

Missing

by Kylie Parry

JUNIOR JOURNAL 42
This text is levelled at Purple 2.



OVERVIEW

In this narrative, Liam's pets have mysteriously disappeared. When Liam goes to play in his room, he discovers where they've gone and, in the process, learns an important lesson. This text requires students to make inferences on a number of levels – about what is happening in the text, the shift to an imaginary world, and the author's purpose.

There is an audio version of this text on the *Junior Journal 42 and 43* CD.

RELATED TEXTS

Stories with fantasy elements within a realistic setting: "The Desk", (JJ 38), "Taniwha Trouble" (JJ 40), "Sparklies" (SJ 1.2.05)

Stories with a similar "mystery" structure that require students to look for clues: *The Mask Parade* (RTR, Turquoise), "The Pet Day Problem" (JJ 40), "Out of This World" (SJ 1.1.08)

TEXT CHARACTERISTICS

Key text characteristics relating to the reading standard for after three years at school are shown in the boxes with a solid outline. Other boxes indicate additional characteristics.



The first one to go missing was Harold. They called and called, but he was nowhere to be found. "Maybe he's visiting the neighbours, Mum," said Liam.

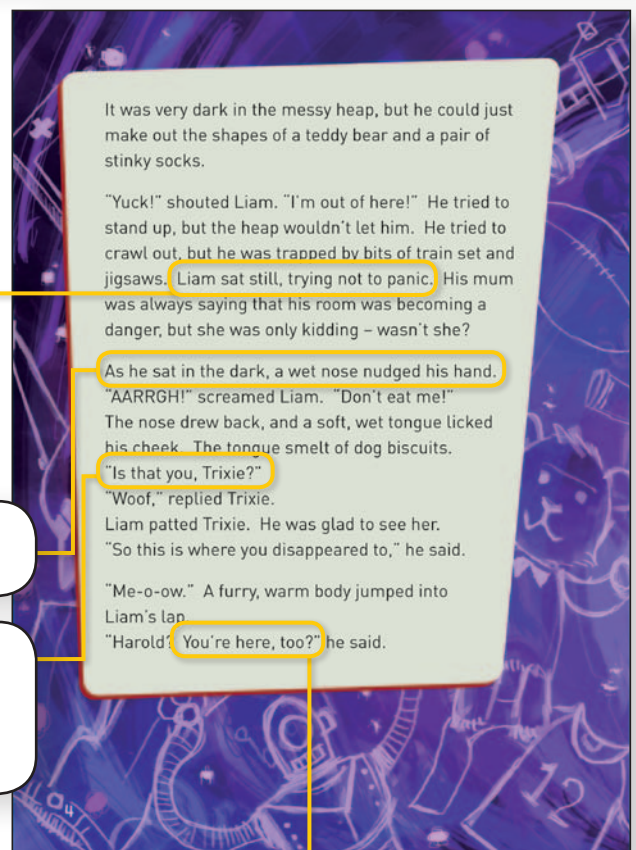
But the next day, Harold didn't come for breakfast, and no one could find Trixie either. "I hope it's not petnappers," said Mum.

A variety of sentence structures, including complex sentences

Frequent use of dialogue, some of which is not explicitly attributed, and more than one character speaking on some pages

A mix of explicit and implicit content within text and illustrations that requires students to make connections between ideas and information, for example:

- the fantasy elements within a familiar setting
- the opening, which plunges right into the action and requires the reader to infer who is missing
- the clues to why the characters have disappeared
- the clues to how Liam feels



It was very dark in the messy heap, but he could just make out the shapes of a teddy bear and a pair of stinky socks.

"Yuck!" shouted Liam. "I'm out of here!" He tried to stand up, but the heap wouldn't let him. He tried to crawl out, but he was trapped by bits of train set and jigsaws. Liam sat still, trying not to panic. His mum was always saying that his room was becoming a danger, but she was only kidding – wasn't she?

As he sat in the dark, a wet nose nudged his hand. "AARRGH!" screamed Liam. "Don't eat me!" The nose drew back, and a soft, wet tongue licked his cheek. The tongue smelt of dog biscuits.

"Is that you, Trixie?"

"Woof," replied Trixie. Liam patted Trixie. He was glad to see her. "So this is where you disappeared to," he said.

"Me-o-ow." A furry, warm body jumped into Liam's lap.

"Harold! You're here, too?" he said.

Some unfamiliar words and phrases, the meaning of which is supported by the context or illustrations

Colloquial language

English (Reading)

Level 2 – Ideas: Show some understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts.

Health and Physical Education (Personal Health and Physical Development)

Level 2 – Safety management: Identify risk and use safe practices in a range of contexts.

Key competencies – Managing self

SUGGESTED READING PURPOSES

(What can the students expect to find out or think about as a result of reading this text?)

To find out who is missing and why

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?)

