

A Wife for Te Rā?

by Moira Wairama

From [School Journal, Part 2, Number 4, 2004](#)

Overview

This New Zealand legend is a mythical explanation of the natural phenomenon of the summer and winter solstices. You could use the poem in this Journal, “Solstice”, to help support the students’ understanding of this phenomenon.

Purposes

Depending on your students’ needs, you could use this text for the following purposes:

•	developing the students’ understandings of the structure and purpose of legends
•	understanding that different cultures have their own ways of explaining natural phenomena
•	supporting students’ development of the comprehension strategies of making connections with prior knowledge, making connections between texts, analysing, and synthesising
•	understanding aspects of narrative structure, such as problem and resolution

Readability

Noun frequency level: 7.5–8.5 years

Supports and Challenges

The features to consider in context and the points outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

•	The students’ understandings about legends, for example, the personification of elements of nature
•	The mixture of Māori and English vocabulary, including the names of the characters
•	Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: “sigh”, “fade away”, “married”, “beneath”, “kūmara”, “gentle”, “decide”, “agreed”, “solstice”, “journey”.

Features to Consider in Context

•	The use of a legend to explain an aspect of the natural world
•	The mixture of fact (in the last two paragraphs) and fiction
•	The use of the macron to indicate a lengthened vowel sound
•	The glossary of Māori words
•	The short paragraphs, which help to sustain the momentum of the narrative.

Introducing Students to the Text

•	Ask the students what the differences are between the summer and winter seasons. (Making connections with prior knowledge)
•	Explore with the students what happens in the northern hemisphere while it is summer in the southern hemisphere and vice versa. Ask them to suggest why this happens. Use a think, pair, and share technique for this discussion.
•	Tell the students that people in different cultures have different ways of explaining natural events and that these stories have been around for a long time in the form of legends.
•	Introduce the title and read the glossary with the students. Ask them to tell you what culture this legend belongs to.

•	Share the purpose for reading the legend. “We are going to read this legend to see how it explains a natural event.” (Analysing and synthesising)
•	Ask the students to read to ““I wonder if one of them would be my wife”” and think about any other Māori legends they have read that include any of these same characters. (Making connections between texts)

During the Reading

•	Discuss with the students other traditional stories they are reminded of that also include any of these characters. (For example, “Māui and the Sun”, and “Tāne me te Whānau Marama”.)
•	“What is Te Rā’s problem?” “Can you predict how he will solve the problem?” (Forming hypotheses about texts)
•	Ask the students to read to “both of them agreed” to check their prediction.
•	Clarify how Te Rā has solved the problem of being lonely.
•	Revisit the purpose for reading. Ask the students to make a prediction about what natural event this legend is trying to explain. “Why has Te Rā decided to have both a winter wife and a summer wife?”
•	Ask the students to read to the end of the story to check their predictions. (Forming and testing hypotheses)

After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focus areas for discussion

•	Discuss with the students the meaning of the solstice. “How does this legend explain the solstice?” (Analysing and synthesising)
•	In pairs, reread the last three paragraphs and find examples of factual information about the phenomenon of the solstice.
•	Read and discuss the poem “Solstice” in this journal.
•	Link the events in the legend to the explanation of the solstice by rereading relevant parts of the text and representing it visually, for example:

Suggested Activities

You may like to select a task from those listed below. You may need to work with the group for some tasks.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>
Viewing Interpersonal Speaking • processing information	• interpret and present information to explain a natural phenomenon.	• as individuals, retell the legend to another class member to help explain the solstice.

<p>Close Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exploring language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use a dictionary to identify meanings and locate derivations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in pairs, find the definitions of the winter solstice and the summer solstice in the dictionary; • use the dictionary to explore the root word, <i>sol</i>, and list other words derived from it (for example, solar).
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Links with Other *School Journal* Titles

“The Sunboy” 1.1.91; “Gifts from the Sun” 2.3.95; “Tāne me te Whānau Marama” 2.2.03

Journal Search Category

Traditional Stories

Cross-curricular Link

Science: Making Sense of Planet Earth and Beyond

Associated Websites

TKI – Dancing the Seasons

www.tki.org.nz/e/community/arts/dance/dance_L1/dance_L1_A5_menu.php

TKI – Purakau: Māori Myths and Legends

www.tki.org.nz/r/maori/nga_purakau_maori/index_e.php

Earthquake

by Bartha Hill

From [School Journal, Part 2, Number 4, 2004](#)

Overview

Ellenna and Amir lost their homes and many family members in the devastation of the 2003 earthquake in southern Iran. The report describes the trauma of the earthquake and is followed by interviews with survivors: eight-year-old Ellenna and the family of seven-year-old Amir.

