

# Craig and the Sister-catcher

by Jane Buxton

[From School Journal, Part 1, Number 1, 2004](#)

## Overview

A young inventor explains his latest invention and tells what it was like to enter the Young Inventionz Competition in Christchurch. He also talks about his ideas for future inventions.

## Features to Consider in Context

•	The structure of the text as an interview, with questions and answers
•	The use of italics to highlight the questions
•	The use of direct speech to give impact to the lead sentences in the opening paragraph.

## 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' experiences of making things
•	The students' experiences of siblings and family life
•	The students' experiences of competitions
•	The photographs that accompany the text
•	The combination of very short and very long sentences, which is typical of spoken language in interviews
•	Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: "wacky", "Inventionz", "interviewed", "habit", "basically", "a working model", "suction cups", "a scale model", "electronics".

## Introducing Students to the Text

•	Ask the students to share their experiences of being annoyed by siblings. What do they do about it? Ask them to think, pair, and share their ideas within the group.
•	Ask the students what people who have ideas and use their ideas to make things are called.
•	Introduce the title and tell the students that Craig is an inventor who won a prize in the Young Inventionz Competition in Christchurch. Draw the students' attention to the spelling of "Inventionz".
•	Tell the students that Craig has a sister called Georgia. "Why would he need a sister-catcher?"
•	Ask the students to discuss, in pairs, what a sister-catcher might look like. They may like to sketch their ideas.
•	Explain that the article is in the form of an interview with Craig. "How do you expect it to be set out?"
•	Share the purpose for reading the text. "We'll check our predictions about the form of an interview and compare your ideas about a sister-catcher with what Craig has made." Ask the students to read silently to "a description of the Door Net and how it works".

## During the Reading

•	Ask the students to compare their ideas with Craig's invention. How were their ideas similar?
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•	Ask the students to look carefully at the drawings on page 12 and 13 and, in pairs, explain what Craig needed to make a working model and how it worked to keep Georgia out of his bedroom.
•	Clarify any vocabulary causing difficulty.
•	“Why do you think Craig’s invention won a prize in the competition?”
•	Ask the students to read to the end of the article and check their predictions.

## After the Reading: Responding to the Text

### Possible focus areas for discussion

•	“Is there any evidence in the text that gives a clue why Craig’s invention won a prize?”
•	“Why does Craig think his slide-wheelbarrow was a stupid idea? Do you agree with him?”
•	“Which one of Craig’s ideas appeals to you most?” “Why?”
•	“How might a scale model be different from a working model?”
•	“How is the interview set out?” Draw the students’ attention to the italics and ask them what the purpose of using italics is.
•	Ask the students to reread the introduction to the interview. “Is this an effective introduction?” “Why?” “What features give impact to the beginning?”
•	Ask the students to discuss, in pairs, their ideas about what they would invent if they were to enter this competition. Chart their responses.

## Suggested Activities

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

<b>Suggested Achievement Objectives</b>	<b>Learning Outcomes</b> <i>Students will be able to:</i>	<b>Learning Experiences</b> <i>Students could:</i>
Presenting • thinking critically • exploring language	• draw and label a diagram to convey information about how an invention works.	• in pairs, choose one of Craig’s ideas or an idea of their own for an invention and draw a diagram of it, labelling the parts of their invention.
Interpersonal Speaking Presenting • exploring language • processing information	• ask open-ended questions to gather information; • present ideas verbally, explaining them clearly and clarifying them where necessary	• in pairs, plan an interview with another student about their invention; • respond to questions, explaining how their invention works.

## Links with Other School Journal Titles

“Todd’s Pigeons” 1.5.01; “My Invention” *The Secret Lake* (JYPW 1995); *Superbike* (SJSJL 1994, tape item no. 95164)

## Journal Search Categories

Family Life

Interaction

Inventions

Cross-curricular Link

Technology: Structures and Mechanisms

## Associated Websites

Young Inventionz

[www.younginventionz.co.nz](http://www.younginventionz.co.nz)

The Virtual Museum of Music Inventions

[www.musicinventions.org/](http://www.musicinventions.org/)

Water Safety New Zealand

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

Taking Good Care of Ourselves – Unit Plan

[http://english.unitec.ac.nz/resources/units/good\\_care/home.html](http://english.unitec.ac.nz/resources/units/good_care/home.html)

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# Look, Listen, Swim!

by Peti Nohotima

English version by Asaeli Afemui

[From School Journal, Part 1, Number 2, 2004](#)

## Overview

Papa Asa teaches a group of children to swim freestyle – without getting wet! When they finally get into the water, they find that Papa’s instructions are more helpful than they first thought.

## Features to Consider in Context

•	The structure of the text as a factual recount that is in the present tense and is told in the first person
•	The use of dialogue to tell what happens
•	The conventions of direct speech
•	The mixture of Māori and English vocabulary
•	The use of colloquial language.

