

# Kosta's Problem

by Dina Viatos

## Overview

Kosta is upset because other children laugh at him when he wears his national costume at school. He feels better when he sees other children wearing their national costumes, which also include skirts.

## Features to Consider in Context

•	The concepts of national costumes and cultural symbols
•	The concept that it's acceptable to be different
•	The conventions of direct speech
•	The considerable number of contractions: "they've", "don't", "that'd", "I'm", "we're", "they'll", "you'll", "doesn't"
•	The use of exclamation marks and question marks.

## Readability: Supports and Challenges

Noun frequency level: 7.5–8.5 years

Suggested level: 8–9 years

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

•	Familiarity with the classroom setting and school procedures
•	The familiar pattern of events that take place between school and home
•	The students' cultural experiences
•	The illustrations that accompany the text
•	The length of the text
•	Concepts and words that some students may find challenging: "national costume", "pleated", "embroidered", "leather", "pompoms", "whined", "dumb", "Konstantino", "convinced", "sulked", "Zorba dance", "suggested", "kia kaha", "kilt", "piupiu", "lāvalava", "highland fling", and "sāsā"

## Introducing Students to the Text

•	Discuss with the students their experiences of school concerts, fancy dress parties, or occasions when students have dressed in costumes.
•	Introduce the concept of national costumes and, if appropriate, ask the students to share what they know about their own national costume. (Some students may own or have seen dolls in national costumes.)
•	Introduce the title and ask the students to view just the illustration on the first page. Use this discussion to introduce specific vocabulary, such as pleated skirt, embroidered jacket, and pompoms.
•	Ask the students to predict what Kosta's problem might be and chart their responses. The students can then read to "Different is dumb!" to check their predictions.

## During the Reading

•	Discuss the students' predictions with reference to the text. Add Kosta's problem to the chart.
•	Clarify any vocabulary causing difficulty.

•	“How is Kosta’s problem going to be solved?” Think, pair, and share the students’ responses before asking them to view the remaining illustrations to check their predictions.
•	“Read to ‘They looked awesome!’ to check your predictions about how Kosta solved his problem.”
•	Discuss Kosta’s feelings when he saw his friends wearing their costumes.
•	Refer to the chart made earlier to clarify Kosta’s problem. Ask the students to read to the end of the story, noting any phrases or sentences which tell them that Kosta’s problem is solved.

## After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focuses for discussion

•	Share the parts of the story which show that Kosta’s problem has been solved.
•	Discuss with the students the positive aspects of being different.
•	Discuss the different cultural dances and allow the students the opportunity for impromptu performance.

## 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>
Personal Reading Viewing • processing information	• select and read for information.	• in pairs, using the Internet, a CD- ROM, or the library, investigate the various countries of origin and their particular costumes.
Presenting Interpersonal Speaking • processing information	• present relevant information.	• present their findings orally or visually to the class.

## Links with Other School Journal Titles

“On Stage!” 3.3.90; “Making a Piupiu” *Junior Journal* 7; “Taiana’s Ngatu” 3.2.98

## School Journal Catalogue Categories

Clothing

## Cross-curricular Links

Health and Physical Education: Mental Health

Social Studies: Culture and Heritage

## Associated Websites

Māori Treasures – Weaving [http://www.maoritreasures.com/konae\\_aronui/weave.htm](http://www.maoritreasures.com/konae_aronui/weave.htm)

# Fears

by Alison Wilson

## Overview

Brooke likes dogs but is scared of high places. The story turns full circle when Brooke describes how each of her friends can be brave in some situations but scared in others.

## Features to Consider in Context

•	The layout of the prose in short sections
•	The connections formed between the sections by the concept of one character's fear being another's forté
•	The repetitive sentence structures at the beginning and end of each section
•	The use of commas to separate items in a list
•	The use of ellipses
•	The use of adjectives
•	Adjectives that show comparison: "braver", "bravest", "tallest", "deepest", and "spookiest"

## 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 students' experiences of things that scare them and feelings associated with fears
•	Chunks of manageable text
•	The repetitive nature of the text
•	The concepts and vocabulary are within the experiences of most students reading at this level.
•	The proper nouns – the names of some characters
•	Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: "fierce", "rough", "shaggy", "except", "flying fox", "roller coaster", "wētā", "spookiest", "dolphin", and "breath"

## Introducing Students to the Text

•	Discuss your own and the students' fears, charting their responses.
•	Refer to the chart and ask the students who feels brave about any of the listed fears. You could mark these with an asterisk.
•	Introduce the title and ask the students to predict what Brooke might be afraid of.
•	Ask the students to read the first section and check their predictions.

