

Professional Learning Guide

How to use Ziptales in your school



Ziptales PL Guide - Overview

This guide is designed for a leading staff member (e.g. literacy co-ordinator or curriculum leader) to present the features of the Ziptales website in one simple session to the whole primary school staff from Foundation* (Prep/Kindergarten) – Year 6.

Running time: 30 minutes

Required materials:

- interactive whiteboard
- laptops/tablets - 1 per teacher (recommended) or 1 per year level
- copies of year level-specific instructions (see page 14) - 1 per teacher



Session overview:

- **Part 1: Introduction and navigation – What does Ziptales offer our school?**
An introduction to the online stories, Reading Scheme, Reading ‘engine’ and Specialised English Lessons. (<5 mins)
- **Part 2: Small group exploration – What does Ziptales offer my year level?**
Time for teachers to explore the specific features designed for the students in their class level. (15 mins)
- **Part 3: Additional benefits of Ziptales – What else does Ziptales offer?**
A final look at other features of Ziptales that may be of particular interest. (2-5 mins)

This guide includes a script to read aloud, along with instructions (in italics) that focus on specific features to ensure the session runs smoothly and productively. The presenting staff member does not need to be fully familiar with Ziptales however we recommend he/she spends some time navigating the website (e.g. identifying buttons, links, drop down boxes) for maximum efficiency in the running of the session.

*** Ziptales uses the Australian Curriculum name for the first year of school**

Part 1: What does Ziptales offer our school?



(1) Display the Ziptales Home Page on the interactive whiteboard.

Ziptales is an online literacy resource offering teaching and learning tools for students and teachers in all levels of the primary school.

(2) Log in to Ziptales via the top right hand yellow Login button. (The Students' Dashboard will appear.)



Student Dashboard

There are two main home pages – the **Students' Dashboard** as seen here – accessible by both students and teachers.

(3) Open the drop down box under the green STUDENT button in the top left hand corner and select TEACHER (one of the four alternative views).



Teacher Dashboard

And a **Teacher Dashboard** – for teachers and administrators only.

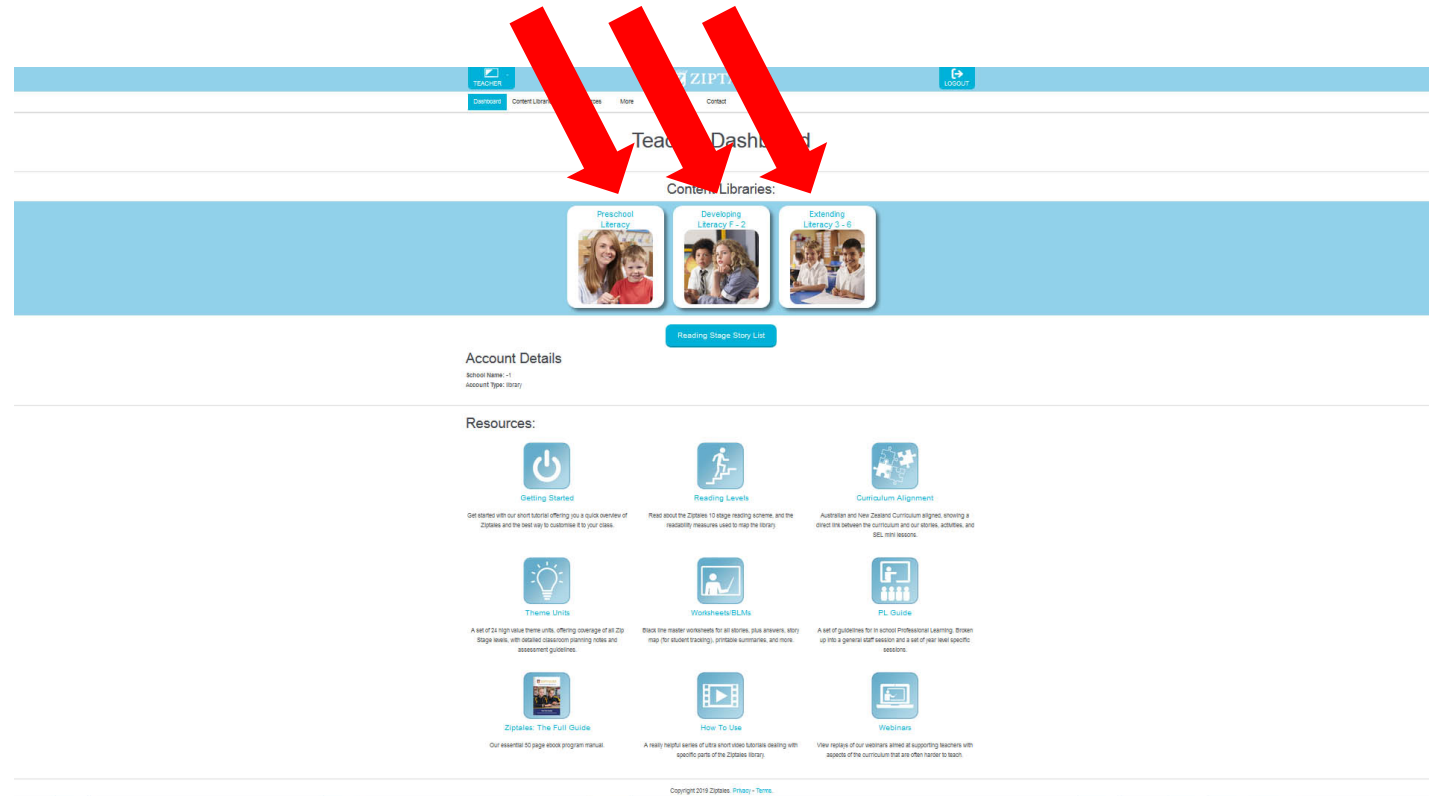
(4) Point out the three buttons under the Content Libraries heading.

There are three main content libraries:

- **Preschool Literacy**
- **Developing Literacy**
(Foundation/Kindergarten – Year 2)
- **Extending Literacy (Years 3 – 6).**

These content libraries offer a variety of online stories and helpful teaching resources.

(5) Open the Developing Literacy link.



Developing Literacy (F-2)

For example, students in lower primary can access a variety of animated stories in **Storytime**, **Timeless Tales**, **Easy Readers** and **Junior Readers**.

All have voiceovers and come with follow up worksheets.

Let's look at an example.

