

# Aim High

by David Hill

## Overview

This recount by a popular author explains how a class trip to the observatory helps Nik cope with the death of a beloved pet.

## Note for Teachers

The International Astronomical Union website describes the practice of selling naming rights to stars as “charlatantry”, that is, the names have no validity and the practice operates for commercial gain.

## Features to Consider in Context

•	The structure of the text as a personal recount: events are told in chronological order using linking words of time (“when”, “later”) and are written in the past tense
•	The use of direct speech in both its simple and more complex forms
•	The use of the apostrophe for contractions and to denote ownership.

## Readability

Noun frequency level: 8–9 years

Suggested level: 8.5–9.5 years

## Supports and Challenges

The features to consider in context and the points outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

•	The students’ experiences of losing a pet
•	The students’ knowledge of stars
•	The complex nature of some of the direct speech, for example, “‘They should call one after me,’ Nik’s friend Todd said. ‘I’m going to ...’”
•	Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: “observatory”, “website”, “certificate”, “astronomer”, “power company”, “yowling”, “trellis”.

## Introducing Students to the Text

•	Introduce the title and ask the students to predict what the story might be about. Use a think, pair, and share technique for this discussion.
•	Explain that this story is about a class visit to an observatory. Ask the students what the class might do at the observatory and introduce the word “astronomer”.

•	Tell the students that Nik’s cat dies in the story and ask them to share their experiences of losing pets. During this discussion, include relevant vocabulary, such as “buried” and “cross”.
•	Ask the students to predict what the connection between the class visit to the observatory and the death of Nik’s cat could be. Use a think, pair, and share technique and chart the students’ responses.
•	Share the purpose for reading the text. “We’re going to read this text to see what the class visit to the observatory has to do with Nik’s cat dying.”
•	Ask the students to read silently to “I put Flash in his basket.”

### During the Reading

•	“What might Mum and Nik do next?”
•	“Having read this much, have you got any ideas about what the children learned at the observatory? Do you have any further ideas about what their visit has to do with Nik’s cat?” Use a think, pair, and share technique for this discussion.
•	Ask the students to find evidence in the text to support their views.
•	Ask the students to silently read the rest of the text to check their predictions about the connection between the observatory visit and the cat’s death.

### After the Reading: Responding to the Text

#### Possible focuses for discussion

•	Check the students’ predictions against what happened in the text.
•	Clarify the meaning of the text. “Why was naming the star after Flash a good way to remember him?” Ask the students to find evidence in the text to support their views.
•	Discuss the ending of the story. “How does Nik feel now and what helped him feel this way?” You may have to help the students make the connection between the death of Flash and the naming of the star.
•	You may wish to choose a feature mentioned under Features to Consider in Context as a further teaching point.
•	Ask the students if they remember any other articles or stories they have read by David Hill. Suggest that they might like to locate further texts by David Hill in the school library or using <i>Journal Search</i> .

### Suggested Activities

You may like to select an activity from those listed below. You may need to work with the group for some activities.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>
Personal Reading • thinking critically • processing information	• develop informed personal response to texts.	• prepare a display for the class or school library with the group's recommendation of items for other students to read.

### Links with Other *School Journal* Titles

“Beneath the Clouds of Venus” 2.1.93; “David Hill – Writer” 3.1.98; “Silent Reading” 2.2.99; “Being Brave” 1.2.93; “The Star Fishes” 1.3.92; “Three Meals a Day” 1.2.94; “Purring” 1.4.97; “Quiet Night” 1.4.95; “When Puhi Died” 2.2.96; “Our Sparrow” 1.4.93; “No-one Cared” 2.3.98

### *Journal Search* Categories

Astronomy

Cats

David Hill

Death

Stars

### Cross-curricular Links

Science: Making Sense of Planet Earth and Beyond

### Associated Websites

Naming Stars (This page from the International Astronomical Union website explains that nobody has the right – legal or moral – to sell naming rights to stars.)

