



Overview

This report describes the Garden to Table programme and how it operates at Cannons Creek School. The programme involves teachers and community volunteers and helps students learn how to grow and cook their own fruit, vegetables, and herbs.

Linked texts within this journal include an article and a poem about insects and spiders that are commonly found in home gardens, and a humorous story about a group of students growing plants for a competition.

“Dig In!” requires students to “confidently use a range of processing and comprehension strategies to make meaning from and think critically about” texts (from *The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 14).

A PDF of the text and an audio version as an MP3 file are available at www.juniorjournal.tki.org.nz

Other related texts

Texts about gardening and/or plants: “That’s the Idea” (JJ 44); “Pōhutukawa” (JJ 45); “Rongoā Māori”, “Helpful Trees and Plants” (JJ 48); “I Spy” (a sci-fi story), “Kākano” (a poem), “Seeds” (JJ 50); “Garden with Science” in *How Do You Know?* (Connected, L2, 2014)

Texts that involve school projects and teamwork: “Our Recycled Worm Farm” (JJ 40); “A New Home for Mokokoko” (JJ 43); “Making Paper” (JJ 44); “Our Gifted Garden” (JJ 49); “Winning the Bledisloe Cup” in *How Do You Know?* (Connected, L2, 2014)

Text characteristics

Key text characteristics relating to the reading standard for after three years at school are shown in the boxes below.

A mix of explicit and implicit content within text and illustrations that requires students to make connections between ideas in the text and their prior knowledge to form and test hypotheses and make inferences

Visual language features such as subheadings, photographs, captions, quotes, words in bold print linked to a glossary, and changes in font to indicate different sections of text

The context of gardening, in particular the Garden to Table programme, which may be unfamiliar to some students

What is “Garden to Table”?

Garden to Table is a programme that helps students learn how to look after plants in their **school garden**. The students also find out about **healthy eating** and how to cook **tasty meals** using the plants they grow. Teachers and volunteers from the **local community** help with the programme. **Many New Zealand schools** take part in Garden to Table.



Krimzin and Charlotte are finding out about this kohlrabi plant.

Busy in the garden

At Cannons Creek School, classes take turns to work in the garden and the kitchen each week. They learn lots of things as they work in their garden. They learn about the seasons and the things that plants need to live and grow. They learn how much it costs to grow vegetables and how much it costs to buy vegetables from a shop.



Charlotte and Breana plant **lettuce seeds** in the greenhouse. Breana sprinkles the seeds into a **seed tray** and covers them with a **thin layer of soil**. Then Charlotte waters the soil. Now they must wait for the seeds to grow.



◀ A packet of lettuce seeds from the garden centre costs only a little more than one lettuce from the supermarket, but one packet has enough seeds to grow lots of lettuces.

Ideas and information organised in paragraphs

Some unfamiliar words and phrases, the meaning of which is supported by the context, the sentence structure, or visual language features. These include subject-specific vocabulary, precise descriptive vocabulary (in particular noun phrases), and commonly used words that have multiple meanings

Shifts in time and place

A variety of sentence structures, including complex sentences, so that students are required to notice linking words and phrases (for example, “And when”, “that”, “as”, “Then”, “Now”, “also”) and punctuation that clarify the links between ideas

English (Reading)

Level 2 – Structure: Show some understanding of text structures.

Health and Physical Education

Level 2 – Community Resources: Identify and use local community resources and explain how these contribute to a healthy community.

Technology

Level 2 – Nature of Technology: Understand that technology both reflects and changes society and the environment and increases people's capability.

Exploring financial capability

This article can also be used as a context for discussing the concept of getting value for money when spending (for example, when buying family groceries). For more, go to: <http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-resources/Financial-capability/Financial-capability-progressions>

Select from and adapt the suggestions below according to your students' strengths, needs, and experiences – their culture, language, and identity (*Reading and Writing Standards for Years 1–8, Knowledge of the Learner, page 6*).

Possible reading purpose

(What can the students expect to find out as a result of reading this text?)

