



Overview

An Island in Time is about Matiu/Somes Island in Wellington Harbour. The text contains three articles, a timeline, and a glossary (which applies to all three articles). Using the book as a whole (over a series of lessons) provides opportunities for students to make connections across the different text types as well as with their own experiences. The key theme to explore across the three articles is how different people have viewed and used the land and how this has changed over time.

The three articles are:

“Island Stories”, which gives the historical background to how the island has been used, from the time of Kupe to the present day; “A Helping Hand”, which recounts the journey of a boy and his mother to Matiu/Somes Island as volunteers in a planting programme; and “Interview with Department of Conservation Ranger Matt Sidaway”, in which an unnamed interviewer questions a ranger from Matiu/Somes Island.

There is an audio version of this text on the *School Journal Story Library Years 5–6 2011 CD*.

Texts related by theme

Whakaari” SJ 2.2.06 | “The Hidden Midden” SJ 2.3.10 | “Save Our Sand Dunes” SJ 2.3.10

Text characteristics from the year 6 reading standard

mixed text types (for example, a complex explanation may be included as part of a report)

abstract ideas, in greater numbers than in texts at earlier levels, accompanied by concrete examples in the text that help support the students’ understanding

some ideas and information that are conveyed indirectly and require students to infer by drawing on several related pieces of information in the text

They eventually reach Joakim. He is a volunteer who is planting trees on the eastern side of the island.

“Have you ever planted anything before?” asks Joakim. Te Moananui shakes his head. “Well, this is a good place to start!” Joakim says.

Te Moananui is going to plant harakeke (flax). Joakim shows him what to do.

“First, you make a small flat area to work on. This makes it easier for the plant to collect water, too. Next, dig a hole twice as big as the plant needs. Then loosen up the soil a bit so the roots can get through it.”

Now, shake out a handful of water crystals from the bottle. The crystals slowly release water for the plant. Take the flax out of its plastic bag. Don’t tease the roots out because that might damage them. Place the flax in the hole, put soil around it, and press down gently. Find a rock to place on top of the soil to hold it all down.”

Te Moananui plants a rātā tree as well.

“That rātā might be around for a thousand years,” Matt tells him. “There’s something very special about planting a tree.”

Statue of Kupe on Wellington waterfront

Joseph Somes

Matiu/Somes is a small island, but it is full of history. The Polynesian explorer Kupe first named the island Matiu after his niece. For many centuries, Māori used it as a pā site and a place of refuge. The island’s steep hills made it easy to defend. When settlers began to arrive from England, the island was renamed after Joseph Somes. He was the deputy governor of the New Zealand Company.

Many people have lived on the island. For the lighthouse keepers or the quarantine officers, it was their place of work. Other people didn’t want to be there. Some of them even tried to escape.

* The New Zealand Company brought settlers to New Zealand from England by ship in the 1800s.

a significant amount of vocabulary that is unfamiliar to the students (including academic and content-specific words and phrases), which is generally explained in the text by words or illustrations

sentences that vary in length and in structure (for example, sentences that begin in different ways and different kinds of complex sentences with a number of subordinate clauses)

illustrations, photographs, text boxes, diagrams, maps, charts, and graphs that clarify or extend the text and may require some interpretation

Possible curriculum contexts

SOCIAL SCIENCES (Social Studies)

Level 3: Understand how people view and use places differently.

Level 3: Understand how people make decisions about access to and use of resources.

ENGLISH (Reading)

Level 3 – Ideas: Show a developing understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts.

Possible reading purposes

- To identify how Matiu/Somes has been used in the past
- To identify features of islands that make them suitable for specific purposes
- To explore how the use of places can change over time
- To find out about people who work on environmental projects and what they do.

Page 4 has suggestions for writing instruction.

For more support and suggestions for accelerating students' writing, see *Teaching Writing across the Curriculum in Years 4–6* on the Writing Hub.



