

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

Teachers' Notes

School Journal

Part 2 Number 2

2001



Part 2

No. 2

2001

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Teachers are welcome to photocopy these notes if and as necessary.

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Introduction

Why do we read? To satisfy curiosity? To develop deeper understandings? To gain specific information – or simply for enjoyment and entertainment?

These teachers' notes are intended to help you to encourage your students to use the *School Journal* for all of these purposes. They provide a wealth of detailed suggestions for using the Journals in your class reading programme.

The notes should be used in close conjunction with *The Essential School Journal*, *The Learner as a Reader*, and *English in the New Zealand Curriculum*.

The Teaching Approaches

A classroom reading programme uses a variety of approaches, including:

- reading to students
- reading with students
- reading by students.

These notes include ideas for using *School Journal* material for all these approaches, with a particular emphasis on guided reading.

For information on deciding which approach to use with a particular journal item for particular students, see *The Essential School Journal*, pages 12–15, and *The Learner as a Reader*, Chapter 5.

Guided Reading

Guided reading is at the heart of the instructional reading programme. In this approach, teachers work with a small group of students to guide them purposefully through a text.

Guided reading involves:

- selecting a purpose for the reading
- introducing the text
- reading and responding to the text
- extending students' word-level strategies
- discussion and, where appropriate, follow-up activities.

These notes include suggestions for:

- selecting a focus for the reading and setting the scene
- particular features of the text that could be highlighted in discussion, including words and concepts that may present challenges for some students

- possible discussion points, learning experiences, and follow-up activities, where these are appropriate.

Possible follow-up activities are presented in charts that provide suggestions for:

- relevant achievement objectives
- learning outcomes for students
- learning experiences for students.

Please note that these charts are intended only to provide a range of suggested activities for you to choose from or adapt to your students' particular needs. The objectives and outcomes listed for each activity are also intended only as suggestions. You might choose to use a particular learning experience for any one of a number of different achievement objectives and learning outcomes, according to the needs of your students.

Introducing the Text

The introduction should be brief. It should:

- make links with students' background knowledge and motivate them to read
- highlight selected features of the text
- introduce in conversation any unfamiliar names or potentially difficult concepts
- set a purpose for the reading.

Reading and Responding

Some texts can be read straight through; others may need to be broken up, with breaks for discussion. While students are reading the text silently, you can observe their reading behaviour and help any students who are struggling. Students could be encouraged to identify (for example, with a paper clip or Post-it sticker) any words that cause difficulty.

Discussing the Text

This should be brief (a maximum of 10–15 minutes) and should not be a simple "question and answer" session. Students should be encouraged to think about their own responses to the text and to consider alternative points of view.

New concepts, vocabulary, and text features can be discussed in greater detail. Words that have caused difficulty could be discussed in the group. These notes list some words that have challenged students when the material has been trialled. You should not assume, however, that these same words will challenge your own students. Wait and see what comes out of the first reading. Students should be encouraged to use a variety of strategies to work out unfamiliar words. This is an opportunity to develop students' phonological awareness and skills. For example, in studying the context of the text, you could use a whiteboard to draw students' attention to letter clusters and letter-sound relationships, to break up words into syllables, or to discuss the meanings of words.

This is also a good time to look closely at language features if this is a focus for the lesson. For example, you could discuss features such as alliteration or use of similes or metaphors, and you could take the opportunity to expand students' own written vocabulary by pointing out interesting verbs or adjectives and synonyms for commonly used words.

Where appropriate, follow-up activities may be selected.

Selecting Texts: Readability

When you are thinking about using a *School Journal* item for a particular student or group of students, you can use the *School Journal Catalogue* or *Journal Search* to find its approximate reading level. These levels are calculated using the Elley Noun Frequency Method (Elley and Croft, revised 1989). This method measures the difficulty of vocabulary only and does not take into account other equally important factors affecting readability.

