

# Feleti's Birthday

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## Overview

A young girl and her elderly next-door neighbour share a special relationship. Contained within this text is a health message about Type 1 diabetes. There are links between this text and "Nanny's Tokotoko" (SJ 1.2.08) and "Nana and the Flower Arranger" (SJ 2.1.08) in regards to relationships with elderly people.

## Suggested teaching purposes

- To support the students in developing the comprehension strategy of **inferring**.
- To engage the students in reading about a special relationship between a girl and her elderly neighbour.

## Suggested learning goal

I am learning to find clues about the relationship between the two main characters.

## Success criteria

I will be successful when I have:

- made connections to what I know about close relationships between young and old people
- predicted what the main characters think and feel about each other
- reread the text to find clues to back up or change my ideas.

## Features of the text

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

- The aspects of Sāmoan culture embedded in the text:
  - the Sāmoan vocabulary and the supporting glossary
  - the contrasts between life in Sāmoa and life in New Zealand
- The warm relationship between the main characters, conveyed through their dialogue and actions
- The implied reasons for the decline in Feleti's health, for example, his sadness about leaving everything he was familiar with and his inability to cope with the changes in his lifestyle
- The use of narrative to convey a message about keeping healthy
- The glossary and diabetes information on the inside front cover.

## Readability

Noun frequency level: 7.5–8.5 years for guided reading

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

- Experience of people telling stories about their lives.
- Experiences of relationships with older people and with people who have come from another country
- Awareness of diabetes
- Experience of Sāmoan culture

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

- The word “plantation”
- The Sāmoan words: “fale Komiti”, “paifala”, “to’ona’i”
- The idea of Feleti ‘giving up on looking after himself.

### **A framework for the lesson**

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

#### **Before reading**

- Tell the students you have a text for them to read about the relationship between a girl and her elderly neighbour. Encourage the students to discuss any relationships they have with an elderly person. Draw out the idea that elderly people often move more slowly and may develop health problems. You could discuss diabetes if it comes up in the conversation; otherwise, leave it until the reading to avoid obscuring the focus of the lesson. (Making connections)
- Share the learning goal and success criteria with the students.

#### **Reading and discussing the text**

*Refer to Effective Literacy Practice in Years 5 to 8 for information about deliberate acts of teaching.*

- Ask the students to read the first sentences spoken by Evelina and Kuinileti on page 13. “What does this suggest about the relationship between the two characters? Find the clues in the text to support your ideas.” (Inferring)
- Have the students read the rest of page 13. “What do we know about how Kuinileti feels about Evelina? Why do you think they have a friendship?” Draw out the idea that Evelina likes to talk about her life and Kuinileti likes to listen and help. “What clues does the author give us about how well Kuinileti knows Evelina?” (Inferring)
- “I wonder who Feleti might be. There’s been no mention of this person, and yet his name is in the title. Share with the person next to you who you think Feleti might be. Let’s see if the next page will tell us.” (Forming hypotheses)
- Have the students read page 14. “Were you surprised that Feleti had passed on some time ago? What can you infer about Kuinileti’s character? What helped you make those inferences?” Draw out the ideas that Evelina likes to talk about Feleti and that Kuinileti knows this. “I wonder what the author means by ‘Kuinileti knew better than to argue’ ...” (Inferring)
- Encourage the students to predict what the next part of the story will be about. If necessary, prompt them to reread the last two lines on page 14 to clarify that Evelina is going to tell Kuinileti about Feleti. (Forming hypotheses)
- Have the students read page 15. Briefly review the different activities Evelina and Feleti took part in when they lived in Sāmoa. (Summarising)
- Have the students read pages 16 and 17. “How has the mood of the story changed?” For example, you could prompt the students to reread the first sentence on page 16. “Why does Evelina start to speak more softly?” (Inferring)
- “From the information we have about their lives in Sāmoa, what can we infer

about how Feleti and Evelina felt when they moved to New Zealand? Do you think they both felt the same way? Why might they have come here?" (Inferring)

- "Why does Evelina think Feleti became ill? Do you agree?" Prompt the students to look for evidence in the text. Draw out the idea that Feleti felt sad when he moved to New Zealand, gave up, and stopped caring. (Inferring; analysing and synthesising)
- Ask the students to read page 18. "What can we say about how Evelina views Kuinileti?" Draw out the idea that Kuinileti helps her to feel young and gives her a reason to take better care of herself or ideas about positive thinking and how it affects your outlook on life. (Inferring)
- Discuss diabetes with the students and refer to the glossary and information on diabetes provided on the inside cover of the Journal. (Analysing and synthesising)
- Make a chart like the example below, listing the clues in the text about the relationship between Kuinileti and Evelina and what we can infer from this. Discuss the ways the author has conveyed their relationship through dialogue and actions. (Analysing and synthesising; inferring)

What the text states	What I think this means
"You'd better stop asking"	They know each other well.
she liked to visit Evelina	Kuinileti would rather spend time with Evelina than her friends.
she liked to hear Evelina's stories	Evelina likes to tell stories about her life.
She had her special top on, and she'd done her hair in a different way.	Kuinileti knows Evelina really well.
Kuinileti knew better than to argue.	Kuinileti knows Evelina would refuse help and likes to be independent.
"You can tell me about Feleti"	Evelina likes to talk about Feleti.
"You still miss him, eh?"	Kuinileti knows how much Evelina misses Feleti.
"I haven't put any sugar in it."	Evelina is looking after Kuinileti as well.
"I have you to visit me after school."	Evelina looks forward to Kuinileti visiting.

- Briefly discuss any words or phrases that the students found difficult and the strategies they used (or could have used) to work them out.
- Review the learning goal and success criteria and reflect with the students on how well the learning goal has been achieved. For example, "What are some clues that helped you build your ideas about how Kuinileti and Evelina feel about each other? Did you find anything that made you want to change your ideas?" Note any teaching points for future sessions.

### **Links to further learning**

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

- The students could write about a special relationship they have with someone. (Making connections)
- During shared writing, you could use the examples on the chart to draw out

links between what a reader does to infer and the sorts of things a writer does when they want their readers to infer. (Inferring; links to writing)