

Treasure Deep

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Overview

This fictional text presents five episodes in the lives of children in Taranaki at different times in history. The messages convey historical information and suggest aspects of life that stay the same in spite of social and technological changes.

This is a rich text with multiple layers. It deserves exploration over at least two sessions, especially to draw out the deeper themes. These notes focus on revisiting the text, after a first reading, to identify and discuss deeper meanings. Opportunities also exist to make links with other texts. (See "Links to further learning".)

Suggested teaching purposes

- To support the students in developing the comprehension strategies of **analysing and synthesising**, and identifying the main idea.
- To engage students in reading below the surface of a text to explore ideas about changes over time.

Suggested learning goal

I am learning to identify and discuss the patterns that run through this text and come to a conclusion about the main idea.

Success criteria

I will be successful when I have:

- identified the patterns that run through the text (things that the characters have in common)
- identified any differences in the text (things that change from page to page)
- reread this text with these ideas in mind and considered the deeper themes of the text.

Features of the text

What features of this text support the teaching purposes?

- The possible multiple meanings of the title
- The structure of the text as a series of moments of time
- The use of different forms of communication – oral message, letters, email – to convey historical information, especially how a place, people, language, and technology change (and don't change) over time
- The distinctive voices and perspectives of the characters
- The old-fashioned language in the early pieces of communication (for example, "I know not when") compared with the informal language in the email (for example, "Hey, cuz")
- The patterns – the ways of conveying the communication, the ideas about place (Koru Pā), the loss of treasured items, and the ideas about family and cultural relationships
- The underlying deeper themes of:
 - mystery and spirituality (for example, "Koru Pā becomes a mysterious place", "Nanny Miro can hear people's voices", "it was the best place to

lose something”, “the pā is still a special place for Māori people”, “Dad said some blessings”, “A shiver went right through me”)

- whakapapa (genealogical ties with people and the natural world, including the river and mountain)
- the need to communicate with family and friends
- technological change (particularly as conveyed by the type of message and type of taonga)
- The mother’s prophecy (foreshadowing) on page 20 and the associated, implied idea of there being a reason for losing things – and a right time for their return
- The references to major historical events, particularly wars (Māori wars, New Zealand wars, and the First World War)
- The supportive illustrations, especially on the last page.

Readability

Noun frequency level: 8.5–9.5 years for guided reading

What prior knowledge or experience might help my students to read this text?

- Their knowledge and experiences of treasures
- Their knowledge of New Zealand history
- Their familiarity with the language and stories of elders.

What text features might challenge my students and require a prompt or a brief explanation?

- The need to infer that the first letter is an oral message
- The old-fashioned language
- The Māori words and concepts, for example, “pā”, “matau”, “pounamu”, “taonga”, “karakia”, “whare”
- The complex structure of some sentences, for example, “My matau ... gone” (page 20).

Preparation for reading

Have the students read and discuss “Family Treasures” (SJ 1.3.07) and then write a description of something that has meaning to them personally. Briefly discuss what treasures are. (Making connections)

A framework for the lesson

How will I help my students to achieve the learning goal?

Before reading

- Encourage the students to share what they wrote about their treasures. Draw out the idea of people having different treasures for different reasons. (Making connections)
- Look at the title. Briefly discuss what the treasure might be and what “Deep” might refer to. (Forming and testing hypotheses)
- Share the learning goal and success criteria with the students.

Revisiting the text

Refer to Effective Literacy Practice in Years 5 to 8, pages 80–93, for information about deliberate acts of teaching.