[www.iau.org/IAU/FAQ/starnames.html](http://www.iau.org/IAU/FAQ/starnames.html)

Royal Astronomical Society of New Zealand

[www.rasnz.org.nz](http://www.rasnz.org.nz)

Carter Observatory of New Zealand

[www.carterobs.ac.nz](http://www.carterobs.ac.nz)

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# Less than One Second

by Jan Trafford

## Overview

This article provides information about slot cars, slot car drag racing, and the people who race them. It includes an explanation about how slot cars move. The text includes complex mathematical concepts and could be used with older students.

## Features to Consider in Context

•	Informational text features, including the use of headings, photographs, and diagrams
•	Concepts of measurement related to weight, time, speed, length, and circles
•	Concepts associated with electricity and simple circuits
•	The use of subject-specific vocabulary
•	The use of the present tense
•	A considerable number of simple sentences
•	The use of concise, factual language.

## Readability

Noun frequency level: 10–12 years

## Supports and Challenges

The features to consider in context and the points outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

•	The students' experiences of hobbies and competing
•	The students' knowledge or experiences of slot cars and drag racing
•	The students' prior experiences of reading informational texts
•	The use of photographs and diagrams
•	The use of decimal numbers
•	The students' concepts related to the various types of measurement mentioned
•	Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: "grams", "competing", "Nationals", "fast reaction times", "disqualified", "split second", "accurate to a thousandth of a second", "metres", "world record", "maximum battery power allowed", "volts", "braids", "electrical circuit", "armature", "gear", "axle", "transparent", "diameter", "millimetres", "body", "delicate", "admits".

## Introducing Students to the Text

•	Ask the students if they have ever competed in or watched races. Have them share these experiences within the group, introducing and using vocabulary such as "Nationals", "fastest time", "disqualified", "record", and "trophies" during the discussion.
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•	Introduce the title and ask the students to predict what sort of race would take less than one second.	
•	Distribute the Journals and allow time for the students to look at the photographs to check their predictions about the title.	
•	Explain that Ashley and Shiree race slot cars as a hobby. Ask the students to predict some things Ashley and Shiree might enjoy about racing slot cars. Chart the students' predictions.	
•	Share the purpose for reading the article. "We're going to read this article to try and decide what are the pluses and minuses of slot car racing and to find out some interesting ideas about slot car drag racing." Introduce the PMI chart:	
	Positive (+)	Minus (-)
•	Ask the students to read silently to "... 222 kilometres per hour".	

### During the Reading

•	"Can you explain yet why Ashley and Shiree might enjoy the races?" "What makes you think that?" "How does that compare with your predictions?" Refer to the chart made before reading.
•	"What words give the impression that the races are over very quickly?"
•	Ask the students to read the next section that explains how a slot car moves and to think about any possible problems that could occur.
•	Discuss the students' opinions about possible problems and add them to the PMI chart if relevant.
•	Reread the paragraph that explains how a slot car works and discuss the subject-specific vocabulary. You might like to visually represent this section of the text.

### After the Reading: Responding to the Text

#### Possible focuses for discussion

"Given what you know now about slot car drag racing, what are the pluses, minuses, and interesting aspects?" Use a think, pair, and share technique for this discussion.

Chart the students' responses on the PMI chart, revisiting the purpose of the lesson.

Refer to the final paragraph and discuss the speeds of the cars. "Whose car was the fastest?" "How do you know?" You may need to model the situation, using place value blocks or a diagram.

#### Suggested Activities

You may like to select an activity from those listed below. You may need to work with the group for some activities.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>
Interpersonal Speaking • processing information	• ask questions and interpret information; • present information clearly in the form of a poster.	• fax, email, or phone your local information centre to find out about slot car drag racing in your area and report to the class; • present the information in the form of a poster.

### Links with Other *School Journal* Titles

Drag Racing (SJSJL 1991); “Garth Hogan’s Last Run” 4.1.94; “Jet Car” 2.2.96

### *Journal Search* Categories

Cars

Drag Racing

### Cross-curricular Links

Mathematics: Measurement, Geometry

Science: Making Sense of the Physical World

Technology: Structures and Mechanisms

### Associated Websites

New Zealand Slot Car Association

[www.titan.co.nz/nzsc](http://www.titan.co.nz/nzsc)

# Make a Compass

by K.E. Anderson

## Overview

This simple procedural text describes how a compass can be made from everyday materials. This article supports “Sailing the Pacific” and “Vaka Voyagers”, also in this Journal.