Advice is given at the end of the article about what to do in an earthquake.

This article would be suitable to use with year 6–8 students, and you may wish to spend two sessions on it to cover the material suggested in the notes.

Purposes

Depending on your students' needs, you could use this text for the following purposes:

•	making inferences and developing deeper understandings of the effects of a disaster on the lives of survivors
•	developing understanding of the features of a report
•	using photographs to help visualise and interpret text
•	identifying the author's purpose.

Readability

Noun frequency level: 8.5–9.5 years

Supports and Challenges

The features to consider in context and the points outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

•	The students' personal experiences and knowledge of earthquakes
•	The students' familiarity with the features of a report
•	The detailed photographs that accompany the text
•	Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: "ancient, walled city", "mud-bricks", "increased", "rescue crews", "survivors", "rubble", "thirty thousand people", "urgently", "Red Crescent", "aid agencies", "donations", "journalist", "trowel", "terrified", "mound", "scrabbled", "grateful".

Features to Consider in Context

•	The structure of the text as a report: recording an event, providing background information in the introduction, including facts, and personalising the information with the use of quotations
•	The use of the past and present tenses
•	The provision of additional information about earthquake safety under a sub-heading at the end of the report.

Introducing Students to the Text

•	Ask the students to show you what they would do in an earthquake.
•	Allow time for the students to think, pair, and share their experiences of earthquakes. (Making connections with prior knowledge)
•	Tell the students that they are going to read a report about an earthquake that occurred in Iran in 2003. Locate Iran on a world map and discuss its location and distance from New Zealand.
•	Discuss the features that the students would expect to find in a report. (Making connections with prior literacy knowledge)
•	Introduce the title and read the first paragraph aloud to the students, asking them to visualise the scene as you read. “What did you see? What did you hear?” (Visualising)
•	Distribute the Journals and allow time for the students to view and discuss the photographs, noting the effects of the earthquake.
•	Share the purpose for reading the report. “We’ll read the report to try and understand the effects this earthquake had on the lives of the survivors and to find out what the author’s purpose was in writing it.”
•	Ask the students to read to “find out what was needed” and be ready to share some of the effects the earthquake had on the survivors.

During the Reading

•	“If your home crumbled but you survived, how would life be different?” “What help would you need?” “Where would you go?” (Making connections)
•	Discuss the effects of the earthquake on people’s lives.
•	Clarify concepts such as “thirty thousand people”, “aid agencies”, and “rubble”.
•	Tell the students that the rest of the report tells the stories of Ellenna and Amir, two children whose lives were affected by the earthquake.
•	Ask the students to read to “can help scrape the rubbish and dust away” and think about the effects of the disaster on Ellenna’s life.
•	“What sort of help do Ellenna and her mum need?” (Inferring)
•	Ask the students to read to “And Rex means a lot to him” and think about whether they agree or disagree with the following statement, supporting their views with evidence from the text: “Amir was lucky.” (Inferring)
•	Discuss the students’ views about Amir before reading the rest of the article aloud to them.
•	Ask the students to look carefully at the photograph of Amir on page 26. “Share in pairs what you think Amir is thinking and feeling.” (Inferring)

After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focus areas for discussion

•	Revisit the purpose for reading the text. “I wonder what life is like for Ellenna and Amir now.” (Evaluating ideas and information)
•	“If you could meet Ellenna and Amir today, what questions would you ask them?” (Evaluating)
•	“Why did the author write this article?” “What, in particular, does she want you to know about the earthquake?” (Identifying the author’s purpose)
•	Use a shared reading approach to read the information section and relate it to the earthquake drill practised earlier.
•	Ask the students whether this information would have helped the people of Bam. “Why or why not?” (Evaluating information)

Suggested Activities

You may like to select a task from those listed below. You may need to work with the group for some tasks.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>
Close Reading Interpersonal Listening Interpersonal Speaking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • thinking critically • processing information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read for information; • apply the knowledge to another context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read the information in the Yellow Pages concerning disasters; • as a group, compare the advice given in the Yellow Pages with that in this article and with your school's plan. List any differences on a chart or Venn diagram.
Close Reading Interpersonal Speaking Presenting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • processing information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • locate and retrieve information; • talk clearly about events to an audience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as a group, use the Internet and a map of the world to plot the position of major earthquakes in recent times; • prepare an oral report for the rest of the class.