## During the Reading

•	Check the students' predictions with the text and add to or asterisk the chart as appropriate.
•	Ask the students to read to the end of the text and find out what scares Alice, Joseph, Ripeka, Min, and Harry.

## After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focuses for discussion

•	Discuss the various fears of the characters, adding to the chart and relating them to the earlier responses made by the students.
•	Refer to the chart and the text, asking the students, “Who was brave about this?” The students could read the relevant section of the text and asterisk the chart to denote bravery.
•	Ask the students, in pairs, to choose a character and generate ideas for helping that character to overcome their fear. Share the ideas within the group.
•	Refer to the adjectives used for comparison using the examples of braver and bravest. Ask the students to find other examples in the text.

## 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	• express meaning based on personal experience.	• in pairs, using the text as a model, write their own section to add to the story.
Using Texts Presenting	• work co-operatively and use drama to present ideas.	• in pairs, choose any of the fears from the chart and prepare a mime for the group that includes three actions.
Interpersonal Speaking Interpersonal Listening • thinking critically	• identify and question meanings, drawing on personal experience.	• As a group, prepare questions to interview one character in role to bring out information about the reasons for that character’s fears.
Interpersonal Speaking Presenting	• use drama to clarify meaning.	• allocate the role and use the hot-seating convention; refer to page 48 of <i>The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum</i> .

## Links with Other School Journal Titles

“Awangawanga” 2.3.96; “The Confidence Course” *The Secret Lake* JYPW; “Ghost Train” 1.2.99; “The Jump” 1.5.98; “The Magpie Tree” *Junior Journal* 18 (tape available, item number 99111, side 1)

## School Journal Catalogue Categories

Interaction

Relationships

Everyday Life

## Cross-curricular Links

Health and Physical Education: Mental health

## Associated Websites

For Kids – Being Afraid [http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/emotion/afraid\\_p2.html](http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/emotion/afraid_p2.html)

Figuring Out Phobias [http://kidshealth.org/kid/health\\_problems/learning\\_problem/phobias.html](http://kidshealth.org/kid/health_problems/learning_problem/phobias.html)

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# I'm the Oldest

a story from Burma retold by Barbara Beveridge

## Overview

In this traditional tale, a clever parrot provides an elephant and a monkey with uncontested proof that he is the oldest of the three.

## Features to Consider in Context

•	The retelling of a traditional oral story
•	The concept of arguing, where characters state their case and provide a reason for their point of view
•	The story structure, which includes setting, characters, a problem, and its resolution
•	The conventions of direct speech
•	The use of simple and compound sentences
•	The use of italics for emphasis
•	The use of commas to separate items in a list.

## Readability: Supports and Challenges

Noun frequency level: 8–9 years

Suggested level: 7.5–8 years

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

•	The students' knowledge and previous experiences of reading folk tales and traditional tales
•	The manageable length of the text
•	Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: "banyan", "argument", "youngest", "respect"

## Introducing Students to the Text

•	Ask the students what they know about the characteristics of traditional tales. You may like to give an example of one that has been recently read by the group. Characteristics may include animal characters, animals that can talk or act like humans, tricks played, a setting that is distant in time or place, and a problem that is solved.
•	Chart the students' responses using a bubble chart.
•	Introduce the title, using some of the vocabulary, explaining that the tale is about an argument between a parrot, a monkey, and an elephant who live near a banyan tree.
•	Before distributing the Journals, ask the students, in pairs, to predict who might win the argument about who is the oldest, giving their reasons.
•	Chart the students' responses.
•	Ask them to read the tale to check their prediction about who wins the argument and why.

## After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focuses for discussion

•	Discuss with the students who won the argument and why, comparing this with their prediction.
•	Discuss the reasons given by each character for their point of view. "Why did the parrot win the argument?"

