

Email Runaway

by Feana Tu 'akoi

Overview

Braden is determined to run away, and emails his auntie for support. She cleverly convinces him that life at home is not so bad after all.

Features to Consider in Context

•	The conventions of email, such as the formatted headings and the use of casual language
•	The immediacy of email messages conveyed within a short time frame
•	The structure of the text, which includes the messages sent and received
•	The relationship between the author and the sender in the text, suggested by the surnames
•	The element of humour.

Readability: Supports and Challenges

Noun frequency level: 8–9 years

Suggested level: 8.5–9.5 years

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

•	Experiences of disagreement within families
•	The use of natural language, for example, “touching my stuff”
•	The relationship between the two correspondents
•	Familiarity with sending and receiving email messages
•	The specific language associated with sending email, for example, “Subject”, “Re:”
•	The subject titles, for example, “Spitfire Attack”
•	Concepts that some students may find challenging: “spare bedroom”, “ear muffs”, “Noise Control”, “attic”, “St Bernard”, “company”
•	Words that some students may find challenging: “definitely”, “complain”, “jolted”, “vicious”, “supersonic”

Introducing Students to the Text

•	“What problems do we sometimes have at home with the people we live with?” “How do they annoy you?” Think, pair and share responses within the group.
•	“How do we solve these problems?” “Who can help?”
•	Explain that in the text the students are about to read, Braden is having trouble with his little sister, Rhegan, and emails his aunt for help.
•	Explore with the students their experiences with email. Using an enlarged heading format, discuss the conventions.
•	Introduce the title. Ask the students to make a prediction about how Braden’s aunt might help him solve his problem and chart their responses.
•	Ask the students to read the first two email messages.

During the Reading

•	Ask the students if their predictions have been confirmed or not.
•	Read the next four messages to see if their charted predictions are still being confirmed.

•	“What are we learning about Braden’s aunt?” “Why do you think of her replies to Braden’s messages?” “Why doesn’t he run away to Auntie Nikki’s?” “Is she helping to solve the problem?” During this discussion, clarify any concepts or words causing difficulty.
•	The students can now read to the end of the story and decide whether Braden’s problem is solved. How does this compare with their charted predictions?

After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focuses for discussion

•	“Why do you think Braden’s aunt discouraged him from coming?”
•	“Has Braden’s problem been solved?”
•	“What might he do next?”
•	Briefly discuss whether Braden might encourage his auntie to come or not. Why?

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>
Poetic Writing • thinking critically • exploring language	• draw on their knowledge of the text to express ideas in email form.	• in pairs, reply to Auntie Nikki’s last email message.
Expressive Writing • exploring language • thinking critically	• write spontaneously to record personal experiences.	• use email to send messages to each other.
Close Reading Viewing and Presenting • thinking critically • processing information	• respond to meaning, showing how words and images can combine to convey ideas.	• use the text to draw a plan of Auntie Nikki’s house and show the obstacles that persuaded Braden not to run away.

Links with other School Journal titles

“Tough Talk” 2.4.94; “Dear Abby” 1.5.92; “A Letter to Granny” 1.5.94; “Love from Simon” 1.4.96; “Wild Bill’s Secret Wish” 2.4.95; “When I Was Young” 2.1.96; “Socks” 2.3.93

School Journal Catalogue Categories

Humorous Stories

Cross-curricular Links

Technology

Health and Physical Education: Relationships with Other People

Associated Websites

[Email Opens up a World of Possibilities](#) A personal account of ways in which email can be used to encourage children to evaluate and develop their writing.

Lete's Dream

by Caroline Beaufort

Overview

A little girl dreams about returning to the islands to be with her grandmother again. Her dream comes true when her grandmother sends for her.

Features to Consider in Context

•	The structure of the text as a recount
•	The imagery and poetic language used when describing Lete's dream
•	The use of past tense.