- To find out about the Garden to Table programme

Possible learning goals

(What opportunities does this text provide for students to learn more about how to “read, respond to, and think critically about” texts?)

- The students **make connections** between the text and the visual language features in order to **locate and clarify** information.
- They identify key words in order to **make connections** between ideas within and across sentences and paragraphs.
- They **identify the main points** about what the students learn from being part of Garden to Table and form an opinion about (**evaluate**) the programme.
- They **monitor** their reading, and when something is unclear, they take action to solve the problem, for example, rereading a sentence, looking for clues close by, or using the glossary.



Text and language features

Possible supporting strategies

(These suggestions may be used before, during, or after reading in response to students' needs.)

Vocabulary

- Possibly unfamiliar words and phrases, for example, “Porirua”, “gardening gloves”, “mulch”, “herbs”, “healthy eating”, “tasty meals”, “volunteers”, “local community”, “improve”, “provides”, “plant waste”, “grass clippings”, “compost”, “lettuce seeds”, “seed tray”, “broccoli”, “feijoa”, “kohlrabi”, “beetroot”, “pateta”, “aprons”, “root vegetables”, “menu”, “karakia”
- Commonly used words or phrases that have more than one meaning (for example, “slide on their gumboots”, “programme”, “take part”), including words that can be both nouns and verbs (“hoe”, “water”, “weed”, “mulch”, “plant”)
- The figurative language in the phrases “Dig In!” and “Cooking up a storm”.

Prompt the students to remember the strategies they can use, often in combination, for example:

- **when decoding:**
 - recognising words, word chunks, or syllables within words (“Po-ri-ru-a”, “gum-boots”, “vol-un-teers”, “com-mu-ni-ty”, “green-house”, “broc-co-li”, “beet-root”)
 - drawing on knowledge that a letter or letter combination can have different sounds (for example, “improve”, “grow”; “feijoa”, “their”; “aprons”, “that”)
- **when working out word meanings:**
 - using the context of the sentence and the surrounding sentences
 - using the illustrations, the unfolding meaning of the story, and their prior knowledge
 - reading on to the next word (this is particularly helpful in regard to noun phrases) or to the end of the sentence
 - referring to the glossary for words in bold print.

Note that readers are able to use strategies for working out unfamiliar words only when they know most of the vocabulary in the text. For English language learners who need support with vocabulary, introduce and practise selected items before reading. See suggestions in “Introducing the text” and “After reading”. For more ideas, see [ESOL Online: Vocabulary](#).

Text features

- Connective words and phrases (such as, “and”, “as”, “next”, “but”, “Now”, “When”) that clarify links between ideas within and across sentences
- The use of lists and repeated phrases to create a sense of busyness and hard work. Examples include: “They dig and they pull, they snip and they hoe, they water, weed, and mulch”, the repetition of “They learn” on page 11, and “They chop and grate and stir and pour” on page 14.

Select two sentences with a clear link, for example, “The students grow vegetables, fruit, and herbs in the school's garden. And when the plants have grown, the students get to eat them.” Have the students identify the ideas in each sentence and then support them to identify the words that link them, in this case, the words “And when” that clarify the sequence of events. Have the students read the sentences aloud so they hear the pace and rhythm. Encourage them to enjoy the language and the pictures it builds in their minds.



Metacognition

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR STUDENTS TO BE METACOGNITIVE

Here are some ways you can build students' awareness of the processes and strategies they are using as they make meaning and think critically.

- *What did you do to work out the meaning of the title?*
- *You told me that at first you thought the food they cooked was going to be sold. What changed your thinking?*

Introducing the text

- Use your knowledge of your students to ensure that your introduction to the text is effective in activating their prior knowledge and providing appropriate support for a successful first reading. Choose from the following suggestions.

For English language learners, before reading the article with the rest of the group, use the photographs and subheadings to clarify the context and introduce some of the subject-specific vocabulary. If possible, arrange for the students to visit a school garden or other local garden. In addition, you could show students photos of fruit and vegetables that are mentioned in the text. Try to provide the names in their first languages as well as in English.