(6) Open Easy Readers – Short Vowels, **Bad Cat**.



The screenshot shows the ZIPTALES website interface. The top navigation bar includes a 'TEACHER' tab, the ZIPTALES logo, and a 'Welcome, Ziptales Master Admin!' message with a 'LOGOUT' button. Below the navigation bar, the main heading is 'Developing Literacy F-2'. Under this heading, there is a section titled 'Reading & Enrichment' with a description: 'These resources are designed especially for Developing Literacy F-2 (Year 1 and Year 2). These are the early years, where children are being taught to read, and can deal with simple texts. The texts here vary from learning to read, phonics based texts, and on to more complex texts. There are a more than 250+ texts in this section.' A large red arrow points from this text to the 'Easy Readers' icon in the grid. The grid contains 12 icons arranged in 3 rows and 4 columns. The icons are: Row 1: ABC, Storytime, Timeless Tales, Puppet Plays; Row 2: Easy Readers, Junior Readers, Joke in a Box, Puzzle Palace; Row 3: Rhyme Time, Make and Do, Happy Schools, Specialised English Lessons (SEL). Each icon has a magnifying glass and a share icon below it.

Example of Developing Literacy (F-2)

(7) Demonstrate how to turn the voiceover on and off via the speaker button in the top right hand corner.

The **Easy Readers** are written specifically to develop phonemic awareness in the early primary years. The module covers short vowels, long vowels, consonant blends, digraphs and other essential sound-letter recognition content. All are presented in a humorous 'Dr Seuss' style, to entertain as well as inform.

(8) Navigate via the red back arrows to the Developing Literacy Home Page.

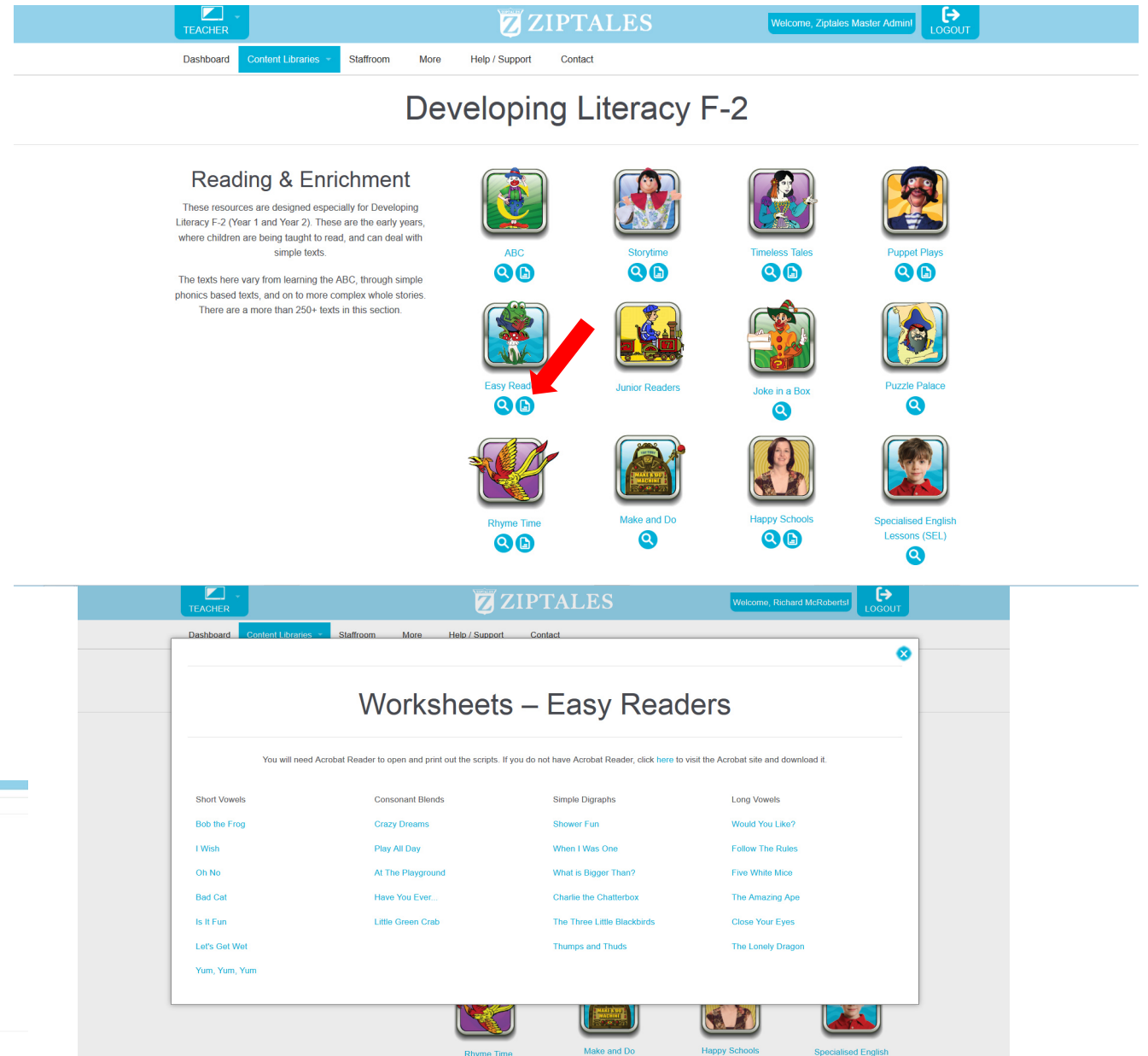
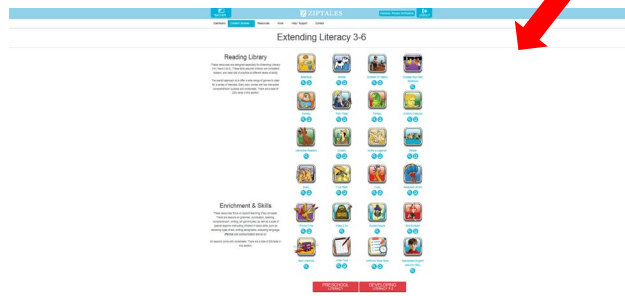


Worksheets

(9) Click on the Worksheets link under the Easy Readers icon (blue button showing an earmarked paper icon). Scroll down to display full list.

Worksheets are available for each story and can be accessed under the icon.

(10) Click on the blue cross in the top right corner of the Worksheets pop up page (to close the page). Now choose the Extending Literacy library.



