



## Overview

This TSM contains a wide range of information and suggestions for teachers to pick and choose from, depending on the needs of their students and their purpose for using the text. The materials provide many opportunities for revisiting the text.

Rez Gardi was born in a Kurdish refugee camp in Pakistan and came to New Zealand as a young child, with her family. This graphic text is a memoir, looking back on her life so far. She is now a successful lawyer, a worker for refugees, and was the 2017 Young New Zealander of the year.

The opening panel shows Rez at her New Zealand school being teased by other students. The following panels explain how she came to be here. The drawings and captions give the reader some background to the Kurdish people's difficulties, but much of the focus is on Rez's life after arriving in New Zealand.

The style of this graphic text will appeal to readers. It also means that the more difficult aspects of the family's experiences can be presented in a lighter way, appropriate for the age level.

This story:

- recounts the experiences of a refugee and her family
- has a graphic text format
- includes a chronological sequence, narrated in the first person and in the past tense
- includes a map.

A PDF of the text is available at [www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz](http://www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz)

Texts related by theme "New New Zealanders" SJ L3 Nov 2017 | "Being Kiwi" SJ 4.2.10

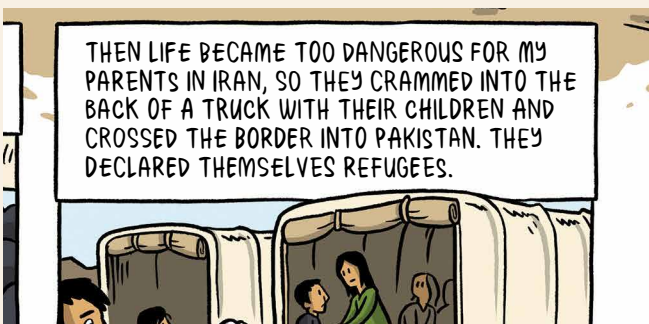
## Text characteristics from the year 6 reading standard



abstract ideas, in greater numbers than in texts at earlier levels, accompanied by concrete examples in the text that help support the students' understanding



some ideas and information that are conveyed indirectly and require students to infer by drawing on several related pieces of information in the text



sentences that vary in length and in structure (for example, sentences that begin in different ways and different kinds of complex sentences with a number of subordinate clauses)





illustrations, photographs, text boxes, diagrams, maps, charts, and graphs that clarify or extend the text and may require some interpretation

Reading standard: by the end of year 6

## VOCABULARY

- Possibly unfamiliar words and phrases, including “illegal”, “banned”, “fled”, “crossed the border”, “overwhelming”, “intimidating”, “youth advisor”, “conferences”, “law firm”, “Young New Zealander of the Year”
- Names of places, peoples, languages, and organisations, including “Kurdish”, “Kurdistan”, “the Kurds”, “Turkey”, “Iran”, “Iraq”, “Pakistan”, “Farsi”, “Urdu”, “the Red Cross”
- Abstract concepts, including “homeland”, “independence”, “illegal”, “protest”, “Kurdish rights”, “refugees”, “resettled”, “access Kiwi culture”, “represented”


## Possible supporting strategies

- Explain that the text includes the names of various languages and countries .
- Tell students that there are a number of abstract concepts in the text. Select one of the abstract concepts to discuss and explain. Reassure students that they will have opportunities to discuss ideas to clarify meaning. It may be helpful to record these concepts on a chart for revisiting during or after the reading.
- Give the students a copy of the map that appears on page 42, minus the names of the countries. Provide a list of the countries mentioned in the story and have the students use an atlas or the Internet to locate them and add them to their maps.  
 Alternatively, use [Google Earth](#) to locate, explore, and compare locations.
-  Share video clips, photos, and books about Kurdish culture, including music, dance, food, clothing, and language. Discuss how this is similar to and different from “Kiwi” culture.
- Provide sticky notes for students to indicate words, phrases, or concepts they don't understand and want to come back to.
- *The English Language Learning Progressions: Introduction*, pages 39–46, has useful information about learning vocabulary.
- See also [ESOL Online, Vocabulary](#), for examples of other strategies to support students with vocabulary.

## SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED

- Some understanding of the concept of being a refugee
- Some understanding of the concept that “we're all pretty much the same”
- Understanding that different languages are spoken in different parts of the world

## Possible supporting strategies

- Prompt prior knowledge of the term “refugees” and clarify any confusion. In particular, discuss the differences between a refugee and an immigrant. You could use a graphic organiser such as a Venn Diagram or a Concept Map/Star to help the students to distinguish the differences between these terms.
- Provide opportunities for students to discuss, in pairs and in small groups, the idea of everyone being “pretty much the same”.
- Prompt prior knowledge of the many different languages there are worldwide, in New Zealand, and in the school.
- If appropriate, encourage students who speak another language to share how they cope with speaking and learning in English at school.
- It may also be appropriate for some students to share their experiences of being a refugee. Check whether they are happy to share beforehand. Some students are sensitive to being recognised as a refugee, especially if they have been in New Zealand for some time.
-  Share online refugee stories so that the students can gain greater understanding of their situations, for example, [“A Boy Called Mohi”](#) retold and illustrated by the children of Island Bay School, Wellington.

