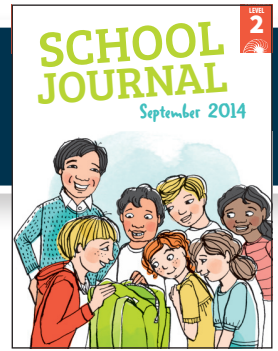


Reading a Boat

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Year 4



Overview

“Reading a Boat” is an account of a family taking a ferry ride, which becomes an exploration of signs on the ferry. The family continue their exploration of signs when they arrive on land, and they discuss how we know which signs are important.


This factual narrative:

- contains other text features, questions for the reader, discussion, and debate and includes photographs of different kinds of signs

- encourages opportunities to explore signage around your classroom, your school, or your local community
 - provides opportunities for students to make inferences and think critically about which signs keep us safe.
- There is a PDF of the text and the audio version as an MP3 file at www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz

Text characteristics from the year 4 reading standard

The boys went back up on to the top deck.
“I never realised there were so many signs on the ferry,” said Gran when the boys showed her their photos.
“I know,” said Nicko. “It’s almost like you need to be able to read a boat.”
“What about on shore?” asked Gran as the ferry was tied up to the wharf. “There are lots of signs on land, too. Let’s have a look when we get off the ferry.”
Gran was right. The boys hadn’t really noticed before, but now they were looking, there seemed to be signs everywhere.




some abstract ideas that are clearly supported by concrete examples in the text or easily linked to the students prior knowledge

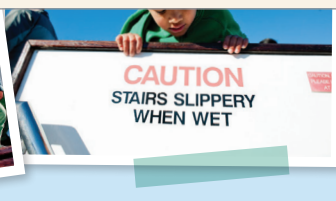
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some compound and complex sentences, which may consist of two or three clauses



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some words or phrases that are ambiguous or unfamiliar to the students, the meaning of which is supported by the context or clarified by photographs, illustrations, diagrams, and/or written explanations

The advertising signs were easy. They were easy to read something. The road signs were easy, too. If you are driving a car towards an intersection, you really do have to stop.
But what about that sign? It says not to take too much kaimoana.
“It’s important,” said Nicko.
“It says that there’s a fine if you take too much.”
“I don’t think it’s the fine that makes this sign important,” said Gran. “The kaimoana might disappear forever if people take too many. That’s what makes it important.”



Possible curriculum contexts

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION (Personal Health and Physical Development)

Level 2 – Safety Management: Identify risk and use safe practices in a range of contexts.

ENGLISH (Reading)

Level 2 – Structure: Show some understanding of text structures.

ENGLISH (Writing)

Level 2 – Structure: Organise texts, using a range of structures.

Possible reading purposes

- To find out what happens when the characters' interest in signs develops into an investigation of signs
- To form their own opinion of the importance of the signs the characters don't agree on
- To evaluate which signs are important in different places.

Possible writing purposes

- Describe the purposes of signs around your school
- List and explain some possible new signs for the school (or another place in your community).



The New Zealand Curriculum

Text and language challenges

VOCABULARY:

- Possibly unfamiliar words and/or specialist words, including “top deck”, “advice”, “on shore”, “intersection”, “fine”, “kaimoana”, “classify”
- Possibly unfamiliar words in the signage
- The phrase “must read”
- Colloquial expressions: “well heaps”, “they’d better”, “get fried”.

Possible supporting strategies

- Identify specialist words in the text and illustrations that may be unfamiliar and plan activities to introduce them before reading. Integrate the words with activities to make connections to prior knowledge. See ESOL Online, Vocabulary, for examples of strategies to support students with vocabulary.
- Support students to clarify the meanings of expressions they are unsure of. Discuss the meanings together, then have the students work in pairs to reword the expressions in more familiar ways.
- For English Language Learners, give them definitions and tell them to match them to the words or expressions. *The English Language Learning Progressions: Introduction*, pages 39–46, has useful information about learning vocabulary.

SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED:

- Knowledge of the information signs convey (warnings, directions, advertising, rules, and so on)
- The concept of the relative importance of signs
- Signage about “rāhui” and “kaimoana”
- Familiarity with using a ferry as a form of transport.