Links with Other *School Journal* Titles

“The Big One” 3.2.99; “Earthquake” *Junior Journal* 8

Journal Search Categories

Earth Science

Earthquakes

Cross-curricular Links

Health and Physical Education: Body Care and Physical Safety

Health and Physical Education: Mental Health

Science: Making Sense of Plant Earth and Beyond

Associated Websites

Picking up the Pieces – Unit Plan (Social Studies Online)

www.tki.org.nz/r/socialscience/curriculum/SSOL/pieces/index_e.php

Calamities and Catastrophes – Unit Plan (English Online)

<http://english.unitecology.ac.nz/resources/units/disasters/home.html>

wicked – Science Stuff – What on Earth Interactives

www.tki.org.nz/r/wick_ed/science/what.php

High Lights

by David Hill

From [School Journal, Part 2, Number 4, 2004](#)

Overview

When Dad decides to enter the Illuminated Homes competition one Christmas, a series of problems arises. The wind takes a hand, and Dad's original idea is further shaped into an original piece of Kiwiana that pleases the judges.

Purposes

Depending on your students' needs, you could use this text for some of the following purposes.

•	investigating the writing style and, in particular, the use of simple sentences to add impact
•	identifying the elements of the text that add to its humour (for example, puns and wordplay)
•	making connections to personal experiences
•	identifying aspects of narrative structure, for example, the series of complications leading to a resolution.

Readability

Noun frequency level: 9–10 years

Supports and Challenges

The features to consider in context and the points outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

•	The students' experiences of preparing for Christmas or another celebration
•	The students' knowledge of using lights as decorations
•	The illustrations that accompany the text
•	The use of puns and wordplay, particularly for new learners of English (for example, the title "High Lights" and "'Is that rain, dear?' asked Wendy. 'Not quite,' said Dad. 'It's <i>reindeer</i> .'");
•	Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: "announced", "illuminated", "Thunderbolt Energy", "reindeer", "safety harness", "transformer", "bulb", "black power", "electrician", "switchboard", "original".

Features to Consider in Context

•	The narrative structure of the text, with a chain of events involving a challenge, a series of complications, and a resolution
•	The dialogue between characters and the conventions of direct speech
•	The humour
•	The use of puns and wordplay
•	The use of italics to emphasise the play on words
•	The variation in sentence lengths and the use of alliteration to add impact to the writing.

Introducing Students to the Text

•	Ask the students what special things their families do to prepare for Christmas at home. (Be sensitive to the fact that not all students' families may celebrate Christmas.) Use a think, pair, and share technique for this discussion. (Making connections with prior knowledge and experiences)
•	Introduce the title and ask the students to predict how the title might be related to Christmas. (Making predictions)
•	Explore the play on words in the title. Discuss the difference between "high lights" and "highlights", and compare these with other usages, such as "highlighter pens".
•	Distribute the Journals and allow time for the students to view and discuss the illustrations on pages x and x. Explore some of the vocabulary during this discussion.
•	Ask the students to check their predictions about the title while they are viewing the illustrations.
•	Share the purpose for reading the text with the students. Explain that you want them to make connections to their own experiences as they read. "Does anything that happens in this story remind you of an experience you have had?" Suggest that they could use a paper clip to mark the place in the text that reminds them of their own experience.
•	Ask the students to read to "'Black power,' murmured Wendy"