Developing Literacy F-2

Reading & Enrichment

These resources are designed especially for Developing Literacy F-2 (Year 1 and Year 2). These are the early years, where children are being taught to read, and can deal with simple texts.

The texts here vary from learning the ABC, through simple phonics based texts, and on to more complex whole stories. There are a more than 250+ texts in this section.

Icons shown: ABC, Storytime, Timeless Tales, Puppet Plays, Easy Readers (highlighted with a red arrow), Junior Readers, Joke in a Box, Puzzle Palace, Rhyme Time, Make and Do, Happy Schools, Specialised English Lessons (SEL).

Worksheets – Easy Readers

You will need Acrobat Reader to open and print out the scripts. If you do not have Acrobat Reader, click [here](#) to visit the Acrobat site and download it.

Short Vowels	Consonant Blends	Simple Digraphs	Long Vowels
Bob the Frog	Crazy Dreams	Shower Fun	Would You Like?
I Wish	Play All Day	When I Was One	Follow The Rules
Oh No	At The Playground	What is Bigger Than?	Five White Mice
Bad Cat	Have You Ever...	Charlie the Chatterbox	The Amazing Ape
Is It Fun	Little Green Crab	The Three Little Blackbirds	Close Your Eyes
Let's Get Wet		Thumps and Thuds	The Lonely Dragon
Yum, Yum, Yum			

Extending Literacy (3-6)

For students in middle and upper primary years, there is a complete **Reading Library** of over 200 stories classified according to genre: adventure, animal, comedy, fantasy, mystery, etc.

Each story comes with a voiceover, animations and worksheets which can be accessed under each icon.

(11) Click on the Worksheets link under the Adventure icon. Scroll down to display types of worksheets available.

The screenshot shows the ZIPTALES website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'TEACHER' and 'ZIPTALES' logos, and a 'Welcome, Ziptales Master Admin!' message with a 'LOGOUT' button. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links: 'Dashboard', 'Content Libraries', 'Staffroom', 'More', 'Help / Support', and 'Contact'. The main heading is 'Extending Literacy 3-6'. Underneath, there's a 'Reading Library' section with a description: 'These resources are designed especially for Extending Literacy 3-6 (Years 3 to 6). These texts assume children are competent readers, and need lots of practice at different levels of ability. The overall approach is to offer a wide range of genres to cater for a variety of interests. Every story comes with two interactive comprehension quizzes and worksheets. There are a total of 200+ texts in this section.' Below the text is a grid of 16 genre icons, each with a 'Q' (quizzes) and 'h' (worksheets) icon. A red arrow points to the 'Adventure' icon in the top-left of the grid.

Genre	Quizzes (Q)	Worksheets (h)
Adventure	Yes	Yes
Animal	Yes	Yes
Children in History	Yes	Yes
Choose Your Own Adventure	Yes	Yes
Comedy	Yes	Yes
Fairy Tales	Yes	Yes
Fantasy	Yes	Yes
Graphic Classics	Yes	Yes
Interactive Readers	Yes	Yes
Mystery	Yes	Yes
Myths & Legends	Yes	Yes
People	Yes	Yes
Scary	Yes	Yes
True Tales	Yes	Yes
Yucky	Yes	Yes
Advanced Library	Yes	Yes

Worksheets (Years 3 to 6)

The stories come with a variety of worksheets including **Learning Support, Spelling and Vocabulary, Word Work** and **General Worksheets**.

(12) Click on the blue cross in the top right corner of the Worksheets pop up page (to close it) and open the Adventure icon.



Worksheets – Adventure

You will need Acrobat Reader to open and print out the scripts. If you do not have Acrobat Reader, click [here](#) to visit the Acrobat site and download it.

General Worksheets

Live Dinosaur Tour
[Worksheet 1](#) – Have You Heard of Homographs?
[Worksheet 2](#) – Dinosaur Quiz – What Am I?
[Worksheet 3](#) – Dinosaur Research
[Worksheet 4](#) – My Life As a Dinosaur

Good Dog
[Worksheet 1](#) – Crazy Contractions
[Worksheet 2](#) – The Key to Mapping!

Lost in the Rainforest
[Worksheet 1](#) – Using Commas
[Worksheet 2](#) – Animal or Plant?
[Worksheet 3](#) – Writing a Recount

Dr Wow in Atlantis
[Worksheet 1](#) – Swapping Synonyms
[Worksheet 2](#) – Facts about Mammals

Galaxy Chase
[Worksheet 1](#) – Galaxy Spell Check
[Worksheet 2](#) – Story Sequencing
[Worksheet 3](#) – Character Profiles
[Worksheet 4](#) – Space Navigation

Learning Support Worksheets

[Good Dog](#)
[Dr Wow in Atlantis](#)
[Galaxy Chase](#)
[The Pirates' Cave](#)
[Finders Keepers](#)
[Dr Wow](#)
[Old Minty](#)
[The Pirate's Prize](#) *Not available*
[The Eye of the Idol](#) *Not available*
[The Forgotten Pharaoh](#) *Not available*
[Lost in the Rainforest](#) *Not available*
[Live Dinosaur Tour](#) *Not available*

Word Work Worksheets (NEW)

[Live Dinosaur Tour](#)
[Good Dog](#)
[Lost in the Rainforest](#)
[Dr Wow in Atlantis](#)
[Galaxy Chase](#)
[The Pirates' Cave](#)
[The Eye of the Idol](#)
[The Forgotten Pharaoh](#)

Spelling and Vocab Worksheets

[Live Dinosaur Tour](#)
[Good Dog](#)
[Lost in the Rainforest](#)
[Dr Wow in Atlantis](#)
[Galaxy Chase](#)
[The Pirates' Cave](#)
[The Eye of the Idol](#)

Dr Wow

The Thrill of Time Travel

But his best invention was the TARDIS. Like Dr Who's TARDIS, it involved a box that travelled in time. "It stands for Time and Date in Sync," said Uncle Harry, wiping his glasses with excitement.

One of the most exciting ideas in Science Fiction has always been the concept of travelling in time.

The two best known examples of this are "The Time Machine", a short novel by HG Wells (published in 1895), which has since been made into two films – and "Dr Who", the world famous British television series which was first broadcast in November 1963 – and is still running 50 years later.