When selecting texts, you should also consider:

- the student's prior knowledge, interests, and experiences
- the complexity of the concepts in the item
- the complexity of the style
- the complexity and length of the sentences
- any specialised vocabulary
- the length of the item
- the density of the text and its layout

- the structure of the text
- the support given by any illustrations and diagrams.

It is important to remember that most of these points could constitute either supports or challenges for particular students, and all of these aspects should be considered when selecting the text and the approach to be used.

These notes give further information about some of the potential supports and challenges in particular *School Journal* items. They include information gathered through trialling the items with groups of students.

Developing Comprehension Strategies

Reading is about constructing meaning from text.

Using a guided or shared reading approach provides an ideal context in which to teach comprehension strategies, for example:

- using prior knowledge
- predicting
- inferring
- asking questions and seeking clarification
- summarising
- interpreting.

These notes suggest ways to develop these and other strategies.

Curriculum Links

These notes place particular emphasis on the English curriculum's achievement objectives for all three strands and the processes of exploring language, thinking critically, and processing information.

Where appropriate, links are suggested to key strands of other curriculum statements.

Suggestions for Further Reading

In some instances, related items from the *School Journal* or other Ministry of Education publications are listed. This will help you to suggest further reading or to plan theme studies.

As Fast as the Wind

by Jan Trafford

Overview

This narrative describes how Te Aho's unplanned involvement in a game of rugby helps him to overcome his apprehension of starting at a new school. Not only does playing rugby help Te Aho feel more relaxed about his new school, but it also strengthens the bond that he already feels developing between himself and his koro.

Features to Consider in Context

The features outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

- The use of a simile as the title
- The structure of the text as a narrative
- The relationship between the two main characters
- The problem and the resolution (Te Aho's apprehension and feelings of pride and acceptance after playing rugby)
- The picture on the wall, which links the beginning and end of the story and emphasises the relationship between the child and his koro
- The actions of the wind paralleling Te Aho's feeling throughout the narrative: "Fear wrapped around Te Aho", "The wind rushed around him."
- The use of descriptive language: "hurled through the black and grey clouds", "sharing hot, steaming porridge and brown sugar", "the picture shining in the moonlight"
- The mixture of English and Māori words
- The use of colloquialisms: "eh", "Nah".

Readability

Noun frequency level: 8–9 years

Suggested level: 9–10 years

Supports and Challenges

The aspects outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

- Feelings associated with the night before starting a new school term and possibly a new school
- The New Zealand context of rugby being played at school
- Words that some students may find challenging: "glimpse", "somersaulting", "hurtled", "dude"
- Concepts that may cause difficulty for some students: extended family, a child living with a grandparent (koro) and the reason for this, "shaft of moonlight", "a close eye on the action", the El Niño wind

Introducing Students to the Text

- Have the students tell a partner how they feel just before the start of a new school term.
- "Who has changed schools? What is it like? What did you look forward to? What worried you?"
- Introduce the title, characters, and setting. Ask the students to predict why they think the writer has chosen this title and note down their predictions.
- Set a purpose for the reading. Ask the students to read to the end of paragraph four, "... couldn't see the picture any more", to find out why Te Aho is finding it difficult to sleep.

During the Reading

- Discuss why Te Aho is having difficulty sleeping and relate this to the students' personal experiences. "What is it like when you lie in bed on a windy night? What do you hear? How do you feel? What do you imagine?" "What is Te Aho doing?" Identify challenging words and concepts as part of this discussion.
- Ask the students to sketch the picture that hangs on the bedroom wall in the story.

- Set a purpose for reading. Ask the students to read the rest of the story to find out how Te Aho's first day at school went and to check their predictions about the title.

- Check the students' predictions about the title and why the writer might have chosen this title.
- "How did Te Aho feel about staying with Koro?" "How did Koro feel?" "Why was Te Aho staying with Koro?" These questions could be worked through with the students role-playing in pairs.

After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focuses for discussion

- "How did Te Aho feel about his first day at his new school? What happened at school to change his feelings?"

