

# At the Pool

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This text is levelled at Red 2.



## Overview

When Mum takes James and Noah to the pool, Noah has a great time playing on an inflatable dinosaur but James worries about getting into the water. Eventually, Noah's urging and the prospect of playing on the dinosaur persuade James to overcome his fears and join in the fun.

This text supports the development of a self-extending reading processing system by helping students "make meaning of text by applying their increasing ability to attend to print detail and their growing knowledge of sentence structures and also by using their expanding vocabulary and the illustrations" (*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 10).

There is an audio version of the text as an MP3 file at [www.readytoread.tki.org.nz](http://www.readytoread.tki.org.nz)

## Cross-curriculum links

Health and physical education (level 1, interpersonal skills) – Express their own ideas, needs, wants, and feelings clearly and listen to those of other people.

## Related texts

- Texts about overcoming a personal challenge: *A Starfish for Oscar* (Red 1); *The Lost Hat* (Red 2)
- Texts about water play: *Bubbles* (shared); *The Water Slide* (Magenta)

## Text characteristics

The students are working towards the standard for after one year at school. Many of the characteristics of Green texts are also in texts at earlier levels but in simpler forms. These characteristics, as they relate to this text, are shown in the boxes below.

The familiar setting of a public swimming pool and the familiar context of playing in the water

Most content explicitly stated but also some implicit content that provides opportunities for students to make predictions and inferences (for example, on page 4, the inference that James is afraid to get into the pool)

Some sentences that run over more than one line but do not split phrases, and two or three lines of text on every page supporting phrasing and return sweep

Illustrations that support and extend the meaning but may not exactly match the words



James looked at the water.  
"No. I will stay here," he said.



Noah played with the dinosaur in the pool.  
"Look at me!" he shouted.

Dialogue between easily identified speakers

Many high-frequency words, several of which ("at", "Come", "got", "he", "looked", "me", "on", "said", "the", "with") are repeated

A range of punctuation, including full stops, commas, speech marks, and exclamation marks, to support phrasing and meaning

Interest words (for example, "dinosaur", "pool", "water") that are likely to be in the reader's oral vocabulary and that are strongly supported by the context, the sentence structure, and the illustrations

## Suggested reading purpose

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

We are reading this story to find out what happened when James and Noah went to the pool.

## 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 behaviours listed below link to *The Literacy Learning Progressions*. **Select from and adapt** them to set your specific learning goal. Be guided by your students’ particular needs and experiences – their culture, language, and identity. (*Reading and Writing Standards for years 1–8*, Knowledge of the Learner, page 6).

This text provides opportunities for students to:

- make connections to their own knowledge and experiences in order to make predictions and inferences about the story
- make meaning by drawing on more than one source of information, for example, meaning (context and illustrations), structure (sentence structure and word order), and visual information (including grapho-phonetic information and punctuation)
- continue building a reading vocabulary of high-frequency words and read groups of words together in phrases
- notice some errors in their reading and take action to self-correct.

## Introducing the story

- Use your knowledge of your students to ensure that the introduction to the text activates their prior knowledge and supports them for a successful first reading. This story uses vocabulary and language structures (for example, “and”, “Come on”, “got”, “he”, “here”, “into”, “looked at”, “me”, “Mum”, “No”, “said”, “shouted”, “went”) that students are likely to be familiar with from previous reading and writing.
- Have the students use the cover illustration to clarify the context and the setting. Encourage them to attempt the title.
- Ask the students to share their experiences of going to the pool, including their experiences of playing with inflatable toys such as the dinosaur on the title page. If you have students from other countries who are not familiar with public pools or with inflatable toys, use the pictures in the story to introduce the concept. Explain that the dinosaur is an inflatable

toy, and show the students the other kinds of inflatable toys that are in the story, such as the inflatable rings on page 3.

- Tell the students the names of the characters. You may wish to practise saying the names aloud a few times. This can be particularly helpful for English language learners.
- Share the purpose for the reading.
- Browse the illustrations on pages 2–5 together and discuss what is happening. Expect the students to notice the contrast between Noah’s enthusiasm and James’s reluctance to get in the pool. Encourage them to predict what James might do.
- During the discussion, feed in new words or use prompts to elicit or support new language structures and vocabulary. For example:
  - use the characters’ names often, and clarify which boy is Noah and which boy is James
  - draw attention to the speech marks on page 3 and remind the students that the marks show that someone is speaking
  - on page 4, to support “I will stay here”, you could say: *James looks worried. Will he get in the pool or will he stay where he is?*
- Leave the students to find out what happens on pages 6–8 as they read the story for themselves.
- Remind them of the reading purpose.