Some reading behaviours you could expect to see as the students read in order to meet the reading purpose are suggested below. **Select and adapt** from them to set your specific learning goal(s). 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 students:

- identify, and make connections between, the clues in the text in order to make inferences and form and test hypotheses
- summarise the events in the text
- use word-solving strategies and language knowledge to decode and/or work out the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases.

TEXT AND LANGUAGE FEATURES**VOCABULARY**

- Colloquial language, for example, “just make out”, “I’m out of here!”, “only kidding”, “You’re here, too?”, and the figure of speech “nowhere to be found”
- Some unfamiliar words and phrases, including “neighbours”, “petnappers”, “shove”, “panic”, “nudged”, “tongue”.

POSSIBLE SUPPORTING STRATEGIES

For students who need more language support, have them look at the relevant illustration and explain, for example that “pile of stuff” is a large heap of things. Tell them this text has some colloquial and some informal expressions. Discuss these expressions as they arise and start or add to a chart of colloquial expressions.

Monitor students’ **decoding** attempts by noticing their use of words from the text during discussion and/or asking questions that require the students to use those words. Prompt students to remember strategies they can use, for example:

- breaking words into syllables or familiar chunks, for example, “pet-nap-pers”, “tip-toed”, “dis-ap-pear-ing”, “com-plete-ly”;
- drawing on knowledge of spelling patterns or analogies to other known words (“neighbours”/ “eight” “weigh”; “shove”/“love”)
- rereading the phrase or sentence around the unfamiliar word to confirm decoding attempts.

If necessary, write “nudged” and show the students the similarity to “fudge”. Explain that “dge” makes a “j” sound, as in “hedge” and “fridge”.

Monitor students’ **word-solving strategies** to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases. Prompt students to remember the strategies they can use, often in combination, for example:

- thinking of the overall context and making connections to their own experiences
- rereading or reading on so that they can use the next word or the overall context of the sentence or paragraph
- using knowledge of syntax to confirm that “smelt” and “leapt” are alternatives for “leaped” and “smelled” and looking for clues in the illustrations to confirm the meanings.

Have a dictionary available to confirm or clarify word meanings.

STRUCTURE


- The complex sentences “He had almost made it ...”, “As he sat in the dark ...”, and sentences with adverbial phrases, such as “trying not to panic”

Support the students to read and understand compound and complex sentences by breaking the sentences into separate clauses. Identify the main idea and of each clause and how the ideas are connected. Use Who? What? Where? When? How? and Why? as prompts.

INTRODUCING THE TEXT


- At the beginning of the session, provide students with sticky notes or paper to record any words they have difficulty with as they encounter them during the reading.
- Look at the title and the illustration on pages 2–3 and have the students form hypotheses about what could be missing and why. Model your thinking: *I can see that this is a bedroom, and I’m noticing that heap of stuff in the illustration. I wonder if that’s a clue ...* Share experiences of losing things and where students found them. If possible, provide opportunities for students who share a first language other than English to discuss this in their first language and then share their ideas in English.
- Share the reading purpose and learning goal(s).
- For students who need a high level of support, photocopy (and enlarge) page 2 and glue it into the group modelling book. Ask the students what they can infer from each new piece of information (or model your own thinking). For example, “*The first one to go missing was Harold*” – *there is more than one thing missing*. Continue in this way to the end of the page, with the students discussing and refining their inferences in the light of new information.

METACOGNITION




Effective readers are metacognitive. They are aware of the processes and strategies they draw on and are able to explain how they used these to successfully make meaning and think critically. Examples of metacognitive behaviours, or strategies that promote metacognitive behaviours, are threaded through the notes and indicated by .

EXPECTED STUDENT BEHAVIOURS

(what to look for, prompt, and support as the students work towards achieving their learning goal)

-  As they read or reread this text, students notice when meaning has broken down. They draw on a range of strategies to correct the problem and can explain what they did.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR STUDENTS TO READ, RESPOND, AND THINK CRITICALLY

-  Ask questions: *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?*
-  Use prompts: *How did you know that bit was right? Think about the strategy you used. How did it help you?*
-  Give feedback: *I noticed that you read this as... and then you fixed it up by ...*

READING AND DISCUSSING THE TEXT

In order to meet the reading purpose: **The students identify, and make connections between, clues in the text in order to make inferences and form and test hypotheses about what is happening and why. They summarise the events in the story.**

EXPECTED STUDENT BEHAVIOURS

(what to look for, prompt, and support as the students work towards achieving their learning goal)

PAGE 2

The students ask questions as they read, for example (*Who is Harold? Who are "they"?*) The students make and use clues to make inferences, for example, Harold could be a child, an adult, or a pet. "They" are Mum and Liam.

The students make inferences as they read on and find further clues. For example, they notice "pet" within "petnappers" and make connections to their knowledge of "kidnappers".

The students summarise what they know has happened so far.

The students use the illustration to form hypotheses about where the pets could be, and possibly, what might happen to Liam.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR STUDENTS TO READ, RESPOND, AND THINK CRITICALLY

Provide a prompt after students have read the first sentence: *What questions do you have in your head?* Tell them they are going to read on to find out who Harold is and look for clues to support their thinking.

