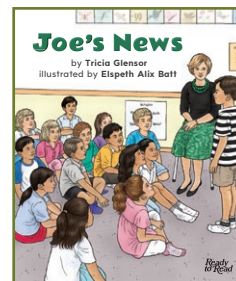


Joe's News

by Tricia Glensor
illustrated by Elspeth Alix Batt

This text is levelled at Green 3.



Overview

This story is told in the first-person (by Troy) and is based on real events. When Troy's class find out that a Deaf boy, named Joe, will be coming to their school, they are worried they won't be able to talk to him. Their teacher arranges for the children to learn sign language. Troy explains that the class is silent at news time now because they use sign language to tell their news. Troy's story focuses on a day when Joe has particularly exciting news to share. As well as finding out what Joe's news is, this story explores ideas about being Deaf, learning new things, friendship, and inclusiveness.

This story supports the development of a self-extending reading process. It requires students to "use a range of sources of information in the text, along with their prior knowledge, to make sense of the texts they read", to monitor their reading, and to "use strategies such as asking questions and making inferences to help them think more deeply about the ideas in the text" (*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 12).

There is an audio version of the text as an MP3 file at www.readytoread.tki.org.nz

Cross-curriculum links

Health and physical education (level 1, relationships)

- Explore and share ideas about relationships with other people.
- Demonstrate respect through sharing and co-operation in groups.

Related texts

Texts about making friends: *Dragons! Dragons! Dragons!*; *Monster's Lunch* (shared); *A Friend for Mateo* (Yellow 2); *My Name is Laloifi* (Orange 1)

Texts about feelings and overcoming personal challenges: *Dragons! Dragons! Dragons!*, *The Crocodile's Christmas Jandals* (shared); *Going Camping* (Yellow 3); *Stay Where You Are* (Blue 2); *The Night the House Shook* (Blue 3); *Mum's New Job* (Green 2); *I Want to be the Fox* (Green 3); *A Special Visit to Koro and Nanny, Mya's Finger* (Orange 1)

Text characteristics

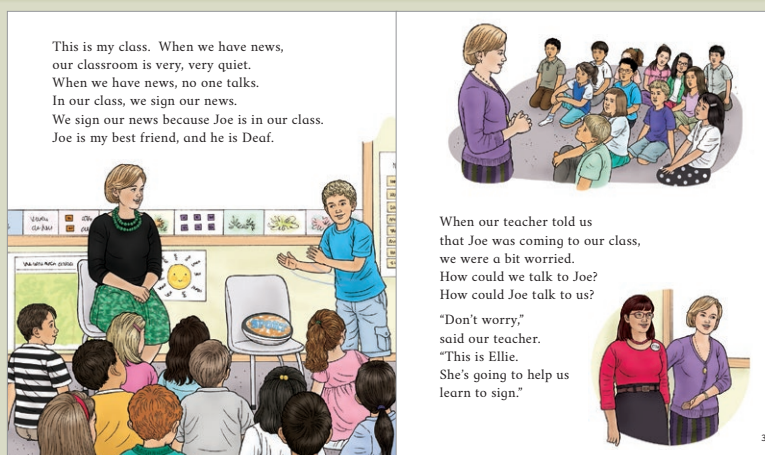
The students are working towards the standard for after one year at school. The characteristics of Green texts as they relate to this text are shown in the boxes with a solid outline. Other boxes indicate additional characteristics.

Shifts in time between the present and the past

A mix of a familiar context (having news at school) and content that is likely to be unfamiliar to many students (the concept of being Deaf and the use of sign language)

Most content explicitly stated but also some implicit content that provides opportunities for students to make inferences and predictions

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



Sentences that run over more than one line but do not split phrases

Topic words ("Deaf", "sign", "signed", "signing") that are likely to be new to students and that will require some explanation

Many high-frequency words

The inclusion of factual information in the story and on the inside back cover

Interest words that are likely to be in the reader's oral vocabulary and that are strongly supported by the context, the sentence structure, the illustrations, and/or explanations (for example, "best friend", "body", "classroom", "face", "fingers", "friend", "Happy birthday", "news", "puppy", "special", "spell", "spelling", "teacher", "words", "worried"), including a wide range of verbs, some of which appear in more than one form (for example, "came", "coming", "sign", "signed", "signing", "talk", "talking", "talks", "telling", "told", "watch", "watched")

Dialogue between easily identified speakers

A range of punctuation, including speech marks, commas, an ellipsis, and exclamation marks to support phrasing and meaning

Reading standard: After one year at school

The Literacy Learning Progressions

Suggested reading purpose

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

For the first reading:

We are reading this story to find out what Joe's news is.