•	“Why was it so important to be the oldest?”
•	Think, pair, and share ways in which you show respect to older people.
•	Return to the “traditional tales” chart and check with the features displayed in this story. Add to the chart if appropriate.

## 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>
Interpersonal Listening and Speaking • thinking critically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>innovate on the text.</li> <li>interact in a group, talking about events and clarifying meaning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>in groups of three, provide alternative arguments for the animals: “I’m the oldest because ...” so that the monkey or the elephant are the oldest animals.</li> </ul>
Using Texts Presenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>communicate ideas, using drama and adapting spoken language for an audience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>present their arguments within the group using role-play.</li> </ul>
Listening to Texts Using Texts • thinking critically • exploring language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>innovate on the text.</li> <li>tell a story to an audience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>in pairs, retell the tale using a rimu tree, a tui, a gecko and a kiwi.</li> <li>share the story with another group.</li> </ul>
Using Texts • exploring language • thinking critically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>read aloud using fluency and expression.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>present the tale as a Readers’ Theatre using a narrator and the three characters.</li> </ul>

## Links with Other School Journal Titles

“The Crab, the Crocodile, and the Cunning Jackal” 1.3.90; “Crow’s Idea” 1.1.98; “The Fox and the Tiger” 1.1.90; “The Wolf and the Shrimps and the Rabbit” 1.4.90

## School Journal Catalogue Categories

Traditional Stories

Talking Animals

## Cross-curricular Links

Health and Physical Education: Mental Health

Social Studies: Culture and Heritage

## Associated Websites

# The King’s Birthday

by Jill MacGregor

## Overview

It’s the day before the King of Tonga’s birthday, and everyone is busy with preparations for the feast that follows the grand parade and the celebrations at the sports stadium. The King also receives some special birthday presents. This article would support a classroom study about life in Tonga.

## Features to Consider in Context

•	The mixture of English and Tongan words
•	An introduction in italics to set the scene
•	The English words bracketed in the text that provide an explanation of the Tongan words
•	The chronological sequence of events
•	The use of the present tense
•	The footnote to explain “lu sipi”
•	Compound words: “birthday”, “breakfast”, “breadfruit”, “archways”, “overhead”, “necklaces”, “outdoor”, “grandstand”, “tomorrow”, “forward”, “everyone”

## Readability: Supports and Challenges

Noun frequency 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.

•	Familiarity with the Tongan culture and language
•	The students’ experiences of celebrations
•	The photographs that accompany the text
•	The students’ concepts of kings, queens, kingdoms, and public celebrations
•	The King’s title
•	Words and concepts that some students may find challenging: “celebrate”, “uniform”, “parade”, “archways”, “banners”, “procession”, “stadium”, “brass bands”

## Introducing Students to the Text

•	Ask the students what special days are marked by holidays. Discuss national days such as Waitangi Day, Anzac Day, Queen’s Birthday, Labour Day, and the reasons for these holidays.	
•	How are days like Waitangi Day and Anzac Day celebrated? Festivals such as Christmas or the America’s Cup celebrations could be mentioned. Chart the students’ responses.	
	NZ Celebrations	Tongan Celebrations
•	Parades	Add during reading
•	Brass bands	
•	Use this discussion to introduce some of the vocabulary: “parade”, “celebrate”, “uniform”, “banners”, “procession”, and “brass bands”.	
•	Introduce the title, allowing the students time to peruse the photographs. Read the introduction aloud to explain who the King of Tonga is. Locate Tonga on a map. Introduce the names of the family members.	
•	Ask the students to predict how the family members might prepare for the celebrations and share the students’ predictions with the group.	
•	Ask the students to read to “She mustn’t be late!” to check their predictions.	

## During the Reading

•	Compare the students' predictions with what happens in the text.
•	Ask the students to view the photographs carefully to predict what will happen during the King's birthday celebrations. Chart their responses.
•	Read to the end of the article to check their predictions and find any other information about celebrations to add to the chart.

