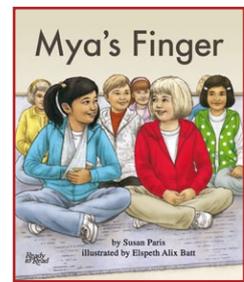


Mya's Finger

by Susan Paris
illustrated by Elspeth Alix Batt

This text is levelled at Orange 1.



Overview

Lucy and Mya are friends, but Lucy feels terrible when she accidentally shuts Mya's finger in a door. This seemingly simple narrative explores ideas about feelings and friendship and requires students to make connections to their own experiences.

Mya's Finger provides opportunities for students to “flexibly use the sources of information in text, in combination with their prior knowledge, to make meaning and consider new ideas” and “draw on a wider range of comprehension strategies to help them think more deeply about what they read” (all from *The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 13).

There is an audio version of the text on the *Readalong 2012: Ready to Read and Junior Journal 44 and 45* CD as well as on an MP3 file at www.readytoread.tki.org.nz

Cross-curriculum links

Health and physical education (level 1, safety management) – Describe and use safe practices in a range of contexts and identify people who can help.

Health and physical education (level 1, relationships) – Explore and share ideas about relationships with other people.

Text characteristics

The students are working towards the standard for after two years at school. Many characteristics of Turquoise texts are also in texts at earlier levels but in simpler forms. These characteristics are shown in the boxes with a solid outline. Other boxes show additional characteristics.

A mix of explicit and implicit content that provides opportunities for students to make simple inferences, for example, about how the characters are feeling and why they are friends

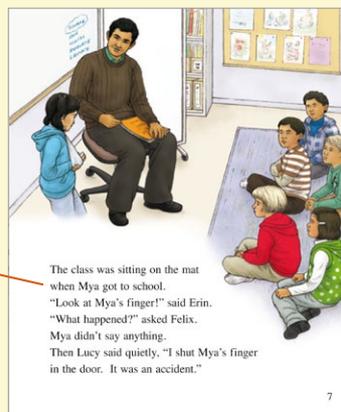


The shifts in time, with the cover showing the end of the story, and indicators of time within the text (“One afternoon”, “The next day”, “when Mya got to school”, “Then”)

The context of accidentally causing harm to someone, which may be outside the experience of some students, set within the familiar context of spending time with friends

Illustrations that support the meaning and may suggest new ideas or viewpoints, for example, on page 4, where the illustration shows that Lucy is feeling upset

A variety of sentence structures, including compound sentences and (on page 7) a complex sentence



The underlying themes of friendship, forgiveness, and being brave

Frequent use of dialogue and more than one character speaking on a page

Mostly familiar words, but some new topic words and descriptive language that are supported by the context and/or by illustrations (for example, “accident”, “brave”, “doctor’s”, “gently”, “hurt”, “quietly”, “screamed”, “slammed”, “sobbed”, “towel”, “wrapped”) The compound words “afternoon”, “anything”, “Everyone”, “Everything”, “Someone’s”, “Sometimes”

A suggested reading purpose

To find out what happened to Mya's finger and how the main characters felt about it

Setting a learning goal

(*What opportunities does this text provide for students to learn more about how to “read, respond to, and think critically about” texts?*)

Select from and adapt the opportunities below to set your specific learning goal or goals. In addition to using the information you have gathered about your students from a range of reading assessments, be guided by your students' particular needs and experiences – their culture, language, and identity (*Reading and Writing Standards for Years 1–8, Knowledge of the learner, page 6*).

The characteristics of this text provide opportunities for students to:

- make connections to their prior experiences and use information from the text and illustrations to infer
- draw on multiple sources of information, for example, grapho-phonetic information, known words, sentence structure, punctuation, context, and/or illustrations to make meaning
- monitor their own reading and self-correct where necessary, using strategies such as rereading text or checking further sources of information
- identify and discuss some main ideas.