During the Reading

•	Model the strategy of making connections, for example: "The 'Illuminated Homes' competition reminds me of the Festival of Lights that happens in our city each Christmas" or "'Dad was up on the roof with a safety harness' reminds me of how some men climbed up to secure the roof tiles on our house after a storm".
•	Ask the students to share parts of the story and say how that part reminds them of their own experiences. (Making connections)
•	Discuss the problems that Dad has had so far. "What else could go wrong?" (Inferring, predicting)
•	Ask the students to read to "more bent and buckled than ever" to check their predictions about what could go wrong. Ask them to continue to mark any places in the text that remind them of an experience that they have had.
•	Discuss the series of complications that occur and whether the students' predictions matched the text. (Testing hypotheses)
•	Ask the students to think, pair, and share any parts of the text that remind them of a certain experience. (Making connections)
•	Discuss the examples of wordplay (see "Supports and Challenges" above). "Why does the author play with words like this?" "How is your attention drawn to the wordplay?" (for example, through the writer's use of italics) (Analysing)
•	"Do you think Dad expects to win the competition? Why do you think this?" "What might happen now?" (Inferring, predicting)
•	Ask the students to silently read the rest of the story to check their predictions.

After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focus areas for discussion

•	Discuss whether the students' predictions matched the text.
•	“How did Dad, Wendy, and Ryan feel when they won the prize? Find the part in the text that shows what they felt.”
•	“Dad won the prize for the Most Original Illuminated House. How would that be different from the house with the best lights?” Ask the students to use the text to support their views. (Inferring)
•	Tell the students that David Hill uses many simple sentences in this story. Provide an example from the text – “The seagulls flapped off.” – and explain what a simple sentence is. Ask the students, in pairs, to find another example on page 4.
•	“What effect do simple sentences have in a story?” (For example, they can help to emphasise parts of the story for comic effect or be used to create impact.) (Analysing)

Suggested Activities

You may like to carry out the task below. You may need to work with the group for this task.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>
Poetic Writing • exploring language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sort words according to their associations with a particular topic; • use a set of words to construct a cohesive narrative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in pairs, make two sets of cards with words associated with the topics of “electricity” and “Christmas”; • swap the cards with another pair and sort according to topic; • write a narrative which incorporates as many as possible of the words from either or both sets.

Links with Other *School Journal* Titles

“Fairy Dust” 1.5.98; “Christmas” 1.5.99

Journal Search Category

Christmas

Associated Websites

TKI – Electronics and Control Technology Unit – Illuminated Sign
www.tki.org.nz/r/technology/curriculum/Sign/S_Title_e.php

TKI Hot Topic – Christmas Cards and Packaging
www.tki.org.nz/r/hot_topics/packaging_e.php

TKI – Why Celebrate? Unit Plan (Social Studies Online)
www.tki.org.nz/r/socialscience/curriculum/SSOL/celebrate/index_e.php

Mosaics

by Sue Gibbison

From [School Journal, Part 2, Number 4, 2004](#)

Overview

This article explains how to make mosaic pictures from broken tiles. It presents the process in the form of diary entries spanning several weeks.

Purposes

Depending on your students' needs, you could use this text for the following purposes:

•	identifying the steps in a process (identifying and summarising main ideas)
•	locating information in a recount and reorganising it as a set of instructions (analysing and synthesising).

Readability

Noun frequency level: 9.5–10.5 years

Supports and Challenges

The features to consider in context and the points outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

•	The students' experiences and knowledge of making mosaics
•	The students' familiarity with the conventions of diary writing
•	The photographs that accompany the text
•	Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: "mosaics", "creatures", "terracotta", "guides", "racket", "caulking gun", "squirt", "exactly", "grout", "cement", "sponges", "substance", "earthenware".

Features to Consider in Context

•	The structure of the text as an explanation in the form of a recount
•	The diary format
•	The use of commas to separate items in a list, for example, "flounders, snapper, sea horses" and to separate subordinate and main clauses, for example, "When the grout is dry, we'll polish the tiles"
•	The glossary.

Introducing Students to the Text

•	Introduce the title and explain that this text is a student's account of an art project. If possible, show a piece of tile mosaic (or a picture, for example, of Gaudi's work in Barcelona: see School Journal 4.1.93) and ask the students to suggest how it is made. Use a think, pair, and share technique to engage all the students in this discussion. (Forming hypotheses)
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•	Distribute the Journals and allow time for the students to view and discuss the photographs. You could use the discussion to introduce vocabulary, drawing the students' attention to the glossary at the end of the article.
•	Ask the students what they notice about the layout of the text. "Why might an article about making mosaics be set out in a diary format?" (Inferring)
•	Share the purpose for reading the text. Tell the students that you want them to identify the process, step by step, that these students use to make mosaic tiles. They will do this by locating key information in each paragraph. (Identifying main ideas)
•	Ask the students to read silently to "even a flying fish!" to locate the first step in the process. (Identifying the main idea)