## Readability

Noun frequency 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’ experiences of learning to swim
•	The students’ experiences of Māori language
•	The inclusion of a glossary
•	The photographs that accompany the text
•	Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: “Papa”, “freestyle”, “stretch”, “patient”, “rhythm”, “dolphins”.

## Introducing Students to the Text

•	Ask the students to think, pair, and share their experiences of learning to swim.
•	Introduce the title and the names of Papa Asa and Te Kauru. Explain that the text is a translation from Māori, so the students can expect to read some Māori vocabulary (for example, “e tama”). Tell them that there is a glossary of Māori words at the end of the article to help them with the meanings of the words.
•	Tell the students that the article describes how some children learn to swim freestyle. You may need to clarify the meaning of “freestyle”.
•	Share the purpose for reading the text. “Let’s read this text to see how the writer lets us know what happens and how the children are feeling.”
•	Ask the students to read silently to “‘Oh, man!’ we all think.”

## During the Reading

•	“How do the children feel about learning to swim? How do we know this?”
•	“What might they practise out of the water?”
•	“How do we know what’s happening so far?”
•	Use a shared reading approach for the next section to “Wow, you guys are awesome”.
•	“What movements are the children practising out of the water?”

•	Clarify the link between the Māori and the English instructions.
•	Ask the students to read silently to the end of the text and find the part that tells them whether Papa Asa’s method works.

## After the Reading: Responding to the Text

### Possible focus areas for discussion

•	Briefly discuss the evidence in the text that shows that the teaching method worked.
•	Ask the students to chant the instructions (“whātoro, whakakapu, pana, whanawhana”) with you to get the rhythm.
•	As a group, chant the instructions with the actions.
•	Allocate students to the roles of Papa Asa and the children. Ask them to read the dialogue only from “OK, now stretch out your left arm” to “Then you’ll be able to swim”.
•	Revisit the purpose for reading the text. “How has the narrator let us know, all through this text, what is happening and how the children are feeling?” Discuss the use of dialogue in a recount.

## Suggested Activities

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

<b>Suggested Achievement Objectives</b>	<b>Learning Outcomes</b> <i>Students will be able to:</i>	<b>Learning Experiences</b> <i>Students could:</i>
Listening to Texts • processing information	• follow instructions from a written text.	• as a group, practise Papa Asa’s method for learning to swim freestyle, out of the water and in the water.
Interpersonal Listening Interpersonal Speaking • exploring language • thinking critically	• devise a set of instructions using key verbs.	• in pairs, identify some of the key verbs in the text (e.g., “stretch”, “cup”, “push”, “kick”); • make an instructional chant for another activity (e.g., skipping or a ball game), incorporating appropriate verbs.

## Links with Other *School Journal* Titles

“Swimming Day” 1.5.92

## *Journal Search* Categories

Building Self-esteem

Schools

Sports

Swimming

## Cross-curricular Link

Health and Physical Education: Physical Activity

## Associated Websites

Assessing Student Swimming and Aquatic Skills

[www.minedu.govt.nz/index.cfm?layout=document&documentid=7913&data=1](http://www.minedu.govt.nz/index.cfm?layout=document&documentid=7913&data=1)

ACC: PoolSafe

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

Swimming NZ: About Us

[www.swimmingnz.org.nz/about/index.php](http://www.swimmingnz.org.nz/about/index.php)

Safety and EOTC

[www.tki.org.nz/r/eotc/resources/safety\\_e.php](http://www.tki.org.nz/r/eotc/resources/safety_e.php)

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# Lucky Escape

by Philippa Werry

[From School Journal, Part 1, Number 2, 2004](#)

## Overview

This poem uses rhyme and vivid language to describe a brief moment when a lizard escapes from a hunter.

## Focus for Discussion

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|---|--|
| • | Ask the students if they have ever watched a cat stalking its prey. “What did you notice about the cat’s movements?” “What might the cat have been hunting?” |
| • | Introduce the title of the poem and ask the students to predict what might happen in the poem.   |
| • | Have the students close their eyes and listen and visualise while you read the poem aloud.   |
| • | Allow time for the students to share their images before comparing them with the illustrations in the Journal.   |
| • | Ask the students to read the poem silently before miming the second stanza with a partner.   |

If you decide to explore the poem further:

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|---|--|
| • | Discuss what makes this an effective poem. You might consider:   |
| • | the nouns activated by verbs (for example, “Lizard skitters”)  |
| • | the rhyming words (for example, “dash” and “flash”)  |
| • | the alliteration in lines 2 and 10.  |
| • | Draw the students’ attention to the economy of the language in the first four verses. You could model a longer version (for example, “The sun is blazing and the lizard is lazing”) and ask the students to compare it with the lines in the poem. “What is different?” “What effect does this have when you read the poem aloud?” |