## Features to Consider in Context

•	The structure and features of a procedural text:
	• the title stating the goal or aim
	• a list of materials
	• the method presented in numbered steps
•	the evaluative comment at the end that states how the success of the procedure can be tested
•	The use of the simple present tense
•	The use of imperatives such as “rub”, “float”, and “place”.

## Readability

Suggested level: 8–9 years

## Supports and Challenges

The features to consider in context and the points outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

•	The students’ familiarity with procedural texts
•	The diagrams and illustrations that accompany the text
•	The students’ prior knowledge and experience of magnetism
•	The students’ prior knowledge and experience of compasses.

## Introducing Students to the Text

•	Ask the students if they know of situations where compasses are used. Discuss the purpose of the compass as an aid to navigation.
•	Introduce the title and ask the students to predict what form of text this might be.
•	Ask the students, in pairs, to predict a list of materials that may be required to make a compass. Share responses within the group.
•	Share the purpose for reading the text. “We’re going to silently read this text to check our predictions against what the text tells us.”
•	Distribute the Journals and allow the students time to scan the text to check their predictions.

## During the Reading

•	Use a shared reading approach to read the text with the students.
•	Discuss the students' predictions relating to the form of text and the list of materials.

## After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focuses for discussion

•	Have the materials ready and ask the students to work in pairs to follow the instructions and make a compass.
•	Reread the last two sentences of the text. "Is the activity successful?" "How do you know?"

## Links with Other *School Journal* Titles

"Port Waikato School Camp" *The Secret Lake* (JYPW 1995); *Get Lost!* (SJSJL).

## Journal Search Categories

Camping

## Cross-curricular Links

Science: Making Sense of the Physical World

Health and Physical Education: Outdoor Education

## Associated Websites

Orienteering for the Young

[www.us.orienteering.org/OYoung](http://www.us.orienteering.org/OYoung)

Orienteering New Zealand

[www.activenz.co.nz/activities/orienteering.html](http://www.activenz.co.nz/activities/orienteering.html)



# Sailing the Pacific

by Maria Samuela

## Overview

This article explains traditional sailing and navigation methods used by early Polynesian voyagers. Teachers and students could read “Vaka Voyagers” in this Journal as an introduction to reading this article. The article could be used with an older age group.

## Features to Consider in Context

•	The structure of the text as a series of explanations of about how phenomena in the natural world were used for navigational purposes
•	The mixture of Māori, Cook Islands Māori, and English words
•	The layout of informational text
•	The use of subject-specific vocabulary.

## Readability

Noun frequency level: 9–10 years

## Supports and Challenges

The features to consider in context and the points outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

•	The students’ knowledge of sea voyages and sailing
•	The students’ experiences of reading explanations
•	The students’ experiences of learning te reo Māori
•	The photographs that accompany the text
•	The presentation of the text in manageable chunks
•	Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: “oral history”, “voyager”, “discovered”, “approached”, “traditional”, “navigators”, “ocean swells”, “reflect”, “hint of green”, “lagoon”, “migrating”, “routes”, “regular journeys”, “position”, “instruments”, “accurately”, “particular”, “double-hulled canoes”, “vaka”, “pandanus”, “supplies”, “special item”, “anchor stones”, “sacred”
•	Note that “vaka” is the Cook Islands Māori word for “waka” or “canoe”.

## Introducing Students to the Text

•	Introduce the title and locate the Pacific Ocean on a map.
•	Ask the students to discuss in pairs their knowledge and ideas about sailing in the Pacific. Use a think, pair, and share technique for this discussion.
•	Chart the students’ ideas, introducing relevant vocabulary.
•	Ask the students to predict how sailors find their way when sailing in the Pacific Ocean.

•	Distribute the Journals, allowing the students time to view the photographs.
•	Use a shared reading approach to read the three introductory paragraphs and clarify when the events in the text happened.
•	Share the purpose for reading the text. Tell the students they are each going to read a section of the text silently and then work with a partner to present an oral summary to the group.
•	Allocate sections of the text to pairs of students.
•	You could model presenting an oral summary of the first three paragraphs of the text.
•	Ask the students to read their section of the text silently.