During the Reading

•	Discuss what the students in the article have done to start making their mosaic tiles. Ask the students where this information is located in the paragraph. Explain that key information is often contained in the first or last sentences of a paragraph.
•	Model recording the information on a chart, emphasising that only the key words and phrases should be recorded. Highlight the fact that many of the key words will be verbs. For example: Work with a partner. Draw a sea creature.
•	Distribute "yellow stickies" to the students and explain that you want them to work in pairs to record just the keywords and phrases that describe each step in the process. Ask the students to number their stickies. (Identifying and summarising main ideas)
•	Ask the students to silently read the next two diary entries to "and one for terracotta tiles" and work in pairs to record the key information.
•	Discuss and clarify the information that the students recorded on the stickies.
•	Ask the students to read to the end of the text and complete their recording. (Identifying and summarising main ideas)

After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focus areas for discussion

•	Ask the students to compare the information they have recorded.
•	Discuss the key words that are verbs, such as "draw", "squirt", "fill", and "wipe". "What did the writer mean when she wrote, 'the mosaic pictures came back like magic'?" (Inferring)
•	Revisit the purpose for reading the text. Does their recorded information identify the process for making mosaic tiles?
•	Ask the students to explain how they sorted out the important information in the text. "How could you use this information?" (Analysing and synthesising)

Suggested Activities

You may like to attempt the task below. You may need to work with the group for this task.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>

<p>Transactional Writing Presenting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • processing information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rewrite a recount as a flowchart, using verbal and visual features. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as a group, use the key information they recorded to create a flowchart that shows the procedure for making mosaic tiles. (Analysing and synthesising)
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Links with Other *School Journal* Titles

“Patterns from Fruit” 1.1.95; “A School Mosaic” 4.1.93

Journal Search Categories

Arts and Crafts

Craftwork

Mosaics

Cross-curricular Link

The Arts: Visual Arts

Solstice

by Bill Nagelkerke

From [School Journal, Part 2, Number 4, 2004](#)

Overview

This poem could support the students' understanding of the winter and summer solstices. See also the notes for the legend "A Wife for Te Rā?" in this Journal.

Purposes

Depending on your students' needs, you could use this text for the following purposes:

•	making connections between texts
•	inferring
•	identifying the author's purpose.

Features to Consider in Context

•	The shape of the poem on the page, which reflects its meaning
•	The repetition of words and sentence structures in the two stanzas
•	The use of antonyms (shortest/longest; uphill/downhill)
•	The rhyming pattern.

During the Reading

•	Read the poem together
•	Discuss the illustration, the shape of the poem, and the reasons for placing the second part of the text upside down.
•	"Why does the poet think it is 'uphill all the way' after the shortest day?" "Why is it 'downhill all the way' after the longest day?" Interpretations of this may vary. For example, it could be "downhill all the way" because we are moving away from the long days of summer towards darkness again, and "uphill all the way" because it feels like a long, hard journey out of midwinter darkness back to the light. (Inferring)
•	Relate the poem to the final two paragraphs in "A Wife for Te Rā?". (Making connections between texts)
•	"Why do you think the poet has made the two parts of the poem so similar?" (Identifying the author's purpose)

Suggested Activities

You may like to attempt the task below. You may need to work with the group for this task.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>
Poetic Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none">• thinking critically• exploring language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• write a poem in a shape which reflects a cyclic process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• as a group, discuss other phenomena which have a cyclic pattern that is similar to that of the seasons (for example, day and night, or high and low tide);• write a poem in a shape which reflects this cyclic pattern

Cross-curricular Link

Science: Making Sense of Planet Earth and Beyond

Associated Websites

TKI – Dancing the Seasons

www.tki.org.nz/e/community/arts/dance/dance_L1/dance_L1_A5_menu.php

TKI – Reasons for Seasons

www.tki.org.nz/r/assessment/exemplars/sci/planet/pe_4a_e.php

wickEDtv – Seasons

www.tki.org.nz/r/wick_ed/wickedtv/seasons.php

Tigerpaste

by Christine Larsen

From [School Journal, Part 2, Number 4, 2004](#)

Overview

This fantasy tells how the tables are turned on a menacing tiger that comes to watch television uninvited.