Readability: Supports and Challenges

Noun frequency level: 7–8 years

Suggested level: 7.5–8.5 years

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

•	The students' relationships with grandparents
•	Students' feelings of being homesick or missing someone they love
•	Students' memories of the time when they were little
•	The manageable length of the text
•	Words that some students may find challenging: "soaring", "Pacific", "frigate", "opals", "fale"

Introducing Students to the Text

•	Ask the students if they have ever missed anyone, perhaps when staying away from home. Explore feelings of being homesick and feeling far away from someone they love.
•	Ask the students if they have stayed with their grandparents. "What do you remember was the best thing about staying at your grandparents' place?" Think, pair and share the experiences.
•	Introduce the title of the story and explain that Lete's grandmother lives in the islands in the Pacific Ocean. Ask the students to predict what Lete might remember about her grandmother's place and the islands and share their prediction with a partner.
•	Distribute the Journals, asking the students to view the illustrations on the first two pages and read to "return to her island home" to check their predictions.

During the Reading

•	Ask the students if their predictions related to the text. Refer to the text to identify the memories that Lete has.
•	Ask the students to close their eyes and think of their grandparents' place: what colours do they see? Tastes? Smells?
•	Clarify any vocabulary causing difficulty and ask the students, "What can you do if you come to a tricky word?" Refer to the suggestions made in these notes under "Huhu Escape" – During the Reading.
•	Make a prediction about what Lete misses most and share responses within the group.
•	Read to the end of the story to check predictions.

After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focuses for discussion

• Compare the students' predictions with what Lete missed most, with reference to the text.
• Briefly discuss the end of the story, drawing attention to the feelings of the grandmother and Lete.
• Ask the students to close their eyes and picture Lete's dream in their heads, while you read paragraphs 4–7 aloud.
• Ask the students to re-read this part of the text and, in pairs, to identify any words or phrases that help this piece of text sound like a dream.
• Chart their responses and discuss the meaning of words, for example, "soaring" and phrases like "the dark blue sea the colour of opals".

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>
Close Reading Viewing and Presenting • thinking critically	• respond to meaning using verbal and visual features to convey ideas.	• as a group, paint Lete's dream using the language from the text as a guide.
Poetic Writing • thinking critically • exploring language	• draw on their personal background and experience to shape ideas in a poem.	• as a group, write a co-operative poem: At my grandparents house I see / I taste / I smell / I hear / I feel.
Poetic Writing Viewing and Presenting • thinking critically • exploring language	• draw on their personal experience. • combine words and images to express meaning.	• create a dream tree, attaching painted or written dreams to form the leaves.

Links with other School Journal titles

"The Birthday Pillow" 2.4.97; "Catching Coconut Crabs" 1.5.92; "Feeding Time" *Junior Journal 16*; "Fish and Chips in Tokelau" *Junior Journal 6*; "Hot Bread" 1.4.99; "Pinaleka's Loose Tooth" *Junior Journal 17*; "An Unexpected Wish" 1.4.97

School Journal Catalogue Categories

Pacific Islands

Family Life

Cross-curricular Links

Health and Physical Education: Relationships with Other People

Social Studies: Place and Environment

Associated Website

Grandmother and Me <http://www.kidlink.org/KIDPROJ/grandmother/> A project about grandmothers around the world. Students are encouraged to tell the names they call their grandmother, ways they spend their time (or did spend their time), with their grandmother, and why she is so special. Students of all ages are invited to participate.

Huhu Escape

by Jan Maguiness

Overview

This article describes the life cycle of a huhu grub and its ultimate escape from its cage to the world beyond.

Features to Consider in Context

•	Simple sentence structure
•	Photographs which convey information
•	The use of the past tense, including the past perfect, for example, had started, had gone, had eaten.
•	The use of commas to encourage phrasing.

