



Overview

This story introduces colour-blindness in a light-hearted but informative way. When Cody goes back to school after the holidays, he can't see why his friends are so excited about the repaint of the school. As the story progresses, his classmate Gemma notices Cody is behaving oddly. She eventually realises Cody is showing similar behaviours to her brother who is colour-blind. Could Cody be colour-blind too?

Colours and colour-blindness are also explored in other texts in this journal. The article "Living in a Colourful World" explains what

colour-blindness is, and the poem "If" explores the idea of a world where familiar things are different colours.

This text requires students to "confidently use a range of processing and comprehension strategies to make meaning from and think critically about" text (from *The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 14).

There is a PDF of the text and an audio version as an MP3 file at www.juniorjournal.tki.org.nz

Related texts

Real-life stories with a mystery to be solved: "Something Strange Going On" (JJ 46); "Always Great, Never Late" (JJ 48)

Texts that feature idioms and sayings: "Something Strange Going On" (JJ 46); "Always Great, Never Late" (JJ 48); "No More Warts" (JJ 49)

Humorous texts about how family and friends help each other: "That's the Idea" (JJ 44); "No More Warts" (JJ 49); "Helpful" (JJ 50)

Text characteristics

Key text characteristics relating to the reading standard for after three years at school are shown in the boxes below.

A mix of explicit and implicit content that requires students to make connections between ideas in the text and their prior knowledge in order to form and test hypotheses and make inferences about Cody's reactions

The context of colour-blindness that is gradually revealed and which may be unfamiliar to most students

Frequent use of dialogue, some of which is not explicitly attributed, and more than one character speaking on a page

No Big Deal

by Bill Nagelkerke

When the signal beeped and the light changed, Alex and Cody crossed the road to school. Gemma was waiting for them on the other side.

"Hi, guys," said Gemma. "I wonder what our room's going to look like?"

During the holidays, some of the older classrooms had been repainted. The painters had used bright colours.

"Wow! It's like a rainbow," said Alex. "We might need sunglasses!"

"It's no big deal," said Cody. He couldn't really see what all the fuss was about.

There were other changes in the classroom as well. The art materials were now in coloured boxes.

"No excuses for untidiness," said Mr Marlow. "A place for everything, and everything in its place."

Builders had been at the school, too, building a new toilet block.

"Are the new toilets working?" asked Gemma.

"Yes, they are," said Mr Marlow. "But there are no signs on the doors yet."

"Then how will we know which ones to use?" asked Alex.

"The girls' toilets have a green door, and the boys' toilets have a red one," said Mr Marlow. "Green for girls. That's easy to remember."

Ideas and information organised in paragraphs

A variety of sentence structures, including very short sentences and complex sentences, so that students are required to notice and use punctuation and context to clarify phrasing and meaning

Some unfamiliar words and phrases, including descriptive vocabulary, the meaning of which is supported by the context, sentence structure, or illustrations

English (Reading)

Level 2 – Purposes and audiences:
Show some understanding of how texts are shaped for different purposes and audiences.

Level 2 – Ideas: Show some understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts.

Health and Physical Education

Level 2 – Personal health and physical development: Personal growth and development.

Select from and adapt the suggestions below according to your students' strengths, needs, and experiences – their culture, language, and identity (*Reading and Writing Standards for years 1–8, Knowledge of the Learner, page 6*).

Possible reading purposes

(*What can the students expect to find out or think about as a result of reading this text?*)

- To find out what is happening with Cody in this story
- To think about why the author chose to call this story “No Big Deal”

Possible learning goals

(*What opportunities does this text provide for students to learn more about how to “read, respond to, and think critically” about texts?*)

- The students **make connections** between the context and Cody's actions to **form and test hypotheses** about why Cody might be reacting in the way he does.
- They **make connections** between the clues in the story to **make inferences** about what Gemma is noticing and how she is trying to help.
- They **form an opinion** about the author's purpose for writing this story.
- They **monitor** their reading, and when something is unclear, they take action to solve the problem, for example, rereading a sentence or looking for clues close by.



Text and language features

Vocabulary

- Words and phrases that may be unfamiliar: “signal”, “the light changed”, “repainted”, “art materials”, “Builders”, “untidiness”, “muttered”, “least”, “the running man”, “toilet block”, “Granny Smith”, “colour-blind”, “especially”, “properly”
- Words with prefixes and suffixes: “re-painted”, “build-ers”, “un-tidi-ness”, “careful”
- Idiom: “No Big Deal” meaning no worries or no problem
- The saying: “A place for everything, and everything in its place”.

Text features

- Some extended passages of dialogue.

