

# Pōwhiri for a Prince

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From *School Journal*, Part 3, Number 2, 2007

## Overview

In this fictional diary from 1920, a young Māori girl shares her thoughts and feelings about an upcoming visit by Prince Edward and the dramatic impact of an influenza epidemic. The first-person narration helps the reader to make connections and visualise the personal impact of historical events.

This text refers to actual historical events, so you may need to provide some background information. For students new to New Zealand, you may also need to provide support with cultural understandings.

## Suggested teaching purposes

- To support the students in developing the comprehension strategies of **making connections**, summarising, and visualising.
- To engage the students in reading and discussing a text that presents a very personal response to dramatic historical events.

## Suggested learning goal

I am learning to make connections between ideas and pieces of information in this text to help me understand the historical event and imagine what it might have been like for the people involved at that time.

## Success criteria

I will be successful when I have:

- identified the place and time and the historical events described
- used clues in the text and illustrations to help me understand whose perspective we are viewing this event from
- found evidence in the text to help me imagine the impact of the historical events on the people involved
- formed my own ideas about why people in the 1920s might have responded to these events in this way.

## Features of the text

*What features of this text support the teaching purposes?*

- The historical events referred to in the text – the 1918 influenza flu pandemic, the First World War, the 1920 royal visit
- The use of the diary format and strong narrative voice to convey events from the perspective of a child and make a strong connection with the reader
- The focus on the human response to important events rather than on the detailed descriptions of those events, for example, the preparations that the community make demonstrate the mana that the royal visit has in the eyes of the Māori community and the narrator
- The foreshadowing of the influenza epidemic at the pā (10 April)
- The shift in the narrator's perspective on the royal visit and influenza epidemic (27 April)
- The old-fashioned vocabulary, for example, "drapery", "cheekin' me",

“influenza”, “tending the sick”

- The chant (and its translation at the end), written out separately as well as interspersed with the 14 May diary entry
- The extra information provided in the illustrations, for example, the title and information about the prince’s visit included in the mock newspaper on page 27.

## **Readability**

Noun frequency level: 9–10 years for guided reading

*What text features might challenge my students and require a prompt or a brief explanation?*

- The historical language and information
- The need to make connections or seek out further information to fully understand the significance of the situation (for example, where Lyttelton is in relation to Rotorua and why influenza would have been such a threat)
- The Māori words and concepts, especially for students new to New Zealand, for example, “Pōwhiri”, “haka”, “poi”, “pūkana”, “pā”, “hui”, “kāuta”, “mana”
- ESOL students may need support with the variety of verb forms relating to multiple time frames, for example, future forms – “will be given”, “will never forget”, “will catch”; past forms – “had”, “practised”, “saw”; and present forms – “are learning”. For teaching suggestions, see “Links to further learning” at the end of these notes. You could also refer to Exploring Language[stop italics], pages 62–69, for more information on verb forms.

*What prior knowledge or experience might help my students to read this text?*

- Their knowledge of New Zealand history, geography, and life in earlier generations
- Their experiences of preparing for important community events.

## **A framework for the lesson**

*How will I help my students to achieve the learning goal?*

### **Before reading**

- Tell the students that you have a text for them to read that presents a very personal account of some events in New Zealand in the 1920s. Together, make connections to any relevant texts that you and the students have been examining, for example, the timelines or historical articles in this and the other three 2007 centenary Journals or the *School Journal* centenary poster. Have a New Zealand atlas available as well in case the students need it as they read. (Making connections)
- Have the students look through the text to confirm the diary format. “What sort of information would you expect a diary to focus on?” (for example, personal information, thoughts, and feelings). Explain that the students will have to look for clues, make connections to what they know, and use their imaginations to understand the significance of the events the narrator is describing in this text. (Making connections; visualising)
- Share the learning goal and success criteria with the students.

### **During reading**

*Refer to Effective Literacy Practice in Years 5 to 8, pages 80–93, for information about*

