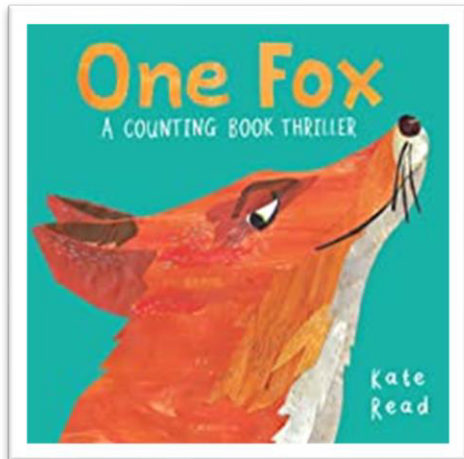


# Read for Pleasure

## One Fox

By Kate read



One famished fox with two sly eyes is on the prowl...

Three plump hens had better watch out!

This is no ordinary 1, 2, 3.

This is a 1, 2, 3 that will have you on the edge of your seat.

### Title Talk

*The title of this story is: One Fox.*

- This title is short, simple and direct. Why might this be?
- What do you already know about foxes that might suggest that danger and death lurk nearby?
- We are told that this is a counting book THRILLER. What do you think this means?
- How does this make you feel about A] the fox and B] this story?



### Cover Chat

*Now look at the cover of this picture book.*

- Much like the title, the cover simply shows the head of a fox, presumably the one fox referred to in the book's title.

In light of what you have just talked about with regards to foxes being predators and their hunting habits, what might this particular fox be thinking and why?



## Page 1-2

### **One famished fox**

- We begin with the number one. A lone hunter appears, unfurled from its slumber, ready for the hunt to begin. Interestingly, the number one is coloured the same as the fox. Might this have been deliberate?
- As the fox awakens, how hungry would it be? Which word emphasises this?
- If a predator is FAMISHED, how dangerous is it? Why?
- With this in mind, how might you read the opening sentence?
- Take it in turns to read it out loud. Who can make it sound the most sinister? What can you do with your voice to make it sound so scary?
- What effect does this have upon the reader?
- How might this set the tone for the rest of the book? Dare you read on?

## Page 3-4

### **Two sly eyes**

- Whose eyes do you think are being described here?
- Which word is used to describe them?
- Look up the word SLY using an online dictionary. What does it mean?
- How fitting is the use of this word to describe the eyes of a hunter? Discuss.
- Did you read this sentence using the same sinister narrator's voice? Why? How did this build tension?
- On page 3, we see the fox, its nose to the ground, its eyes focusing on something. What do the two sly eyes spot on page 4?
- Interestingly, the number two is coloured the same as the feather. Why might this be?
- What does the appearance of a feather suggest might happen next?



## Page 5-6

### **Three plump hens**

- Which word is used to describe the hens?
- If a hen is PLUMP, how juicy and tasty are they likely to be?



- What might this mean for A] the fox and B] the hen?
- Interestingly, the three hens are shown busying themselves hunting for food. Why is this ironic?

Remember: these three hunters are about to become the hunted.

- Does this change how we feel towards the fox? Why? Discuss.
- Do the hens realise that a fox is on the prowl? Why do you think this?

## **Page 7-8**

### ***Four padding paws***

- Who do these four padding paws belong to? Can you spot them?
- Interestingly, we often think of the sharp claws of a hunter when considering its paws. Yet here, the writer chooses to focus on its pads. Why might this be? Does it raise the tension even further? Discuss.
- Until now, the pages have been given a plain white background. Now, however, we see the darkness of the farmyard and the fox's shadow encroaching on these pristine pages. Even the number four is coloured a shadowy grey. Might this be significant?



## **Page 9-10**

### ***Five snug eggs***

- We are halfway through what we presume will be a count to ten, and the tone and atmosphere are given an unexpected twist. All seems quiet. All seems calm. All seems safe and well.
- Which word is used to describe the five eggs? Look up its meaning using an online dictionary?
- What does the word SNUG mean? How does it tie in with the sense of peace and quiet of the hen house?
- Is this sense of security one that is true or one that is false? Why is this?
- Interestingly, we cannot see the fox who is somewhere on the prowl outside. The hens are sleeping, unaware of the danger lurking in the shadowy darkness outside. How does this contrast make you feel? Why?
- As such, do you think including this contrast at the midpoint of this counting thriller is a good idea? Discuss.



