

A Bowl of Rice

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Overview

This report looks at how Duy, a young Vietnamese boy, helps his family to produce the rice that is the staple of their diet. There are lots of opportunities for students to compare their lives to that of Duy.

Note for English-language learners: although the sentence structures in this article are simple, it includes a large amount of low-frequency vocabulary.

Suggested reading purpose and teaching purpose

Based on the information I have about my students' learning needs, what would be appropriate reading and teaching purposes for this lesson?

- To find out how a family in a small village in Vietnam grow and produce rice, based on the experiences of a boy their own age.
- To support the students in developing the comprehension strategy of **summarising**.

Suggested learning goal

We are learning to summarise the key information in a text about growing rice.

Success criteria

To support our comprehension of the text, we will:

- ask questions and make connections to identify key information in the text
- sequence this information
- condense the information into the most important ideas
- state the summary in our own words.

Readability

Noun frequency level: 9–10 years for guided reading

What features of this text support the reading and teaching purposes?

- The use of a footnote
- The “Facts about Rice” on page 13
- Information that supports students to make links to their own knowledge and experience, for example, the importance of rice as a staple of the Vietnamese diet, the strong, cooperative family effort involved in growing rice, and the contrast with farming techniques in New Zealand
- The supportive photographs

- The language of sequencing, including “first”, “then”, “now”, “when”
- The topic-specific vocabulary
- The use of short sentences
- The direct quote at the end in large typeface and the message it gives.

What prior knowledge or experience might help my students to read this text?

- Experience of farming, farm techniques, and farm life
- Experiences of growing plants and vegetables
- Experiences of helping parents and wider family groups to complete a task
- Familiarity with rice and the various ways it can be eaten
- Familiarity with cereals and making the connection to plants
- Knowledge about how to find information and summarise as they read.

What text features might challenge my students and require a prompt or a brief explanation?

- The concept of paddy fields being flooded to grow the rice (compared with New Zealand farming methods)
- The difference between seeds and seedlings
- The use of bullocks and other relatively simple technology
- The fact that the stalk of the rice is hollow
- The idea that something that is going to be eaten is left beside the road and walked on
- The concept of “sticky” rice
- The classification of rice as a member of the grass family
- Particular words and phrases, including “Quy Nhon”, “bullocks”, “plough”, “paddy fields”, “seedlings”, “threshing machine”, “separate”, “trample”, “husks”, “bran”, “milling machine”, “crushes”, “weave”, “bundle”, “sticky-rice”, “bean-paste”, “stall”, “drooping fronds”, “soaks”.

A framework for the lesson

How will I help my students to achieve the reading purpose and learning goal?

Before reading

Photocopy the article for the students so that they can use a highlighter pen to identify key information in the text. You may wish to have your students do this independently or in pairs depending on the level of support they require. (You may decide to create a partially completed one to support English-language learners.)

- Share the reading purpose and briefly introduce the article.

- Discuss with the students what they know about rice. “Where does it come from? How is it eaten? When is it eaten? How often do you eat rice?” (Making connections)
- Use an atlas or the Internet to show the students where Vietnam is. (Making connections)
- Have the students read page 13. Discuss it with the students. Make sure they understand that this page gives them some background information about rice but not much detail about the process of producing rice. (Making connections)
- Share the learning goal and success criteria with the students. Briefly review how readers summarise key information as they read to gain an understanding of the author’s purpose.

Reading and discussing the text

Refer to Effective Literacy Practice in Years 5 to 8 for information about deliberate acts of teaching.

As your students read through the text, support them with any unfamiliar vocabulary, grammar, and concepts as necessary.

- Discuss any words, phrases, or concepts that students find difficult. (Analysing and synthesising)
- Model for the students, using the first paragraph on page 9, how they can find and highlight the key sequencing information about the growing of rice. Discuss the sequencing words that might give them clues to finding the key information. Focus on getting the students to highlight only the information they require and not the whole sentence. Usually the key information in a sentence starts at the verb. For example, in the sentence “His mother plants rows and rows of seedlings into the muddy water”, the key information begins at “plants” and is about the planting, not about who did it. (Analysing and synthesising; summarising)
- As the students read (and highlight information from) the rest of the text, check to ensure their understanding of key words and phrases, including what the threshing and milling machines do as part of the process. (Analysing and synthesising; summarising)
- Make sure that the students are able to unpack the key information from the narrative. For example, on page 11, ensure that what is important is that the grains of rice are **drying** not the fact that they are being walked on or run over. (Analysing and synthesising; summarising)

After reading

- Discuss the information that the students have highlighted. Ensure that all the students understand the key steps of producing rice. Record these on the whiteboard, using the students’ own words. Show the students how to combine and shorten (condense) the information in

order to summarise. Support the students to make summaries of their key information in their own words. (Summarising)

- Review the learning goal and success criteria and reflect with the students on how well the learning goal has been achieved. For example, “What were some of the clues that helped you to find the key information in the text?” (for example, the sequencing words). How will what you learnt today about finding and summarising key information help you next time you are reading a text like this by yourself?” Note any teaching points for future sessions.

Links to further learning

What follow-up tasks will help my students to consolidate and/or extend their new learning?

- Have the students create a flow chart (perhaps illustrated by photocopied images from the article) to show the steps taken to produce rice in Vietnam. This could be done individually, or each pair of students could focus on a particular step of the process in more detail. These could then be put together to create one flow chart from the whole group. The flow charts could be presented either in standard visual form (a poster) or as a computer-aided presentation.
- For students requiring more support, provide a sequence of key processes for them to order by referring to the text.
- Have the students summarise and sequence the key information from other *School Journal* texts, for example, “Fish Drive” (2.3.06) or “Move That Tree!” (1.3.02).
- Ask the students to share with a partner how they use summarising to better understand a text when they are reading independently.