Suggested Activities

You may like to select an activity from the follow-up activities listed below. Teachers may need to work with the group for some activities.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>
Expressive Writing • thinking critically Interpersonal Listening and Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • go beyond the text to express meaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create thought bubbles to show what Te Aho was thinking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the night before school started – the next night. • share these with the group.
Interpersonal Listening Interpersonal Speaking • thinking critically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • draw on their background and experience to talk about events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in pairs, think and share some ways that a class/school could make new pupils feel welcome. Get together as a group to list their ideas.
Interpersonal Speaking and Listening Expressive Writing • thinking critically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • express and develop further understanding of a character. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as a group, draw a life-size shape of Te Aho. Put words that describe Te Aho's physical appearance outside the body shape and words that describe his feelings inside the body shape.
Listening to Texts • thinking critically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • express personal responses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as a group, imagine Te Aho walking back to class after the game of rugby. As he passes each student, that student shares what they are thinking about him with the rest of the group. You will need to encourage the students not to repeat what others have said.

Links with Other *School Journal* Titles

“Āwangawanga” 2.3.96; “At the End of the Holidays” 1.1.92; “The Bat” 2.2.99; “In Training” 1.1.92; “Just Different, That’s All” 1.1.93; “My Grandfather and the Auckland Harbour Bridge” 1.5.91

***School Journal Catalogue* Categories**

Relationships
School(s)

Cross-curricular Links

Health and Physical Education: Relationships with Other People

Associated Websites

Kiwi Touch
<http://www.hillarysport.org.nz/kids/kiwisport/modified/modified2.shtml>

Mini Messages

by Philippa Werry

Overview

Jacob's email messages to and from his dad and friend Angus herald a series of humorous coincidences. Anticipation of the possibilities of Dad and Angus meeting builds throughout the series of exchanges.

Features to Consider in Context

The features outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

- The immediacy of email
- The conventions of email messages:
 - a variety of salutations and sign-offs
 - short sentences
 - use of contractions
- The use of upper-case letters and punctuation to emphasise the speechlike quality of email messages
- The use of brackets and dashes to convey additional information, for example, "How's school? (Ha, ha, I'm on holiday!)", "We're going to Paris next on the train – through the Chunnel!"
- The use of postscripts (PS)
- The pages representing the computer screen and containing, within the screen, illustrations of landmarks characteristic of the places being visited
- Various forms of transport also depicted, which highlights the fact that email puts people in touch faster than any mode of transport
- Technological references, for example, "cyber-cafe", "scanner".

Readability

Noun frequency level: 8–9 years

Supports and Challenges

The aspects outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

- The students' experience or lack of experience with email messages

- The text is arranged in short, manageable chunks, and the vocabulary is largely within the reading experience of the students.
- The places mentioned in the emails and their location
- Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: distance in time and space, "bumping into" people, "posh", "the Chunnel", "canals", the technological references described in Features to Consider in Context above

Introducing Students to the Text

- Discuss the variety of ways messages can be sent, for example, by word of mouth, letter, email, and fax, and discuss when particular forms are appropriate to use.
- Introduce the title of the text and ask which form of message the title "Mini Messages" might refer to.
- Set a purpose for the reading. Ask the students to view the illustrations on the first two pages and read the first three messages to find who the characters are and where they are.

During the Reading

- Chart the student responses to the purpose for reading in a visual form (story map).
- Introduce the idea of the coincidence that Dad and Angus were staying in the same hotel.
- Ask the students to predict a further coincidence and read the next four messages.
- Identify the coincidence of Dad and Angus being in Paris at the same time and check the students' earlier predictions.
- Add to the story map.
- Read to the end of the story.

After the Reading

Possible focuses for discussion

- Complete the story map.
- Identify further coincidences.

- Reread the final message. “What do you think has happened?”
- Discuss some of the features of email messages and ask the students to identify these features in the text.
- Discuss the idea of landmarks in cities, for example, the Eiffel Tower in Paris, Big Ben in London, the Statue of Liberty in New York. Ask the students to brainstorm local/national landmarks.