### During the Reading

•	Ask the students to practise their oral summaries in their pairs, using just the main points and their own words.
•	Share the oral summaries within the group and provide feedback to the students concerned.
•	Clarify any difficult concepts or vocabulary.
•	You may wish to use the rest of the text for pairs of students to silently read and to continue to practise presenting oral summaries to each other.
•	Return to a shared reading approach for the final paragraph.

### After the Reading: Responding to the Text

#### Possible focuses for discussion

•	“Why do you think these traditional methods of navigation have been replaced?” “What are some ‘modern’ aids to navigation?”
•	“Think, pair, and share a question you would like to ask about navigation methods.” The students’ questions could be charted.
•	“Where could we find further information to answer these questions?”
•	“Do you think sailors would still use the traditional signs like birds? Which ones – and why?”
•	Discuss the features of the tirito ‘etu with the students. Explain how it worked and how it was used.
•	“How do you think sailors knew about this? Where did they get their information from?” (Māori oral history).

#### Note on Tirito ‘Etu

The tirito ‘etu (or starpeeker) is a navigating instrument from the Cook Islands. It was made from an empty coconut shell with holes drilled in it. Water was filled to the level of the lower ring of holes. This helped to keep it lined up with the horizon as the boat moved up and down in the waves. The navigator looked through two of the holes until the reflection of a particular star came into view. The holes were

positioned so that the star could be seen only when the vaka was directly east or west of its destination.

## Suggested Activities

You may like to select an activity from those listed below. You may need to work with the group for some activities.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>
Personal Reading • processing information	• locate, identify, select, and present relevant information.	• in pairs, find answers to their questions about navigation methods; • write a quiz (with an answer sheet) to give to other group members.
Interpersonal Speaking Listening to Texts • thinking critically	• ask questions to elicit key information, listen, and respond.	• ask their parents, grandparents, or elderly friends to tell them a story from their past.
Using Texts • thinking critically • processing information	• retell a story informally to an audience, using appropriate props or actions; • recall main ideas in sequence.	• present these stories orally to the group or class.

## Links with Other *School Journal* Titles

“Night on the Reef” 2.1.96; “Shipwrecked Journals” 2.3.99; “One Hundred and Twenty Days at Sea” 3.2.80; “A Flax Sailing Canoe” 3.2.91; “Over She Goes” 3.3.88; “Sailing Away” *I Feel Dizzy* (JYPW 1997); “South by the Southern Cross” 4.1.98; “Visiting the Endeavour” 2.1.97; “Voyage to the Cold South” 1.2.94

## *Journal Search* Categories

Pacific Islands

Sailing

## Cross-curricular Links

Science: Making Sense of Planet Earth and Beyond

Social Studies: Place and Environment

Technology: Materials Technology

## Associated Websites

Polynesian Voyaging Society

<http://leahi.kcc.hawaii.edu/org/pvs>

Traditional Navigation in the Western Pacific

[www.museum.upenn.edu/navigation/Intro.html](http://www.museum.upenn.edu/navigation/Intro.html)



# Storm in a Teacup

by Philippa Werry

## Overview

This poem uses metaphors and a simile to compare a chocolate drink in a teacup to a storm at sea.

## Introducing Students to the Text

•	Introduce the title of the poem and ask the students what this means. “Have you heard anyone use this term?”
•	Ask the students to predict what the poem might be about.
•	Read the poem aloud to the students and ask them to check their predictions.

## Focus for Discussion

If you decide to explore the poem further:

•	Discuss the way comparisons are made in the poem:	
	•	the metaphors in the first two lines
	•	the simile “the spoon like a silver typhoon”
•	•	the metaphor “pink debris” in the final verse.
•	Identify the rhyming pattern.	
•	Discuss the internal rhyme in line three.	