## Suggested Activities

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

<b>Suggested Achievement Objectives</b>	<b>Learning Outcomes</b> <i>Students will be able to:</i>	<b>Learning Experiences</b> <i>Students could:</i>
Personal Reading • exploring language	• identify the poetic language features, such as rhyme, and vivid language, especially verbs.	• read other poems that use vivid verbs and rhyming words for poetic effect (e.g., the “Koru” 1.3.03; “Cocoon” 1.4.02; “Cheetah” 1.3.02; “Spaghetti” 1.4.01; “Player of the Day” 1.1.01).
Using Texts • thinking critically	• read a poem with fluency and expression; • give reasons for their choice of poem.	• share a favourite poem with the group, giving reasons for their choice.

## Cross-curricular Link

Science: Making Sense of the Living World

## Associated Websites

Welcome to Forest and Bird: Lizards in the Garden

[www.forest-bird.org.nz/magazines/99nov/lizards.asp](http://www.forest-bird.org.nz/magazines/99nov/lizards.asp)

KCC: Tuatara Fact

[www.kcc.org.nz/animals/tuatara.asp](http://www.kcc.org.nz/animals/tuatara.asp)

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# Remembering Summer

by Sharon Holt

[From School Journal, Part 1, Number 2, 2004](#)

## Overview

Through a series of images, the poem conjures up memories of summer to reassure the winter-weary reader that warmer days will be back again soon. Its simple language, repetitive structure, and absence of rhyme would make it a good model for students' own writing.

## Focus for Discussion

•	Ask the students what their favourite season is. "What do you like most about it?"
•	Ask the students to draw a single image that reminds them of summer and share it with a partner.
•	Read the poem aloud to the students and ask them to shut their eyes while they listen and visualise what they see as you read.
•	Then compare the students' drawings with the images in the poem and the illustrations in the Journal.

## Suggested Activities

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

<b>Suggested Achievement Objectives</b>	<b>Learning Outcomes</b> <i>Students will be able to:</i>	<b>Learning Experiences</b> <i>Students could:</i>
Poetic Writing • thinking critically	• innovate on a poetic text, using an existing structure to convey images and ideas from their own experience.	• in pairs or as a group, write and illustrate a similar poem about another season, for example, "On hot, summer days ..."
Personal Reading • exploring language	• recognise the ways in which expressive language and images contribute to the effectiveness of a poem.	• read another poem about a season (e.g., "Cocoon" 1.4.02; "Autumn Leaves" 2.2.93; "Winter's Coming" <i>Junior Journal 15</i> ); • in pairs, create mind maps to extend and develop their vocabulary. Identify particular images or words that strongly remind them of what that season is like.

# The Experiment

by Diana Noonan

[From School Journal, Part 1, Number 2, 2004](#)

## Overview

“May the first – pie-warmer day!” But Alisha’s excitement soon turns to disappointment when she realises that nothing in her lunchbox is meant for the pie-warmer. A sympathetic teacher helps to solve Alisha’s problem, and a new fad for pie-warmer lunches begins.

## Features to Consider in Context

•	The narrative structure of the text, with a setting, dialogue between characters, a series of events leading to a problem, and a resolution
•	The use of dialogue to carry the storyline and develop characterisation
•	The conventions of direct speech
•	The use of italics for emphasis.

## 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’ experiences of school lunches and home-made baking
•	The students’ experiences and knowledge of attending rural schools
•	Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: “canteen”, “stew”, “pastry”, “monitor”, “Good grief”, “stomach”, “a tinfoil package”, “mystery”, “revealed”, “fudge sauce”, “solved”.

## Introducing Students to the Text

•	Ask the students to think, pair, and share their experiences of having hot lunches at school.
•	Introduce the title and read the first paragraph of the story aloud to the students.
•	Ask the students why they think the author chose this title.
•	Tell the students the names of the children mentioned in the story.
•	Share the purpose for reading the text. “We’ll read the text to see how the author uses the characters to tell the story.”
•	Ask the students to read silently from the beginning to “she might be going to cry” and think about how the author lets us know how characters are feeling.

## During the Reading

•	“What have we learned from the characters so far?”
•	“How are the characters feeling?” “How do we know that?” “What parts of the text make you think that?”
•	“What do you think has happened to upset Alisha?”
•	Ask the students to read silently to “That’s disappointing” to clarify Alisha’s problem.
•	Discuss the problem Alisha has. “How do you think her problem could be solved?”
•	Ask the students to read silently to “The steam ... smelled delicious”.
•	“What do you think has been heated for Alisha’s lunch? Why?”
•	“What else have we learned from the characters?”