There are other stories too. Some say that the story of "Rip van Winkle" (by Washington Irving, 1819) is a "time slip" story, and that the celebrated novel "A Christmas Carol" (by Charles Dickens, 1843) is another, as is "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court" (by Mark Twain, 1889) – though they are all strictly speaking fantasies as opposed to "science fiction" (there is no explanation scientifically in any one of them for how the characters get around in time).

"Rip van Winkle" appears in Zipfates, under Myths and Legends)

Your task:

- Find out as much as you can about one of these stories with research (in books and online).
- Write out a short summary of the story you have chosen (50-100 words), or in the case of Dr Who, of a typical episode.
- Find some pictures to illustrate the story.
- Present your summary and pictures to the class.

© Zipfates Extending Literacy / Adventure

Example of a story

(13) Select the story Dr Wow and click to begin. Turn the sound off (via the speaker icon in the top right corner) and click on Page 10 of the story using the list of numbers at the bottom of the page. Point out the Fill the Gaps and Multiple Choice links in the bottom right corner of Page 10.

The genre stories all have **Fill the Gaps** (cloze) and **Multiple Choice** comprehension activities for students to complete after reading the story. These provide instant feedback on how well the story was understood.

(14) Point out the Zip Stage 5 reference in the top right corner of Page 10.

Ziptales reading levels scheme

All Ziptales stories in all three content libraries are levelled according to the unique **Ziptales Reading Levels** scheme.

Essentially, there are **10 Zip Stages**, mapped to the **Reading Recovery**, **Flesch** and **Lexile** reading difficulty systems.

(15) Use the back arrows to return to the Extending Literacy home page. Open the drop down box under the blue TEACHER button in the top left corner and select STUDENT to open the Students' Dashboard home page.

	RR levels	Lexile levels	Flesch levels
Zip Stage 1	5 - 10		Kindergarten
Zip Stage 2	11 - 15		Kindergarten
Zip Stage 3	16 - 22		0.1 - 2.5
Zip Stage 4	23 - 27	100 - 200	2.0 - 3.5
Zip Stage 5	28+	200 - 400	2.5 - 4.0
Zip Stage 6		400 - 500	3.5 - 4.5
Zip Stage 7		500 - 700	4.0 - 5.5
Zip Stage 8		700 - 950	5.0 - 6.5
Zip Stage 9		950 - 1100	6.0 - 7.0
Zip Stage 10		1100+	7+

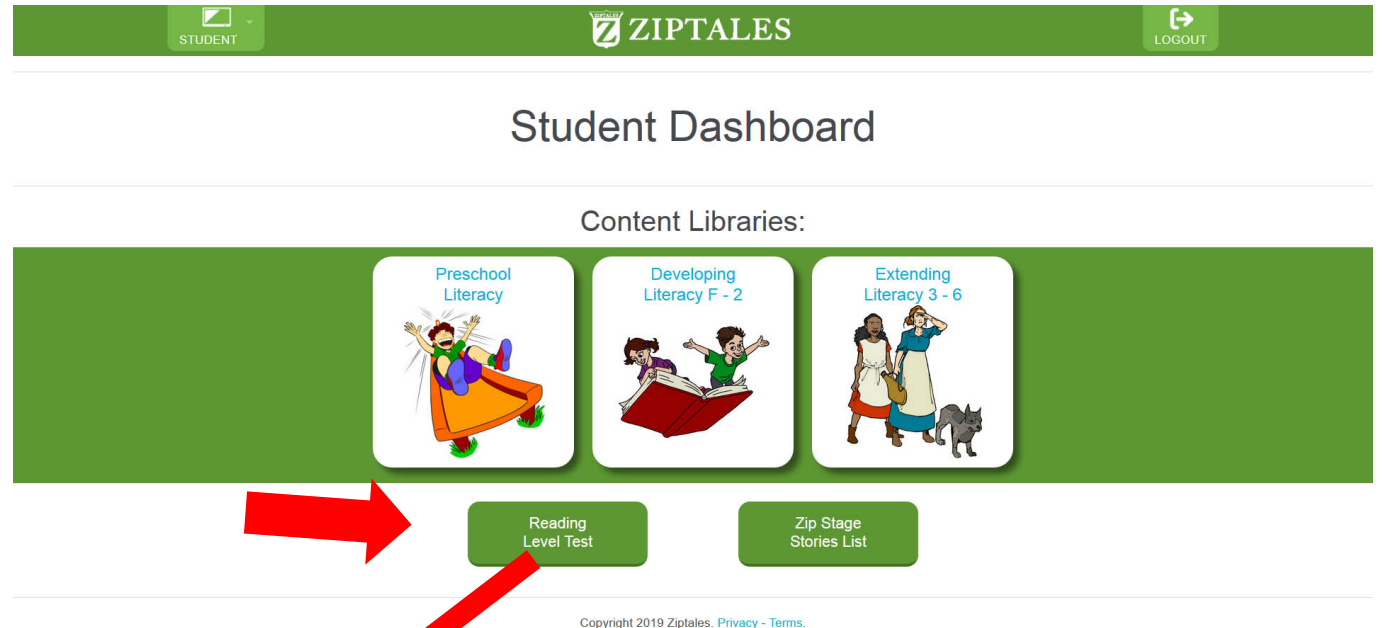
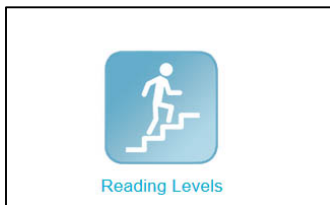
Reading Level Test

(16) Point out the Reading Level Test (What's My Ziptales Reading Level?) link (green button).

Students can access a specially designed **reading placement 'engine'** to pinpoint the Zip Stage suited to their reading ability.

This takes just a few minutes, and recommends an appropriate reading level – not too easy, not too hard.

Full instructions are to be found on the Teacher Dashboard under 'Reading Levels'.



The Ziptales reading levels map

(17) Point out the Zip Stage Story List (green button) underneath the Content Libraries buttons.

Once students have been assigned a **Zip Stage**, they can directly access level-appropriate titles using this link.

(18) Click on the Zip Stage Story List. Then select the Zip Stage 5 blue button from the list.

For example, if a student is assigned **Zip Stage 5** – a list of stories suited to their reading ability appears for them to choose from.

(19) Scroll down to display titles.