The Writing Hub

Text and language challenges

VOCABULARY:

“Island Stories” (including timeline)

- Possible unfamiliar and/or topic-specific words and phrases, including “full of history”, “centuries”, “site”, “refuge”, “defend”, “settlers”, “deputy governor”, “lighthouse keepers”, “quarantine officers”, “memorial”, “internment”, “internees”, “background”, “imprisoned”, “mainland”, “region”, “bombed”, “anti-aircraft guns”, “reserve”, “kayak”, “ashore”, “inner-harbour”, “pests”, “official”, “bilingual”, “iwi ownership”
- The phrases, “full of history”, “named after”, “place of refuge”, “place of work”, “halfway round the world”, “According to legend”, “Forest & Bird (Lower Hutt branch)”, “opened to the public”, “under DOC management”.

“A Helping Hand”

- Possible unfamiliar and/or topic-specific words and phrases, including “A Helping Hand”, “bow”, “peers”, “harbour ferry”, “top deck”, “whare kiore”, “rangers”, “Customs”, “native”, “rodents”, “tree wētā, giant wētā, geckos, skinks, and tuatara”, “protected”, “except”, “set off”, “skitter”, “memorial”, “kākāriki”, “fragrant”, “eventually”, “volunteer”, “eastern side”, “tease the roots out”, “quarantine”.

“Interview with ... Matt Sidaway”

- Possible unfamiliar and/or topic-specific words and phrases, including “record”, “pā site”, “played an important role”, “biodiversity”, “eco-friendly”, “diesel generators”, “solar and wind power”, “live in harmony”, “predators”, “bait stations”, “ink tunnels”, “regenerate”, “hardy coastal shrubs”.

Possible supporting strategies

Identify vocabulary, including phrases and figurative language, that may be challenging for students. Use strategies to support them to understand these words and phrases, such as:

- providing opportunities for students to meet words through oral language before reading
- reviewing how to use a glossary
- discussing words, concepts, and terms to clarify meaning and dispel any misunderstandings
- brainstorming topics and/or concepts to elicit topic-related words from students and co-constructing word lists and word webs
- helping students make notes in their own (or the class) vocabulary learning notebook about key words and phrases, for example, definitions, translations (if appropriate), word families, synonyms, and/or collocations (words that go together).

The English Language Learning Progressions: Introduction, pages 39–46, has some useful information about learning vocabulary.

SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED:

“Island Stories”

- Understanding of time periods – “the 1800s”, “the mid-1800s”, “1866”, “from 1899”, “In the First World War”, “During the Second World War”
- Knowledge of both world wars and of the Māori and European colonisations of New Zealand.

“A Helping Hand”

- Experience of going through Customs
- Knowledge and/or experience of volunteering or planting trees or other plants
- Knowledge of native New Zealand flora and fauna.

“Interview with ... Matt Sidaway”

- Knowledge of the interview format.

Possible supporting strategies

Provide opportunities for students to encounter and discuss key aspects of each article's content.

- For “Island Stories”, check for prior knowledge of wartime events in New Zealand and the world, and help students build and make connections with other information they have.
- For “A Helping Hand”, discuss the concept of volunteering to help students access prior knowledge and to understand the title. Ask students to share experiences they have of planting and/or environmental work.
- For students who share knowledge of a language other than English, provide opportunities for them to explore the topic and key concepts in this language.

TEXT FEATURES AND STRUCTURE:

“Island Stories”

- The footnote and timeline
- A lot of adverbial phrases, some long and many signalling time and/or place, for example, “to New Zealand from England by ship in the 1800s”
- A range of verb forms, mostly past
- The use of passive verb phrases (usually where the agent is unknown or where it refers to people in general), for example, “Lighthouses were built ...”.

“A Helping Hand”

- The recount in the present tense
- The use of language that signals time and sequence
- The map, which shows features also mentioned in “Island Stories”.

“Interview with ... Matt Sidaway”

- Speakers are not identified directly.

Possible supporting strategies

For each item in the book, identify students' knowledge of the text features and structures they will encounter and provide explicit support where needed. Preview the texts to help students make links between them and with their prior knowledge of similar structures. Show students how to use any clues (such as the foreshadowing on page 3) to predict what they will read about. Point out the maps, timeline, and glossary and explain how they can be used. Students may need support to understand map features, including the enlargement, the scale, and the directions.

Provide explicit instruction as necessary to support recognition and understanding of sentence structures. If students are confused by the passive voice, explain why and how it is used: refer to *Exploring Language*, pages 64–66. Make links to the use of the passive voice in other texts and in students' own writing.