For subsequent readings:

To think about what it's like for Joe to be in Troy's class.

To think about what it's like for the children to have Joe in their class.

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** between their own experiences and information in the story to **make predictions and inferences**
- **ask questions** about aspects they are not sure of
- identify the main events in the story (**summarise**)
- make meaning by searching for and using multiple sources of information rather than one source
- monitor their reading and self-correct where necessary, for example, by rerunning text or checking further sources of information.

Introducing the story

- Use your knowledge of your students to ensure that the introduction to the story activates their prior knowledge and supports them for a successful first reading. Tell the students you have a story for them about a Deaf boy who comes to a new school. Introduce the idea of some people being Deaf and using sign language to communicate. It may be useful to show a video clip of Deaf people using sign language, as in the Ministry of Education shared reading e-books for Deaf students (for example, *T-shirts, I'm the King of the Mountain*). (Wait until after the first reading before drawing attention to the information on the inside back cover so that the students can focus on the storyline.)

- Use the cover illustration to establish the classroom setting and the context of news time. Expect the students to infer that this shows Joe sharing news.
- Use the illustrations on the inside front cover and the title page to identify the two main characters. (The students might also like to go back and find Joe and Troy in the cover illustration.) Tell the students that Troy is telling the story. Share the purpose for reading.
- On page 2, expect the students to notice the link to the cover illustration of news time but this time with Troy sharing news (and using sign language). Encourage the students to infer (from Troy's signing and the rugby ball on the chair) what Troy's news is about. Draw out the idea that the children need to watch what Troy is signing because they cannot listen to the words.
- Explain that the page 3 illustration is showing what it was like before Joe arrived in Troy's class. *I wonder why the children are looking worried. If a Deaf person came to our class, what would we need to do? What might you be worried about?* Draw out the idea that children could learn sign language but would need a teacher. Point out Ellie in the illustration and tell the students her name.
- Browse through the illustrations on pages 4–7, briefly discussing what is happening. Tell the students that as well as telling a story, Troy is also giving information about using sign language. Explain topic-specific ideas, such as signing, finger spelling, and using the face and body to communicate, and feed in new vocabulary that you think will need support. You could write the word "sign" and discuss its unusual spelling (the silent "g") and clarify that it's different from the word "sing". Remind the students that as well as looking carefully at the words when they are reading, they will need to think about what makes sense.
- Encourage questions, ideas, predictions, and inferences. For example:
 - on page 5, expect them to predict that the woman in the bottom illustration is Joe's mum bringing him to his new school
 - on pages 6 and 7, support them to infer from Joe's "I am 6" badge and the wrapping paper around the cage that Joe's news is something to do with his birthday.
- Save the surprise on page 8 for the children to discover when they read the story themselves.
- Remind the students of the purpose for reading.

Monitoring the reading

- Observe closely as the students read the story quietly to themselves, noting their confidence and perseverance with challenges, their attempts to solve unknown words, and any instances of self-monitoring, cross-checking, and self-correction. Provide support to individual students as required. For example:
 - on page 2 if necessary, clarify that the word is “sign” not “sing” (Remind the students to think about what makes sense.)
 - on page 3, to support “worried” and “worry”, you could remind them of the discussion before the reading: *Remember we talked about how the children might have felt when they heard Joe was coming? They were a bit w...*
 - on page 4, if a student stops reading at the end of line 1 (or line 4), assuming that the sentence has ended, remind them to read on to the full stop
 - on page 6, if a student stops at “special” or “birthday”, draw attention to the “I am 6” badge and ask: *Why would Joe be wearing this badge today? What special day might it be?*
- If a student makes an error without noticing, wait until the end of the sentence or the page before intervening, unless they stop reading. Waiting gives the student an opportunity to notice the error and fix it. Use appropriate prompts to draw their attention to the error. For example:

Text in book	Student reads	Teacher prompt
Ellie told us that signing is a way of talking with your hands and your body and your face.	Ellie told us that signing is a way of talking with your hands and your body and your fin gers.	<i>That makes sense and starts with the right sound, but does the rest of the word look right? Have another look and think about what else would make sense.</i>
Today, Joe had some special news.	Today, Joe had some sp ... spe ... k ... l ... al news. (The student stops reading.)	<i>You worked hard on that word and you're nearly there. Remind the student that “c” can have different sounds. Try that again and think about what sort of news Joe had. If more support is needed, tell them the word and make a note to discuss it later.</i>

- Other prompts that you could use include: *Are you sure?; What did you notice?; Read on to the full stop.; You said ____, does that make sense?; Does that look/sound right to you?; What else could you check?; If the word was ____, what letters would you expect to see?*
- Remember to base these prompts on what you know about the students’ prior knowledge. For example, asking an English language learner if a word sounds right may not be useful if they are not familiar enough with English phonemes and vocabulary to know the answer. In this case, an explanation and further examples would be more effective.