## Monitoring the reading

- Watch and listen as the students read the story quietly to themselves, noting their ability to read the high-frequency words, how they attempt the interest words, their phrasing, and any instances of self-monitoring and self-correction. Provide support for individual students as necessary. For example:
  - if a student has trouble getting started, tell them the boys’ names
  - page 4 – if a student stops after reading the first line, help them get to “No” by saying: *James looks worried. Will he get in the water? Read what he said.*
- If a student makes an error without noticing a problem, wait until the end of the sentence or page before intervening, unless they stop reading. Waiting gives them the opportunity to notice the error and fix it themselves.

- Use appropriate prompts to draw their attention to the error. For example:

Text in book	Student reads	Teacher prompt
James looked at the water.	Student stops at “water”.	<i>What is James looking at? Look at the beginning of the word.</i>
Noah played with the dinosaur.	Noah <b>hopped</b> on the dinosaur.	<i>That makes sense, but do those words (“played with”) look like “hopped on”?</i>
Noah played with the dinosaur.	Noah played <b>went</b> the dinosaur.	<i>Does that make sense to you? Try that again.</i>

- Other prompts you can use to encourage monitoring include: *Are you sure?; You said ... Did that make sense?; Does it look right?; Were you right?; This word starts like ...; This word looks like ...; Look at the beginning of the word.*
- Reinforce attempts to problem-solve whether a student is successful or not, for example: *You noticed that wasn’t quite right. Well done.*
- For further suggestions about ways to support students to self-monitor (to cross-check, confirm, and self-correct), see *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4*, page 130.
- As the students finish reading, they can quietly reread the story until everyone has finished.

## Discussing the text after the first reading

- Remind the students of the reading purpose. *What did James do? Is that what you thought would happen? Has anything like this ever happened to you?*
- Encourage the students to think critically. *What did you find out about James? What made James change his mind?*
- As well as making inferences about the boys’ feelings, the students may want to speculate on the relationship between the boys. Have them reread page 2. Think aloud as you model drawing an inference that Noah and James are brothers. *Noah and James are both at the pool with their mum, so Noah and James must be brothers.*
- Have the students reread the text, stopping for discussion at points of interest. Encourage them to read expressively, using a “worried” voice and a “triumphant” voice. You could also draw attention to a particular text feature, such as:
  - the use of speech marks to indicate dialogue
  - the high-frequency words
  - the inflected endings in the words (“looked”, “played”, “shouted”).

## After reading: practice and reinforcement

After-reading tasks should arise from monitoring the students’ needs during the lesson and should provide purposeful practice and reinforcement. Where possible, make links to other reading texts, including texts generated from language experience and shared writing, to the wider literacy programme (oral language, writing, handwriting, alphabet and word games and activities), and to other curriculum areas.

**Select from and adapt** these suggestions, according to the needs of your students.

- Ask the students to reread the text to a partner. Listen in, providing feedback and noting their ability to use punctuation to support phrasing and expression. You may also use this time to do a quick running record with a student to provide more information on an aspect you have noticed.
- The students can build their comprehension and fluency by rereading the text while listening to the audio version. Audio versions also provide English language learners with good models of pronunciation, intonation, and expression.
- Provide many opportunities for students to reread this text and to read other stories with similar themes (see Related texts).
- Have the students reconstruct cut-up sentences from the story. Have them match their sentences with copies of the complete sentences. Both the model and the children’s versions must be bigger than those in the book.
- To support comprehension and oral language, have the students work in pairs to take turns retelling the story using the illustrations. You could provide photocopies of the illustrations for the students to put in sequence as they talk about them.
- To support inferring and build vocabulary, have the students discuss how the characters felt at different parts of the story. They could share their ideas of what James and Noah are thinking on pages 4 and 5 and write some thought bubbles for them. Alternatively, they could draw pictures of James before and after he got into the pool and write a sentence about each picture.
- Have the students paint or draw a picture of what they like to do at the pool or other swimming area. Support them to add a caption. Be aware that some students may come from cultures with different rules about swimming (for example, what is considered appropriate swimwear).

- Provide images of other sorts of inflatable toys. Have the students choose (or draw their own picture) of a toy that they would like to play on in a pool and create their own dialogue using the sentence framework from the story. (“Come on the \_\_\_\_\_. Come on the \_\_\_\_\_ with me”).
- Write “went” on the whiteboard and have the students identify the initial letter. Then ask them to revisit the text and find more words that start with “w” (“with”, “water”, “will”).
- To build students’ awareness of inflected endings, write “looked”, “played”, and “shouted” on the whiteboard. Support the students to identify the root words and the “ed” endings. Ask the students to find and read the sentences using these words in the story.
- Have word games and activities available that reinforce automatic recognition of high-frequency words, for example, matching games and making words with magnetic letters. Provide bilingual word games and activities where appropriate.