The image shows two screenshots of the Ziptales website interface. The top screenshot is the 'Student Dashboard' with a green header containing 'STUDENT', 'ZIPTALES', and 'LOGOUT'. Below the header, the title 'Student Dashboard' is centered. Under 'Content Libraries:', there are three boxes for 'Preschool Literacy', 'Developing Literacy F-2', and 'Extending Literacy 3-6'. Below these are two green buttons: 'Reading Level Test' and 'Zip Stage Story List'. A large red arrow points to the 'Zip Stage Story List' button. The bottom screenshot is the 'Zip Stage Story List' page, also with the same green header. On the left is a vertical list of blue buttons labeled 'Zip Stage 1' through 'Zip Stage 10'. A large red arrow points to the 'Zip Stage 5' button. To the right of the list, a grid of story thumbnails is displayed, each with a title below it: 'Tortured by Fairies', 'Loose Undies', 'Hiccups', 'Starkers', 'Time to Own Up', 'The Fool Falls', 'Accused', 'Spaghetti Face', and 'What's That Smell?'. A small instruction at the top of the grid says: 'Click on an item on the left to select your Zip Stage, then click on a story that appears below.'

Specialised English Lessons (SEL)

(20) Return to the Teacher Dashboard. Open the Extending Literacy library, scroll down and click on the Specialised English Lessons (SEL) icon.

Ziptales also offers detailed **Specialised English Lessons**. These lessons cover all outcomes of the English curriculum from Foundation/Prep – Year 6. Each lesson is animated with a voiceover and offers follow up classroom activities.

(21) Click on the red Filters button (on the left hand side) and select a year level.

Lessons appropriate for each year level can be located quickly and easily via the red **Filters** button.

(22) Scroll down to browse some of the lesson titles.

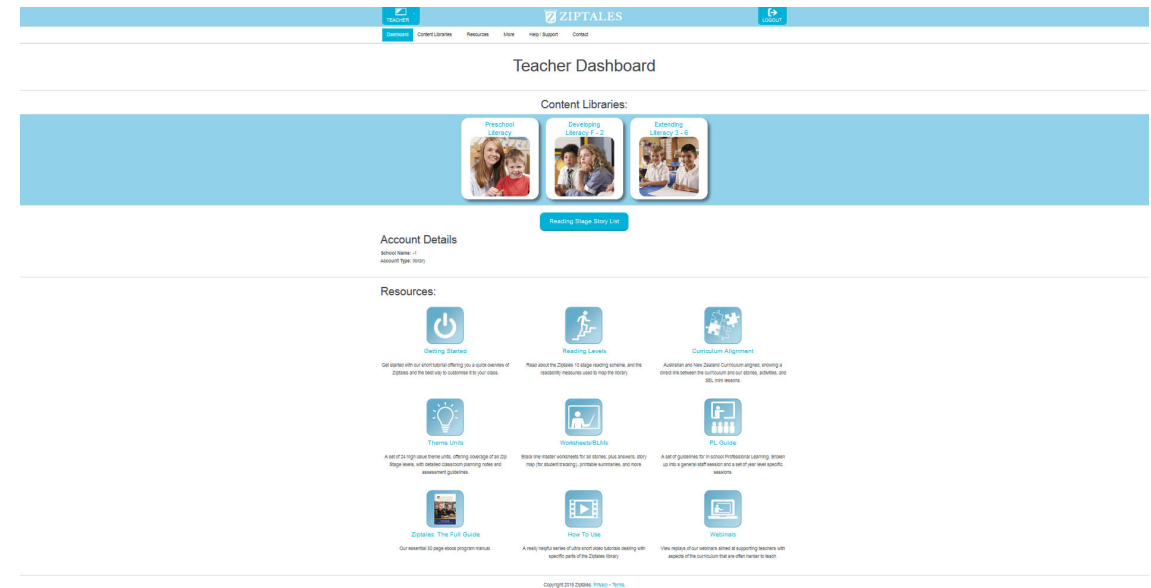
The screenshot displays the Ziptales Specialised English Lessons (SEL) interface. At the top, the 'Extending Literacy 3-6' library is shown with a grid of icons. A red arrow points to the 'Specialised English Lessons (SEL)' icon. Below this, the 'Specialised English Lessons (SEL)' header is visible. A red arrow points to the 'FILTERS' button on the left. The filters section shows 'YEAR LEVEL' with 'Years 3 / 4' selected, and 'THEME' with 'Asking Questions' selected. The main content area displays a grid of lesson cards, including 'Better Writing', 'Capturing Readers', 'Conversations (Part A)', 'Conversations (Part B)', 'Describing a Setting', 'Developing Reading Skills', 'Did You? Didn't You? (Questions)', 'Different Texts, Same Theme', 'Digital Texts', and 'Enjoying Texts'.

Part 2: Specific year levels research

(23) Return to the top of the page and click on the back arrow to return to the Teacher Dashboard.

You will now have 15 minutes to explore Ziptales. An instructional handout will guide you with exploring the main features suited to your year level using a 'Top 5' icon list.

(24) Once teachers are clustered into their year levels, distribute the relevant instruction guide to each group so that each teacher has a copy.



There are four sets of instructions – for Foundation/Prep/Kindergarten, Years 1-2 teachers, Years 3-4 teachers and Years 5-6 teachers.