- Reinforce the students’ attempts to problem-solve, whether they are successful or not, for example: *You reread that sentence and fixed “signing”. What helped you fix it?*
- For further suggestions about ways to support students to self-monitor (to cross-check, confirm, and self-correct), see *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1–4*, page 130.

Discussing and rereading the story

- You can reread this story several times, focusing on different aspects and providing opportunities for students to build comprehension and fluency. Many of the ideas and discussion points listed here also lead naturally into “After reading” activities.
- Encourage the students to share their responses to the ending. *Is that what you thought Joe’s news would be? When did you work it out?*
- Remind the students of the reading purpose, and summarise (retell) the events together.
- Encourage the students to ask questions about anything they are not sure of, for example, the different signs. Explore the illustrations inside the back cover and try them out. The students could look for each sign in the book. Prompt them to think critically. For example: *Why wasn’t Troy holding the rugby ball when he was sharing his news about playing rugby?*
- Have the students reread the story, stopping for discussion at points of interest. You could draw attention to such features as:
 - the shifts in time (or focus) from page to page. Together, summarise what each page is mostly about. Draw out the idea that the story begins when Joe is already in Troy’s class and then shifts to an earlier time when they found out he was coming
 - the feelings of the characters as suggested by the illustrations
 - the new topic words and ideas (“Deaf”, “a way of talking with your hands and your body and your face”, “spell our names with our fingers”, “sign”, “signed”, “signing”)
 - interesting features of words (for example, the silent “g” in “sign”, “signing”, and “signed”; the “sh” sound for “c” in “special”; “learnt” as an alternative for “learned”; the compound words “classroom”, “someone”). Remind the students of the need to check for meaning and visual information when they come across words that seem odd or unfamiliar
 - the reason for the ellipsis on page 7. Have the students reread pages 7 and 8, pausing at the ellipsis to emphasise the surprise.

After reading: practice and reinforcement

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

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

- Have the students reread the story to a partner. Listen in, 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 story while listening to the audio version. Audio versions also provide English language learners with good models of pronunciation, intonation, and expression.
- Provide many opportunities to reread this book and other books with similar themes (see Related texts).
- Explore and practise the signs on the inside back cover. Students could find out more about sign language and how to “finger spell” their names at <https://nzsl.vuw.ac.nz>. The students could learn to sign the alphabet or find more signs to use in the classroom (for example, toilet, quiet, play, listen, look, tissue). They could display labelled photographs of children signing (similar to the images on the inside back cover of the book).
- Help the students clarify the shifts in time by getting them to choose three or four events from the story and put them in sequence.
- Have the students draw two pictures and add thought bubbles to show how Troy and Joe might have been feeling on Joe's first day at school and then after they became friends.

- Ask the students to draw and write about a time when they felt worried or when they learnt something new. The students could use the first sentence on page 3 (“When our teacher told us that ...”) as a model. You could use the “When I ...” structure as a speaking frame so that students can practise it orally before they have to write it. Oral practice is particularly supportive for English language learners. Start with very familiar contexts, for example, “When I had my first day at school ...”, “When it was playtime ...”. Prepare a set of cards, and have your students use the speaking frame and to talk to a partner using the “When” structure. Alternatively, you could cut up sentences that you have created together and have the students reconstruct them to make sense. For example, “When I went to the dentist, he looked at my teeth.” “When I was eating my dinner, the dog wanted some food too.”
- Build students' knowledge of word structure by exploring different forms of verbs. Write “watch”, “watched”, and “watching” and then read the words together. Support the students to identify the root word “watch”. Discuss how the endings “ed” and “ing” affect the meaning of the words and clarify their meanings by reading sentences from the story or creating oral sentences together. Repeat with the words “sign”, “signed”, and “signing”. Give students copies of a chart (such as the one below) and have them work in pairs to complete them. (The example below lists regular verbs first.) Afterwards, discuss the students' completed charts together, for example, “told” as the past tense of “tell” and the two options for the past-tense forms of “learn” and “spell”. Provide support for English language learners by using the chart as a prompt for composing further oral sentences together.

Root word	-ed	-ing
sign		
	watched	
		talking
learn	learnt (or learned)	
	spelt (or spelled)	
come		
tell		