

The Hungry Wave

by Lani Wendt Young

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Year 5



Overview

This narrative is based on factual accounts from survivors of the earthquake and tsunami that struck Tonga and Sāmoa in 2009. Readers follow Ana and her brother as they are caught up in the tsunami. There are opportunities for students to explore a variety of language features and writing techniques, although some students may need support with the figurative language and vocabulary from Sāmoa.

The story could also be used to introduce students to the concept of tsunami and their impact on communities.

You will need to be aware of, and sensitive to, students who have lost family in tsunami or who have had to escape from frightening situations.

Texts related by theme

“The Race” SJ 3.1.11 | “Earthquake” SJ L3 Nov 2011 |

“One City – Two Earthquakes” SJ L3 Nov 2011

Text characteristics from the year 5 reading standard

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

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

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Ana's mother was getting the children ready for school when Mafu'e, the earthquake demon, came. He stamped his foot, and the whole village could feel it. There was a loud rumbling sound, and then everything started to move. The tin roof clattered. The posts of the fale swayed. The family's TV set crashed to the ground and shattered. People were screaming:

"Mafu'e! Earthquake!"

Ana threw herself on the ground with the others and watched as the houses around them shook and rattled. Her little brother, Mika, was excited. He grabbed Ana's arm. "Look! The village is moving. Maybe the school will get broken, and then we can go swimming today instead."

Their big brother, Niko, frowned at Mika. "Don't be silly," he said.

"A visit from Mafu'e is nothing to be happy about."

The earthquake lasted a long time, but even though it had been an unusually angry one, no houses were destroyed. When the ground was finally still, Ana's mother, Sina, called out to the children, "Hurry up! You need to get ready for school or you'll be late."

It was Ana's turn to have her hair braided. Sina was rougher than usual as she brushed and twisted Ana's long hair into a high bun. Ana winced. "Ouch! That hurts, Mama!" She looked in the mirror and frowned at her reflection. "I look silly with this bun on my head like that. Please can I have two braids instead?"

figurative and/or ambiguous language that the context helps students to understand

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

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)

Reading standard: by the end of year 5

Possible curriculum contexts

SCIENCE (Physical World)

LEVEL 3 – Physical inquiry and physics concepts: Explore, describe, and represent patterns and trends for everyday examples of physical phenomena ...

ENGLISH (Reading)

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

ENGLISH (Writing)

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

Possible reading purposes

- To understand what it was like for people during the 2009 earthquake and tsunami through one child's perspective
- To discuss how a fictional story helps us to understand real events
- To analyse how the author has built up the tension in the text
- To explore the author's use of language.

See [Instructional focus – Reading](#) for illustrations of some of these reading purposes.

See [Instructional focus – Writing](#) for illustrations of some of these writing purposes.

Possible writing purposes

- To write a story about escaping from danger
- To share a family story with the class
- To build up tension in a fictional text.

Text and language challenges

VOCABULARY:

- Possible unfamiliar and/or specialist words and phrases, including “clattered”, “destroyed”, “braided”, “wincing”, “frowned”, “reflection”, “impatiently”, “sulked”, “guilty”, “reef”, “coral reef”, “ocean”, “shallow”, “amazement”, “attention”, “dark mass”, “advancing”, “tsunami”, “confused”, “hibiscus”, “risked”, “glance”, “sea foam”, “crest”, “mountainside”, “vines”, “minute”, “tumbled”, “terrified”, “smashed fragments”, “floating”, “head bob up”, “metre”, “churning”, “clinging”, “gripping”, “hauled”, “relief”, “plantation”, “snuggled”, “struck”, “survivors”
- Language and names from Sāmoa – “Ana”, “Mafui'e”, “fale”, “Mika”, “Niko”, “Sina”, “Galua afi”.

Possible supporting strategies

Identify new vocabulary that the students should prioritise for learning. *The English Language Learning Progressions: Introduction*, pages 39–46, has useful information about learning vocabulary.

Before reading, use pictures as prompts to explore emotions. You could give pairs a photo of people experiencing an emotion relevant to the story. Ask each pair to stick the picture in the middle of a blank chart, write one to three emotions they think the person is experiencing, write actions associated with each emotion, and things they think cause each emotion. Have each pair share their chart with the others. Make links to the charts during and after reading as students read about and talk about how the characters feel.

Discuss with the students the author's precise language to describe the characters' reactions. You could create word maps to explore connections between emotions and actions. For more information about and examples of word maps, see <http://esolonline.tki.org.nz/ESOL-Online/Teacher-needs/Pedagogy/Cross-curricular-strategies/Teaching-approaches-and-strategies/Vocabulary/Word-clusters-maps>

Some students may need support to understand the figurative language. Allow opportunities for them to encounter these through oral language before reading. Ask students who know other languages to make connections with how figurative language works in those languages. Explore or link to previous learning about personification, similes, and imagery. Discuss the meaning and impact of phrases such as “hungry wave” and “angry ocean”. Explain the figurative language use of “Mafui'e, the earthquake demon” by the narrator. Compare or link to other texts that have used Tangaroa in a similar way.

SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED:

- Knowledge of tsunami and earthquakes
- Knowledge of Sāmoa as an island group with reefs
- Knowledge of family dynamics.

Possible supporting strategies

Before reading the story, read the fact box at the end of page 9. Prompt the students' prior knowledge of the earthquake and tsunami that occurred in Sāmoa and Tonga, or of other earthquakes or tsunami they know about.

Possibly use video clips to support the students' understanding of tsunami.

Use a map to locate Tonga and Sāmoa.

TEXT FEATURES AND STRUCTURE:

- Third-person, past-tense narrative based on a factual event
- Use of unattributed dialogue
- A fact box at the end that provides details of the real event fictionalised in the text
- Figurative language, including “hungry wave”, “earthquake demon”, “as if someone had pulled the plug out of an enormous bath-tub”, “fire wave”, “like a hungry beast”, “like a toy in a washing machine”, “swallowed up”, “angry ocean”
- The supportive illustrations.

Possible supporting strategies

Discuss how this dialogue often does not state the speaker, with constructions such as “he said” or “she said”. Ensure the students understand who the speaker is and how the context supports them to understand the characters' emotions as they speak. Model how to identify the speaker.

Create a graphic organiser to help students keep track of the clues in the story, to focus on the language, and to record any difficulties they have. The graphic organiser could include the setting, Ana's feelings, Sina's feelings, and evidence from the text. Give the students time to fill in the graphic organiser for sections of the text. They could do this with a partner and then share their ideas with other pairs. Provide opportunities for students who share another language to work together and discuss their ideas in that language.

Discuss the purpose of the fact box at the end of the text. How does this add to understanding?

Instructional focus – Reading

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

Text excerpts from “The Hungry Wave”

Students (what they might do)

Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

Sina was rougher than usual as she brushed and twisted Ana’s long hair into a high bun.

“I look silly with this bun on my head like that. Please can I have two braids instead?”

“I wish I didn’t have so many brothers,” she thought.

Students **locate and integrate** information across the text and **make connections** to their prior knowledge to understand why Ana wished she “didn’t have so many brothers”.

Something was wrong. The water was running backwards, away from the land and towards the reef, as if someone had pulled the plug out of an enormous bath-tub.

She could see fish splashing and jumping in shallow puddles as they searched for water to swim in.

Students understand what was happening to the water and in what way it was wrong by **visualising** the events as they occur.

“I wish I didn’t have so many brothers,” she thought.

Far away from the ocean. Snuggled up with her mother and father and her three brothers under the beautiful night sky, Ana was happy to have all her family safe and together.

Students **integrate** information from the last sentence and from earlier in the text to draw conclusions about the **main idea** of the text being the importance of family.

PROMPT the students to integrate information to support their understanding of the text.

- Ana wishes that she did not have so many brothers. I wonder why? I think there is some information earlier in the text that suggests the reason. Work with a partner to identify it.
- We know that Sina was rougher than usual doing Ana’s hair. Why might that have been?
- Think about what it’s like at your place when you are in a rush to get somewhere.
- We also know that Ana wanted two braids but did not get them. What was the reason she didn’t get them, or whose fault did Ana think it was?
- When we integrate these ideas, it helps us to realise why Ana wanted fewer brothers.

EXPLAIN that visualising is a good strategy to use when reading.

- When you can imagine what a person is thinking, seeing, and hearing, you’re visualising. Visualising helps to deepen your understanding of a character or a situation. Authors know this and give details that develop a mood and help their readers to visualise.

PROMPT the students to deepen their understanding.

- This section is describing what was happening to the water. In pairs, one of you read aloud while the other visualises the images and then draws a rough picture or diagram. Talk about it together, with the listener describing it and both of you talking about how it helps your understanding.

PROMPT the students to reflect on the events in the story to gain a deeper understanding of the main idea. Refer the students to their graphic organisers and have them use the information they recorded to help the group make notes about how the characters felt.

- We have found out about this family and what happened before, during, and after the tsunami.
- How did Ana feel at the beginning of the story? What did she think about her brothers? What do we find out in the last sentence? Has Ana changed her mind?
- Is there a main idea that the author wanted us to know? Turn to your partner and discuss what you think it was.