## After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focuses for discussion

•	Discuss what happened during the celebrations with reference to the responses charted earlier. Add any further information.
•	Discuss the similarities and differences between the Tongan celebrations and other celebrations. Asterisk the similarities and use the information to construct a Venn diagram. The students could do this independently if they understand Venn diagrams.
•	Discuss how the writer made sure that we would understand the meaning of some Tongan words (the footnote and bracketed explanations).
•	Think, pair, and share a slogan for a banner.
•	As a group, sing <i>Happy Birthday</i> to the King.
•	Clarify any concepts still needing further explanation: 'umu pit, archways (ask the students to quickly sketch an archway), waist mat, kava plants, and woven mats.
•	Draw attention to one of the compound words and ask the students to find two more.
•	These could be charted for discussion.

## 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 Transactional Writing • exploring language	• organise information using a convention of writing.	• use Tongan words from the text and their explanations in English to construct a glossary in alphabetical order.
Interpersonal Speaking Interpersonal Listening • thinking critically	• clarify meaning, drawing on background knowledge.	• in pairs, make suggestions for what the King might do on his actual birthday. Share with the group.
Viewing Presenting • thinking critically	• show awareness of how words and images combine to make meaning.	• if involved in a study about Tonga or celebrations, recreate the procession with banners, necklaces, and a waist mat, role-playing the procession and gift giving.

## Links with Other School Journal Titles

“What a Feast!” 1.2.97; “Fakalukuluku” 3.1.97; “Pinaleka’s Loose Tooth” *Junior Journal 17*; “An Unexpected Wish” 1.4.97

## School Journal Catalogue Categories

Pacific Islands

Tonga

Cross-curricular Links

Social Studies: Culture and Heritage

Associated Websites

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# Worm Wise

by Jude Southee

## Overview

This article includes an explanation of how worms are farmed, followed by a set of instructions for making a worm farm. Teachers may like to use this article over two sessions.

## Features to Consider in Context

•	The explanatory structure of the first part of the article
•	The use of words that signal explanation: “so”, “if”, “then”, “as”, “because”
•	The use of subject specific vocabulary in both parts of the article: “worm beds”, “castings”, “fertiliser”, “barrel”, “body weight”, “moisture”
•	The use of commas to separate items in a list
•	The use of quotation marks before and after words: the “worm man”, the “worm beds”
•	The conventions of direct speech
•	The procedural structure of the second part of the article, with the title explaining the goal, the materials listed using bullet points, and the steps numbered in sequence.

## Readability: Supports and Challenges

Noun frequency level: 8.5–9.5 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 photographs
•	The students’ knowledge of worms
•	The students’ experiences of worm farms
•	Concepts and words that some students may find challenging: “woollen underfelt”, “manure”, “squirming”, “wriggling”, “produce”, “several”

## Introducing Students to the Text

•	Brainstorm with the students what they know about worms, charting their responses.
•	Tell the students they are going to read an article about a worm farm and ask them to view the photographs on the first three pages.
•	Introduce the title and ask the students why they think the writer has chosen this title.
•	Ask the students what they would like to know about a worm farm. Ask them to form their own questions using words like “who”, “what”, “when”, “where”, “why”, and “how”.
•	Chart the students’ questions.
•	Set a purpose for reading. Ask the students to read along silently while you read aloud to see if they can find answers to their questions. Read to “Kitchen scraps, grass clippings, wool, even paper because that’s made from trees.”

## During the Reading

•	Ask the students if anyone has had their questions answered yet.
•	“Have we found out anything about worms that we didn’t know before?” If appropriate, add further information to the chart brainstormed with the students earlier.
•	Revise decoding strategies. “What will you do if you come to a tricky word?”

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| • | Ask the students to read silently to the end of the article to find further information and answer their questions. |
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## After the Reading: Responding to the Text

Possible focuses for discussion

•	Discuss the answers the students have found to their questions, by referring to the text.
•	Clarify any vocabulary causing difficulty.
•	Ask the students where they might find answers to any unanswered questions.
•	With reference to the text and the photographs, model a labelled diagram that shows how the worm castings are extracted.
•	“Has anyone changed their mind about why the writer chose the title?” Discuss the meaning of the title.

## 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 Interpersonal Speaking Interpersonal Listening • thinking critically • processing information	• interpret and follow instructions.	• read the instructions with the teacher and make a worm farm.
Viewing Close Reading • processing information	• locate, select, and organise information.	• use the Internet, the library, and <i>Journal Search</i> to find further information about worms.
Presenting • thinking critically • processing information	• use verbal and visual features to communicate information.	• share the information found with the class.