Suggested Activities

You may like to select an activity from the follow-up activities listed below. Teachers may need to work with the group for some activities.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>
Expressive Writing • exploring language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use conventions of writing. • express meaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compose and send their own email, requesting a reply.
Close Reading • processing information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use a map to locate where Angus and Dad went.
Close Reading Transactional Writing • processing information • thinking critically Presenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • locate, select, record, and present relevant information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in pairs, select from a list of world cities and, using the library or the Internet, research landmarks for a particular city. The students could publish their findings.

Links with Other *School Journal* Titles

“Pen-friends” 1.5.95

Cross-curricular Links

Social Studies: Place and Environment
Technology

The Cindy Limpics by Michael Wilson

Overview

Cindy Baxter is determined to do well at her class Olympic Games. But accident-prone Cindy's training sessions always seem to end in disaster. This humorous narrative details a comedy of errors that eventually leads to an injured Cindy having an Olympic event made up especially for her.

Features to Consider in Context

The features outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

- The play on words in the title and the story ending – the Cindy Limpics rather than the Sydney Olympics
- The expectation created in the description of the first training session “Cindy was the sort of girl that accidents happened to ...”, which leads the reader to anticipate further disasters as Cindy tries each new activity
- Illustrations support the meaning of the text
- Minimal description of certain events in the story, requiring the reader to infer/visualise what actually happened (“Cindy’s dad said that it was OK to use a smooth river rock for the shot put but to try and throw it further next time. Cindy’s toe hurt.”).

Readability

Noun frequency level: 9–10 years

Supports and Challenges

The aspects outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

- Although the story is set in New Zealand, some students may find the references to farm life unfamiliar.
- The story is based on a recent event that most students will have prior knowledge of.
- Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: “ancient”, “pole vault”, “javelin”, “trough”, “barrier”, the concepts of a tomato stake and a stampede

Introducing Students to the Text

- Discuss the Olympic Games, the various track and field events, and the historical background to the games. Ask the students “If you were watching the track and field events, what would you expect to see?” Chart the students’ responses.
- Talk about class/school Olympics that the students may have participated in.
- Discuss the students’ experiences of sports injuries.
- Discuss what it means to be accident prone.
- Revise decoding strategies. “What will you do if you come to a tricky word?”
- Set a purpose for the reading. Ask the students to read the first seven paragraphs up to “She tried not to cry” and decide what similarities and differences there are between using the javelin, the shot put, and the discus.

During the Reading

- “Why did Cindy think it was all right for her to use the tomato stake for a javelin?”
- Ask the students to work in pairs and discuss what they think is the same and what is different about using the javelin, shot put, and discus.
- Have the students provide instructions for you to draw the steps of the shot-put incident.
- Ask the students to predict what might go wrong with Cindy’s discus throw.

After the Reading

Possible focuses for discussion

- Check the students’ predictions concerning the discus throw. Ask them to think about the sequence of events and then have them work in pairs to develop a list of the sequence of events, checking their list against the text.
- “Do you think this story is funny? Which parts? Why?” “Why do you think we sometimes find someone else’s misfortune funny?”

- “Does this story remind you of any other stories, cartoons, or television programmes where accidents happen to people?”
- “How would you describe Cindy? What evidence in the story supports this?”
- “How could Cindy train more safely for the next class Olympics?”

- “What do you think would have happened to Cindy between cracking her ankle and returning to school?” You could chart the students’ responses to this question. “Why do you think the writer left this detail out?”

Suggested Activities

You may like to select an activity from the follow-up activities listed below. Teachers may need to work with the group for some activities.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>
Viewing and Presenting • thinking critically	• communicate ideas using drama.	• mime one of Cindy’s disasters. Other students could guess what is being mimed.
Using Texts Presenting • thinking critically	• read aloud in an informal situation. • communicate ideas using drama.	• in pairs, have one student read out the description of one incident while the other student acts it out.
Close Reading Viewing and Presenting • thinking critically • processing information	• respond to meaning and ideas. • use verbal and visual features to communicate ideas.	• create a storyboard or flow chart of the chain of events that leads to Cindy breaking her leg (starting from where she chooses the piece of wood for the marker).