## Suggested Activities

You may like to select an activity from those listed below. You may need to work with the group for some activities.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>
Personal Reading • exploring language	• identify metaphors and similes in poems.	• read a selection of poems and identify metaphors and similes; • in pairs, share the examples they have found and choose one to share with the group.
Speaking • using texts • thinking critically	• read a poem aloud with expression and fluency; • talk to others about their response to the poem.	• share a favourite poem with the group, commenting on what they particularly liked about it.

# Superglue

by Sharon Holt

## Overview

During a wet lunchtime, some children accidentally break their teacher's special vase. Luckily, SUUU-PER-GLUUUUUE comes to the rescue! Find out how he helps the children get out of trouble.

## Features to Consider in Context

•	The conventions of a play: a list of characters provided at the start, the stage directions in italics, and the dialogue for each character
•	The element of humour
•	A twist at the end that requires the reader's input
•	The use of capital letters and bold print in the dialogue.

## Readability

Noun frequency level: 8.5–9.5 years

## Supports and Challenges

The features to consider in context and the points outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

•	The students' prior experiences of reading plays
•	The familiar classroom setting and students' experiences of wet lunchtimes
•	The links to the popular media made with the character of Superglue
•	Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: "incredible", "nervously", "spreading", "huddle", "audience".

## Introducing Students to the Text

•	Ask the students to share their experiences of wet lunchtimes. "How are you expected to behave?" "What can go wrong?"
•	Share the purpose for reading. Tell the students you will be asking them to make predictions and check them with what happens in the text.
•	Introduce the title of the play. Ask the students to predict why this title has been chosen for a play that takes place in a classroom. Share predictions within the group.
•	Ask the students to read to "JAMES. Look, guys! It's incredible" to check their predictions about the title.

## During the Reading

•	Check the students' predictions against what happens in the text.
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•	Ask the students to predict, in pairs, what might happen next and how the play will end.
•	Share predictions within the group.
•	Ask the students to read silently to the end of the play.

## After the Reading: Responding to the Text

### Possible focuses for discussion

•	Check the students' predictions against what happens in the text.
•	Ask the students to discuss, in pairs, what James's idea might have been. Share ideas within the group.
•	As a group, decide what might be written on the piece of paper. "What would this achieve?"
•	"Who does Superglue remind you of?"
•	"Why didn't the children tell the teacher about Superglue?"
•	"Do you think this is a successful play?" "Does it work?" "Why or why not?"

## Suggested Activities

You may like to select an activity from those listed below. You may need to work with the group for some activities.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>
Using Texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>read aloud to practise fluency and expression.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>tape-record the play, using voices and sound effects, and use a listening post.</li> </ul>

## Links with Other *School Journal* Titles

"Pet Day" 2.2.91; "Give Us Your Lunch" 1.3.94; "The Marahau Bus Kids" 1.3.98

## *Journal Search* Categories

Humorous Plays

# Te Pupu Harakeke

by Sheridan Waitai-Cherrington

## Overview

This tale, told to the author by her grandmother, explains how the pūpū harakeke warned the Ngāti Kuri people of an imminent attack by enemy warriors. The theme of kaitiaki and conservation is apparent throughout. The personal significance the story has for the author is shared in the Author's Note at the end. This story would be suitable to use with older students.

## Features to Consider in Context

•	The mixture of Māori words with English
•	The use of questions to introduce the storytelling
•	The link to oral history
•	The inclusion of an Author's Note at the end.

## Readability

Noun frequency level: 10–12 years

## Supports and Challenges

The features to consider in context and the points outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

•	The students' experiences of reading folk tales and legends
•	The students' experiences of te reo Māori
•	The students' experiences of spending time with their grandparents
•	Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: "guardian", "rare", "warriors", "distant", "tribes", "maidens", "shrill", "trampled", "fled", "conservation", "sanctuary", "reality", "a reserve".

## Introducing Students to the Text

•	Ask the students what is special about the times they have with their grandparents. Use a think, pair, and share technique for this discussion.
•	Ask the students if their grandparents read stories to them or tell them stories about when they were growing up. Discuss any relevant experiences.
•	Introduce the title and explain that this is a story told by the author's grandmother to her when she was a child.
•	Ask the students to listen while you read to them the first six paragraphs to "... and the pūpū harakeke would answer". Tell them to listen carefully to find out where the story takes place and why the pūpū harakeke is a special snail.
•	Discuss the students' responses and locate Muriwhenua on a map.
•	Clarify the meaning of the Māori vocabulary.