Ask questions: *How do you know? What clues are you noticing?*

Prompt the students to make connections to the word "kidnappers" if they know it. Otherwise, tell them what it means. Have the students share their thinking and unpack the clues they found.

Have students recap (summarise) what they have found out or inferred.

Encourage them to form hypotheses. *So where are they? What do you think will happen next?*

PAGE 3

The students infer from clues in the text that Liam's room is very messy and has been so for a long time.

The students make connections between the illustration and the final sentence, in particular the phrase "disappearing completely", to infer that Liam has fallen right inside the pile.

They infer from Liam's disappearance and the phrase "a strange thing happened" that the text has make-believe elements in it.

The students make hypotheses about what will happen next. They may make connections to page 2 and form a hypothesis that the pets are also inside the pile.

Ask questions to support inferring: *What tells you that Liam's room has been messy for a long time? Why can't he see his bed?*

To help students clarify the sequence of events (summarise), ask: *Who disappeared? Where did he go? What does it mean to disappear "completely"?*

Provide prompts if the students haven't noticed the make-believe elements: *Think about why the author has used the word "strange". Could this really happen?*

Have the students share their hypotheses. *Why do you think that?*

Give feedback through specific comment, for example: *I noticed that you made a connection between those two ideas.*

PAGE 4

They identify and use clues in the text ("trying not to panic", "AARRGH! ... Don't eat me!") to infer from the second paragraph that Liam is trapped and scared.

The students confirm that the pets are in the pile with Liam and form hypotheses about what will happen next.

With support, the students use the personification of the heap to confirm their earlier inference that this is make-believe. They think critically and search for further clues to further confirm this inference, for example, the improbability of a boy and two pets being trapped in a messy pile in a bedroom and the fact that Liam thinks he's going to be eaten.

Model your thinking: *I'm noticing the text repeats "He tried to ... but," and that makes me think that Liam is trapped and getting scared. He's trying to get out, but nothing is working.*

Have the students think, pair, and share about who is in the heap, using the clues from the text. *What can they do now?*

Encourage the students to think about the way the author has described the heap. *Why does the author say "the heap wouldn't let him"? What is she suggesting about the heap?*

If necessary, model your thinking: *This is starting to sound like a make-believe story to me. I don't really think the pets would be trapped in a messy pile like this for a whole night. If it was true, the dog would just bark or dig his way out.*

PAGE 5

The students use the illustration to confirm that Harold and Trixie are pets and they are with Liam.

The students continue to form and test hypotheses. After reading page 5, they can explain what has happened so far (summarise).

They identify Liam's bigger problem – that his room is still messy, so and that something “strange” could happen again – and form hypotheses about how the story might end.

Regularly prompt the students to notice connections between parts of the text and to check their hypotheses and inferences.

Have the students summarise the story. *Think about what has happened so far. What are the main ideas?*

What do you think might happen next? How might the story end?

Have the students read to the end of the story and test their hypotheses.

PAGE 7

The students infer that Liam didn't want his parents to know the pets were missing because of his messy room.

Model your thinking: *I notice that Liam didn't say anything. I wonder why ...*

The students summarise the events in the story and discuss their personal responses to the text, in particular, their opinion of the ending.

Support the students to identify key points. *What happened at the beginning? How did the story unfold? What was the resolution?*

Have the students share their ideas about the story. *How did you feel about this story? Is this how you thought it would end? Why?*

With support, the students reflect on their learning. They revisit the reading purpose and learning goals and they explain what helped them to make meaning as they read, for example, how they formed and tested a hypothesis, made an inference, or overcame a challenge in the text.

Revisit the reading purpose and learning goals.

The students identify some challenges in the text and explain how they worked (or tried to work) them out.

Encourage the students to reflect on their learning. *What clues did you notice and put together to infer who Harold and Trixie were? When did you start to think that this story had some make-believe in it?*

Was there anything that you found difficult or confusing? How did you try to fix it? If necessary, model or explain some strategies the students could use.

AFTER READING

- Students can reread the story as they listen to the audio version on the *Junior Journal 42 and 43* CD. Audio versions also provide English language learners with good models of pronunciation, intonation, and expression.
- Students can read other fantasy texts, focusing on such aspects as distinguishing the real from the imaginary (for example, “Taniwha Trouble” in *JJ 40*) or identifying the author's purpose.
- Discuss the structure of the text as a mystery and how it's fun to try and “solve the puzzle”. Prompt the students to make connections to other familiar mystery stories, such as *The Mask Parade* (RTR, Turquoise) or “The Pet Day Problem” (*JJ 40*), that require the reader to look for clues.
- Discuss the idea how a bit of magic and/or danger can make texts more exciting. Prompt the students to make connections to other favourite texts that have these characteristics, for example, many Margaret Mahy stories.