

Wrybills at Risk

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Overview

There are fewer than 5000 wrybills left, and part of the problem is that people don't know they are there. This text outlines the steps a small community of helpers took to protect the wrybills in their area.

Suggested reading purpose and teaching purpose

Based on the information I have about my students' learning needs, what would be appropriate reading and teaching purposes for this lesson?

- To gather and explore information about an endangered New Zealand bird that is not well known and find out what some people are doing to protect it.
- To support the students in developing the comprehension strategy of **asking questions**.

Suggested learning goal

We are learning to ask questions to gain information from a text.

Success criteria

To support our comprehension of the text, we will:

- ask questions that the text raises for us
- look for information in the text that answers our questions
- explain how asking questions helps us to gain better understanding of what we are reading.

Readability

Noun frequency level: 8.5–9.5 years for guided reading

What features of this text support the reading and teaching purposes?

- The detailed report followed by a recount
- The parentheses containing additional information
- The supportive photographs
- The information about wrybills
- The use of questions under two photographs to engage the reader, with the answers on the inside back cover.

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

- Experience of studying other endangered animals
- Experience of beaches covered in stones rather than sand

- Experience of the features of reports and recounts.

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

- Particular words and phrases, including “ngutu pare”, “wry”, “larvae”, “shallow”, “nest”, “riverbeds”, “camouflaged”, “accidentally”, “Rakahuri”, “predators”
- Use of the word “nest” as a verb (including the concept that nesting involves laying eggs and raising chicks).

A framework for the lesson

How will I help my students to achieve the reading purpose and learning goal?

Before reading

- Share the reading purpose. Briefly introduce the text by telling the students that you have a report for them to read about a New Zealand bird, followed by a recount. Explain that, as they read these texts, their reading will raise questions, and tell them to keep these questions in mind as they read on.
- Discuss the various ways that the students could phrase their questions, for example, “I wonder ...?”, “What would happen if ...?”, “Why would ...?”, “How could this change?”
- Briefly revisit what the students know about the types of information, structure, and language they are likely to find in reports and recounts.
- 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.

As your students read through the text, support them with any unfamiliar vocabulary, grammar, and concepts as necessary.

- Read the title and look at the photograph. “What questions does the title raise for you?” Ask the students to share these questions and record them on a chart or in the group reading book for revisiting during the session. Remind the students that, as they read, they may or may not find the answers to their questions and that other questions may arise, either from these or as they read through the rest of the text.

Page 9

- “Have we found any answers to our questions?” Record answers from the text against the relevant question on the chart. If necessary, use the photograph to support the meaning of “wry”. “I’m wondering whether a riverbed is a safe place. Can you think of a question about where the birds nest?” Have the students think, pair, and share to come up with possible questions and record these. (Asking questions; forming hypotheses)

Page 10

- Ask the students to share with a partner the risks the eggs are exposed to. Then have the students share their findings with the group, using the text to support their answers. Look at the photograph on the opposite page and ask the students to find the eggs. “Now we know that people are a problem for the wrybills because people can’t see them. What questions does this raise for you?” Draw out the idea that perhaps if people knew the birds and eggs were there, they might take more care. “Five thousand birds isn’t very many; can you think of questions to ask about the future of these birds?” If necessary, prompt the students to think of questions, such as “What can be done to help the wrybill?”, “Who can help?”, and “What will happen if nothing is done?” Have the students think, pair, and share their ideas and add the questions to the list. (Asking questions; forming hypotheses)

Pages 12 and 13

- Discuss the change on page 12 from a report to a recount. Have the students look at the photographs and share their ideas about what they think is happening. “What questions do you have about what is happening in these photos?” If necessary, prompt the students to ask questions, such as “What are the boxes for?”, “What are the people doing with the plants?” and “Who are the children?” Record the questions. Encourage the students to answer their questions, using the information from the text. Draw out the idea that there is no explicit information about the boxes on page 13. Encourage the students to make the connection with the information about traps for predators. “I wonder why the wrybill doesn’t like plants.” (Asking questions; forming hypotheses)
- “Have we found any more answers to our questions?” Record the information from the text. Have the students think, pair, and share. (Making connections; inferring)

Pages 14 and 15

- Before reading, briefly review the dangers faced by the wrybill. Prompt the students to think back to the problems caused by people, as discussed on page 10. (Making connections)
- “Have we found any more answers to our questions? Record these on the chart. Encourage the students to think of further questions. “When I read what Fergus is wishing, it makes me think of some questions. What questions do you have?” If necessary, prompt the students to think about questions such as why the kiwi is more famous and why Fergus wants to tell his class about the wrybill. (Making connections; asking questions)

After reading

- Revisit the students’ questions. “Have we answered all your questions?” Have the students work in pairs to read through the text again, checking that they have found the information in the text that supports their answers. Questions that weren’t answered from the text could be used as a follow-up task. (Making connections)

- Discuss the use of the questions under the photographs. “Were these questions and photographs helpful in getting us to think about the problem of camouflage and the ideas in the text? In what way?” Have the students justify their reasoning. (Making connections; evaluating)
- Discuss the reasons why the author has used features of a report and a recount in this article. “Why do you think the author structured the text in this way?” (Identifying the author’s purpose; evaluating)
- Have the students share their ideas about how posing questions helped them to consider the ideas in the text. “How did asking questions before you started reading and during your reading help you to understand the problems and solutions?” (Making connections)
- Briefly discuss any words or phrases that the students found difficult and the strategies they used (or could have used) to work them out.
- Reflect with the students on how well they have met the learning goal and how the success criteria helped them. For example, “Do you think asking questions will help you when you read fiction texts as well? In what ways?” 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 research the answers not found in the text. (Asking questions)
- Have the students research other endangered New Zealand animals that are not well known, posing a range of questions before and during their research. (Asking questions)
- The students could create a chart of question prompts that they feel are the most effective to gain information. (Making connections)
- Ask the students to share with a partner how they were able to ask questions to help them understand a text when reading independently.