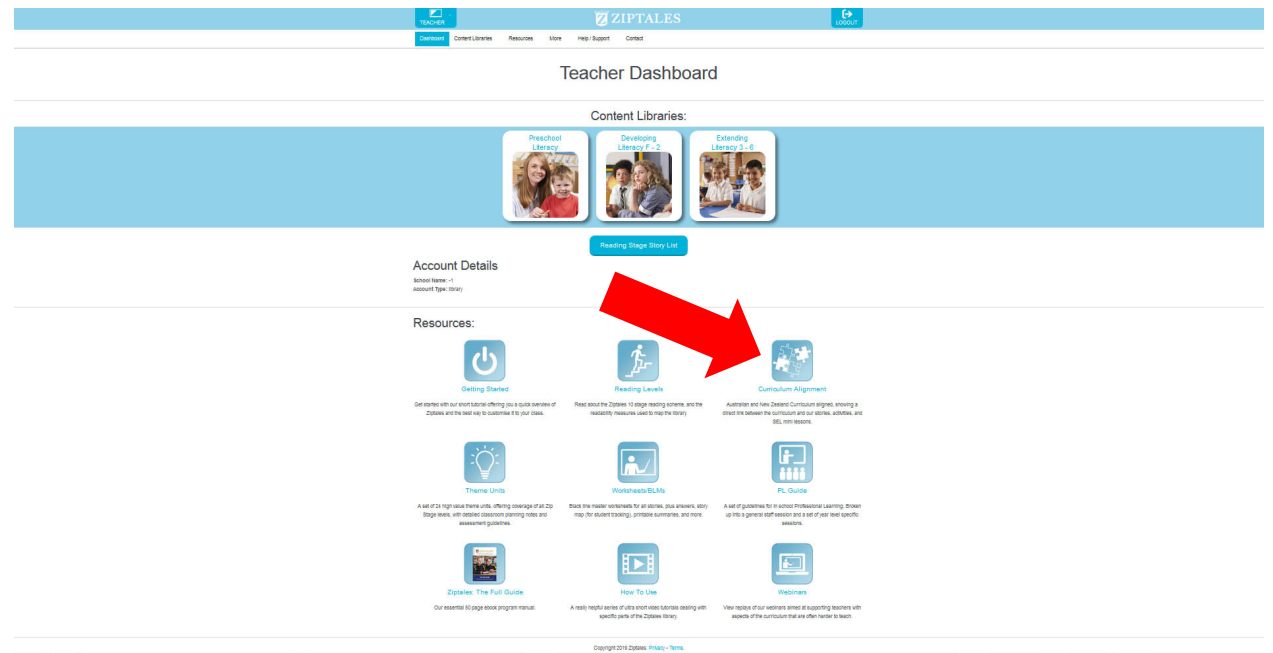


Part 3: Final (whole staff) session

(25) Display the Teacher Dashboard home page on the interactive whiteboard. Scroll down to the Teacher Resources section.

The **Teacher Resources** section on the **Teacher Dashboard** offers a range of features.

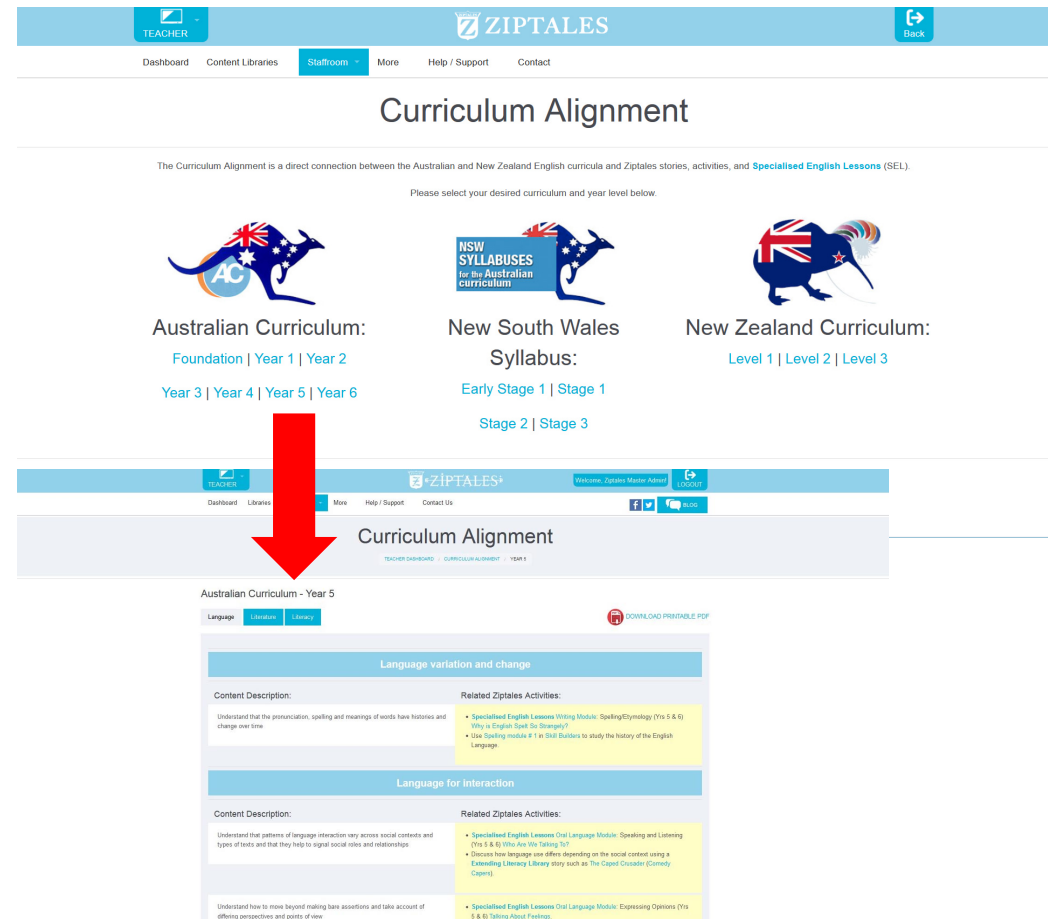
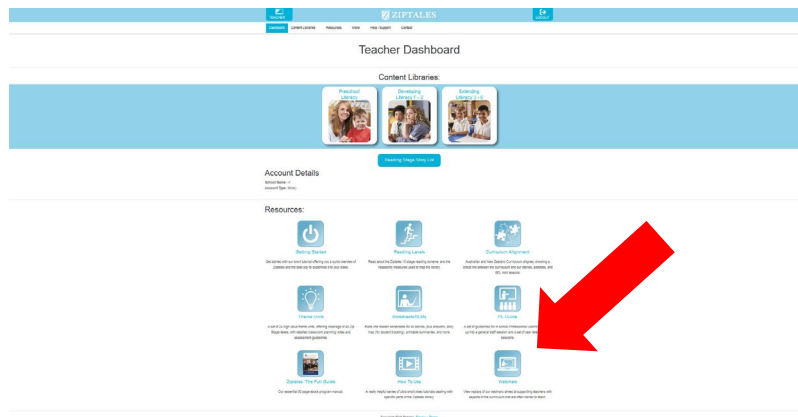
(26) Click on the Curriculum Alignment link. Select a sample year level relevant to your school. Scroll down to display the content of this document.



Ziptales Curriculum Alignment matrix

For example, the **Curriculum Alignment** link features a scope and sequence chart for each primary year level matching every content description (Australia)/indicator (NZ) in the English curriculum to a related Ziptales activity.