Sounds and words

Instructional focus – Reading

Social Sciences (Social Studies, level 3 – Understand how people view and use places differently.)

English (Level 3, ideas – Show a developing understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts.)

Text excerpts from “Island Stories”

Students

(what to prompt, support, and look for as the students are reading)

Teacher

(possible deliberate acts of teaching)

Matiu/Somes is a small island, but it is full of history. The Polynesian explorer Kupe first named the island Matiu after his niece. For many centuries, Māori used it as a pā site and a place of refuge. The island’s steep hills made it easy to defend. When settlers began to arrive from England, the island was renamed after Joseph Somes. He was the deputy governor of the New Zealand Company.

Many people have lived on the island. For the lighthouse keepers or the quarantine officers, it was their place of work. Other people didn’t want to be there. Some of them even tried to escape.

DEMANDS OF THE TEXT

Students need to:

- draw on their prior knowledge of reading historical recounts
- infer meaning based on their understanding of how an island differs from the mainland
- understand the abstract concept of times past and relate the passage of time to both the timeline and their own lives.

Students use their knowledge of vocabulary to understand the figurative as well as literal meanings of words and expressions such as “full of history”. They draw on their prior knowledge of New Zealand history and other timelines to gain an understanding of the time periods the report covers.

Students make connections between their knowledge of islands and the text to visualise an island with steep hills. They integrate this visualisation with words in the text to infer how the island could be “a place of refuge” and why it was “easy to defend”.

The students ask and answer questions about what they will learn about people who lived on the island. They use vocabulary knowledge (“lighthouse keepers”, “quarantine officers”, “escape”) and knowledge of how texts work (the introduction foreshadows the contents) to infer that they will learn about the use of the island for lighthouses, quarantine stations, and a prison.

ASK QUESTIONS or **PROMPT** students to use specific strategies for working out vocabulary, sentence structure, and overall meaning.

- What does “named after” mean? My father’s name is Samuel, and my son’s name is Samuel. I named my son after his grandfather. Are you, or is anyone you know, named after another person?
- What do you think Kupe’s niece was called?
- Why do you think the text shows a statue of Kupe, not an actual photograph? Use what you know about the arrival of Kupe in Aotearoa/ New Zealand to infer the reason why we don’t have a photograph of him.
- Why would the island be a good place for a pā?

EXPLAIN that a useful reading strategy is to ask questions in your head as you read.

MODEL some possible questions.

- Why would Māori need to use Matiu as a refuge?
- I wonder what quarantine officers did? Why were they there?
- What kind of people tried to escape? Why?

GIVE FEEDBACK

- You wrote down some new words to come back to later, but you kept on reading. That’s an excellent way to deal with unfamiliar words.
- You were able to make connections with your knowledge of islands to understand why Māori might have chosen Matiu as a place to live. That is good use of what you know to help you to understand new information.

MONITORING THE IMPACT OF TEACHING

If students have difficulty making connections, focus on the questions that they can ask to clarify information and language use. For example:

- What do I know about islands that will help me?
- How can I figure out what ... means? What strategies can I use?

During both world wars, Somes Island was used as an internment camp. The camp held hundreds of “enemy” internees. ... However, they were imprisoned because New Zealand was now at war with the country that they came from.

DEMANDS OF THE TEXT

Students need to:

- draw on their prior knowledge of events in New Zealand history, in particular of the two world wars
- apply some knowledge of geography to place the nationalities mentioned
- understand the abstract concept of imprisoning people who have committed no crime
- work out the unnamed agent in sentences that use a passive construction (“... Somes Island was used ...”).

Students use their knowledge of history to work out the meaning of “both world wars”. They refer to the glossary and use the definitions to understand the concept of internment. Students make connections between their knowledge of the world wars and the text to ask questions and infer (through discussion) that men were imprisoned on Somes as a wartime security measure.

Students use their knowledge of sentence structure and of the use of public land to infer that the unnamed agent in the first (passive) sentence is the New Zealand Government.

ASK QUESTIONS to support students to use strategies as they read.

- What does “both world wars” mean? What do you know about them?
- Which countries were the enemies in each of the world wars?
- Why do you think people were interned?

EXPLAIN the use of “background”.