Introducing the text

- Read the title. If necessary, explain the use of the possessive apostrophe to show that the finger belongs to Mya.
- Ask the students what questions they have about the cover illustration, for example, who, what, where, and why. Prompt the students to infer some answers to their questions, for example, that the two girls in the front row are friends, that Mya is the girl on the left, and that she has hurt her finger.
- Ask the students to share any experiences of times they or someone they know has hurt their finger. Prompt the students to use the term “accident” and talk about what it means.
- Begin a chart of adjectives to describe feelings. If possible, provide opportunities for students who have a first language other than English to discuss all of these ideas in that language.
- Share the reading purpose.

Reading the text

Below are the sorts of behaviours you want students to demonstrate as they read and discuss this text, on the first or subsequent readings. These are shown in bold. The behaviours are followed by instructional strategies you can use to support students to demonstrate those behaviours. **Select from and adapt** the suggestions according to your students' needs and experiences.

The students make connections to their prior experiences and use information from the text and illustrations to infer how the main characters are feeling and why they behave as they do.

The students draw on multiple sources of information to make meaning.

The students identify and discuss some main ideas in the text, for example, about friendship or being brave.

- **Title page** – *How does this illustration fit with our ideas about the cover and what these friends like to do? Let's read and find out.*
- **Page 2** – Prompt the students to notice that Mya's finger is undamaged in this illustration, so there has been a shift in time. The students can read to find out if this is before or after Mya hurt her finger.
- Listen to the students read the page quietly to themselves. Notice how they manage the interest words. If necessary, briefly show how “hide” loses its “e” when it becomes “hiding”.
- *What is the important idea on this page? (Mya and Lucy are friends.) How do you know? Tell me about Lucy and Mya.* Prompt the students to make connections to the illustration on the title page and to their own experiences of spending time with friends. *What are some of the games you like to play with your friends?*
- Tell the students that as well as using the words and illustrations, they will need to think about their own lives to help them understand and talk about the main ideas in this book. Ask the students to predict what's going to happen.
- **Page 3** – If necessary, prompt the students to attend to grapho-phonetic information to confirm “raced” not “ran” and “close” not “closed”, and to clarify the meaning of “close” by noticing the following word (“behind”) and/or rereading the whole sentence.

- **Page 4** – You may need to support students with “She gently wrapped a towel ...”, which contains several interest words. Prompt them to think about the meaning – how Mum will be handling the hurt finger. Have the students reread the sentence to check that their decoding attempts make sense. You may need to remind them of the different sounds that “g” can have (to support them with “gently”) and that the “w” is silent in “wrapped”.
- Have the students review their predictions. Model your thinking. *I think Mya is hurt.* Prompt the students to find clues that show this (for example, Lucy yells for her mum and looks as if she is feeling really upset in the illustration; Lucy’s mum gently wraps the towel around Mya’s finger and is going to call Mya’s mother).
- *What tells us how Lucy is feeling?* Prompt the students to use clues in the text and illustration and make connections to their own experiences (to visualise what it would feel like to have hurt your best friend). Refer to and add to your “feelings” chart.
- **Page 5** – Have the students read page 5 and confirm their inference about how Lucy is feeling. *Why did Lucy go under her bed?* Prompt the students to infer the meaning of “sobbed” if the word is unfamiliar. *What clues in the illustration tell us what “sobbed” means?*
- Take this opportunity to explore ideas about friendship and forgiveness. *Do you think Mya and Lucy will still be friends? What could Lucy do to make herself feel better?*
- **Page 6** – If necessary, clarify the use of “felt” (not “feeled”). *Lucy still seems to be feeling upset. What is she worried about? What does she think will happen? If you were Lucy, what would you do to make things better?*
- **Page 7** – *Why is Lucy speaking quietly? Did Lucy do a brave thing? Why?*
- Ask the students to review their predictions about whether Lucy and Mya will still be friends and then to read page 8 to confirm.
- **Page 8** – Ask the students to review their predictions and to make further inferences about how Mya and Lucy feel about the accident. *How did thinking about your own friends help you understand how Lucy was feeling? What did you think Mya was going to say?*
- Review the reading purpose. *There’s a message in this book about friendship. What do you think it might be?*

Monitoring during the reading

The students monitor their own reading and self-correct where necessary.