Links with Other School Journal Titles

“Rowing to the Olympics” 4.2.97; “Paddle Your Own Canoe” 1.3.99; “Winning” in *I Feel Dizzy* (JYPW 1997)

School Journal Catalogue Categories

Games
Olympics
Sports

Cross-curricular Links

Social Studies: Social Organisation
Health and Physical Education: Personal Health and Physical Development

Associated Websites

Toni Hodgkinson
<http://www.athletics.org.nz/hodgkins.html>

Beatrice Faumuina
<http://www.athletics.org.nz/faumuina.html>

Chantal Brunner
<http://www.athletics.org.nz/brunner.html>

The Olympic Games
<http://www.culture.gr/2/21/211/21107a/og/games.html>

The Olympic Games of Ancient Greece
<http://education.nmsu.edu/webquest/wq/olympics/olympicwq.html>

Fast Post?

by Helen Schmidt

Overview

This factual account provides information about the methods of mail delivery that existed in New Zealand in the 1850s and at the turn of the next century.

Features to Consider in Context

The features outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

- The rhetorical question of the title, which invites comparison between the relative speed of mail delivery now and in our early history (This question could lead to discussion about what people might have considered fast 150 years ago.)
- The visual elements of the text, which include the use of white and black print, photographs, a map, and handwriting in the background
- The mixture of English and Māori words, with Māori words supported by photographs, for example, *raupō* whare.

Readability

Noun frequency level: 7.5–8.5 years

Supports and Challenges

The aspects outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

- Photographs and a map support the text.
- The text is a manageable length.
- The text contains references to places that will not be familiar to some students.
- Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: “General Store”, “whare”, “*raupō*”, distance in time, the living conditions and technology that existed 150 years ago

Introducing Students to the Text

- Have the students talk about occasions when they might post something. “What happens to a letter after you’ve posted it in the mailbox? How long does it take to get to its final destination?”

- Discuss stamps and their purpose.
- “What do you know about how letters were sent 150 years ago?” Chart the students’ responses.
- Introduce the article and allow the students time to preview the photographs.
- Discuss the title “Fast Post?” “Why do you think there is a question mark?”
- Set a purpose for the reading. Read the first four paragraphs up to “... small rafts and in canoes”. “What else do you know about how letters were sent in the past?” Add the students’ responses now to the chart that they created earlier.

During the Reading

- Read the next three paragraphs. Ask the students to work in pairs to list what the runners had to do, for example, get up very early, run from one post office to another, and pick up mail along the way.
- Discuss what difficulties the runners may have faced.
- Relate the distance of the run to a local example.
- Read the rest of the article together.

After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focuses for discussion

- “Why would postage stamps become a more popular option for showing that you had paid for your letter to be delivered?”
- Return to the title and ask for the students’ comments on what it means now.
- Consider the chart that the students made earlier. Ask the students how letters are delivered today.
- Ask the students to compare the methods of mail delivery in the 1850s and now; between places within New Zealand and overseas.

Suggested Activities

You may like to select an activity from the follow-up activities listed below. Teachers may need to work with the group for some activities.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>
Close Reading Presenting • processing information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify, record, and present information, using verbal and visual images. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reread the text and create a flow chart of the journey of a letter in 1855.
Personal Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> read for enjoyment. practise reading strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use <i>Journal Search</i> or the <i>School Journal Catalogue</i> to locate examples of letters that they may read.
Close Reading using texts • processing information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> read for information. make an oral report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use teacher-located resources to read about one other aspect of life in early New Zealand and share the information with the group.

