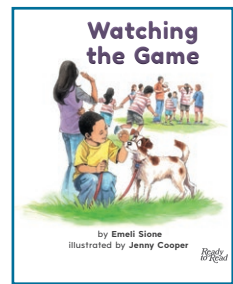


Watching the Game

by Emeli Sione
illustrated by Jenny Cooper

This text is levelled at Blue 2.



Overview

When Mika and Mum go to watch Tusi and Pati play touch rugby, they take Rocky the dog with them. Rocky enjoys playing with the tennis ball – but then he suddenly catches sight of the rugby ball on the field! This is the third story about Mika’s family.

This text supports the development of a self-extending reading process, requiring students to “monitor their reading, searching for and using multiple sources of information in order to confirm or self-correct” and use a variety of comprehension strategies to “engage more deeply with texts” (*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 10).

There is an audio version of the text as an MP3 file at www.readytoread.tki.org.nz

Cross-curriculum links

Health and physical education (level 1, regular physical activity) – Participate in creative and regular physical activities and identify enjoyable experiences.

Related texts

Stories about the same family: *T-shirts from Nana* (Red 1); *Swimming Lessons* (Yellow 2)

Other humorous stories about families: *Where Is Aunty?* (Yellow 3); *Skipper’s Happy Tail* (Blue 1); *The Missing Socks* (Blue 2); *The Hissing Bush* (Blue 3); *Dad’s Hat, My Brother, The Great Car Clean-out* (Green 1)

Stories about misbehaving pets: *Lunch for Greedy Cat* (Yellow 3); *Skipper’s Happy Tail* (Blue 1); *No, Skipper!*, *Greedy Cat’s Door* (Blue 3)

Text characteristics

The students are working towards the standard for after one year at school. Many characteristics of Green texts are also in texts at earlier levels but in simpler forms. These characteristics, as they relate to this text, are shown in the boxes below.

Most content explicitly stated but also some implicit content that provides opportunities for students to make predictions and inferences

Illustrations that support and extend the meaning but may not exactly match the words

The familiar context of a game at a park

A range of punctuation, including speech marks, commas, and exclamation marks, to support phrasing and meaning

Many high-frequency words

Mika was at the park with Mum and Rocky. They were watching Pati and Tusi play touch rugby.

Mika and Mum watched the game. Rocky watched the ball.

“Woof,” barked Rocky.
“Woof, woof.”

Mum took a tennis ball out of her bag.
“Here you are, Mika,” said Mum.
“Go and play with Rocky.”
“Woof,” barked Rocky.

Sentences that run over more than one line but do not split phrases, and several lines of text on every page

Dialogue between easily identified speakers

Interest words that are likely to be in a reader’s oral vocabulary and that are strongly supported by the context, the sentence structure, and/or the illustrations (for example, “barked”, “field”, “game”, “landed”, “park”, “play”, “wagged”) and noun phrases (“rugby ball”, “tennis ball”, “touch rugby”), irregular verbs (“came”, “ran”, “threw”, “took”), verbs that appear in different forms (“race”, “raced”, “watched”, “watching”), and the repeated adverbial phrase “Over and over again”

Reading standard: After one year at school

The Literacy Learning Progressions

Suggested reading purpose

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

We are reading this story to find out what happens when Mika goes to the park to watch touch rugby.

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 behaviours listed below link to *The Literacy Learning Progressions*. **Select from and adapt** them to set your specific learning goal. Be guided by your students’ particular needs and experiences – their culture, language, and identity. (*Reading and Writing Standards for years 1–8*, Knowledge of the learner, page 6)

This text provides opportunities for students to:

- **make connections** between their own experiences and information in the story to **make predictions and inferences**
- identify the main events in the story (**summarise**)
- make meaning by searching for and using multiple sources of information rather than one source
- monitor their reading and self-correct where necessary, for example, by rerunning text or checking further sources of information.

Introducing the story

- Use your knowledge of your students to ensure that the introduction to the story activates their prior knowledge and supports them for a successful first reading. This story uses vocabulary and language structures (for example, “after”, “again”, “came”, “closer”, “didn’t”, “everyone”, “Here you are”, “just”, “landed”, “Mika”, “out”, “over”, “park”, “Pati”, “shouted”, “tail”, “They”, “took”, “Tusi”, “wagged”, “watched”, “with”) that students are likely to be familiar with from previous reading and writing. As part of the introductory discussion, draw out (or feed in) new vocabulary and language structures that you think will need support.
- A few days before reading this book, add *T-shirts from Nana* and *Swimming Lessons* to the students’ browsing boxes to remind them of the family members.