Possible supporting strategies

- Build students' understanding that signs can convey different types of information. Make connections to the students' prior knowledge. For example, have them:
 - brainstorm the signs they see on their way to school
 - categorise the signs into three groups (directions, safety messages, and advertising)
 - think-pair-share which signs they think are the most important.
- Signage about “rāhui” and collecting seafood will be familiar to some students. Give them the opportunity to share their knowledge. They will have particular relevance to students from cultures where collecting seafood is important.
- Build prior knowledge by having students share experiences of ferry rides. Monitor the use of specialist vocabulary as the students discuss their experiences. Introduce important words into the discussion. Create a list of key vocabulary for reading this text, perhaps as a word map (with “ferry rides” in the middle and associated vocabulary around it). Add to the list before and after reading. Refer to the list in writing. In future lessons, come back to these words and remind students to recognise and use them.

TEXT FEATURES AND STRUCTURE:

- A narrative with factual information presented through discussion – using questions, answers, and debate to show points of view
- Visual features including photographs of signage, grouped into categories
- Imperative verb forms in the signs
- Some use of unattributed dialogue
- Language expressing real and hypothetical consequences, and sometimes conditions: “You’d want to know where to go if ever there were an emergency” (consequence, condition), “If you are driving a car towards an intersection, you really do have to stop” (condition, consequence).

Possible supporting strategies

- Ask the students to share their understanding of how factual information and ideas are shared in a narrative.
- Review features such as the use of dialogue, photographs, and the structure of a discussion, including the impact of modal verbs.
- Draw the students' attention to how we know the writer is talking directly to the reader, by using the pronoun “you” and by using a verb that tells the reader what to do.



Sounds And Words

Instructional focus – Reading

Health and Physical Development

(Personal Health and Physical Development, level 2 – Safety Management: Identify risk and use safe practices in a range of contexts.)

English (Level 2 – Structure: Show some understanding of text structures.)

First reading

Before reading the text:

- skim the text with the students to help them get a sense of the factual focus
- prompt them to read the title and look at the photographs to predict where the story will go.

Identify any unfamiliar words in the photographs. Remind the students to use their word-solving strategies to try and solve the meaning of other words and phrases they are unsure of. For students who need more support, refer to the work you've done before reading, provide additional support as needed, and then look for opportunities for them to use word-solving strategies.

Review the structure of a discussion to support the information on page 10. Prompt them to notice the writer's questions to the audience to identify the focus of the discussion.

Ask questions to help the students reflect on their reading purpose and their initial ideas about the content.

- Do you still have any questions about the story? Is there anything you are not sure of?
- How did reading the title, skimming the text, and looking at the photographs help you to find information?
- What did Niko and Achilles do with the signs they read?

If the students struggle with this text:

- Ask questions or prompt them to use their prior knowledge about ferries and about the signs that might be on a boat.
- Support them when meaning breaks down. Prompt or remind them to use strategies they know, such as rereading and using text clues and information in sentences and photographs close by.
- Prompt them to use punctuation and key words to help track the questions, answers, and debate in the discussion.

Subsequent readings

The teacher:

Support the students to locate and integrate the information to help them decide what makes some signs more important than others. Have them reread the discussion on page 10 and look at how the photographs are grouped on page 11.

You could have the students reread what Niko says about the emergency exit and identify his reason as a possible situation and consequence. You could add this to a graphic organiser like the example below. Support the students to identify other reasons given in the text that are based on possible consequences and add them to the graphic organiser.

Sign	Important?	Reason – possible consequence
Emergency exit	Yes	If there were an emergency, you'd want to know where to go.

Have the students use a similar graphic organiser for their own discussions and decisions. Perhaps model taking notes and then constructing sentences. If necessary, provide sentence frames to support students with expressing possible consequences. Model using the sentence frames to create your sentences, co-construct sentences with the students, then support the students to write their own. In particular, provide guidance on what verb forms to use and on using modal verbs such as can, could, and might.

If you _____, then you could/might _____

You could/might _____ if you _____

Draw their attention to the emergency exit and ice cream signs to help them make inferences about their importance.

Ask what they think about the choices the children made.

The teacher:

Ask questions about the meaning and use of some of the language.

- What are the clues that help you work out what "get fried" means?
- That's an interesting use of "must read". Who might the other signs be a "must read" for?

The teacher:

On page 15, support the students to clarify the relative importance of signs by asking them to use what they've learned about the groups of signs to classify the signs they were sent.

METACOGNITION

- How did you work out the writer was speaking directly to you? How did that help you with the questions he was asking?
- What helped you track the discussion on page 11? How did you work out who said, "OK, what about the recycling sign on that rubbish bin?"
- What helped you describe "get fried"? How did other uses of the word "fried" help you?