Possible supporting strategies

(These suggestions may be used before, during, or after reading in response to students' needs.)

Readers are able to use strategies for working out unfamiliar words only when they know most of the vocabulary in the text. For English language learners who need support with vocabulary, introduce and practise selected items before reading. See [ESOL Online: Vocabulary](#) for suggestions.

Prompt the students to remember the strategies they can use, often in combination, for example:

- when **decoding**:
 - looking for root words and familiar parts of words (“rain-bow”, “sun-glasses”), including prefixes and suffixes (“re-painted”, “build-ers”, “un-tidi-ness”, “proper-ly”, “dis-covered”)
 - knowing that letters can have more than one sound (“signal”, “signs”)
- when **working out word meanings**:
 - using the context of the sentence and the surrounding sentences
 - using the illustrations, the unfolding meaning of the text, and their prior knowledge
 - reading on for further information.

See Introducing the text for ideas about the idiomatic title.

Have a dictionary available for students to confirm or clarify word meanings, but remind them that they can make a best attempt at a word and come back to it later.

When reading dialogue, prompt the students to identify a new speaker by drawing their attention to:

- the paragraph indent and new speech marks
- the attributions
- the use of the pronouns “you” and “I” by the speaker.

The students could also pair-read some sections aloud to use the dialogue indicators and to hear the conversational style, for example, the question and answer pattern on pages 21–22.



Metacognition

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR STUDENTS TO BE METACOGNITIVE

Here are some ways you can build students' awareness of the processes and strategies they are using as they make meaning and think critically.

- *What helped you work out the meaning of the sentence at the top of page 19?*
- *How did you track who was speaking in the class discussion about the new toilets?*

Introducing the text

- Use your knowledge of your students to ensure that the introduction to the text is effective in activating their prior knowledge and providing appropriate support for a successful first reading. The suggestions in this TSM assume that the students are reading this story *before* reading “Living in a Colourful World” because it gives them more opportunities to form and test hypotheses and solve the mystery for themselves. If this is not the case, adjust your introduction accordingly.
- Have the students discuss the meaning of the title. Draw out or feed in the idea that “no big deal” is a comment people make when they think something is not that important or special. Encourage them to share examples of similar sayings they might use, such as “no problem”.
- Ask the students to read page 18 to establish the setting and the characters. To support English language learners, you could list the characters’ names on the whiteboard and practise saying them together.
- Share the reading purpose and explain that they will need to look for clues to find out what the problem is and if it is a big deal. Leave an explicit link to colour-blindness out of the discussion so the students can enjoy discovering it for themselves.
- You could provide the students with sticky notes to mark possible clues.

Reading and discussing the text

Suggestions for ways that you can support the students to achieve the learning goals are in the right-hand column of the table below.

Select from and adapt the suggestions according to your students’ needs. These suggestions may apply to the first or a subsequent reading.

Encourage the students to read the whole text by themselves, intervening only if it’s clear a student needs help. There will be many opportunities to provide support with word-solving and comprehension on subsequent readings.

Student behaviours

Examples of what to look for and support as the students work towards achieving their learning goal(s). Note that much of the processing that students do at this level is “inside their heads” and may not be obvious until after they have read the text and you are discussing it as a group.

Deliberate acts of teaching

Examples of how you can support students as they work towards achieving their learning goal(s). Often this will involve individual students rather than the whole group.

The first reading

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The students look for clues (the changes at school and what Cody does) and use them to form hypotheses about Cody. They test their hypotheses as they discover new information. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Model your thinking: <i>I notice Cody thinks differently from Alex. I wonder why he thinks the repaint is no big deal.</i>• Remind the students to mark clues with sticky notes. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On page 19, the students make connections between the illustration and Mr Marlow’s description of “coloured boxes” and “A place for everything and everything in its place” to infer it will be easy for the children to put the art materials away because the colours will make it obvious where they belong. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prompt students to infer what the classroom changes will mean for the children. For example, on page 19: <i>What difference will the coloured boxes make for the children?</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• They notice paragraph indents and speech marks identifying new speakers to work out who is talking in the conversation about the toilets. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If necessary, prompt students to notice the clues that will help them track who is speaking. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As they read page 20, the students make connections between Gemma’s “careful look” and the crayons being in the wrong boxes (and possibly, to Cody drawing a purple sky) and infer that Gemma believes Cody has messed up the crayons. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask a question to draw their attention the clues in the text and the illustrations: <i>I wonder who has muddled up the crayons?</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• They infer from several clues on pages 21–22 (for example, his red face, being glad that Alex didn’t see, Gemma’s reference to him “owning up”, and Cody being “surprised” and “looking worried”) that Cody is becoming increasingly confused and concerned. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If the students aren’t using the sticky notes, prompt them to find clues to support their thinking. <i>What are you noticing about Cody and colour?</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On page 21, as they read Gemma’s questions, they confirm their earlier predictions – that she thinks Cody has a problem with the colours. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prompt the students to think about the reason for Gemma’s questions. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On page 23, when Gemma suggests Cody might be colour-blind and says “It’s no big deal”, the students make connections to what they know about this term to infer Gemma is reassuring Cody that it’s not something to worry about. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use a think-aloud to encourage students to notice Cody’s feelings and how Gemma is trying to help. For example: <i>Cody is worried about Gemma’s suggestion. I wonder how Gemma will answer him.</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As the students finish reading, they check their sticky notes and reflect on what they learned about Cody. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remind the students to reflect on the purpose for reading. |

