the world is children saying things are boring!" retorted Mum.

William arrived, his usual smile on his face. Kitty realised he was her happiest friend. Nothing seemed to put him in a bad mood. When she said they all had to look after the baby he said, "That's OK."

"No, it's not. I wanted to make a den at the bottom of the garden," said Kitty.

"But it's raining!" said William.

"I suppose we could make one in the sitting-room – while we're looking after Tom," said Kitty slowly.

Mum called that she wouldn't be long, and Daniel came into the sitting-room carrying the baby. When Kitty told her brother that they had decided to make a den, he grinned. Daniel always liked playing games he pretended were much too young for him, just like Kitty liked to re-read her first storybooks, with the very big print.

"Oh, all right," sighed Dan. "I supposed I'll have to help you." He put Tom's little bouncy chair on the rug and fastened the baby in it. Tom waved his arms about and shouted excitedly, as if he knew something good was about to happen.

"I know what we could do," said William. "Make a little house for Tom by pulling out the sofa, and putting a tablecloth – or something over, and …"

"No – chairs would be better," said Daniel. "You know, like we used to do, Kit?"

They looked around, and talked some more, and started to pull the sofa out … and Baby Tom started to feel bored. As far as he was concerned, nothing was happening. So he started to wave his arms about like windmills and kick his legs – all of which made him hotter and hotter, and more and more uncomfortable … And that made him start to whimper.

"Oh no," said Kitty.

"What's the matter with him?" asked William.

"Maybe he's got a pooey nappy, in which case you'll have to change it, Kit!" grinned Daniel.

"Why me?"

"Cos you're a girl – and it's a girl's job!" shouted Dan.

"What a lot of old-fashioned rubbish!" shouted Kitty. "In any case, Dad changes nappies – so there!" She threw a cushion at her brother, but he ducked and it went rolling over the rug and just touched Tom's legs. It was gentle – but the baby didn't like it one bit.

"Waaaaaaa!"

Name:	Date:

Read the text, then answer the questions.

1. Why did Mum want to go next door? Tick the correct answer.

    Because Dad was in bed with a cold. ☐

    Because William was coming to play. ☐

    So the children could look after the baby. ☐

    Because she wanted to ask for her neighbour's help. ☐

2. Why did Mum want the children to keep quiet?

    _____

3. What makes Kitty think that William is her happiest friend?

    _____

4. Do you think Daniel is older or younger than Kitty? Explain your answer.

    _____

5. Whose fault is it that the baby started to cry?

    _____

6. Number these events from 1 to 5 in the order that they happened in the story.

    Mum went out ☐

    The children started to make a den. ☐

    Baby Tom became hot and started to whimper. ☐

    William came to play. ☐

    Baby Tom cried. ☐

7. Why would the children be worried when the baby started to cry?

    _____

8. What do you think Mum would say if she walked back in at the end of the text?

    _____