•	Ask the students to predict how a snail could be the guardian of the people.
•	Share the purpose for reading the text. “We’re going to read this text to check our predictions and find out what the writer intended by telling this story.”
•	Ask the students to read silently to “... one day you may hear them speak.”

### During the Reading

•	Check the students’ predictions against what happens in the text.
•	“Why do you think the author chose verbs like ‘sneaked’, ‘trampled’, ‘charged’, and ‘fled’?” Revisit the text and ask the students what pictures they get in their heads when these parts of the text are reread.
•	Discuss the concept of “kaitiaki”. “Who could be the guardians for pūpū harakeke?” “How could that happen?”
•	Ask the students to silently read the Author’s Note and think about why the author has chosen to tell this story.

### After the Reading: Responding to the Text

#### Possible focuses for discussion

•	Discuss with the students their responses to why the author chose to tell the story. “What was in the author’s mind?”																					
•	“Everything has a purpose ... all life is given to us to take care of.” “What do these words mean?” “Do you agree with them?” “Why?”																					
•	“Can we think of some ways that we take care of ‘all life’ and list these on a chart?” During this discussion, clarify the concepts of conservation, reserves, and national parks. The students could brainstorm ideas under the following headings: <table border="1" data-bbox="798 1500 1228 1769"> <tr> <td>•</td> <td>people</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>•</td> <td>laws</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>•</td> <td>families</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>•</td> <td>elderly people</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>•</td> <td>young people</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>•</td> <td>native trees</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>•</td> <td>native animals.</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	•	people		•	laws		•	families		•	elderly people		•	young people		•	native trees		•	native animals.	
•	people																					
•	laws																					
•	families																					
•	elderly people																					
•	young people																					
•	native trees																					
•	native animals.																					
•	Refer to the way the story about te pūpū harakeke has been told from generation to generation and introduce the concept of oral history.																					

### Suggested Activities

You may like to select an activity from those listed below. You may need to work with the group for some activities.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>
Interpersonal Speaking Poetic Writing Presenting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exploring language</li> <li>• processing information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ask questions and interpret information;</li> <li>• use common conventions of writing and organisation of text;</li> <li>• communicate information clearly through a flowchart.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contact a local Department of Conservation officer by fax, email, or letter to find out how native flora and fauna are protected in your area;</li> <li>• present information to the class using a flowchart.</li> </ul>

### Links with Other *School Journal* Titles

“Life on the Desert Road” 2.2.93; “Snails in Danger” 1.4.85; “Snail Meets Worm” 3.3.96; “Feeding the Kakapo” 2.3.92; “Slugs – They’re Not Always a Pest!” 1.1.96

### *Journal Search* Categories

Animals

Conservation

Snails

### Cross-curricular Links

Science: Making Sense of the Living World

### Associated Websites

DOC – Giant Snails

[www.doc.govt.nz/Conservation/001~Plants-and-Animals/001~Native-Animals/Invertebrates/Giant-Snails.asp](http://www.doc.govt.nz/Conservation/001~Plants-and-Animals/001~Native-Animals/Invertebrates/Giant-Snails.asp)

# Vaka Voyagers

by Maria Samuela

## Overview

Moe and her dad travel to Mauke where their ancestors used to live. While travelling by plane, Moe discovers how her ancestors sailed together in one big vaka and watched the waves and stars for signs of land.

This story could be read in connection with the articles “Sailing the Pacific” and “Make a Compass”, also in this Journal.

## Features to Consider in Context

•	The conventions of direct speech
•	Conversation between two characters
•	Several examples of implied conversation between the characters, for example, “Sailing a vaka to the islands must have been very hard work, Moe thought. ‘Sure was,’ said Dad.”
•	The use of contractions to reinforce the conversational tone
•	The use of commas for a range of purposes.

