

Iris and Dog Star

by Iris Marshall

School Journal
Level 3, May 2019
Year 5



Overview

This TSM contains 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 multiple opportunities for revisiting the text several times.

This article is based on the diary of Iris Marshall, a ten-year-old girl who sailed on the yacht *Dog Star* with her parents and a family friend from New Zealand to Nouméa. The text details the highs and lows of the journey from Iris's perspective and includes some excerpts from the on-board logbook. While few students will have had the experience of sailing, many will have experienced sea sickness, and most will relate to and be interested in the day-to-day details of life at sea. The text could be used as a starting point to explore the nature of adventure, its perils, and its rewards.

This article:

- has an underlying theme of adventure and risk taking
- contains technical language and information about sailing and navigation
- is a first-person recount, written in the present tense and in a chatty and entertaining style
- includes personal details about domestic arrangements on board and how people are feeling
- includes photographs, a map, and a glossary.

A PDF of the text is available at www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz

Texts related by theme

“**Boy on a Bike**” SJ L3 May 2015 | “**Journey on the Sea**” SJ L3 August 2018 | “**Border Control**” SJ L3 May 2019 | “**Captain Cook: Charting Our Islands**” SJ L4 May 2016 | “**What Is Biosecurity?**” *Border Security*, Connected L3 2011

Text characteristics from the year 5 reading standard

We have retained the links to the National Standards while a new assessment and reporting system is being developed. For more information on assessing and reporting in the post-National Standards era, see: <http://assessment.tki.org.nz/Assessment-and-reporting-guide>

WEATHER: Clearing
WIND: WSW, 25 knots, gusting 32
SEA STATE: Rough
GPS CO-ORDINATES: -22.389, 166.180
DISTANCE TO NOUMÉA: 7 nm
COURSE: 278 degrees

We've arrived. It took a day to reach Nouméa after we first spotted land. We sailed up the coast feeling so excited. Solid ground! When we got to the marina

mixed text types (for example, a complex explanation may be included as part of a report)

The wind's picked up now, but yesterday it was so light we had to use the engine. It rumbled all night. Then there's the noise of the water sloshing and slapping against the hull and the winches clicking when we change the sails. Plus the **autopilot** is right under my bed. It makes another kind of clicking sound, also annoying! How will I ever sleep? We have lots of equipment onboard - not all of it noisy. The depth sounder tells us how deep the water is, and the wind gauge tells us the strength and direction of the wind. Our electronic chart plotter tells us where we are (using **GPS**), and we have paper charts in case the electronic plotter breaks. We have a life raft in case our boat sinks and an **EPIRB** to share our position with search and rescue. We also have a satellite phone, a **VHF radio**, and plain old life jackets!

a significant amount of vocabulary that is unfamiliar to the students (including academic and content-specific words and phrases), which is generally explained in the text by words or illustrations

wouldn't crash to the floor. I have lots of bumps and cuts. No one dared go down the stairs; it was impossible to stay upright. Besides, we're all feeling too sick. We can't use the stove in the **galley** to make a cup of tea because we might spill boiling water. Everyone's worn out. Still no other boats about. It's a bit scary

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 5


VOCABULARY

Possible supporting strategies

- Topic-specific words and phrases related to sailing and navigation (some of which are defined in the glossary and the diagram), including “knots”, “swell”, “marina”, “fuelled up”, “stowed”, “cockpit”, “bow”, “cabin”, “hull”, “winches”, “electronic chart plotter”, “watch”, “trimmed”, “starboard”, “overboard”, “mainsail”, “headsail”, “reef”, “bailing”, “engine bay”, “port stern”, “galley”
 - Topic-specific words and phrases related to crossing borders, including “passports”, “customs officer”, “clearance”, “biosecurity”, “immigration”
 - Topic-specific words relating to weather, including “overcast”, “moderate”, “gusting”, “squalls”
 - Abbreviations and acronyms, including “SSE”, “GPS”, “EPIRB”, “VHF”
 - Place names: “Opuā”, “Nouméa”, “New Caledonia”
 - Other possibly unfamiliar words and phrases, including “albatrosses”, “hysterical”, “regurgitate”, “cramped”
 - Extensive use of colloquial language, such as “on the upside”, “crazy”, “nag”, “throwing up”, “super windy”, “no drama”, “a bit spewy”
- Identify words or phrases that may be unfamiliar to your students. Tell them that the article includes a lot of technical language about boats and sailing. Have them brainstorm words they think they may encounter, either through their personal experiences of sailing or from reading other texts about sailing. Discuss the meaning of these words.
 - Point out the glossary and discuss how a glossary can help readers access the text.
 - Ask the students to identify any other difficult vocabulary as they read and to add those words to the glossary.
 -  The students could create words maps of the topic-specific vocabulary, using an online tool, such as [Mindmap](#).
 - Explain the difference between an abbreviation and an acronym, clarifying that both are used to shorten a word or phrase, but an acronym can be said as a word. Have the students find the abbreviations and acronyms in the text and discuss what they mean.
 - Discuss the use of colloquial language and how it reflects the age and personality of the writer. Be aware that this language may be a barrier for English language learners. Talk through what these words and phrases mean and what the equivalents are in the student's own language/s. For fun and practice, have the students make up short dialogues where they use these words.
 - English language learners could make vocabulary cards for the technical terms. These cards should include a first language translation, a definition, a sentence using the word, and an illustration of the meaning.
 - To practise new vocabulary, English language learners could play matching games, such as Fish, using illustrated word cards. See [ESOL Online, Vocabulary](#), for other examples of other strategies to support students with vocabulary.
 - *The English Language Learning Progressions: Introduction*, pages 39–46, has useful information about learning vocabulary.

SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED

Possible supporting strategies

- Personal experience of adventures and/or long journeys
 - Knowledge of the geographical position of New Zealand in relation to Nouméa
 - Some understanding about sailing and navigation and the use of logbooks
 - Familiarity with the points of the compass and how they are used to identify the direction of the wind
 - Some understanding about the process for entering or departing any kind of port and the need for border security
- Have the students think, pair, and share stories of journeys and adventures. If they don't have personal experiences, they could share experiences of people they know or those they have read about or seen on television.
 - Have the students use the map to identify the places named in the text and trace the journey from Opuā to Nouméa. If possible, demonstrate this on a globe, using it to illustrate the concepts of latitude, longitude, and nautical miles.
 -  The students could use Google Earth to search for and explore locations and to measure distance, then compare them with the places on a globe.
 - Discuss the concept of a [logbook](#) and clarify its purpose.
 - You may want to share-read the section on Longitude and Latitude in “Captain Cook: Charting Our Islands” in *School Journal*, Level 4, May 2016 to help students make sense of the information in the onboard log.
 - Have a compass available. Take the students outside to work out the direction the wind is coming from. You may find this [video clip](#) helpful in conveying this information. *Why is this information so important to sailors?*
 - Invite students to share experiences of entering or exiting a port. If they haven't experienced this personally, they may have read about it in a *School Journal* or *Connected* text (see page 1) or viewed the process on a programme such as *Border Patrol*. *Why do you suppose there are all these measures controlling people entering or exiting a country?*

TEXT FEATURES AND STRUCTURE

- The voice and perspective of a ten-year-old girl
- A recount told largely in the present tense, using two text types: an onboard log and a diary
- The language and text features of an onboard log, including a set sequence of headings for the critical information; concise, mostly formal, impersonal language; factual information; and the language of measurement
- The language and text features of a diary, including conversational language; some colloquial language; a mix of facts and feelings; a personal perspective, so it is likely to be biased; some short and incomplete sentences; direct address to the reader; questions that help reveal the character's inner thoughts; and humorous asides
- The use of metaphor, simile, and alliteration to enliven and illuminate the explanatory text, for example, "the size of two bikes", "It's like coming inside on a freezing night and having a hot bath"
- Words and phrases that appeal to the senses, including onomatopoeic words, such as "rumbled", "sloshing", "slapping", "clicking"
- Rhetorical questions, including "What else is out there, I wonder?", "How crazy is that?", "How will I ever sleep?"
- A map
- The use of modifiers with some nouns or verbs, including "rough", "moderate, becoming rough", "a lot rougher", "very rough"

Possible supporting strategies

- Let the students spend time familiarising themselves with the text. Discuss the purpose of the two text types. Talk through the first log entry as a group, unpacking what it tells us about the state of the sea and the weather, where they are, how far they need to go, and the course they will take. Discuss why sailors keep logs such as this and why this information is so important.
- Discuss the purpose of the onomatopoeic words on page 17. *How else has Iris conveyed a sense of what she can see, feel, and hear?*
- Explain that rhetorical questions are questions that don't require an answer; they are used to emphasise a point or get the audience thinking. Have the students work in pairs to identify the rhetorical questions in the text and their purpose.
- It can take a long time for English language learners to master the order or strength of modifiers. In pairs, have the students create a continuum of related words (for example, of descriptive words for the sea from "calm" to "extremely rough"), placing each word on the line where it best fits. Have a discussion about how they decided on the placement order.



