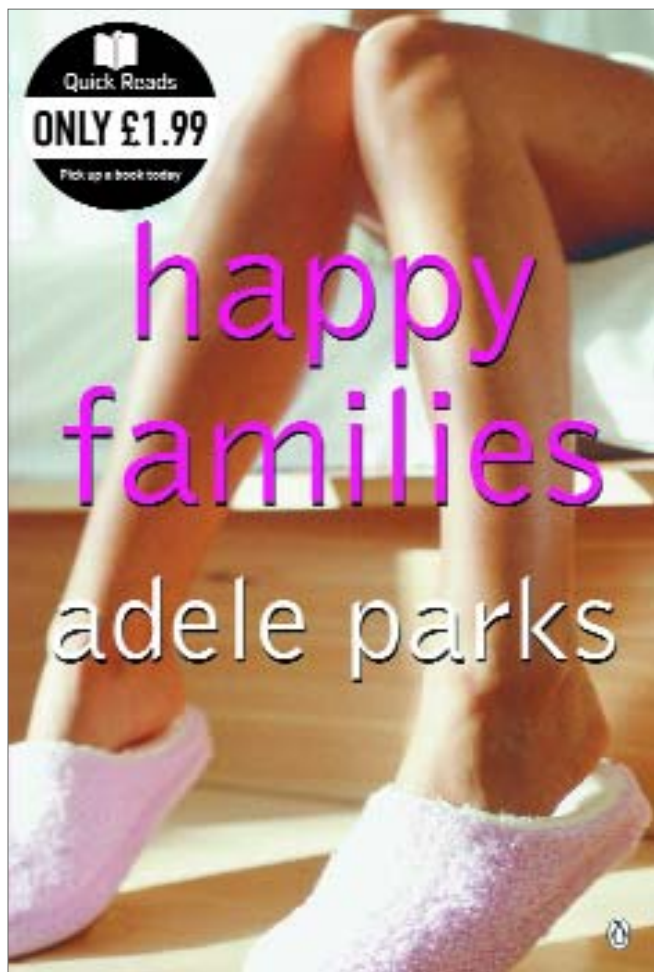




Quick Reads

The Vital Link Guide



Introduction

The launch of a fourth set of Quick Reads titles on World Book Day in March 2008 provides another great opportunity to introduce less confident adult readers to the world of books. This is particularly important during the 2008 National Year of Reading which has adult literacy learners as a priority audience.

The response to the books published since the launch of the Quick Reads initiative in March 2006 has been enormously positive. Thousands of people have discovered an enjoyment of reading for the first time. Tutors and other professionals have recorded an increase in learners' confidence, motivation and acquisition of literacy skills.

The Vital Link encourages practitioners to integrate reading for pleasure into their work with adult literacy learners through partnership with the public library service. Support from the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills has enabled us to provide tools to link the Quick Reads into regular teaching practice and into more informal contact with adults who are improving their literacy skills.

As part of this work, The Vital Link has created resources to support use of the Quick Reads. These provide a 'way in' to using the books in a range of settings through ideas for discussion and extension activities. We have included suggestions for other reading materials, printed and online, and curriculum references for the main learning points.

The resources for the Quick Reads published in 2008 are available to download as individual PDF or Word files from www.vitallink.org.uk.