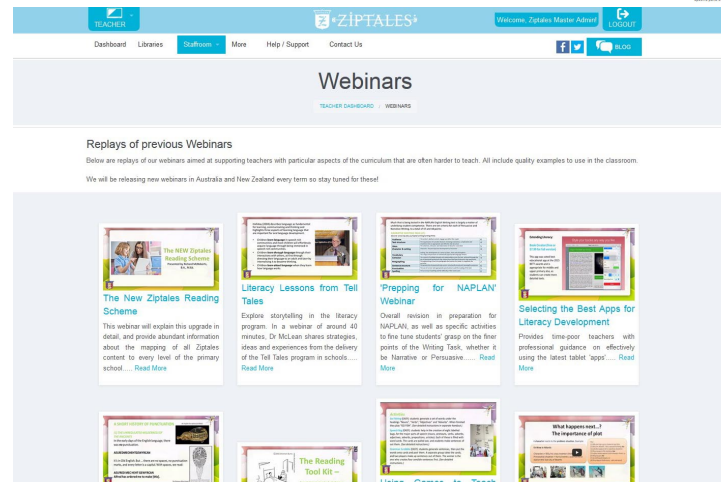
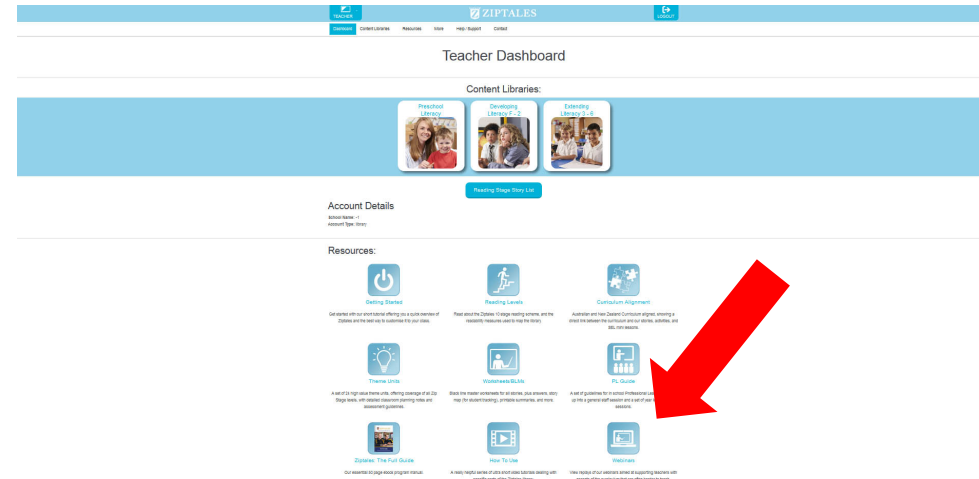
(27) Return to the Teacher Resources section of the Teacher Dashboard. Open the Webinars link. Scroll down to display the webinar titles.



Ziptales teacher education webinars

Also available is a selection of **Webinars** on a wide range of literacy related topics.

The webinars run for approximately 25 minutes and are ideal for professional development sessions.



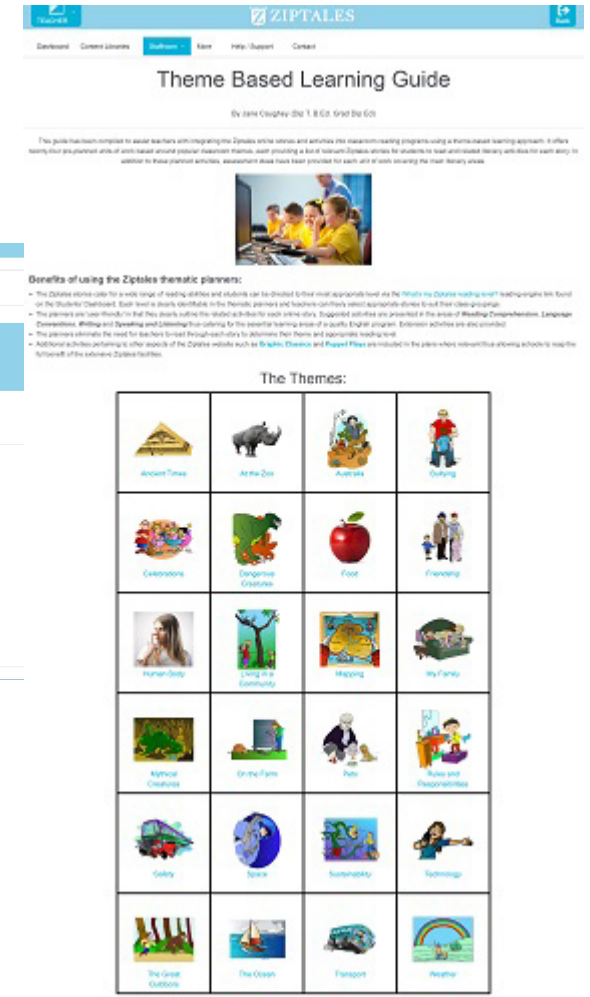
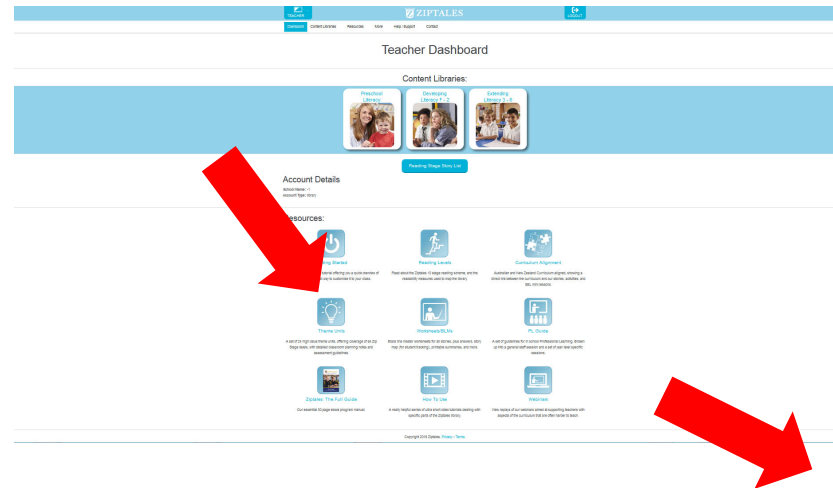
(28) Return to the Teacher Resources section of the Teacher Dashboard.

Use of Ziptales with classroom Themes

(29) Open the Theme Units page. Scroll down to display content.