Readability: Supports and Challenges

Noun frequency level: 7.5–8.5 years

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

•	The manageable length of the text
•	Photographs that support the text
•	Vocabulary that is subject-specific: “huhu grubs”, “adult”, “soft bodies”
•	Words that some students may find challenging: “observe”, “develop”, “bodies”, “tunnels”, “harder”, “flown”.

Introducing Students to the Text

•	Ask the students if they have found interesting creepy crawlies. Have them share their experiences in pairs.
•	If appropriate, refer to the students’ prior knowledge about life cycles of insects.
•	Introduce the title and ask the students to predict what the huhu grubs might escape from. Share and list the students’ responses.
•	Distribute the Journals, setting a purpose for reading. Ask the students to skim the photographs and read the first two paragraphs to check their predictions about who or what the huhu grubs are escaping from.

During the Reading

•	Ask the students if their predictions matched what is in the text.
•	“What will you do if you come to a tricky word?” Encourage a range of responses that include the following:
•	Look carefully at the letters: beginning, medial, and final.
•	Use clusters of letters from known words to get to new words.
•	Use letter-sound knowledge.
•	Think about the meaning. Reread a part of the text or read on a little way and come back to the tricky word.
•	Use the illustrations or diagrams.
•	Ask, “Does that make sense?” “Does it sound all right?” “Do we talk like that?”
•	Refer to the text to model one or two strategies.

•	Encourage the students to monitor their reading, by cross-checking meaning and structure with the visual information to improve their reading and self-correct their errors. For further information refer to <i>The Learner as a Reader</i> , chapter 3.
•	Ask the students to read to the end of the text and record any interesting words they find.

After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focuses for discussion

•	Clarify and discuss the words the students have recorded.
•	Ask the students to silently re-read paragraph 3, noting and pausing at commas.
•	Briefly discuss the stages in the life cycle of the huhu grub.
•	Ask the students to mime the huhu grub's life cycle while you read the text aloud to them.
•	Discuss with the students how diagrams show insect life cycles. Preferably have an example. Relate this to the life cycle of the huhu grub.

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>
Viewing and Presenting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • thinking critically • exploring language • processing information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • convey information using verbal and visual images. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as a group, draw a large life cycle of the huhu grub for display, using 3D for effect.
Using Texts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • processing information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpret and present information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain the life cycle of the huhu grub to another group, using photographs from the text.
Close Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exploring language • processing information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use reference texts to identify information, select, and record in note form. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use the library or internet to find interesting facts about beetles and share findings with the group.
Viewing and Presenting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • thinking critically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate ideas using verbal and visual images. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • investigate habitats for beetles in the playground and make observational drawings of any insects found.

Links with other School Journal titles

“Wetas with Backpacks” *Junior Journal 13*

School Journal Catalogue Categories

Insects

Cross-curricular Links

Science: Making Sense of the Living World

The Arts: Drama

The Visual Arts

Associated Website

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Letter to a Small Island

Josh Long talks to Clare Bowes

Overview

Josh's interest in collecting Pacific islands stamps leads him to discover Raoul Island. He writes to one of the five residents and receives an interesting reply.

Features to Consider in Context

•	The text structure includes letters and a fact file embedded within a factual account
•	The use of the present tense
•	The use of bullet points to organise information in a list
•	The use of headings within the text.

Readability: Supports and Challenges

Noun frequency level: 9–10 years

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

•	The students' experiences of collections and collecting
•	The organisation of the text in manageable chunks
•	The process of sending and receiving mail overseas
•	Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: "Pacific", "Raoul", "resident", "enclosed", "postmark", "dinghy", "nature and marine reserve", "threaten", "weather balloon".

Introducing Students to the Text

•	Share the students' experiences of collecting, and the reasons for their interest in collecting certain items.
•	Introduce the title. Ask the students to predict why Josh is writing this letter.
•	Locate Raoul Island on the map. Tell the students that only five people live on Raoul and ask them to think, pair, and share within the group, what life might be like on Raoul Island.
•	What would you like to find out about Raoul Island? Allow time for the students to generate questions and quickly chart these for later reference.
•	Ask them to read to the end of the first letter and check their predictions about Josh's reasons for writing his letter.