Sounds and Words

Possible curriculum contexts

ENGLISH (Reading)

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

Level 3 – Language features: Show a developing understanding of how language features are used for effect within and across texts.

ENGLISH (Writing)

Level 3 – Ideas: Select, form, and communicate ideas on a range of topics.

Level 3 – Language features: Use language features appropriately, showing a developing understanding of their effects.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Level 3 – Personal Health and Physical Development: Identify risks and their causes and describe safe practices to manage these.

Level 3 – Movement Concepts and Motor Skills: Participate in co-operative and competitive activities and describe how co-operation and competition can affect people's behaviour and the quality of the experience.

Possible first reading purpose

- Find out about the challenges experienced by a ten-year-old girl and her family when sailing to Nouméa on their yacht.

Possible subsequent reading purposes

- Identify the features of a diary
- Identify and discuss the planning and preparation needed for a long sea journey and compare this with other journeys.

Possible writing purposes

- Write a short story about a family adventure or a long trip by sea, air, or land
- Recount an adventure through diary extracts
- Describe a moment in time from a long adventure.



The New Zealand Curriculum


Instructional focus – Reading

English Level 3 – Ideas: Show a developing understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts; Language features: Show a developing understanding of how language features are used for effect within and across texts.

First reading

- Have the students read the title and the name of the author, then skim the headings, photos, and map to gain an overall impression of what the article is about and who wrote it.
- Unpack the first log entry as a group.
- Have the students read the first diary entry and additional information about sailing conditions to confirm or amend their first impressions about the article and its writer and to set the purpose for reading.
- Prompt the students to notice how the log entries can help us make predictions about what Iris will find on her voyage and the challenges the group will face. Invite them to respond to the rhetorical question: “What else is out there, I wonder?”
- Direct the students to work in pairs, reading one section of the text at a time and asking each other questions about the challenges Iris and her family are facing and the positive aspects of their experiences.
- Give the students sticky notes so they can record their questions and thoughts for discussion in subsequent readings.

If the students require more scaffolding

- Use the possible supporting strategies outlined under “Specific knowledge required”.
 - Chunk the text into its separate entries and use a shared reading approach for the first reading. Check that the students understand who is writing the diary and have them make connections between the information in the log and what Iris recounts in her diary.
 - Construct a table the students can use as a framework for making and confirming predictions as they read.
-  This could take the form of a Google doc that the students could complete together.

	Having read the log book entry, I predict that:	Through reading the diary, I found that:
28 May 2018		
29 May 2018		
30 May 2018		
31 May 2018		
1 June 2018		
2 June 2018		
3 June 2018		
4 June 2018		

Subsequent readings How you approach subsequent readings will depend on your reading purpose. Where possible, have the students work in pairs to discuss the questions and prompts in this section.

The teacher

Have the students use their sticky notes to revisit the text and talk through their responses to the article. Check that the students understand the enormity of the challenges the family and Brian faced and also the rewards they gained from the experience. Prompt the students to make connections with the text.

- *What connections can you make to this family’s adventure? Is this something your family would ever be likely to do? Why or why not?*
- *What adventure might your family all enjoy?*

You could provide sentence scaffolds for English language learners, for example, “Iris and her family ...”, “I think my family would / would not want to do this because ...”, “An adventure we would all enjoy would be to ...”


The teacher

Prompt the students to recall the language and text features of the logbook entries. Support them to create a Venn diagram on which they compare the language and text features of a diary with those of a logbook, noting those that are the same and those that are different. Ask them to suggest reasons for the similarities and differences and to think about which type of text they prefer to read and why.

The teacher

Have the students go through the text and identify the equipment on board and its purpose. Ask them to suggest other things the family might have taken that aren’t mentioned, such as water and cooking fuel, and things, such as the weather, that they would have to consider when planning the trip.

Ask them to discuss with a partner how the planning Iris and her family did for their trip compares with the planning they and their family did for a long trip or for a journey they have read about in other texts.

 The students could use Mindmap to create a diagram with the name, description, and an image of each piece of equipment.