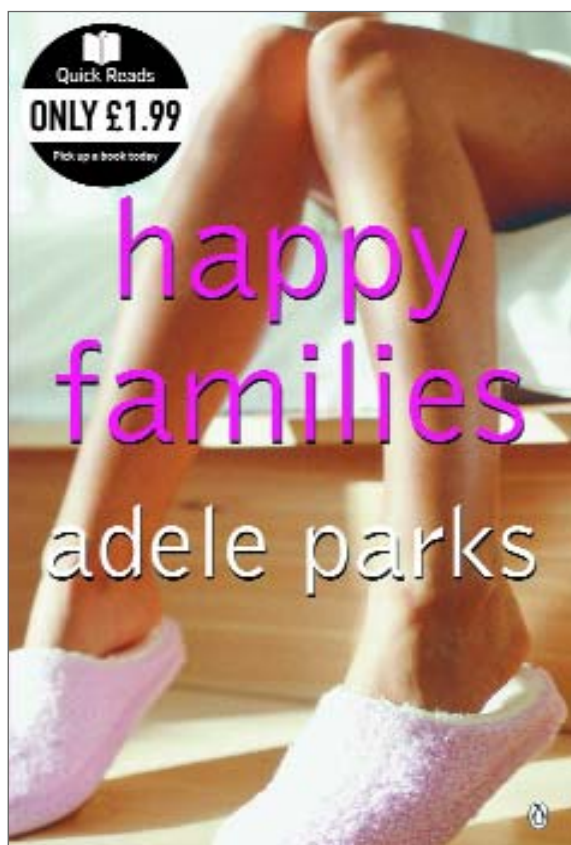
Similar materials for Quick Reads titles published in 2006 and 2007 are also available from www.vitallink.org.uk. *Starting with Quick Reads*, a 24-page guide supporting the Quick Reads titles published in 2007, is also available as a hard copy free from DIUS. Call 0845 6022260 (ref code SFLQR).

An innovative set of web-based activities for readers linked to the Quick Reads titles published in 2007 can be found at www.quickreadsideas.org.uk. A CD containing resources from 2006 and 2007 (excluding the web quests) for those without internet access is also available from DIUS. Call 0845 6022260 (ref code SFLQRCD).

**The
Vital
Link**

Our thanks go to writers Roger Adams and Gill Moore. The Vital Link is run by The Reading Agency in partnership with the National Literacy Trust.

We welcome all feedback on these ideas and on how you are using the Quick Reads. Please contact genevieve.clarke@readingagency.org.uk



Readability 12 Level 1

The Book

This romance is about Lisa, who is 42, divorced and a mother of three. For the past year, she has been going out with Mark, who is five years younger than her. But might he leave her like her husband did? Lisa tries to protect herself against further hurt by denying her feelings, but when she becomes pregnant, it is her own children and friend who help her to face her true feelings.

The Author

Adele Parks was born in Teeside, north-east England, but now lives in Guildford with her husband and son. Her earlier novels, *Playing Away*, *Game Over*, *Larger Than Life*, *The Other Woman's Shoes*, *Still Thinking of You*, *Husbands* and *Young Wives' Tales*, were all bestsellers.

Book Talk

- Ask the readers to summarise in as few words as possible the central theme of this book. Romance is one of the most popular genres, with the 'will they/won't they?' question at its heart. How many of the men/women in your group like romantic fiction? What is its enduring appeal? What stories have your readers enjoyed with this theme – from current TV 'soaps' to short stories to Jane Austen and Shakespeare.
- Trace the key stages in the plot (Postit notes are useful as they can be rearranged and extra items inserted. They also appeal to visual and kinaesthetic learners and are helpful to those who find it difficult to organise their ideas.)
- The chapters have dates on the headings. How important is this in helping the reader to follow the action? Would the readers have preferred titles to the chapters? What could these be?
- Why is the overheard telephone conversation (Chapter 9) important? (It forces Lisa to confront her own situation and that is the turning point.) It also uses the device of mistaken identity. Can readers recall other cases where a mix-up of this type is central to the plot (encourage them to think about books, plays, TV programmes, films)?
- A recent popular title is *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus*. Do the readers understand what is meant by this? Is it true that women are more emotionally sensitive than men? Which characters in *Happy Families* are portrayed as emotionally sensitive?
- How much do we know about Mark? What are the clues to his character? (Finding page references is good for skimming and scanning skills.) We know nothing about his background – students might invent a background for him.
- Lisa thinks she is a good mother. Do you agree? In finding the evidence for their views, readers might focus on the opening pages of the story, and the point where Lisa confronts her daughter after overhearing the phone conversation (Chapter 10).