*deliberate acts of teaching.*

- Tell the students that you want them to read the whole text to get an overall idea of events and then you'll revisit it together to draw out the deeper ideas.
- Have the students read page 27. Clarify what a pōwhiri is and the meaning of "mass" in this context. Have the students discuss why the newspaper only mentions Māori in relation to the pōwhiri. (Making connections; building vocabulary)
- Ask the students to read pages 28 and 29. Encourage them to look for clues to the meanings of the unfamiliar words, for example, "pūkana" and "drapery". (Inferring)
- Review the first two success criteria. "What have we found out so far about where and when? Who is the narrator? How do you know?" If necessary, have the students refer to the atlas to clarify where Lyttelton, Wellington, and Rotorua are in relation to one another. (Making connections; inferring)
- "What clues on page 28 are you noticing about the feelings of the characters, particularly the narrator's feelings?" (Making connections)
- Discuss the references to key historical events (the war and the influenza pandemic) in the 10 April diary entry. You could have the students refer to page 14 of the Journal for some background to the narrator's comments. If necessary, explain that in 1918, people weren't aware of how contagious flu was and that soldiers travelling home from the First World War inadvertently spread the virus all over the world, creating a pandemic rather than an epidemic. (Making connections)
- "What are you noticing about the difference in tone between the first paragraph on page 28 and the last paragraph on page 29? Why do you think the adults are so worried about the influenza?" Clarify that influenza is the full word for "flu". (Making connections)
- Have the students read to the end of the text. Draw out the idea of community pride and excitement. Encourage the students to make connections to any experiences they have had of important ceremonial occasions or meeting important people. (Making connections)
- Review the learning goal and the success criteria so far. Support the students with identifying and sequencing events in the text by using a graphic organiser like that below. Help them to identify the main time periods in the text and to complete the column on the left. (Summarising)
- Then ask the students to work in pairs, rereading the text to help them fill in the community's and the narrator's responses (what they think, feel, and do in relation to the event). Ask them to back up their ideas with examples from the text. Fill in the organiser for the first event as a group to model the process. (Making connections)

Events and dates	Community response	Narrator's response
Rotorua pōwhiri for royal visit announced in newspaper 1 March 1920	Māori from all over the country getting involved	To record a journal of the preparations her whānau and hapū are undertaking for this big event

<p>Preparation for pōwhiri Before the royal visit 23 March to 10 April</p>	<p>Māori from all over the country getting involved Lots of organisation (“Wiremu has written”; “The girls are learning”) Hui to discuss transport Excitement and best behaviour (“high spirits”; “People were even patient”)</p>	<p>Happy and keen to do well (“I practised my pūkana”) Wants to look good (“I’ve seen a dress”) Excited about the small things (“boiling mud”)</p>
<p>Flu epidemic 16–27 April</p>	<p>Worry (“Her face was pale”) Quick and big response (“we need to act fast”; “working day and night”) Everyone involved in some way (“Uncle Tui delivers soup”)</p>	<p>Disappointed about missing the royal visit and not wearing her dress (“My new dress ... I have to go!”; “I ran into our bedroom and cried”; “I felt like tearing it to shreds”) Helps Aunty and is “glad to be useful” Wants things to get better (“We need some sunshine”) Starts feeling differently (“I haven’t thought about Rotorua or the Prince for days”; “I just want everyone at the pā to get better”)</p>
<p>End of the epidemic 10 May</p>	<p>Relief and rest (“slept for sixteen hours”)</p>	<p>Hopeful (“Maybe now, the happy times will start”)</p>
<p>Pōwhiri (anticipation and event) 13–14 May</p>	<p>Anticipation (“Tomorrow the elders will ride”) Great pride (“faces of my whānau ... were lit up with pride”)</p>	<p>Happy and excited (“I can wear my green dress after all!”) Proud (“I did my best pūkana ever”)</p>

### After reading

- Review and discuss the students’ graphic organisers. “How much information about the actual historical events did you find out from the diary? What other ways than a diary could be used to present information about these events?” Draw out the idea of a timeline and discuss how it might differ from a diary in its focus. “Why do you think the author chose the diary form? What does that suggest about what she sees as important in

history?" (Analysing and synthesising; identifying the author's purpose and point of view)

- Compare the responses in the story with people's reactions today to the flu (access to doctors, knowing about how it spreads), to the memory of war (memorials, ANZAC Day services), and to travelling around New Zealand (changes to transport to make it faster) to show why these things were so dramatic then. (Analysing and synthesising; making connections)
- Review the learning goal and success criteria and reflect with the students on how well the learning goal has been achieved. For example, "From the story, what sense did you get of what these significant events in our history meant to the children and adults living at that time? Do you think that the diary text form is good for presenting historical events? Why or why not?"

### ***Links to further learning***

*What follow-up tasks will help my students to consolidate their new learning?*

The students could:

- brainstorm and write what they remember most about important events in their lifetime – for example, the Boxing Day tsunami, the day the All Blacks lost the 2007 World Cup quarter-final, or the day Sir Edmund Hillary died (Making connections)
- identify the variety of verb forms relating to time, and place them on timelines like the examples below. "Now" represents present time for the narrator, not the reader.

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