

Sample of Cover and Selected Pages

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CODE READER™

Making Difficult Words Easy

Code Reader Books provide codes with “sound keys” to help read difficult words. For example, a word that may be difficult to read is “unicorn,” so it might be followed by a code like this: unicorn (*YOO-nih-korn*). By providing codes with phonetic sound keys, Code Reader Books make reading easier and more enjoyable.

Examples of Code Reader™ Keys

Long a sound (as in make):

a (*with a silent e*) or **ay**

Examples: able (*AY-bul*); break (*brake*)

Short i sound (as in sit): **i** or **ih**

Examples: myth (*mith*); mission (*MIH-shun*)

Long i sound (as in by):

i (*with a silent e*) or **y**

Examples: might (*mite*); bicycle (*BY-sih-kul*)

Keys for the long o sound (as in hope):

o (*with a silent e*) or **oh**

Examples: molten (*MOLE-ten*); ocean (*OH-shen*)

Codes use dashes between syllables (*SIH-luh-buls*), and stressed syllables have capital letters.

To see more Code Reader sound keys, see page 41.

(RAH-nuh)

RANA AND THE DOLPHIN

By Jeanne-A Debats

Cover illustration by Stéphanie Hans

TREASURE BAY

Rana and the Dolphin

**A Code Reader™ Chapter Book
Blue Series**

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Patent Pending.

Code Reader books are designed using an innovative system of methods to create and include phonetic codes to enhance the readability of text.

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Chapter 1

The Whale Key

My name is Rana (*RAH-nuh*), like the Viking (*VY-king*) sea goddess Ran (*rahn*). My mom gave me this name because on the day I was born, nine years ago, a terrible storm swept along the coast near our home.

The wind was so violent (*VY-uh-lent*) that it drove a blue whale onto the shore. No matter how hard they tried, the people who came to help couldn't get the huge animal back into the sea. My dad told me that the whale was enormous (*ee-NOR-mus*).

While they were dragging it back to the edge of the waves, two winch lines that were pulling it broke

under its weight (*wayt*). It was nearly one hundred and seventy tons! As heavy as two buses!

The whale died on the beach, far away from her usual (*YOO-zhoo-ul*) hunting grounds. I always thought that Mom and Dad regretted having to stay at the hospital because I was being born right then. It meant they couldn't help their friends, who were trying to save the magnificent (*mag-NIH-fih-sent*) animal. But I don't blame them: I also love whales—and I grew up in the shadow of the greatest one of all.

At that time, the mayor decided that the town should leave the whale's skeleton where it was, for tourists. He had a huge structure built (*bilt*) to house it. In summer, there were sometimes visitors (*VIZ-zih-turz*), but in winter it was closed and you had to ask my parents for the key. I've never stolen anything except this key, but I've stolen it so many times I've lost count.

I must have been not quite six years old when I first took it, and I was not proud when I got into the

building—I promise (*PRAH-mis*) you. I don't really remember being scared, but I do remember my amazement.

The floor was covered in blue tiles, and the whale's skeleton hung above it on ropes as thick as both of my wrists put together, as if it was sleeping forever. The sun came in through windows on the roof, and long beams of light danced across the bones. The skull was white and shaped like a bird's beak. It was shining softly in the cathedral-like (*KUH-thee-drul-like*) atmosphere (*AT-mus-feer*). The huge room smelled of dust and damp, which gave it a slightly creepy feeling of being abandoned (*uh-BAN-dund*) and mysterious (*mis-TEER-ree-us*).

Since then, I have visited my old friend, the whale, thousands of times. I crawled under the spine that was thicker than my head. I played hide-and-seek between her enormous (*ee-NOR-mus*) ribs, which were at least six times taller than me. I think my

parents always knew I went there, but they never said anything about it. They are scientists who study mammals (*MAM-mulz*) that live in the sea—whales, orcas (*OR-cuz*), and dolphins (*DOL-finz*)—and they love them.

So, I think they were pleased that I loved them too.

Chapter 2

Mystery at the Lab

Another unusual (*un-YOO-zhoo-ul*) thing about the day I was born is that I was born on April Fools' Day. Yes, it sounds like fun to be born on the first of April, but it's actually (*AK-shoo-ul-lee*) not as fun as you'd think. At school, people often called me an April fool to annoy me. You can't imagine (*ih-MAJ-in*) how much that irritated (*EER-rih-tay-ted*) me!

On my last birthday, Mom came home from work looking very pleased. Her cheeks were flushed with excitement. She gave me a huge smile and said, "I've got a wonderful surprise for you, sweetie!"

Looking at her face, you would have thought that the wonderful (*WUN-dur-ful*) surprise was for her. There must have been something for her too, considering how happily Dad was looking at her. Right away, I realized (*REE-uh-lized*) that it couldn't have been the awesome mermaid outfit that I had asked for as a present. No, this had to be something really very special.

"Get your swimsuit," Mom added.

I stared at her, shocked. The sun was out, but the water in our bay here in Northern California (*kal-ih-FORN-yuh*) was cold. This didn't bother me at all, but my mom comes from Southern California, where the weather is warmer. She is normally convinced that if you go swimming when it's less than 70 degrees out, you're risking death or worse—a very bad cold at the least.

We got into the car before I could get them to tell me what this was all about. All I could get out of them

was another big happy smile. Then we drove to the Center for Nanotechnology (*NAN-oh-tek-NAH-luh-jee*) Research, where they both worked. Mom pulled over into the employee parking lot and we headed toward their lab.

I had never set foot there before, because there were very strict security (*seh-KYUR-ih-tee*) rules at the research center. It was all very strange, especially (*eh-SPESH-il-lee*) when we ran into the director (*dur-REK-tur*).

I never liked him. He always seemed to suspect you of something. Every time he had come to our house, I made some silly mistake that I wish Mom could have ignored. So I blushed when we met him, and I didn't know what to say. Then he ruffled my hair, which was really annoying, and chuckled loudly. My parents also laughed, but I could tell it was a bit forced.

The three of us set off again, and as we walked, Mom whispered to Dad, "The director always scares

me a bit. Something about him reminds me of a shark.”

She was right. He was wearing a black suit (*soot*) and had very pale, slightly flabby skin and pointy teeth. He looked exactly like a shark that had learned to walk. Changing the subject, Mom added, “Still, it’s wonderful that we have permission (*pur-MIH-shun*) to test out our research!”

Dad smiled at her. They raised their right hands above their heads and high-fived each other, like two basketball players after a winning shot. This was getting more and more mysterious.

Mom took out her staff card and let me into a warehouse. It reminded me of the building my whale was kept in, except (*ex-SEPT*) this one was a bit smaller and was split into two halves (*havz*). The first one was full of lab benches and transparent (*trans-PAIR-rent*) shelves. They were covered in oddly shaped test tubes (*toobz*) full of colorful liquids (*LIH-kwidz*). It smelled

strange in there, like a hospital. What was I doing there with my swimsuit?

Just then, I noticed through a glass window that there was a second half of the building that was taken up by a huge, bright blue swimming pool. The pool was at the level of the floor, but only half of it was sheltered by the building. The other half was in the open air. The pool almost reached the sea—in fact, there were pumps for refilling it with clean sea water. Waves were crashing against the nearby sea wall.

I was amazed when I saw what was swimming in the pool!