To build English language learners’ vocabulary, you could use the cover illustration to introduce key nouns and verbs, including words, such as “children”, “lead”, “collar”, “grass”, that are not in the story. You could also take the students out for a game of touch rugby if they’re not familiar with it.

- Tell the students that you have another story for them to read about Mika and his family. Briefly discuss who is in his family and what happened in the other two stories.
- Encourage the students to use the title and cover illustration to make inferences about where the characters are and what they are doing. (Some of the students may notice the mismatch between the title and the illustration of Mika and the dog in the foreground *not* watching the game.) Have the students share their experiences of playing games or watching family members play games at the park.
- Use the pictures on the inside front cover to remind the students of the children’s names and to introduce the name of the dog.
- Use the title page to review their inferences from the cover. This illustration provides another opportunity to confirm the idea of Mika and Rocky not watching the game. *What are they doing?* If necessary, feed the term “tennis ball” into the discussion.
- Share the purpose for reading and encourage the students to make predictions about what will happen based on the information they have so far.
- On pages 2 and 3, feed in the term “touch rugby” as you discuss the illustrations. Draw attention to Rocky’s interest in the rugby ball on page 2 and what Mum is doing on page 3. *Why do you think she’s giving Mika a tennis ball?* Encourage the students to share their opinions as to whether it’s a good idea to take Rocky off the lead.
- Browse through and discuss the illustrations on pages 4–7, prompting the students to adjust (or confirm) their predictions.
- Rephrase their responses or use prompts and questions to draw out (or feed in) language structures and vocabulary that you feel may need support. For example:
 - on pages 4 and 5, to support “threw” and “raced”, you could ask: *What did Mika do with the ball?* (For ELL students, you could simply tell them these words as they may not know the irregular past tense form of “throw”, and they may know “raced” in the context of a running race.)
 - on page 5, to support the idea of “Over and over again”, you could ask: *Why has the illustrator drawn so many pictures of Rocky?*
- On page 6, expect the students to notice Mika’s expression and that Rocky is not looking at the tennis ball. Encourage the students to use the page 7 illustration to predict what is going to happen. They can confirm this when they read the story.
- Remind the students of the purpose for reading.

Monitoring the reading

- Observe closely as the students read the story quietly to themselves. Note their confidence and perseverance with challenges (including the noun phrases “touch rugby”, “tennis ball”, and “rugby ball”) and any instances of self-monitoring, cross-checking, and self-correction. Provide support to individual students as necessary. For example:
 - you may need to remind them of the characters’ names
 - on page 2 (or page 6), if a student stops at the end of line 2 thinking the sentence is finished, remind them to read on to the full stop
 - on page 2, if a student stops at “touch”, prompt them to read on to the next word (“rugby”) and to think about the meaning: *What have Mum and Mika come to watch?* Similarly, on page 3, if a student stops at “tennis”, prompt them to read on so they can see that the next word is “ball”.
- If a student makes an error without noticing, wait until the end of the sentence or the page before intervening, unless they have stopped reading. Waiting gives the student an opportunity to notice the error and fix it. Use appropriate prompts to draw their attention to the error. For example:

Text in book	Student reads	Teacher prompt
Mum took a tennis ball out of her bag.	Mum took a tennis ball ... out of him ... he ... here ... her b-a-g (reading the sentence correctly but in a fragmented manner)	Ask the student to read the sentence again to check for meaning (and build fluency): <i>Now that you have worked that out, read it again and put the words together smoothly.</i>
Mika threw the ball, and Rocky raced after it.	Mika threw the ball, and Rocky ran after it.	Prompt the student to check the visual information. <i>That made sense, but check that it looks right.</i>
He wagged his tail.	He watched his tail.	Prompt the student to check for meaning. <i>He watched his tail? Are you sure?</i>

- Other prompts that you could use include: *Were you right?; Does that sound right and look right to you?; You said _____, does that make sense?; Try that again.; If the word was _____, what letters would you expect to see?*
- Remember to base these types of prompts on what you know about the students’ prior knowledge. For example, asking an English language learner if a word or sentence sounds right may not be useful if they are not familiar enough with English phonemes, vocabulary, or syntax to know the answer. In this case, an explanation and further examples would be more effective.

- Reinforce the students’ attempts to problem-solve, whether they are successful or not, for example: *You did some good thinking. I noticed you read “one” and then you fixed it. How did you know this word was “out”?*
- For further suggestions about ways to support students to self-monitor (to cross-check, confirm, and self-correct), see *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1–4*, page 130.