During the Reading

•	Ask the students to compare their predictions with the text.
•	Discuss any concepts causing difficulty: "resident", "enclosed stamp", "postmark". Show an example of a postmark.
•	Refer to the map and briefly discuss how long it takes letters to go to Australia or England by air and by sea. Compare this with how long they think it will take Josh's letter to go to Raoul.
•	Ask the students to read to the end of the article to see if they can find answers to their questions, which were charted earlier.

After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focuses for discussion

•	“Has anyone found the answer to their question?” Discuss with reference to the chart and the text.
•	Discuss the process of sending and receiving a letter from Raoul Island and the reasons for the length of time it takes.
•	Clarify the students’ understanding of the concepts in the fact file and ask if there is anything else they want to investigate. (However, it is not advisable for everyone to write to the Raoul Island residents!)

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>
Close Reading Viewing Presenting • processing information • thinking critically	• communicate ideas using visual and verbal images.	• in pairs, represent in picture form the journey of the letter to and from Raoul Island.
Viewing Presenting • thinking critically • exploring language	• use verbal and visual features to communicate ideas. • use conventions which apply to stamps.	• use one of the facts to design a stamp for Raoul Island.
Viewing Presenting • processing information	• respond to meaning. • gain and present information.	• use the Internet or the Meteorological Service to find further information about the weather balloon and the service it provides. • share findings within the group.

Links with other School Journal titles

“Mail Day” 1.2.92; “Personal Mail” 3.1.91; “Sending a Parcel in India” 2.2.90; “Whirlwind” 1.1.90;

School Journal Catalogue Categories

Pacific Islands

Communications

Mail

Cross-curricular Links

Science: Planet Earth and Beyond

Social Studies: Place and Environment

Technology

Associated Websites

Raoul Island http://volcano.und.nodak.edu/vwdocs/volc_images/img_raoul.html

Volcano Live <http://www.volcanolive.com/contents.html>

Kermadec Marine Reserve <http://www.doc.govt.nz/Conservation/Marine-and-Coastal/Marine-Reserves/Kermadec.asp>

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Soft Toys

by Julia Bracegirdle

Overview

This article offers an account of the soft toys made by the children in Room One along with instructions on how to make a soft toy. Teachers may decide to spend two sessions to deal with the content in this article.

Features to Consider in Context

•	The structure of the text, which includes an account and a set of instructions for making a soft toy
•	The repetitive sentence structure in the first part of the article
•	The numbered steps and use of action verbs at the beginning of each instruction in the procedural text
•	The use of present tense
•	The use of adjectives to describe the children's toys.

Readability: Supports and Challenges

Noun frequency level: 8–10 years

Suggested level: 9–10 years

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

•	The students' experiences of owning soft toys
•	The students' experiences of making things which involve sewing
•	Familiarity with the text structures
•	The proper nouns; the names of the Room One children
•	Words that some students may find challenging: "design", "spiky", "heart", "stripes", "fabric", "foam chips", "pantyhose".

Introducing Students to the Text

•	Ask the students about their favourite soft toys. How long have they had them? In pairs, have the students tell each other what their favourite soft toy looks like.
•	Ask the students who made their soft toys. Have they been bought (commercially made) or hand-made by someone? Discuss the features of soft toys: the huge variety available, what makes them soft, and why people like them.
•	Set a purpose for reading. Read the first part of the article and ask the students how they would describe their favourite soft toy and what they could say about it.

During the Reading

•	Provide a model for the students' responses: for example, "... soft toy has ... and ...". You may discuss the use of adjectives or similes with the students.
•	You may decide to finish the session at this point.
•	Explain that the students are now going to read the instructions about how to make a soft toy and start to make their own.
•	Ask the students to read silently the first five instructions and think about the shape of the toy they will make.
•	Ask the students to make an initial sketch and be ready to discuss their soft toy shape.