- Read the title and chant the “Dig In” rhyme on page 9 together. Discuss the double meaning of “digging” (as in digging in the garden and digging into food). Clarify which meaning is more likely on this page.
- Have the students use the title and the photograph on page 9 to form hypotheses about the article (who, what, where, why), then

ask them to look through (preview) the article to test their ideas. Expect them to predict from the visual language features that this is a non-fiction text about gardening.

- You could extend their thinking by having them focus on the subheadings on pages 10, 11, and 14 and use them to predict what each section might be about. Encourage them to think critically: *Looking at the subheadings, which one do you think will tell us what this whole article is about?* If necessary, prompt them to notice the key phrase “What is” in the page 10 heading.
- Make connections to the students’ own experiences and knowledge of gardens and gardening, including knowledge gained from reading “The Green Team”. Brainstorm words associated with gardening.
- Share the reading purpose and the learning goal(s).
- Provide the students with sticky notes to mark information or key words that relate to the reading purpose or to write any new questions they think of as they read.

Reading and discussing the text

Suggestions for ways that you can support the students to achieve the learning goals are in the right-hand column of the table below.

Select from and adapt the suggestions according to your students’ needs. These suggestions may apply to the first or a subsequent reading.

Encourage the students to read the text by themselves, intervening only if it’s clear that a student needs help. There will be many opportunities to provide support with word-solving and comprehension on subsequent readings.

Student behaviours

Examples of what to look for and support as the students work towards achieving their learning goal(s). Much of the processing that students do at this level is “inside their heads” and may not be obvious until after they have read the text and you are discussing it as a group.

Deliberate acts of teaching

Examples of how you can support students as they work towards achieving their learning goal(s). Often this will involve individual students rather than the whole group.

The first reading

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The students read pages 9 and 10 to test their hypotheses about the content of the article. They identify the two main points about the programme on page 10 – that the students in the programme learn how to grow food and how to cook it. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You could have the students pause after reading page 10 to discuss what they have found out. Prompt them to predict from the page 11 subheading what they will find out in this next section. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The students demonstrate monitoring and self-correction. For example, in the first paragraph on page 9, they reread the sentence to check the meaning of the phrase “slide on their gumboots”. In the second paragraph, they infer from the context and sentence structure that “herbs” are a type of plant and use the glossary to confirm their thinking. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remind the students of the strategies they can use when meaning is unclear. You could have the students act out “slide on their gumboots” and “pull on gardening gloves” (and later, “turn over the compost”) to clarify the meaning. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As they read, they use sticky notes to write any new questions they have or mark words or ideas they are not sure of or want to come back to. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remind the students of how they can use their sticky notes. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As they read page 11, they begin to track information about what the students are learning about gardening (“about the seasons”, “things that plants need to live”, “how much it costs to buy vegetables”). | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prompt the students to make connections between key words across sentences and to track information: <i>Think about the words that tell you what the students are learning.</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• With support, they infer that the sections of text in green italics are quotes from the students and that the small green arrows are pointing to the speakers.• They notice links between the body text, the photo captions, and the quotes from the students. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Draw attention to the section of green text the bottom of page 11. Prompt the students to notice that this is a quote from the girl in the photo (and that there is a little green arrow pointing to her photo). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On page 14, the students predict from the heading (and the information on page 10) that this section will be about cooking the food. They infer from the lead sentence that it is also about working as a team. As they read, they look for information about both ideas (cooking and working as a team). | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prompt the students to make links between the information in the text and the visual language features. |

Discussing the text after the first reading or subsequent readings

You can revisit this text several times to focus on different aspects. Several suggestions are given here. After initial discussion and perhaps some teacher modelling, the students could work on most of these tasks as independent after-reading tasks.