## Readability

Noun frequency level: 8.5–9.5 years

## Supports and Challenges

The features to consider in context and the points outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

•	The cultural backgrounds and experiences of the students
•	The students’ experiences of travel
•	The students’ ability to understand how to compare and contrast distance in time and place
•	The complex nature of some of the direct speech, for example, “‘That’s right,’ he said. ‘That’s Mauke’” and the complex nature of implied conversations
•	The illustrations that accompany the text
•	Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: “ancestors”, “confused”, “gasped”, “nervously”, “double-hulled”, “woven”, “imagined”, “chop suey”, “calm”, “reef”, “gigantic”, “chuckled”, “natural”, “descended”
•	Note that “vaka” is the Cook Islands Māori word for “waka” or “canoe”.

## Introducing Students to the Text

•	Introduce the title and ask the students to predict what they think the story might be about. Clarify the meaning of vaka (waka) and voyager (traveller). “How long might a voyage take?”
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•	“Why do people go on voyages?” Use a think, pair, and share technique for this discussion.
•	Explain that the story is about Moe and her dad travelling by plane to Mauke. Locate Mauke on the map (an island close to Rarotonga).
•	Tell the students that, on their way, Moe and Dad talk about how their ancestors reached Mauke. Clarify the meaning of “ancestors”.
•	Share the purpose for reading. “We’re going to read this text to find out what things are the same about Moe’s and her ancestors’ voyages and what things are different.”
•	Introduce a prepared double bubble map (see the diagram below) or a Venn diagram and tell the students you will record their responses on the chart.
•	Ask the students to read silently to “The vaka had to be big so they could carry all these people and their food” to find out what things are the same and what is different about the voyages of Moe and her ancestors. Early finishers could record words they find interesting.

### During the Reading

•	Chart the students’ responses on the bubble map or Venn diagram.
•	Clarify any vocabulary causing interest or difficulty.
•	Ask the students to read silently to “They were down below the clouds now, getting ready to land.”
•	Discuss and chart the students’ responses concerning the similarities and differences (for example, food on the voyage, the presence of animals, and signs of land).
•	Ask the students to read silently to the end of the story and be ready to discuss further similarities and differences.

### After the Reading: Responding to the Text

#### Possible focuses for discussion

•	Chart further responses and pay particular attention to clarifying the meaning related to the signs of land.
•	Ask the students to work in pairs to generate questions about the ancestors’ voyage. “What else do you want to know?”
•	“What might Moe’s ancestors think and feel about her voyage to Mauke?”
•	You may wish to choose an item from Features to Consider in Context as a further teaching point.

### Suggested Activities

You may like to select an activity from those listed below. You may need to work with the group for some activities.

Suggested Achievement Objectives	Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to:</i>	Learning Experiences <i>Students could:</i>
Interpersonal Speaking Interpersonal Listening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• processing information</li> <li>• thinking critically</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• converse, ask questions, and talk about events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• generate questions, in pairs, to ask their parents, caregivers, or grandparents about their ancestors;</li> <li>• tape-record the interview, and share with the group.</li> </ul>
Presenting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• thinking critically</li> <li>• processing information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use verbal and visual features to communicate ideas, relationships, or stories.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work with the teacher to compile a family tree for their family;</li> <li>• communicate a family story about an ancestor.</li> </ul>
Personal Reading Interpersonal Listening and Speaking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• thinking critically</li> <li>• processing information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• read for information;</li> <li>• interact with others to share information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• as a group, use the school library to locate and read information about voyages;</li> <li>• share the information orally within the group.</li> </ul>

### Links with Other *School Journal* Titles

“A Flax Sailing Canoe” 3.2.91; “Sailing Away” *I Feel Dizzy* (JYPW 1997); “Visiting the Endeavour” 2.1.97; “Voyage to the Cold South” 1.2.94

### Journal Search Categories

Pacific Islands

Sailing

### Cross-curricular Links

Social Studies: Culture and Heritage

Science: Making Sense of Planet Earth and Beyond

### Associated Websites

The Vaka Taumako Project

<http://planet-hawaii.com/vaka>

Oceania Voyaging Canoes

[www.janesoceania.com/oceania\\_voyaging](http://www.janesoceania.com/oceania_voyaging)