## TEXT FEATURES AND STRUCTURE

- Conventional comic layout in which frames are read from left to right
- The use of images to show detail and carry meaning
- First-person narrative in text boxes, within frames
- The use of present and past tense
- The use of speech bubbles on the first and last pages

## Possible supporting strategies

- Review with students what they know about comics and graphic texts. Remind them of the way to read the frames, from left to right.
- Discuss how details in the drawings will support the narrative: there will be clues about the people involved, the setting, and the events.
- Discuss the difference between direct speech in speech bubbles and first-person narrative in text boxes.



## Possible curriculum contexts

### ENGLISH (Reading)

Level 3 – Ideas: Show a developing understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts.

– Structure: Show a developing understanding of text structures.

### ENGLISH (Writing)

Level 3 – Purposes and audiences: Show a developing understanding of how to shape texts for different purposes and audiences.

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

### SOCIAL SCIENCES

Level 3 – Understand how the movement of people affects cultural diversity and interaction in New Zealand.

### Possible first reading purpose

- To find out about the experiences of a refugee girl.

### Possible subsequent reading purposes

- To find out what helps and hinders refugees to adapt to a new country
- To explore how ideas are conveyed in comic format, and how the illustrations work to support and extend the text.

### Possible writing purposes

- To tell a personal narrative using a comic format
- To create speech bubbles for the bottom left frame on page 45 (which shows Rez and her sister in their house in New Zealand)
- To write interview questions for Rez as Young New Zealander of the Year 2017.



# Instructional focus – Reading

**English** Level 3 – Ideas: Show a developing understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts; Structure: Show a developing understanding of text structures.

**Social Sciences** Level 3 – Understand how the movement of people affects cultural diversity and interaction in New Zealand.

## First reading

- Set the purpose for reading.
- Explain that this text is a true story, written in a comic format. Students can discuss with a partner what they know of the comic format.
- Introduce the content: the experiences of a refugee.
- If necessary, clarify the idea that a comic format is not used only for humour and entertainment but that it is a popular format for telling stories of many kinds and for many purposes.
- Prompt prior knowledge of refugees. If necessary, refer to the section “Text and language challenges” for suggestions about how to support students’ background knowledge.
- Direct students to the title and the first frame, so they can identify the character from the title.
- Have students read the first two pages and summarise what has happened so far.
- Make sure the students understand what part of the world Rez came from and where this is in relation to New Zealand.
- If appropriate, after the initial discussion, have students read the rest of the text by themselves with a purpose in mind. If students need more support, break the reading into chunks, allowing time to respond and discuss.

## If the students require more scaffolding

- Make links to students’ experiences with graphic texts.
- Explain what the text is about and clarify abstract concepts where necessary.
- Look at the map and explain that the area known as Kurdistan is spread over a number of countries.
- Direct the students to read the first two pages and then discuss their responses with a partner.
- Record and display (or have the students record) who they have met in the text so far: Rez, other Kiwi school kids, a Turkish soldier, Rez’s dad and mum, other Kurds, one of Rez’s siblings.
- Direct the students to read as far as the point where Rez arrives in New Zealand.
- Use questioning to support understanding. *Which country was Rez’s dad from? Her mum? Where did her mum and dad meet? What were they protesting about in Iran? Where was Rez born? What was so difficult about life in the camp?*
- Direct students to look at the pictures of Rez under the desk and Rez in a New Zealand bedroom. Discuss the contrast between the two images.
- Support understanding of leaving a difficult situation for the freedom of New Zealand. You could share online video clips that show what life is like in refugee camps and what it means to be a refugee. Use a graphic organiser to compare life as a refugee and life in New Zealand. Discuss the restrictions on refugees and the relative freedom of life in New Zealand.

**Subsequent readings** How you approach subsequent readings will depend on your reading purpose.

### The teacher

Focus on Rez’s time in New Zealand. Use questioning to direct students to locate and evaluate information.


- *What helped Rez and her family to settle in New Zealand and what made it more difficult?*
- *What do you think would have been the biggest challenge for Rez in her new school? In her new country?*

Have students record the challenges and the positive aspects of life in New Zealand.

### The teacher

Ask the students to discuss in small groups what they found out about Rez’s experiences. Prompt responses to the graphic format.

- *Is it easy to understand what’s going on?*
- *Are you able to tell who’s who in the pictures?*
- *How do the pictures help you to know how Rez was feeling?*
- *What features in the pictures help to show what the characters are thinking and feeling?*

 The students could use [Google Docs](#) to create a table and use it to summarise what they found out. They could insert text and images from the story and add screenshots, photographs, and speech bubbles to support what they say.