Discussing the text after the first reading

- The students identify some of the clues relating to colour and Cody's actions.
- They share any questions they have about colour-blindness.
- Remind the students of the reading purpose and have them identify the clues the author has used to demonstrate Cody's problem. You could start a summary chart. A partially completed example is shown below.
- Discuss students' questions about colour-blindness. Explain that many of these may be answered when they read the accompanying article "Living in a Colourful World".

Clues the author has used to show Cody's problem	
Main events	What the characters did
Old classrooms repainted with bright colours	Alex: Wow! It's like a rainbow. We might need sunglasses. Cody: It's no big deal – what's all the fuss about?
Coloured boxes in the classroom	Mr Marlow: A place for everything and everything in its place. Someone put the crayons in the wrong boxes. Gemma: Gave Cody a careful look
New toilets painted, no signs	Mr Marlow: Green for girls. Cody: Headed for the green door Gemma: Noticed Cody heading for the wrong door

- The students draw on what they found out and share their inferences about what the characters mean when they say it's "no big deal". For example, they may infer on page 18 that Cody wasn't seeing the same colours as everyone else. They may infer that Gemma says "no big deal" because she wants Cody to feel better, and she knows from her brother's experience of colour-blindness that he will be fine.
- The students share their opinions about why the author used the title and what he wants the readers to know. For example, they may decide he wants the reader to know what being colour-blind is like and that the condition is easy to manage.
- Remind the students of the second reading purpose. *What have you noticed about the words "no big deal" in this story? Why did Cody say it? Why did Gemma say it? What does that tell you about Gemma?*
- Encourage the students to think critically. *Why do you think the author used the title "No Big Deal" for this story? What does he want us to know or to think about colour-blindness?*

Supporting metacognition

With support, the students reflect on their learning. They revisit the reading purpose and learning goal(s).

- The students explain the clues in the text and the illustration that supported their thinking.
- The students give an example of how reviewing the text and rereading some parts of the text helped them notice Cody's reaction to the changes at school and the link to colours.

Remind the students of the reading purpose and learning goal(s).

- *What helped you infer what Gemma's "careful look" was about?*
- *How did checking back through the story help you understand Cody's problem?*

After reading: Practice and reinforcement

- The students can reread the story as they listen to the audio version. Audio versions also provide English language learners with good models of pronunciation, intonation, and expression.
- Provide further opportunities for the students to reread this story as well as other related texts (see Related texts).
- Have the students practise tracking dialogue within text by using the text for Reader's Theatre, with one student taking the role of narrator and different students reading the roles of each character. Alternatively, the students could read sections of the dialogue with a partner. Encourage them to use expression to make it sound like real conversation. You could provide further practice by finding *Junior Journal* plays for the students to read aloud.
- Have the students work in pairs to highlight the clues to Cody's problem on a printout of the text and then complete the summary chart.
- Have the students think beyond the text. They could list ways Cody could manage his colour-blindness, for example, listening for the beeping signal at the crossing and reading signs on doors. This could be a good lead into "Living in a Colourful World". Alternatively, they could make a list of ways Mr Marlow could make things easier for Cody at school.
- The students could research a question they have about colour-blindness. They could compare what they find out with the information in "Living in a Colourful World".
- Have the students identify the idioms and sayings in the story and start a classroom chart. Add to it as the students notice new examples and discuss what each one means. If your students can provide them, include examples in other languages.
- Have the students explore how prefixes and suffixes can affect word meanings, using examples from the story (as shown below). Help the students generate other examples relevant to the story and repeat the activity. They can add other examples as they come across them in their own reading or when you are reading aloud to the class.

Examples	Opposite
untidiness	tidiness
repainted	painted
careful	careless
helpful	
friendly	
embarrassed	