## Links with Other School Journal Titles

“Wonderful Worms” 3.3.96; “A Letter from an Earthworm” 1.4.88

## School Journal Catalogue Categories

Invertebrates

Worms

## Cross-curricular Links

Science: Making Sense of the Living World

Technology: Materials Technology

## Associated Websites

The Adventures of Squirmin’ Herman the Worm <http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/worms/>

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# Morepork

by Margaret Schroder

## Overview

The calling of a morepork causes a commotion during the night and wakes the entire household. Just as the family members are about to get back to sleep in the early hours of the morning, a new noise disturbs them.

## Features to Consider in Context

•	The conventions of a play: a list of characters provided at the start, the stage directions in italics, the dialogue for each character with stage directions for specific characters in parentheses
•	A predictable text that repeats the main idea
•	The use of natural speech patterns and bird calls
•	The use of simple sentences
•	The use of bold format for emphasis
•	A comic twist at the end of the play.

## Readability: Supports and Challenges

Noun frequency level: 8–9 years

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

•	The family and home setting
•	The experience of being woken by noises during the night
•	Familiarity with the sound a morepork makes
•	The timing of the sound effects which are important to the flow of the play
•	The character Sound Effects, whose part is played off stage
•	Words that some students may find challenging: “bother”, “burglar”, “referee”, “whistle”, “drawer”, “several”, “racket”, “pyjamas”, “guess”

## Introducing Students to the Text

•	“What sorts of noises have woken you during the night?” Chart the students’ responses to this question.
•	Introduce the title and view the illustrations on just the first page. “What do you think wakes Mum and Dad?”
•	Discuss the call a morepork makes. As a group, practise calling “Morepork, morepork, morepork.”
•	Ask the students to predict how Mum and Dad will try to solve their problem of getting off to sleep. Share and chart the students’ responses.
•	Read down to “Shoo! Shoo! Go away bird!” to check their predictions.

## During the Reading

•	Is the problem solved? What have Mum and Dad done about it? Did that match your predictions?
•	“Has anyone got another idea about how the problem might be solved?” Add any further predictions to the problem-solving chart.
•	Read to the end of the play to see if any of the family came up with ideas that match yours.

## After the Reading: Responding to the Text

## Possible focuses for discussion

•	“How was the problem solved in the play?” “Why didn’t the family members’ ideas work?”
•	“Did any of our predictions match what happened in the text?”
•	“What do you think of the way the play ended?”
•	“What might happen next?”
•	“What could happen the following night if the morepork returned?”
•	How could you present this play? Discuss the advantages of taping the play as opposed to giving a live presentation.
•	Allocate roles for the students to practise reading the dialogue.

## 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>
Using Texts • exploring language • thinking critically	• read aloud informally. • practise fluency.	• practise reading the play as a group.
Presenting Using Texts • exploring language	• read aloud for an audience.	• perform the play for the class, or • tape-record their play reading for presenting to the class.
Presenting Poetic Writing • exploring language	• use the conventions and text organisation of a play. • read aloud for an audience.	• in pairs, rewrite a small part of the script to include dogs barking or cats fighting. Other ideas could be taken from the chart you made when introducing the text. • present the altered excerpt to the group.
Poetic Writing Presenting • exploring language • thinking critically	• use the conventions and text organisation of a play. • express meaning making appropriate language choices. • read aloud for an audience.	• in pairs, write a short scene that follows on from the end of the play. • present the scene to the group.

## Links with Other School Journal Titles

“Buttercup” *Junior Journal* 18; “The Fox with Good News” 1.5.89; “The Hungry Blackbirds” 1.4.90 “The Cross Afternoon” 1.5.93; “Room to Improve” 2.1.92; “Too Much Noise!” *Junior Journal* 21; “Mr Potae’s Garden” 1.3.95

## School Journal Catalogue Categories

Humorous Plays

Family Life

Birds

## Associated Websites

Ruru, the Morepork, the New Zealand Owl <http://www.nzbirds.com/Ruru.html>

Creatures of the Night <http://www.kiwirecovery.org.nz/extras/night/nocturn.htm>

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