Discussing and rereading the story

- You can reread this story several times, focusing on different aspects and providing opportunities for the students to build comprehension and fluency. Many of the discussion points listed here also lead naturally into “After reading” activities.
- Encourage the students to share their responses to the end of the story. *Is that what you thought would happen? When did you realise Rocky was going to run after the rugby ball?*
- Remind them of the reading purpose and, together, summarise what happened in the story. Encourage the students to make connections to any similar experiences, for example, throwing things for a dog or a dog getting into mischief.
- Prompt the students to think critically (beyond the text). For example:
 - *Why was Rocky barking?*
 - *Why did Mum have a tennis ball in her bag?*
 - *Is Rocky a bad dog?*
- Have the students reread the story, stopping to discuss points of interest. You could draw attention to such features as:
 - the characters’ thoughts and feelings (including Rocky’s) as suggested in the text and illustrations
 - the sentences running over several lines on pages 2 and 6 (Remind the students to read on until the full stop even if the sentence sounds like it has finished. Model the appropriate phrasing and intonation.)
 - the use of speech marks to indicate dialogue and the attributions to clarify who the speaker is, especially on pages 7 and 8 where there are several speakers. (Encourage the students to read the dialogue in a way that shows how the characters are feeling.)
 - the use of noun phrases (“touch rugby”, “tennis ball”, and “rugby ball”) to provide detail (the sort of rugby, the sort of ball). Remind them to read on to the next word when the meaning isn’t clear.
 - words with inflected endings (“Watching”, “getting”; “watched”, “barked”, “raced”, “landed”, “shouted”, “wagged”; “wants”) or words ending with “y” as an “ee” sound (“Rocky”, “rugby”)
 - the irregular verb forms “took”, “threw”, “came”, and “ran”.

After reading: practice and reinforcement

After-reading tasks should arise from your monitoring of the students' needs during the lesson and provide purposeful practice and reinforcement. Where possible, make links to other reading texts, including texts generated from language experience and shared writing, and to the wider literacy programme (oral language, writing, handwriting, alphabet and word games and activities) and other curriculum areas.

Select from and adapt these suggestions, according to the needs of your students.

- Ask the students to reread the story to a partner. Listen in, noting their ability to use punctuation to support phrasing and expression. You may also use this time to do a quick running record with a student to provide more information on an aspect you have noticed.
- The students can build their comprehension and fluency by rereading the story while listening to the audio version. Audio versions also provide English language learners with good models of pronunciation, intonation, and expression.
- Provide opportunities to reread this book and other stories about this family, as well as humorous stories about families or pets (see Related texts).
- Have the students practise retelling the story to a buddy, then have them choose three key events from the story to draw and write about. They could add speech bubbles or thought bubbles to their pictures.
- Have the students work in pairs to plan what Mum and Mika might do with Rocky next time there is a touch rugby game. For example, would they bring him to the game?
- Discuss the words associated with touch rugby and the game Mika plays with Rocky (for example, “park”, “game”, “play”, “ball”, “threw”, “raced after”, “landed”, “field”, and the noun phrases “touch rugby”, “tennis ball”, and “rugby ball”). The students could create a group mural of the events of page 7 and add sentences or captions that describe what is happening.

- Build students' knowledge of word structure by exploring inflected endings. Write “watched” and “shouted” on the whiteboard and read the words together. *What is the same about the endings of these words?* Support the students to identify the root words “watch” and “shout”. *Show me how to write “watching”.* Together, generate some word families using these verbs. Give students copies of a chart (such as the one below) that has some completed word families based on verbs in the story and have them work in pairs to complete the rest. You could focus on just the regular verbs or include the irregular forms “took”, “threw”, “came”, and “ran”. (The example below lists regular verbs first.) Afterwards, discuss the students' completed charts together, for example, the need to remove the “e” from “race” and “come” when adding “ing”, the double “g” in “wagged” and “wagging”, and the double “t” in “getting”. Provide extra support for English language learners by composing oral sentences together using words from the charts.

Root word	-ed	-ing	-s
play	played	playing	plays
watch			
	barked		
	shouted		
race		racing	
	wagged		
	took		
	ran		
	threw		
	came		

- Have word games available that encourage students to sort words by common characteristics, such as inflected endings (“ed”, “ing”), endings in “y” as an “ee” sound, or those belonging to the same word family (“bark”, “barked”, “barking”, “barks”).