Purposes

Depending on your students' needs, you could use this text for the following purposes:

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|---|---|
| • | inferring characters' feelings and personalities from their actions |
| • | forming and testing hypotheses about texts. |

Readability

Noun frequency level: 9–10 years

Supports and Challenges

The features to consider in context and the points outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

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| • | The students' prior experiences of reading fantasy |
| • | The students' knowledge of the animal world, including both hunters and prey |
| • | Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: "ostrich", "caught", "special feature", "stalking", "ripples", "stomach muscles", "glisten", "drool", "blur", "flutters nervously", "snuffled squawk", "gurgly", "shrivels", "condensed", "soothe", "dusky", "gulps", "twitters", "scientists", "contains", "purchased", "endangered", "pearly white". |

Features to Consider in Context

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| • | The structure of the text as a narrative, with a setting, characters, a series of problematic events that build to a climax, and a resolution |
| • | The use of vivid language, particularly the lively verbs and adjectives used to describe the contrasting actions and feelings of the tiger and the ostrich |
| • | The device of repetition – for example, clicking the television remote – which provides a framework to convey the characters' reactions to events |
| • | The personification |
| • | The humour. |

Introducing Students to the Text

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|---|---|
| • | Ask the students if they have read any imaginary stories in which animals behave like people. Allow time for them to share stories that they have read and encourage them to identify how they knew the story was imaginary. (Making connections between texts) |
| • | Tell the students that the story they are going to read is similar to a story called <i>The Tiger Who Came to Tea</i> by Judith Kerr (HarperCollins, 1991) because it's also about a tiger who visits someone's home. Explain that this tiger comes to watch television. "What is it called when animals or things act like people?" (Anthropomorphism) |
| • | Introduce the title and ask the students to predict what it could mean. Chart the students' predictions. |

•	Tell the students that the two main characters in the story are a tiger and an ostrich. “How well do you think they will get on?” (Forming hypotheses)
•	Share the purpose for reading the text. “We’ll read the story to interpret the characters’ feelings. You will need to make inferences about their feelings from the way they act and behave.”
•	Explain that making inferences will involve looking closely at the way the text is written to understand the feelings of the characters – their feelings won’t be described explicitly in the text, and they may change as the story goes on.
•	Introduce two large templates, one showing an outline of an ostrich and the other of the tiger. Tell the students that the actions of each character can be recorded outside the shape and its feelings inside the shape. (This is a “role on the wall” technique. See page 49 of <i>The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum</i> .) Ask the students to read silently to “She’s watching the carpet by her feet” and be ready to discuss the way that the actions of the two characters reveal their feelings. (Informing)

During the Reading

•	Discuss and chart (on the outside of the template) the actions of the ostrich first and then the tiger, for example, “Ostrich: stops talking, huddles, tucks a wing over her beak, watches the carpet”.
•	Ask the students to infer how the ostrich is feeling and chart their responses inside the ostrich template. (Inferring)
•	Ask the students to continue reading silently to “‘McRumbles’ new SUPERCHICKEN burger – only two dollars ninety-five.”
•	Divide the group into two and distribute “yellow stickies” to each group. Suggest that one group focus on the ostrich and the other group focus on the tiger. Ask them to locate the verbs in the text that tell how the character acts, record each word on a sticky, and place it on the chart.
•	Discuss, compare, and record how the ostrich and tiger are feeling. “These are the things we can see the tiger doing. How do you think he feels inside?” (Inferring)
•	Ask the students to share their predictions about how the story might end. (Forming hypotheses)
•	“Have you got any other ideas about the title now?” Ask the students to check their earlier predictions.
•	Ask the students to read to the end of the story to check their predictions about the title and about the way the story ends. (Forming and testing hypotheses)

After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focus areas for discussion

•	Discuss how the story ends and whether the students’ earlier predictions matched the text.
•	“Is the title effective?” “Why do you think this?” (Evaluating)
•	Ask the students to look at the two charts and explain that the action words on the outside are verbs. You could encourage the students to mime some of these actions, for example, “claws flick”, “drape yourself on a chair”, “huddle”, “shrivel”, and “flutter nervously”.
•	Suggest that the students complete the recording of the characters’ actions from the final section of the story.
•	Ask the students what changes they think have taken place in the characters’ feelings. Record the students’ responses on the chart. (Inferring)

Suggested Activities

You may like to attempt the task below. You may need to work with the group for this task.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>
Presenting • thinking critically	• use drama to interpret the feelings of characters for an audience.	• as a group, narrate sections of the story, with group members role-playing the ostrich and tiger characters or creating freeze-frame images that show the feelings of the characters.