- Ask the students to read silently to the end of the story to find out what the characters think of Alisha’s lunch.

## After the Reading: Responding to the Text

### Possible focus areas for discussion

- “What did we learn from the characters? Mr Swann? Alisha? Alisha’s father?”
- “How did the author get the characters to tell the story?”
- Draw the students’ attention to the use of italics. “What purpose do they have?”
- Allocate roles to the students (Dallas, Alisha, Mr Swann, Dad, and Mum). Have them read the dialogue from “She’s got egg sandwiches, a yoghurt ...” to the end of the story.
- Discuss with the students whether a narrator is needed.
- Distribute photocopies of the text with highlighters. Ask the students to prepare for a readers’ theatre by highlighting only the dialogue of their character.

## Suggested Activities

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

<b>Suggested Achievement Objectives</b>	<b>Learning Outcomes</b> <i>Students will be able to:</i>	<b>Learning Experiences</b> <i>Students could:</i>
Using Texts • exploring language	• read aloud with pace, expression, and fluency.	• as a group, practise reading the dialogue in a readers’ theatre.
Presenting • thinking critically	• present dialogue in the form of a comic strip.	• select a part of the story where the characters show how they are feeling and present it as a comic strip using some of the original dialogue.

## Links with Other *School Journal* Titles

“Amber Bakes Biscuits” 1.4.91; “Delicious Steamed Kai” 1.5.92; “Lunch at a Japanese School” 1.2.93; “Finding Breakfast” 1.2.94; “Leila’s Lunch” 1.4.96; “A Marshmallow Sandwich” *Junior Journal 18*

## *Journal Search* Categories

Eating for Health

Food Technology

Recipes

## Cross-curricular Link

Technology: Food Technology

# The Secret

by Robin Nathan

[From School Journal, Part 1, Number 2, 2004](#)

## Overview

This play shows that keeping a secret is not easy. Once Monica tells her secret to Te Rina, it's only a matter of time before everyone knows.

## Features to Consider in Context

•	The conventions of a play: a list of characters in capital letters, stage directions in italics, and dialogue between characters
•	The circular structure of the play
•	The link between the first and final lines
•	The element of humour
•	The questions
•	The use of contractions and simple and minor sentences to heighten the conversational tone.

## Readability

Noun frequency level: 7–8 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 keeping and telling secrets
•	The repetition of dialogue
•	Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: ““Cos”, “meant”, “bionic”, “supposed”, “blabbermouth”, “prove”.

## Introducing Students to the Text

•	Ask the students to think, pair, and share their experiences of telling or being told a secret.
•	Discuss with the students what could happen if you told someone a secret.
•	Introduce the title of the play and the characters. Check to see that the students know the difference between the stage directions and the dialogue.
•	Share the purpose for reading. “We’ll read the play to decide whether it’s serious or humorous.”
•	Ask the students to read to “MONICA leaves. ANNA comes in” to find out what Monica’s secret is.

## During the Reading

•	Clarify with the students what Monica’s secret is.
•	“What do you think will happen next?”
•	Ask the students to read silently to “ <b>JOSH.</b> “But it’s supposed to be a secret”.
•	Ask the students what’s happening to the secret.
•	“How do you think the play will end?”
•	Ask the students to read silently to the end to check their predictions.

## After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focus areas for discussion

•	Discuss with the students how the play ended and allow time for them to check their predictions with what happens in the text.
•	Discuss the first and last lines in the play. “Why has the writer chosen to do this?”
•	“How do you think Monica felt when she found out how many people knew her secret?”
•	“Is this play funny or serious?” “Why?” “Does that make it an effective play?”
•	“How would you prefer to present this play? – live, audiotaped, or videotaped?” “Why?”
•	Encourage the students to think about what they would need to do to successfully perform the play.

## Suggested Activities

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

<b>Suggested Achievement Objectives</b>	<b>Learning Outcomes</b> <i>Students will be able to:</i>	<b>Learning Experiences</b> <i>Students could:</i>
Presenting • exploring language • thinking critically	• communicate the main ideas of a play in a visual form.	• as a group, use a series of cartoons and speech bubbles to represent the circular progress of the secret.
Interpersonal Speaking Using Texts Presenting • exploring language • thinking critically	• use puppets to bring out the individual personalities of the characters in a play.	• make puppets and present the play as a puppet show, making each character different from others.
Using Texts • thinking critically	• read the poem with fluency and expression.	• create hand movements to dramatise the poem and present it to a younger audience.

## Links with Other *School Journal* Titles

“A Birthday Cake for Salote” 1.4.01;

“Birthday Party” 2.2.97

## *Journal Search* Categories

Ceremonies

## Associated Websites

CAFS: Truth and Lies Game

<http://education.indiana.edu/cas/tt/v3i1/truth.html>