METACOGNITION

- *I noticed that when you began reading, you were quite concerned that Iris’s parents were taking someone so young on such a long and dangerous trip. How did you feel by the end? What information informed your thinking?*
- *How did asking questions of the text affect your ability to understand and enjoy it? What was the effect of doing this with a partner?*

The students:

- ask questions and locate answers as they read
- discuss their responses with other students, using evidence from the text
- integrate information across the article and review what they have learnt about the challenges Iris and her family and friend faced, then weigh this with its rewards to infer whether they felt the trip was worth it
- consider whether this would be an adventure they and their family would like to experience or whether there is another kind of adventure they might find more appealing.

The students:

- identify the language and text features of a diary and a logbook, supporting this with examples from the text
- compare the language and text features of the log entries with those of the diary in a Venn diagram
- identify and explain the specific purposes for each of the text types
- consider, express, and justify their personal feelings about these different text forms.

The students:

- find and list the equipment on board and identify its purpose
- use information in the article and make connections to their own experiences and/or other texts they have read to inform a discussion about the planning and preparation required for a long sea journey
- compare how planning for a long sea voyage might compare with planning and preparing for other long journeys. Identify what would be similar and what would be different.

GIVE FEEDBACK

- *You connected your reading of Iris’s diary to our recent recount writing to come up with some good ideas about how you could better reflect your own personality in your writing. You have a great sense of humour, and I’m looking forward to seeing that come through in your next attempt.*

 **Reading standard: by the end of year 5**

 **The Literacy Learning Progressions**

 **Assessment Resource Banks**

Instructional focus – Writing

English Level 3 – Ideas: Select, form, and communicate ideas on a range of topics; Language features: Use language features appropriately, showing a developing understanding of their effects.

Text excerpts from “Iris and Dogstar”

Page 16

We had our passports stamped today. A customs officer came down to the Opua marina. After that, we were allowed to leave. We fuelled up with 400 litres of diesel, checked our gear was properly stowed, put on life jackets – and were off!

Examples of text characteristics

PERSONAL RECOUNT

A personal recount tells the story of an event or series of events the writer was personally involved in. It combines factual information with information about feelings or the writer’s opinion or perspective.

Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

Have the students jot down notes about an adventure they went on as a family or a long trip by sea, air, or land. Have them use their notes to recount their stories orally to a buddy. Encourage them to ask each other questions to pull out interesting or pertinent details of their stories.

Explain that a recount generally tells the events in chronological order. Have them use Iris’s diary recount and descriptions as a model for writing their recount in the form of a diary.

- What do we know about the features of a diary?
- What sort of details make a diary more interesting for other people to read?

Help English language learners to use a variety of text connectives to indicate time in their writing by developing a class lists of words that can be used as a scaffold, for example, “next”, “afterwards”, “after that”, “soon”, “previously”.

Page 19

A big swell came up last night. Dad threw up in the first-aid kit. Luckily he managed to tip the contents onto the floor first. Dad was the first. Now we’re all throwing up. It’s sort of a family-bonding experience.

VOICE

The writer’s voice – their distinct personality, style, or point of view – is important in recounting a personal experience. One way of achieving this is through the use of asides that draw the reader into the story and bring us closer to the writer.

Explain that voice is important in personal recounts such as diaries. It helps to convey a sense of how the writer felt as they experienced the events. Point out that Iris’s jokes about sea sickness help lighten a text that has lots of new information, but they also take the reader away from simple facts about what happened and show aspects of Iris’s personality and how she was feeling.

- What are some personal details you might mention as an aside that will help your readers get to know you a bit better and add interest to your story?
- What other techniques could you use to give your writing a unique voice? What were some techniques Iris used that you might adapt?

Page 17

On the upside, we’re seeing lots of albatrosses. One bird came in so close I saw how big it really was – the size of two bikes! Two very large bikes. How crazy is that?

METAPHORS

Writers use figurative language, such as metaphors or similes, to support understanding. Often, the intention is to help readers “see” the object, action, or event they are describing.

Explain how writers use figurative language to help readers visualise something. Ask the students to find a place in their own writing where a metaphor or simile might help capture a moment in time that has stuck with them. Have them take some time to reflect on what was so significant and what they might compare it with – an image they could use to take the reader to that moment.

GIVE FEEDBACK

- Your first draft was clear, concise, and well structured. Then as you thought through the feedback from your buddy and the model provided by Iris’s writing, your own voice began to come through. Now it has more of your sense of humour and shows much more clearly your feelings about the event.

METACOGNITION

- What made you choose this particular image to describe that moment? What makes it seem apt to you?
- How did talking to your buddy help you plan your recount? Did it turn out the way you expected? Why or why not?

Writing standard: by the end of year 5

The Literacy Learning Progressions