## **Page 11-12**

### ***Six silent steps***

- We quickly return to outside. The fox wraps itself around the hen house under the gaze of a full moon. Remembering that the hens are sleeping snugly inside, how quiet is this scene?
- Which word is used to describe the fox's steps that emphasises this?
- We are told it is SILENT and consider this scene to be peaceful. Yet we can't help thinking about the terror that is about to be unleashed. How does this contrast between the here and now and the very near future make you feel? Why?

Remember, this night (and arguably this story) belongs to the fox. Notice how the number six is now coloured.



## **Page 13-14**

### ***Seven knocks on the door***

- When might we knock on somebody's door? How polite is it to do so?
- Does this seem odd in light of what the fox is likely to do next? Discuss.
- Does the knocking on a door by a predator in order to be let in remind you of any other stories?
- What is the difference between a KNOCK and a TAP? Discuss.
- Why do you think there are seven light taps for us to count rather than seven heavy and more threatening knocks?
- Notice on which side of the page the fox is and on which side the hen house. Might this be deliberate?
- What do we see linking the two halves of this double page spread? Why might this be?
- If you could speak to the hens at this moment in time, what would you say to them?

## **Page 15-16**

### ***Eight beady eyes***

- Apart from the number eight, this scene is covered in darkness. Why?
- Why do you think the number eight is coloured as the fox when we are clearly inside the hen house? Discuss.

- It is hard for us to make out the hens and the fox, but their bright beady eyes (and sharp white fangs in the case of the fox) help us to see what is happening in the deep dark shadows.

What do you think each of these characters is thinking?

- Why might the eyes and the outline of the hens be rounded and the eyes and the teeth of the fox be more pointed? Discuss.

## **Page 17-18**

### ***Nine flying feathers***



- We are now wide awake! The background has returned to a brilliant white. The hens are panicking, flapping their wings in pandemonium and we can only imagine the calamitous din that has broken the silence of the hunt and now jumps out at us.

Do you think this was a good idea? Why? Discuss.

- Can you spot the nine flying feathers? Which of these feathers belongs to which hen?
- Why do you think the illustrator chose not to depict the fox in this scene?

## **Page 19-20**

### ***Ten sharp teeth***

- We now focus, not on the fox but the fox's teeth. Which word is used to describe them? Why is this significant?
- What do you think of when you read or hear the word SHARP?
- Interestingly, the fox's eyes are shut, and it seems to be enjoying this moment of panic and sheer terror. It is as though the fox is laughing and is not concerned about the carnage he is about to unleash upon the hens. How does this make you feel towards A] the fox and B] the hens?
- How likely is it that we have come to the end of our counting thriller?
- How would you feel if there were no more pages left to turn and that this story was at its end? Discuss.
- What if you were told that we were going to turn the page after all. What do you expect to see next? How does this make you feel?



### **Page 21-22**

- Describe what is happening. Who might these hens be running to help?
- Interestingly, there are now words on these pages. Why do you think this is?

Remember: it is often said that actions speak louder than words.

### **Page 23- 24**

#### ***One hundred angry hens and...***

- The sheer number of hens dominate the page while the solitary fox runs away. Why might this be?
- Which word is used to describe the one hundred hens?
- Why are they so ANGRY?
- How do you think the writer of this counting thriller will end the final sentence on the final two pages?

### **Page 25-26**

#### ***... one frightened fox.***

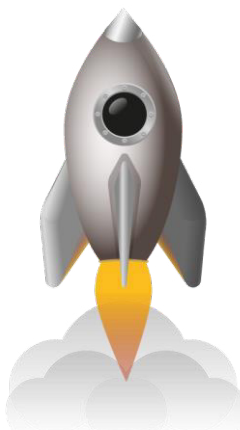
- We return to the lone hunter, no doubt still famished but now frightened as the tables have turned. How do you feel towards A] the fox and B] the hens?



#### **Think about the story as a whole:**

At what point does the balance of power shift from the fox to the hens?

What might this teach us about facing a problem alone?



The perfect companion to  
Reading Rocketeers: **Unit 2.10**

## **John Murray**

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John is a recognised specialist in developing children's reading and comprehension.

The creator of Reading Explorers, Top Class Comprehension and Reading Rocketeers, his seminars and CPD training focus on the teaching, learning and enjoyment of reading.

An independent Literacy consultant, he aims to support schools to improve their performance and secure best practice. Above all, it is to ignite within us a passion for books and a genuine love for the written word.

His enthusiasm and expertise can be seen throughout his work and his resources and training are used in classrooms worldwide.

*“Matilda's strong young mind continue to grow, nurtured by the voices of all those authors who had sent their books out into the world like ships on the sea. These books gave Matilda a hopeful and comforting message: You are not alone.”*

Roald Dahl