Links with Other School Journal Titles

“Ricky’s Letter” 1.3.91; “When I Was Young” 2.1.96; “A Letter to Renée” 1.2.00

School Journal Catalogue Categories

Letters
Mail
Life in Other Times

Cross-curricular Links

Social Studies: Resources and Economic Activities
Technology

Associated Websites

New Zealand Postal Stamps
<http://www.wnc.quik.co.nz/rpsnz/content/items.htm>

Recent Stamp Issues
http://www.nzpost.co.nz/nzstamps/menu_recent_stamps.html

Happy Holi!

by Hilary Watson

Overview

This article outlines the traditions and history of Holi, the light-hearted Indian festival of colour. When else could you throw dye or squirt water guns at your family and friends or even strangers in the street without getting into trouble?

Features to Consider in Context

The features outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

- Use of direct speech, which makes the article more personal
- The beginning of the story, which outlines what would be a very strange experience for a visitor to India at this time of year and captures the reader's interest (By using the second person, the writer immediately engages the reader with the text.)
- Vivid descriptions of the sights one would see at Holi, which allows the students to visualise the festival
- The vivid splash of bright colours used in the background, highlighting what the article is about
- Cropped photographs conveying the fun of the festival
- The separate section on the history of the festival, contained at the end of the main article.

Readability

Noun frequency level: 8.5–9.5 years

Supports and Challenges

The aspects outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

- The familiar speech patterns of the dialogue
- The use of children to explain the features of the festival
- The manageable length of the text
- The students' own experiences of festivals and

cultural events

- Words that may be challenging for some students: "wealth", "generous", "smear", "disagreements", "mischievous", the Indian names
- Some concepts will be outside the experiences of most New Zealand students – springtime in March, children begging amongst traffic, small stalls selling goods, Hindu gods and goddesses

Introducing Students to the Text

- Discuss festivals – both those commonly celebrated in New Zealand and others that the students may have experienced or know about.
- Locate India on a map, including the capital, New Delhi. Share any knowledge that the students may have of these places.
- Before distributing the journals, introduce the title and read the first sentence to the students. Ask them what their reaction would be to someone coming up and throwing red powder and water over them. Read the next two sentences and ask the students to predict what supplies they would need in order to take part in this festival.
- Distribute the journals and allow time for the students to preview the photographs.
- Set a purpose for the reading. Ask the students to read to "Happy Holi!" at the end of the main story and check their predictions about the supplies needed for this festival.

During the Reading

- Ask the students to read "The Story of Holi" to find out why this festival is celebrated.

After the Reading

Possible focuses for discussion

- "Why is Holi a festival that the children look forward to?" "What things about the festival surprised you?" "How is it the same or different to our festivals?"
- "What parts of the article describe differences between life in New Zealand and life in India?"

- Using a Venn diagram model, discuss and chart with the students the similarities and differences between Holi in New Delhi and Easter (or Christmas) in New Zealand. Focus on who, what, when, where, and why.

Suggested Activities

You may like to select an activity from the follow-up activities listed below. Teachers may need to work with the group for some activities.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>
Viewing • processing information	• use the appropriate technology to gain information.	• using the Internet, find out when Holi will be this year.
Personal Reading	• use appropriate technology to gain information.	• use the Internet or library to find out more about different festivals around the world.
Close Reading Viewing Presenting • processing information • thinking critically	• locate, select, interpret, record, and organise relevant information. • present information using verbal and visual features.	• select one particular festival and prepare a written report to detail who, where, when, why, and what. Share the information with the group or class.

Links with Other School Journal Titles

“Happy New Year” 1.4.86; “Fairy Dust” 1.5.98;
“Christmas” 1.5.99; “Teasing the Lion” 2.3.91

School Journal Catalogue Categories

Festivals
Christmas
New Year

Cross-curricular Links

Social Studies: Culture and Heritage

Associated Websites

Holi
<http://www.bawarchi.com/festivals/holi.html>

Holidays and Festivals from around the World
http://www.internet-at-work.com/hos_mcgrane/holidays/festivals_menu.html

Harvest Celebrations around the World
<http://www.familyculture.com/harvest%20celebrations.htm>

Festivals around the World
<http://plaza.harmonix.ne.jp/~haga/home-E.html>

Zapped!

by Janice Leitch

Overview

With encouragement from Jack, Katie breaks the rules and uses her magic calculator with powerful results.