Demonstrate how different frames clarify various concepts by linking captions with pictures, for example:

- *What is meant by something being “different in a good way”?*
- *What is Rez thinking as she watches her teacher and her class play football?*

### The students:

- locate examples in the text that convey Rez’s experiences in New Zealand and evaluate what the pictures and captions (or speech bubbles) show
- make inferences and think critically about the way the Kiwi children treated Rez when she first arrived in New Zealand
- make connections to their own experiences of being new or of moving to a new place
- integrate information from the frames depicting Rez in New Zealand and create a chart, listing the negative and positive aspects of adapting to life in New Zealand.

### The students:

- summarise what they found out, including the countries involved, the time spent in the camp, and the challenges faced on arriving in New Zealand
- revisit the text where necessary to support their summaries
- identify and evaluate the features of a graphic text in relation to the purpose of telling a story
- locate and identify specific examples, such as facial expressions which show feelings
- make links between what they read in the captions, and the supporting details in the pictures.
- create a speech bubble for one of the frames showing a particular facial expression.

## Subsequent readings (cont.)

### The teacher

Ask questions to support students to evaluate the use of a graphic format for telling the story.

- *What are the benefits of telling a story in a graphic format?*
- *Are there any disadvantages?*
- *Was this the best way of telling Rez's story? Why do you think that?*
- *What are some other ways the author could have told the story?*

### The students:

- identify places in the story where the graphic format supported them to understand what Rez had gone through
- explain how the features of the graphic text supported them, or didn't support them, to make inferences about Rez's experiences and her responses to her changing life situations
- form opinions and draw conclusions about the effectiveness of the format for telling Rez's story, using evidence from the text.

### GIVE FEEDBACK

- *Great – you've pulled positive and negative aspects from the text to analyse what it was like for Rez adapting to life in New Zealand. It shows me you are thinking critically about what you're reading. Remember how you did this when we read our next text about refugees.*

### METACOGNITION

- *When you were searching for examples, did you look at the pictures first or the captions? Do you think a comic format is useful to learn about something serious?*



Reading standard: by the end of year 6



The Literacy Learning Progressions



Assessment Resource Banks

# Instructional focus – Writing

**English** Level 3 – Purposes and audiences: Show a developing understanding of how to shape texts for different purposes and audiences; Structure: Organise texts, using a range of appropriate structures.

## Text excerpts from “My Name is Rez”

## Examples of text characteristics

## Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

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### GRAPHIC TEXT FORMAT

Writers choose a format to suit their purpose and audience. Sometimes a serious topic can be shown in a graphic text format. This can make the topic more accessible.

Discuss what students have learnt about the graphic text format.

- Talk to your partner about what helped you to follow what was going on in Rez’s story.
- How did the illustrations in each frame support the narrative?

Prompt prior knowledge of creating personal narratives.

- What details are useful for the reader?
- How will the readers know who is involved?

Model a planning process for creating a personal narrative in graphic text format, using a storyboard framework.

**DIGITAL TOOLS** You could use a table in [Google Docs](#) for this.

- I’m going to use eight frames to tell my story. The first one will show...

Support the students to bring to mind a personal experience. Provide criteria to support their planning.

- Idea/topic
- Setting (Where and when)
- Characters (Who was involved)
- What happened? Was there a problem?
- How it all ended

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### SHOWING EMOTION

In a graphic text, the writer has to show what the characters are thinking and feeling by their stance and facial expressions.

Go back to the graphic text “My Name is Rez” and direct students to specific illustrations that show emotion. Discuss specifics, such as the way the eyebrows and the mouth are drawn.

- How can we tell how Rez is feeling here?

Provide opportunities for students to practise drawing characters showing different emotions by changing their eyes, eyebrows, mouth, and other features.

**DIGITAL TOOLS** The students could use an online comic application such as [Toondoo](#) for this.

Discuss how the illustrations will match the storyline.

- What will your characters be feeling?

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### TEXT BOXES AND SPEECH BUBBLES

In a graphic text, writers usually choose to tell the story through first- or third-person narrative in text boxes, or with direct speech in speech bubbles. Sometimes, thought bubbles are used to show what the character is thinking or feeling.

Discuss the difference between the text which appears as a caption in a text box and the text in a speech bubble. Invite responses from students about the effect.

- What does the text in the text boxes tell us? How is it different from text in speech bubbles?
- Would we get the full story if there were only speech bubbles?
- How do the speech bubbles help us to know what the characters are like?

For each of their frames, allow students to decide whether to use captions, speech bubbles, both, or neither. You may also want to introduce the concept of thought bubbles.

### GIVE FEEDBACK

- You have included a thought bubble at the end. That’s a great way to show what Mum thought about it all instead of simply telling readers how she was feeling in the caption!

### METACOGNITION

- What did you find challenging about telling your story with so few words in each frame? Were you able to provide all the details you wanted to provide?



Writing standard: by the end of year 6



The Literacy Learning Progressions

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