- You may have noticed students doing some self-monitoring during the first reading, but you can monitor more closely as the students reread the text quietly to themselves or to a partner. Note their ability to use the punctuation to support phrasing and expression, especially for the dialogue.
- When students make an error, wait till the end of the sentence or page before intervening, unless they stop reading. Waiting gives them the opportunity to notice the error and fix it themselves.
- Draw attention to the students’ use of strategies by asking questions or giving feedback. For example, *How did you know that bit was wrong? Or: I noticed that you reread that bit when you got confused. How did rereading help you?*
- If students are making errors without noticing a problem, use appropriate prompts to draw their attention to the error. For example:
 - If the student shows by their intonation (and possibly their pace) that they are ignoring punctuation, use prompts, such as *Read to the full stop* or *Look at the speech marks* to redirect their attention.
 - If the student reads “stayed” for “started” on page 2 or “smiled” for “slammed” on page 3, prompt them to look more closely at the word and think about what makes sense.
 - If the student has difficulty with “Someone’s” on page 3, prompt them to read the next word and use their knowledge of spoken language to work out that “Someone’s coming” means “Someone is coming”. (Similarly, the meaning of “close behind” on page 3 clarifies the meaning of the word “close”.)

Remember that these types of prompts are always based on what you know about the students’ prior knowledge. For example, asking an English language learner if a word sounds right may not be useful if they don’t have enough knowledge of English phonemes and vocabulary to know the answer. In this case, an explanation and further examples would be more effective.

- Create charts to remind the students about the strategies they could use when they read. Give feedback when you notice students adopting these new strategies.
- For further suggestions about ways to support students to self-monitor (to cross-check, confirm, and self-correct), see *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4*, page 130.

After reading: practice and reinforcement

After-reading tasks should arise from monitoring the students' needs during the lesson and should provide purposeful practice and reinforcement.

Select from and adapt the suggested tasks, according to the needs of your students.

- The students can build their comprehension and fluency by rereading the text while listening to the audio version on the CD or MP3 files. Audio versions also provide English language learners with good models of pronunciation, intonation, and expression.
- Have the students draw a picture and write three to four sentences about what they like to do with their friends.
- Ask the students to write about what makes a good friend or about a time when they were brave.
- Have the students add thought bubbles to photocopies of pages 5, 6, 7, and 8 to show what the characters are thinking at these points in the story. Have the students share their pages.
- Have the students retell the story. Prompt them to think about: who the main characters are; what happens in the story and how this affects the main characters; and how the story ends. The students could draw a picture for each part of the story and then share their pictures with a partner.
- Identify the alternatives to “said” in the text (“yelled” and “sobbed”) and discuss why the author chose to use them. *How do these words help to show how Lucy was feeling?* Together, list some synonyms for each word (“shouted”, “screamed”; and “cried”, “wept”). Discuss how the students could use words such as these in their own writing.
- Reread the sentences that include contractions and discuss what letters are replaced by the apostrophe. Discuss the less common example, “Someone’s”, and prompt the students to use their knowledge of spoken language to confirm that it means “Someone is”. If necessary, explain that “Let’s” is short for “Let us”.
- Write the compound words in the text on cards and cut them into their component words. Discuss the strategy of looking for the biggest known chunk when trying to work out an unfamiliar word. Make the cards available as an independent activity for students to recreate the compound words from the text, and add in extra copies of some words so they can create new words (for example, “any/where”, “some/thing”, “some/where”, “every/where”, “any/one”).

Related texts

- Texts about feelings and relationships: *Mum’s New Job* (Green); *My Name is Laloifi, Shimbir* (Orange)
- Texts about facing and/or overcoming a personal challenge: *I Want to be the Fox*, *Mum’s New Job* (Green); *My Name is Laloifi* (Orange).