The **Theme Units** link offers 24 pre-planned units of work based on popular classroom themes such as Sustainability, the Human Body and Dangerous Creatures. Each unit identifies Ziptales story titles relevant to the theme and provides group reading activities for comprehension, language conventions, writing and oral language. Assessment tasks are also included.

(30) Return to the Teacher Resources section of the Teacher Dashboard.



Other important teacher information

(31) Open the following key resources pages.

Here in **Teacher Resources**, you will also find important information on

(1) **Ziptales Reading Levels** (the reading scheme and reading 'engine')

(2) story **Worksheets** (multiple photocopiable handouts for every story)

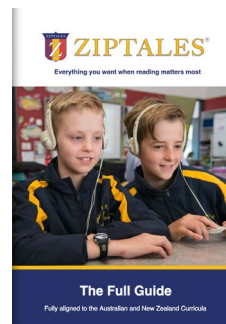
(3) a **Full Guide to Ziptales** (a 'page turning' PDF manual for everything on the site)

(4) **Useful Videos** (a series of very short visual presentations on key content areas).

1

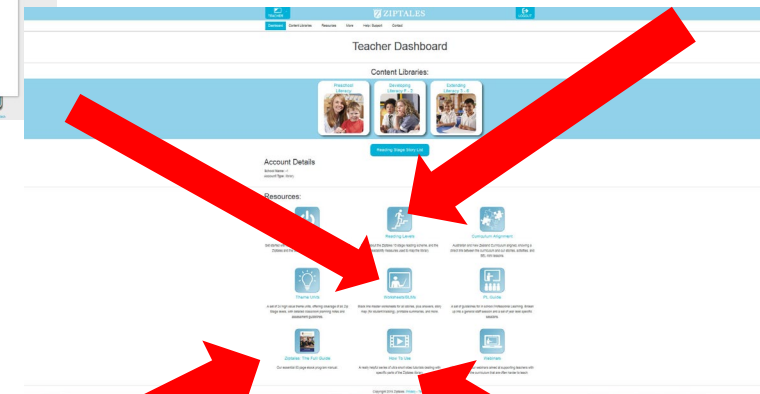
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Zip Stage 10		1100+	7+

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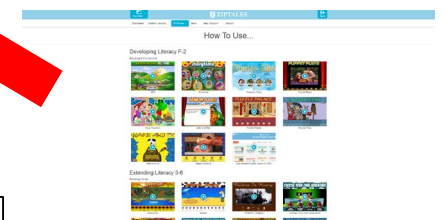


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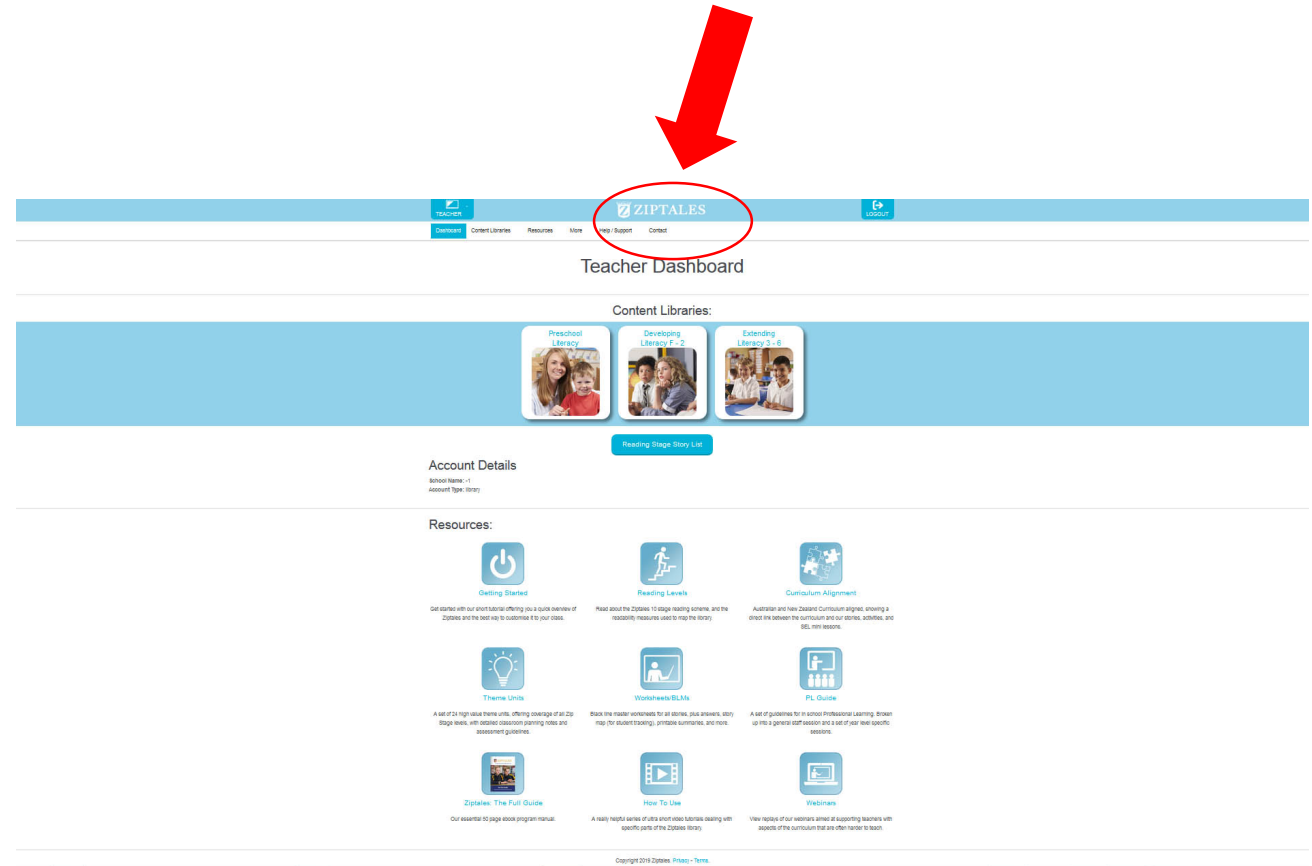
4



And for more information...

(32) Scroll back to the top of the Teacher Dashboard and point to the **Contact** button (last link on the menu at the top).

You can access this **Contact** link to ask questions or provide feedback to Ziptales staff (including an educational consultant) via phone (1800 835 442) or e-mail (admin@ziptales.com) if required.



End of presentation