Features to Consider in Context

The features outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

- The conventions of a play: a list of characters provided at the start, each character's piece of dialogue introduced with the character's name in capital letters, the use of italics for stage directions, and directions for specific characters in parenthesis
- A predictable text that repeats a major idea
- The use of natural speech patterns, including contractions and colloquialisms
- Short, simple sentences
- A comic twist for the ending.

Readability

Noun frequency level: 7.5–8.5 years

Supports and Challenges

The aspects outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

- A familiar classroom setting
- The cues for Angela, Tom, and Jane need to be clearly understood.
- For the roles of Jack and Katie, you need confident, fluent readers who are capable of maintaining an effective pace of delivery.

Introducing Students to the Text

- Tell the students that they will be reading a play.
- Read the first four pieces of dialogue out loud to the group (up to "Dunno") and ask them to predict what will happen.
- Introduce the title: "This play is called 'Zapped!'. What do you think Katie does with her calculator?"
- Ask the students to read the play and find out how the calculator works.

After the Reading

Possible focuses for discussion

- "What do you think of the way the play ends?"
- "What might happen next?"
- "How did the calculator work? How do you know?"
- Allocate roles for the students to practise reading the dialogue.

Suggested Activities

You may like to select an activity from the follow-up activities listed below. Teachers may need to work with the group for some activities.

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"> read aloud with fluency and expression. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> as a group, practise reading the play <i>without</i> following the stage directions. Then as a group, practise reading the play following the stage directions. This will help fluency and expression.
Poetic Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> exploring language thinking critically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use conventions of play writing and organisation of text. express meaning, drawing on personal background and knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in pairs, write a short scene for the play to follow on from the ending.
Presenting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> thinking critically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> interpret the stage directions. communicate ideas using drama. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perform the play with or without one of the alternative endings.

Links with Other *School Journal* Titles

“Computer Magic” 3.1.90; “The Magic Wand” 2.3.97; “Magic Stuff” 2.1.99

School Journal Catalogue Categories

Humorous Plays
Magic

Write a Poem by Desna Wallace

Overview

This poem could be used in a wider poetry unit where the students are asked to discuss “What is poetry?”

Read the poem aloud a couple of times and ask the students to think about and then share, in pairs, any special characteristics they hear that help to make this text a poem. You may like to chart the students’ responses. If you decide to have further discussion, distribute copies of the poem for the students to read.

Focus for Discussion

Thinking Critically

- “What could be the subject of a poem that would fit the first verse? – other verses?”
- “How does this poet feel about writing poetry?” “What does she think a ‘good’ poem would have?” (for example, a personal voice [“make it YOURS!”], words that suggest feelings, mood, movement, and so on.)
- “Look at the last word in lines 2, 3, and 4 of each verse. In pairs, decide whether each word describes sound, movement, or mood.”

Exploring Language

- Discuss alliteration: what it is and its effect. The students could create their own verse, using alliteration, to add to the poem.
- Discuss the use of repetition – the first line of each verse and the first words of the next three lines in each verse.
- Innovate on this text using repetition and alliteration, for example,

Build a house	or	Play a game
make it s.....		make it f.....
make it s.....		make it f.....
make it s.....		make it f.....

Links with Other School Journal Titles

“Writing a Poem” 3.2.95; “When George Yawned” 1.3.96; “Wild Bill’s Secret Wish” 2.4.95; “I Don’t Just Like Writing: I Love It!” 1.5.97; “The Dream” 1.5.95

School Journal Catalogue Categories

Poems
Writers

Associated Websites

Ideas for Writing Poetry
http://english.unitecuniversity.ac.nz/writers/poem_ideas.html

Poetry Writing
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/poet/index.htm>