- The students identify the two main aims of the programme, as described on page 10 (growing and cooking healthy food).
- They identify main points about the Garden to Table programme.
- The students use the text and visual language features to identify implicit and explicit examples of how the Cannons Creek students work as a team.
- The students share their opinions about the programme, making connections to their own lives and what they think would be useful for them to learn.
- The students share (or generate) questions about anything they are not sure of or things they want to find out more about (for example, What makes something a weed? Why use a greenhouse? How do worms help make compost?).
- The students identify ideas on page 14 that help them to visualise “cooking up a storm”.
- Remind the students of the reading purpose. Direct them to page 10 and ask them to summarise: *What are the two main aims of the programme?* Ask the students to think, pair, and share some key points they have discovered.
- If this hasn’t arisen in the previous discussion, prompt the students to think critically: *What else do the students learn?* If necessary, direct them to the first paragraph on page 14. Ask the students to work in pairs using the text, captions, quotations, and photographs to find examples of working as a team.
- Ask the students to evaluate the programme: *Is this a good programme for schools? Why?* Encourage them to make connections to their own experiences for examples to support their opinions.
- Ask the students to talk with a partner about any questions they now have as a result of reading the article. Listen in to the discussions and pick out a few examples to discuss with the group (and perhaps follow up on later).
- Explain the concept of “cooking up a storm” – cooking with a lot of energy and action like the power and action of a storm. Prompt the students to notice the phrase “busy in the kitchen” and the lists of tasks on page 14 that support this idea.

Supporting metacognition

With support, the students reflect on their learning.

- The students give examples of key words, phrases, and linking words that helped them make connections across a paragraph or section.
- The students talk with a partner about words, phrases, or ideas they found challenging and how they worked them out (or tried to). Examples could include using the context and syntax of the sentence and rereading the previous sentence.

Remind the students of the learning goal(s).

- *What helped you understand the information about improving the soil?*
- Ask the students to identify a challenge they had when reading and how they solved or attempted to solve it. Note examples that you might want to return to in a subsequent lesson.

After reading: Practice and reinforcement

- The students can reread the article as they listen to the audio version. Audio versions also provide English language learners with good models of pronunciation, intonation, and expression.
- Provide further opportunities for students to reread this text as well as other texts with similar themes and topics (see “Related texts”).
- Have the students work in pairs on printouts of the article to identify examples of what the Cannons Creek students learn about gardening, cooking, and/or working as a team. Remind them to use the subheadings and look for key words, including words in the photo captions and quotes, to help them locate relevant information. For example, on page 11 the clause, “They learn lots of things” directs them to track the information about gardening.
- Have the students write an email to the principal to suggest why your school should investigate the Garden to Table programme.
- Encourage the students to find out more about fruits and vegetables – those mentioned in the text as well as others. They could sort them into categories, for example, using a T-chart to list root vegetables and non-root vegetables. Alternatively, you could have the students work in pairs and give each pair twelve blank cards. Ask the students to write the names of six fruits or vegetables mentioned in the article on six of the cards and brief descriptions of them on the remaining cards. The pairs of students then swap their cards and attempt to match the descriptions with the names.
- Support the students to compare the costs of growing and buying vegetables. For example, estimate the cost of growing carrots from seeds (assuming a garden was already established) and of buying the same number of carrots from the local grocer or supermarket.
- Create a Venn diagram with the headings “Gardening”, “Cooking”, and “Teamwork” and provide a list of about twenty subject-specific words and phrases from the article (or the students could identify the words). Ask the students, working in pairs, to place the words into the diagram and then discuss their finished work with another pair of students. The discussion involved in this activity requires the students to think deeply about word meanings and to refer back to the text, rereading and looking for further information to clarify their decisions.
- Provide opportunities to explore and enjoy some of the colloquial and figurative language. This may be particularly useful for English language learners. For example, the students could:
 - draw and write about times when they had to “dig in” (for example, tidying their room or finishing their homework before playing)
 - mime the phrases “slide on their gumboots”, “pull on gardening gloves”, “grab their gardening tools”. Have the students work in pairs to think of phrases they could mime for others to guess (for example, climbing into the car, going for a swim, riding a bike)
 - compile a class list of colloquialisms and create a poster to display them in the room.