Taking it Further

- If readers have used Postit notes to trace the main events of the plot, use them as the basis for writing Lisa's 'Dear Diary' entries.
- Write a description of the main characters (provide a writing frame and a word bank where necessary). Discuss the adjectives which might be used to describe appearance and personality, perhaps working in pairs to give mutual support.
- Did the readers want a happy ending? How would they have felt if it Lisa had not married Mark? Could they suggest an alternative outcome? Compare Maureen Lee's *A Dream Come True* in which a woman who becomes pregnant and decides to bring the baby up by herself.
- Invite readers to share romantic stories in women's magazines and celebrity gossip magazines. Do they prefer to read about stars or about 'ordinary' people?

Learning Objectives

The curriculum references below are for Entry 3 or Level 1, but the suggested activities are quite open-ended to allow for the range of abilities found in many settings. Supported reading and discussion should enable readers with lower levels of literacy to be included.

Describe significant situations and /or circumstances related to the main points of a text	SLc/E3.3; Slc/L1.4
Express an opinion based on a text	SLd/E3.2, SLc/L1.4
Follow and contribute to discussion	SLd/E3.1 & SLd E3.2; Sld/L1.1
Follow and comprehend the main events of the narrative	Rt/E3.1 & Rt/E3.4; Rt/L1.1 & Rt/L1.3
Use features of a text to find specific detail	Rt/E3.5; Rt/L1.4 & Rt/L1.5
Recognise how an author uses language and other textual features for different and/or specific effects	Rt/E3.2; Rt/L1.2
Compose a description of characters in the story	Wt/E3.2 & Wt/3.3; Wt/L1.3 & Wt/L1.4

What Shall We Read Next?

There's a lot of poetry about the course of true love. For something modern, amusing and accessible, try Wendy Cope. You can find poetry by Wendy and hear poems read aloud on the website www.poetryarchive.org.

Find out more about Adele Parks on www.adeleparks.com. Adele encourages readers to send her messages via the website.

Ask your librarian about audio books of romantic fiction.

Other Quick Read titles which explore similar romantic themes:

A Dream Come True by Maureen Lee

Woman Walks into a Bar by Rowan Coleman

See the following pages for additional sources of support for working with emergent readers and a complete list of Quick Reads titles.

Further Information

See www.quickreads.org.uk for more about Quick Reads 2008 and the supporting campaign run by NIACE.

You can find a wider range of books suitable for Entry3/Level 1 readers at www.firstchoicebooks.org.uk

Copies of the Quick Reads titles first published, re-issued or reprinted in 2008 can be purchased at all main bookshops and supermarket chains. Bulk quantities can be ordered from the following suppliers:

- Avanti – orders@avantibooks.com 01438 747000 www.avantibooks.com
- Bertrams/THE – books@bertrams.com 0871 303 6600 www.bertramsthe.com
- Browns Books for Students – schools.services@brownsbfs.co.uk 01482 384660 www.bfs.co.uk
- Gardners – custcare@gardners.com 01323 521777 www.gardners.com

Audio versions of the Quick Reads are available from W F Howes Ltd as part of their Clipper Emergent Reader programme – sales@wfhowes.co.uk 01664 423000 www.wfhowes.co.uk/cerp/

Large print versions of several of the Quick Reads titles are available from BBC Audiobooks Ltd – library.sales@bbc.com 01225 335336 www.bbcaudiobooks.com/libraries

Audio extracts from the Quick Reads can be found on the BBC RaW website at www.bbc.co.uk/raw along with a range of resources to support the BBC RaW campaign.

The Quick Reads project in Wales is a joint venture between the Welsh Arts Council and The Basic Skills Agency. Further details can be found at www.quickreads.net

Publishers producing titles specifically for emergent readers include:

- New Island Open Door series www.newisland.ie
- Sandstone Press Vista series and accompanying education packs www.sandstonepress.com
- Barrington Stoke www.barringtonstoke.co.uk (teenagers and young adults)
- Ransom Publishing www.ransom.co.uk (teenagers and young adults)

Gatehouse Media Limited publishes and distributes books and resources for use in adult basic education, including Gatehouse Books written by and for adult beginner readers www.gatehousebooks.org.uk

New Leaf Publishing publishes titles by and for adults who are new to reading and have low levels of literacy www.newleafpublishing.org.uk