- Have the students reread the first page and think, pair, and share about what

the treasure might be. You may need to clarify the meaning of “matau” (fish hook). “What can you infer about the form of the message here? What helped you?” Draw out the idea that the message is oral and that the clues are the language used, the final sentence, and the lack of a date. (Analysing and synthesising; inferring)

- Ask the students to read the next page. “I’m wondering whether this message and the previous one have any things in common ...” Have the students think, pair, and share any patterns they have found and record them in the first column of a graphic organiser like the one below. Depending on the needs of your students, the organiser could be completed as a whole-group activity or each pair could use their own copy of the organiser. “What differences are there between the things in common we’ve already identified?” Prompt the students to look for clues, for example, the different method of communication and the different treasure that is lost. Have the students think, pair, and share and then record their ideas in the second column. (Analysing and synthesising; inferring)

Patterns (things in common) Every page:	Differences (things that change) Over time:	Deeper themes
is a message	the form of the message changes (oral message → letters → email)	People need to keep in touch with family and friends who are far away. Technology changes over time.
is set at Koru Pā, Ōākura, Taranaki, where there are a river and a mountain	the use of Koru Pā changes (people live there → nobody lives there → trees grow → it becomes an archaeological site)	People can feel a spiritual connection with places – that is, a place can be a taonga. Rivers and mountains hold special meaning for Māori.
involves a loss of taonga	the type of taonga changes (matau → knife → peg doll → magnifying glass → cellphone)	Taonga differ for different people. People’s values change over time. Technology changes over time.
is from a child’s point of view	the language used by the characters changes and becomes less formal (“I know not when” → “Indeed, the sun does burn its way down to the sea” → “I found I’d lost my peg doll” → “I’ve lost the little magnifying glass” → “Hey, cuz”).	Language changes over time.

mentions relationships with family and the land	the different family members being communicated to, and their links with the land, change.	Whakapapa (ties with other people and the natural world) is an important theme.
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- Ask the students to continue reading the text and work with a partner to note down patterns (commonalities) between the different passages – and anything that changes. Also prompt them to start thinking about underlying themes. They can refine (add to or cross out) their original ideas as they go. Encourage them to ask questions if they don't understand aspects, and support them as necessary. Have the students share their ideas and complete the first two columns of the organiser. (Analysing and synthesising; identifying the main idea)

After reading

- Discuss the information gathered on the graphic organiser and then revisit the idea of there being deeper themes that can be identified using the collated evidence. "What could we say about the way that people communicate with others over time? Why do people write to friends and family?" Record the students' ideas in the last column. Have the students work in pairs to continue to identify the themes for each pattern and record these on the graphic organiser. (Analysing and synthesising; identifying the main idea)
- Discuss the mother's prophecy on page 20 and the underlying idea of treasures returning to people in time. "Did the mother's prophecy come true? Were there others who felt the same way as she did?" (Analysing and synthesising)
- Consider the related idea of personal treasures becoming national treasures. Revisit ideas about what treasures are. Prompt the students with questions like "Is something a treasure simply because it's very old?" Also encourage evaluation, for example, "What is the difference between a personal and a cultural treasure? Is a museum the best place for treasures? Why or why not?" (Identifying the main idea; evaluating ideas and information)
- Explore the information on historical events that the text conveys and ask for other ways of communicating this information. Draw out the idea of a timeline. "How might a timeline differ from this text? Given what the author has focused on here, what do you think he considers important about history?" Elicit the emphasis on the human response to important events as compared with dates and other details. (Analysing and synthesising; identifying the author's purpose and point of view)
- Review the learning goal and success criteria and reflect with the students on how well the learning goal has been achieved. For example, "What will you be looking for to see if there are patterns that run through a text? How do these patterns help you to find the main themes?" Note any teaching points for future sessions.

Links to further learning

What follow-up tasks will help my students to consolidate their new learning?

The students could:

- choose one of the patterns in the text and create a timeline that shows the changes relating to that pattern over time, doing further research if necessary (Analysing and synthesising; making connections)
- rewrite the last message using their own treasure or write one from the future, ensuring that their message links to all the patterns (Analysing and synthesising; making connections)
- explore in greater detail how language evolves over time, using the text as a basis (Analysing and synthesising; making connections)
- compare the ideas about history in this text with those in “Pōwhiri for a Prince”, SJ 3.2.07 (Analysing and synthesising; making connections)
- compare the ways that authors link ideas in different texts – for example, with patterns, as in this text, or with extended metaphors, as in “Wobbling”, SJ 4.2.07. (Analysing and synthesising; making connections)