The students:

- reread the text and make connections with their own experiences to decide the emergency exit means you can get to a safe place and an ice-cream sign is for something we might want but we don't necessarily need
- identify the reasons given for the relative importance of the signs and what these reasons are based on
- make connections between Niko's explanations about the signs to decide that the important signs help people to be safe
- think critically about the recycling sign and form their own opinion about its importance
- ask questions about the placement of some signs in the photographs they are not sure about
- visualise why people might need the signs and decide what each group of signs have in common.

The students:

- make connections to their prior knowledge of "fried" and the word "dig" in the same sentence and "underground cables" in the previous sentence to infer the meaning
- look at the other photographs and make suggestions about who the signs might be a "must read" for.

The students:

- reread page 15 and use the information they have inferred from the text to classify the signs. They share their opinions and justify their views by referring to the information from the text and their own ideas.

GIVE FEEDBACK

- I saw you reread Niko's comments to help you decide about his group of photographs. You can make a better judgment when you use more than one piece of information.
- I noticed you check with the photograph when you were trying to work out what kaimoana is. Photographs and other illustrations can often give you extra information to help understand something.

Reading standard: by the end of year 4

The Literacy Learning Progressions

Assessment Resource Banks

Instructional focus – Writing

Health and Physical Development

(Personal Health and Physical Development, level 2 – Safety Management: Identify risk and use safe practices in a range of contexts.)

English (Level 2 – Structure: Organise texts, using a range of structures.)

Text excerpts from “Reading a Boat”

There were lots of signs on the ferry. “Do you think anyone ever reads this stuff?” Tobiah said.

“They’d better” said Niko.
“Look what that sign says – ‘Emergency Exit’. You’d want to know where to go if there was an emergency.”

“So how do you know which signs are important – and which aren’t?” asked Tobiah.

The boys asked Gran if they could use her cellphone to take photos of some of the signs. As they took the photos, they filed each one under “Important” and “Not important”.

The boys hadn’t really noticed before, but now they were looking for them, there seemed to be signs everywhere.

As they walked along the shore, the boys divided the signs they saw into two groups: important signs and signs that aren’t important.

Then the boys whether the sign was a “must read” or not. They texted their friends with their answers.

“Sometimes it depends on who you are,” Niko laughed. “‘CCTV cameras are in operation on these premises’ is a must read for shoplifters and robbers!”

Examples of text characteristics

INTRODUCING THE TOPIC

The introduction will provide the setting for the topic and the purpose of the writing.

It will include the “who”, “what”, “how”, and “why” of the investigation.

USING QUESTIONS

The use of a question that directly addresses the reader (second person “you”) is one way to draw in the audience.

COMPLEX SENTENCES

A complex sentence is formed by adding a subordinate clause to a simple sentence.

The subordinate clause often adds information to the main clause it is attached to and is a good way of adding detail.

USING A COLON

A colon can add more information to a sentence and is an easy way to list information.

CONCLUSION

This gives the writer a way to round off their writing. There may be an important point to make about the purpose, an observation, an opinion, or perhaps a question to challenge their readers.

Teacher

(possible deliberate acts of teaching)

Ask questions to help the students discuss and plan their writing, and structure their introduction.

- What do you need to include in your writing?
- What did you do? Why did you do it? Who did it? How did you group your information? Did you have any questions at the end?
- What does your audience need to know in the introduction?
- How will they know what they are going to read about?

Ask questions to support the engagement of the readers.

- How could you draw in your readers?
- Could you use a question to draw them in?
- What happens when we use the word “you” in a question?

Direct the students to examine their writing.

- How can you add detail to your writing?
- With a partner, discuss the extract and how the words between the commas add more detail to the sentence.
- Now take a look at your own writing. How could you add a subordinate clause to add more detail to your writing?

Discuss the use of the colon as a way of listing items that relate to the first part of the sentence.

- Do you need to list items in your sentence? If so, where would you put the colon?
- Have you listed items in any of your sentences? Go back and figure out where a colon could go.

Prompt the students to think about what they want to say to readers about their investigation.

- What else do you want the readers to know about signs?
- What did you notice about the signs you saw?
- Do you have any advice for people reading or displaying signs?
- Do you have any questions or challenges for your readers?

GIVE FEEDBACK

- That was a great question in your introduction. It really made me think about the signs around our school.
- The paragraphs clearly explained your four groups. Your explanation of why you grouped the “directions” signs will be useful when we plan new signs for visitors to our school.
- That’s the first time I’ve seen you try a sentence that includes a colon. It was a good place to use it.

METACOGNITION

- How did your audience know what they were going to read about?
- What have you learnt about using a colon? When would you use one?
- You rewrote your conclusion. Why did you change it? What did you learn by doing that?

Writing standard: by the end of year 4

The Literacy Learning Progressions