Full List of Quick Reads Titles, Including Availability

New titles published March 2008

<i>Doctor Who: Revenge of the Judoon</i>	Terrance Dicks	978 1 846 07372 4
<i>East End Tales</i>	Gilda O'Neill	978 0 141 03494 2
<i>The Girl on the Platform</i>	Josephine Cox	978 0 00 727008 8
<i>Happy Families</i>	Adele Parks	978 0 141 03491 1
<i>The Hardest Test</i>	Scott Quinnell	978 1 90612595 0
<i>Humble Pie</i>	Gordon Ramsay	978 0 00727096 5
<i>Life's New Hurdles</i>	Colin Jackson	978 1 90612593 6
<i>One Good Turn</i>	Chris Ryan	978 0 099 52234 8
<i>RaW Voices: True Stories of Hardship and Hope</i>	Vanessa Feltz (ed)	978 1 846 07446 2
<i>The 10 Keys to Success</i>	John Bird	978 0 091 92360 0

Quick Reads backlist

<i>Aim High</i>	Tanni Grey Thompson	1905170890 978 1 905 17089 0
<i>Bring it Back Home</i>	Niall Griffiths	1905170912 978 1 905 17091 3
<i>Chickenfeed</i>	Minette Walters	978 0 330 44031 8
<i>Cleanskin</i>	Val McDermid	978 0 007 21672 7
<i>Danny Wallace and the Centre of the Universe</i>	Danny Wallace	978 0 091 90894 2
<i>A Day To Remember</i>	Fiona Phillips	1905170904 978 1 905 17090 6
<i>Doctor Who: I Am a Dalek</i>	Gareth Roberts	978 0 563 486480
<i>Doctor Who: Made of Steel</i>	Terrance Dicks	978 1 846 07204 8
<i>Don't Make Me Laugh</i>	Patrick Augustus	978 1 902 934464
<i>A Dream Come True</i>	Maureen Lee	978 0 7528 8239 0
<i>The Grey Man</i>	Andy McNab	978 0 552 15433 8
<i>Hell Island</i>	Matthew Reilly	978 0 330 442329
<i>How to Change Your Life in 7 Steps</i>	John Bird	978 0 091 90703 7
<i>Lily</i>	Adele Geras	978 0 752 88224 6
<i>The Name You Once Gave Me</i>	Mike Phillips	978 0 007 216710
<i>Reading My Arse!</i>	Ricky Tomlinson	978 0 7515 3953 0
<i>The Rubber Woman</i>	Lindsay Ashford	1905170882 978 1 905 17088 3
<i>Star Sullivan</i>	Maeve Binchy	978 0 75287 954 3
<i>The Sun Book of Short Stories</i>		978 0 553 181882 6
<i>Survive the Worst and Aim for the Best</i>	Kerry Katona	978 0 091 91754 8
<i>Twenty Tales from the War Zone</i>	John Simpson	978 0 330 44999 1

Other Titles (only available in libraries)

<i>Blackwater</i>	Conn Iggulden	978 0 007 22166 0
<i>The Book Boy</i>	Joanna Trollope	978 0 747 58211 3
<i>Burning Ambition</i>	Allen Carr	978 0 141 03030 2
<i>The Corpse's Tale</i>	Katherine John	1905170319
<i>Desert Claw</i>	Damien Lewis	0099493535
<i>The Dying Wish</i>	Courtia Newland	0349119635
<i>I Love Football</i>	Hunter Davies	0755314700
<i>The Poison in the Blood</i>	Tom Holland	0349119643
<i>Screw it, Let's Do It</i>	Richard Branson	0753510995
<i>Secrets</i>	Lynne Barrett-Lee	1905170300
<i>Someone Like Me</i>	Tom Holt	1841494461
<i>The Team</i>	Mick Dennis with the Premier League	0552153729
<i>The Thief</i>	Ruth Rendell	0091796865
<i>Winner Takes All</i>	John Francome	0755329481
<i>Woman Walks into a Bar</i>	Rowan Coleman	0099492288