GIVE FEEDBACK

- You used your personal experiences to deepen your understanding of how Ana was feeling towards her brothers. Making connections can help us to better understand a text.
- You’ve asked a lot of questions to help you understand the tsunami we’ve all heard about in the past few years. I can see that you now understand how terrifying a tsunami can be.
- When you described how terrifying the tsunami was, you were visualising the events. Such descriptive writing helps us to visualise.

METACOGNITION

- How did making connections with factual articles about tsunami help you to understand the text?
- Were there any words that you found difficult to understand? What strategies did you use to work out the meaning?
- Was visualising a useful strategy to help you to understand what happened? How was it useful, or why wasn’t it?
- How will you use what you know about visualising as a reader when you are writing a factual recount?

Reading standard: by the end of year 5

The Literacy Learning Progressions

Assessment Resource Banks

Instructional focus – Writing

English (Level 3 – Language features: Use language features appropriately, showing a developing understanding of their effectst.)

Text excerpts from “The Hungry Wave”

Examples of text characteristics

Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

AUDIENCE

Writers always have an audience in mind when they are writing. This audience can determine the style that the writer uses.

Ana looked down at the angry ocean as it smashed its way through their village.

METAPHORS AND SIMILES

Author’s can use metaphors or similes to communicate an idea, a feeling, or a mood.

Just beyond the reef, a dark mass had started to build up.

ADVERBIAL PHRASES AND CLAUSES

Adverbial phrases and clauses are groups of words that act as adverbs. They can modify some of, or the rest of, a sentence to tell the reader how, when, where, or why. For example, subordinate clauses such as “When we got home” are adverbial. Adverbial clauses contain a finite verb; adverbial phrases do not.

She couldn’t see anything as the dirty water dragged her and tumbled her around like a toy in a washing machine. Ana was terrified.

SENTENCE LENGTHS

Varying the length of sentences adds impact and interest for the reader. After this descriptive passage, the short simple sentence adds impact for the reader.

METACOGNITION

- Has rereading your writing supported you to see how varying sentence lengths add impact? How?
- What helped you to understand about metaphors? How will this make it easier to use them in your writing?
- What do you think about as you write your sentences? How does this help you?

ASK QUESTIONS to support the students as they form their writing intentions.

- How will you make decisions about your topic, purpose, and audience?
- What “voice” will you use? Why? What tone or level of formality will be best for your purpose and audience?
- How will you keep your audience in mind as you write? Will you work with a buddy to give each other critical feedback?

DIRECT the students to look at the metaphor in the excerpt.

- Can an ocean be angry? Why do you think the author has said the ocean was angry? What happened in the text to suggest the ocean was acting in an angry way?

EXPLAIN that an author can communicate an idea, a feeling, or a mood through using a simile or metaphor.

- The author has also used a metaphor for the title of the story? Do you think that this is effective?
- With a partner, choose a page to reread. Identify any other examples of metaphors. Note them down and be ready to discuss them.

Encourage students to identify whether metaphors (or similes) could be incorporated into their writing.

ASK QUESTIONS to support the students’ knowledge and understanding of adverbial phrases and clauses that add information for the reader.

- Does “Just beyond the reef” make sense by itself? What information is this phrase telling us?
- Put the phrase at the end of the sentence. Does this change the impact of the sentence? Tell your partner how. (Explain that in English, we often put what we want to be the most important information first.)
- With your partner, find other examples of adverbial phrases and clauses.
- Put all of the adverbial phrases and clauses from the text into categories, for example, how or where. (Create a class chart in appropriate categories.)

Ask the students to reread their writing and identify two sentences that could be recrafted using adverbial phrases or clauses to add information and interest for the reader. Students who find this challenging, especially English language learners, may need a bank of only one or two types (which they have seen many examples of) to choose from to make this task manageable.

EXPLAIN that simple, short sentences can be used effectively to provide contrast in a piece of writing to surprise the reader or to state something quickly. Read the descriptive passage and then emphasise the short sentence.

- What was the effect of the short sentence? What did the short sentence do for you as the reader? Would it have had the same impact if it were a long description of how scared Ana was?
- With a partner, choose a page to reread. Identify any other examples of the impact of sentence length. Note them down and be ready to discuss why they are effective.

ASK QUESTIONS to help students review and refine their writing to meet their purposes.

- Focus on a key part of your text. What do you want your readers to feel or understand at this point?
- What changes could help your audience to “get the message”? How could your sentence lengths support this?

GIVE FEEDBACK

- The short sentence you have used really gave a sense of impact to your writing.
- Your use of the adverbial phrase at the beginning of the sentence allowed me as a reader to see what was really important for you as a writer. It strengthened your point well.
- I can see from the examples you have used (when you ...) that you’ve really got the idea of metaphors.

Writing standard: by the end of year 5

The Literacy Learning Progressions