Links with Other *School Journal* Titles

“The Fox and the Tiger” 1.1.90; “Chee! Chee!” 1.4.94; “Is Brer Rabbit Mighty Strong?” 1.2.95; “The Tiger, the Brahman, and the Jackal” 2.1.91

Journal Search Categories

Humorous Stories

Talking Animals

What's Your Name?

by Robin Nathan

From [School Journal, Part 2, Number 4, 2004](#)

Overview

This humorous play takes the form of a conversation based around nicknames.

Purposes

Depending on your students' needs, you could use this text for the following purposes:

•	reading with expression, pace, and fluency
•	interpreting punctuation features such as question marks
•	considering simple sentence structures
•	interpreting the feelings of characters.

Readability

Noun frequency level: 8.5–9.5 years

Supports and Challenges

The features to consider in context and the points outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

•	The students' experiences and knowledge of nicknames and puns
•	The manageable length of the text
•	Conversation patterns that may be unfamiliar to ESOL students.

Features to Consider in Context

•	The conventions of a play: a list of characters in upper-case letters, stage directions in italics, directions for specific characters in parentheses, and dialogue for each character
•	The humour
•	The use of natural language patterns such as “hi”, “OK”, “cos”, “getting the hang of it”, “gotta”, “how come?”
•	The use of simple sentences and minor sentences (for example, “Hi”) that occur in everyday conversation.

Introducing Students to the Text

•	Ask the students if they know anyone in their family or at school who has a nickname. Clarify the meaning of the word “nickname”. You could ask a student to check the meaning in the dictionary. (Making connections)
•	Ask the students to think, pair, and share the reasons why the people they know with nicknames have been given those names. (Making connections to prior knowledge)
•	“Do people mind having nicknames?” “Why? Why not?” “Is it sometimes unkind to give people nicknames?” Distinguish between nicknames and name-calling.
•	Introduce the title of the play and share the purpose for reading. “Read the text and decide whether the characters would like their nicknames or not. Try to support your views with evidence from the text.” (Inferring)
•	Ask the students to read silently to “JANE. He really is tall like a beanstalk.”

During the Reading

•	Discuss with the students their views and reasons concerning the characters' nicknames. "Which character likes his or her nickname? Why?" "Could any of the characters dislike their nickname? Why?" (Inferring)
•	Draw the students' attention to a simple sentence, for example, "It's my nickname." Ask them to explain to each other why this is a simple sentence.
•	Make the point that sentences like "Hi" and "Get it?" are called minor sentences.
•	Ask the students to read the rest of the play to decide whether the characters are happy with their nicknames or not.

After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focus areas for discussion

•	Have the students share their views about the characters' feelings, giving supporting evidence from the text. (Inferring)
•	Discuss the humour in the play. Ask the students to locate and share in pairs a part in the play that makes them laugh. (Analysing)
•	Draw the students' attention to the use of questions in the play. "If you're reading aloud, how would the audience know that you're asking a question?" (Analysing)
•	Ask the students to practise reading aloud parts of the text in pairs, paying special attention to the questions.
•	"How do you think this play would be most effectively performed – live, taped for radio, or videotaped? Why?" (Evaluating)
•	Discuss with the students the importance of expression, fluency, and pace if the play is to be audiotaped.

Suggested Activities

You may like to try the task below. You may need to work with the group for this task.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>
Using Texts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exploring language • thinking critically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read aloud with expression, pace, and fluency; • present a play on audiotape, using the voice to establish the characters' personalities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as a group, practise reading the play aloud; • audiotape the play; • present the play to another class and request feedback about expression, pace, and fluency.

Associated Websites

TKI – What's in a Name?

www.tki.org.nz/e/community/arts/dance/dance_L4/dance_L4_A4_menu.php