After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focuses for discussion

•	Have the students modify their soft toy shapes if necessary.
•	Proceed through the first five steps, modelling and guiding the students at each step.
•	Read the rest of the instructions together and allow the students to complete their soft toys over the next few days.

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>
Poetic Writing • thinking critically	• record their experiences, shaping ideas and making language choices.	• write a co-operative story innovating on the text model about the soft toys they have made.
Transactional Writing • exploring language	• organise text in a list.	• make a list of the materials they used to make their toy.
Interpersonal Speaking • thinking critically	• talk about personal experiences, clarifying meaning.	• explain to another class member the steps involved in making their toy.

Links with other School Journal titles

“Can You Wear a Teddy Bear?” 1.3.99; “Toys from the Solomon Islands” 3.2.93

School Journal Catalogue Categories

Activities

Toys

Cross-curricular Links

Technology

Associated Websites

English Online units

Moving Toys http://english.unitecology.ac.nz/resources/units/moving_toys/home.html

Come Fly a Kite <http://english.unitecology.ac.nz/resources/units/kites/home.html>

Puppets <http://english.unitecology.ac.nz/resources/units/puppets/home.html>

Seven Eights

by Roger Telenius

Overview

This humorous play will appeal to children's sense of the ridiculous. The action has the characters queuing up to purchase tables from a times tables shop for the purpose of passing a test.

Features to Consider in Context

The features outlined below could constitute either supports or challenges for individual readers.

•	The conventions of a play, including a list of characters in uppercase letters at the beginning, stage directions in italics with stage directions for specific characters in parenthesis
•	The use of ellipsis
•	The use of natural language and short sentences.

Readability: Supports and Challenges

Noun frequency level: 8–9 years

Suggested level: 9–10 years

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

•	The students' knowledge of multiplication tables
•	The students' familiarity with mathematics tests at school
•	The students' familiarity with the format of a play
•	The unusual concept of purchasing tables from a shop
•	Words and concepts that some children may find challenging: "wrapped", "particular", "cycle courier", "actually", "waltzing"

Introducing Students to the Text

•	"What ways do you have of remembering your tables?" Use the five times table to discuss students' strategies.
•	"Read the play and find out how the characters learn their tables."

After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focuses for discussion

•	"Did any of the characters learn their tables like you do?"
•	Clarify how the children in this play learnt their tables.
•	Discuss the characteristics of successful play reading: following cues, fluency, expression, maintaining pace.
•	Ask the children to practise reading the play to develop pace, fluency, and expression.

Links with other School Journal titles

"Crazy Answers" 1.1.97; "The Ghastly Test" (JYPW 1994)

School Journal Catalogue Categories

Mathematics

Humorous Plays

Cross-curricular Links

Mathematics: Number

Associated Websites

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Kai 'Umu

by Feana Tu'akoi

Overview

This highly structured poem in the diamante form communicates both the cooking method and delicious taste of food cooked in an umu.

Kai 'Umu could be read in conjunction with the story, "Lete's Dream", in this Journal.

Focus for Discussion

Read the poem to and with the students for the meaning. Ask the students to think, pair, and share their experiences of eating food that has been cooked outside (hangi, barbecue).

Ask the students what they notice about the shape of the poem and how the poet has achieved this effect. Ask them to reread the poem in pairs to discover any pattern the poet has used.

(The pattern of syllables on each line: 1 2 3 4 5 4 3 2 1)

You may like to write a co-operative poem with the students to model the diamante form.

Choose a topic the class is studying, or use a familiar experience, for example, rainy weather.

Links with other School Journal titles

"Making an Umu" (JYPW 1999)

School Journal Catalogue Categories

Cooking

Associated Website