- “Background” suggests that the country a person’s tupuna or ancestors came from was not from New Zealand.
- What do you think “with a German or Austrian background” means? Why would people with those backgrounds be interned?

PROMPT the students to make connections within and across the text.

- Turn to the timeline on page 7. When was the island used for internees?
- Reread the information on page 4 about Somes Island as a quarantine station. Compare the ideas of quarantine, internment, and imprisonment.

GIVE FEEDBACK

- You made connections between what you know about the Second World War and who the internees were on the island. That clarified for you why they were imprisoned there.

MONITORING THE IMPACT OF TEACHING

- If students are confused by use of the passive, show them different ways (passive and active) of saying the same thing.

Text excerpts from “A Helping Hand”

The whare kiore is a bit like Customs at an airport, except you have to check your own bag. You look for rats, mice, insects, sticks, seeds, and leaves. Seeds could also be stuck to mud on your shoes. The seeds might be from plants that aren't native to the island and don't belong here.

DEMANDS OF THE TEXT

Students need to:

- draw on prior knowledge to understand the analogy with Customs
- make links between the text and the photographs
- use their knowledge of sentence structure to determine meaning.

Students
(what to prompt, support, and look for as the students are reading)

*Students **make connections** with any prior knowledge of Customs and use this to understand what happens at whare kiore. They identify the items that are not allowed on the island and **make connections** with what they know about conservation to **infer** the reasons.*

*Students **make connections** to **infer** that “you” refers to people in general – to the reader or anyone who wants to go to the island.*

*Students **integrate** the use of the phrases “aren't native to the island” and “don't belong here” to understand the differences between native and introduced plants and animals.*

Teacher
(possible deliberate acts of teaching)

EXPLAIN the concepts of Customs and similar security checks. Help students to build prior knowledge as necessary.

- When we go overseas, our bags are checked to make sure we're not travelling with anything that might be harmful on the plane or to the place we're visiting.
- Who has been through Customs? Tell us what happened.

ASK QUESTIONS to support students to understand what happens at the whare kiore.

- What does “kiore” mean?
- Why do they want to keep rats and mice off the island? What knowledge of your own helped you to make that inference?
- If you've been through Customs, what is the big difference here? What does “except” mean?
- Why do you have to check your shoes for seeds? How did the photo help you to understand the text?
- What helped you work out the meaning of “aren't native to the island”?

GIVE FEEDBACK

- I noticed that you put these two phrases together to work out that some plants are native and some are introduced. Remember to do that when reading by yourself.
- While you were reading, I noticed you asked a question to clarify why the bags needed to be checked. That's a great way to understand what you are reading.

MONITORING THE IMPACT OF TEACHING

- If students need more support to understand the concept of being “native to the island”, explore the word “native” in detail. Have them think, pair, and share other uses of the word that they know, then relate these to the text.

Text excerpt from “Interview with Department of Conservation Ranger Matt Sidaway”

What are the plans for the island?

The main plan is to give the island back its biodiversity. This means developing an island that includes everything from the smallest plant to the tallest tree. We also want to make all the services we use (fresh water, waste water, and energy) eco-friendly. For example, we are hoping to move from using diesel generators to using solar and wind power. On the island people will be able to learn how to live in harmony with their environment.

DEMANDS OF THE TEXT

Students need to:

- infer who is asking and who is answering the questions
- understand the abstract concepts of “biodiversity” and “living in harmony”
- make connections across the text to understand the need for conservation work
- draw on prior knowledge of the short-, medium-, and long-term planning needed to achieve goals.

Students
(what to prompt, support, and look for as the students are reading)

*Students **make connections** with the text and their knowledge of interviews to identify each speaker. Students **infer** that Matt speaks on behalf of the Department of Conservation, drawing on the use of “we” and the information that Matt works for DOC.*

*Students draw on their own experiences of working towards a goal to **infer** the need for “plans”. They **evaluate** and **integrate** information across the text to understand that earlier uses of the island destroyed a lot of the natural environment.*

*Students use the glossary and the context to work out the meaning of biodiversity. They **ask and answer questions** to explore the abstract concept of “live in harmony”.*

Teacher
(possible deliberate acts of teaching)

PROMPT students to review what they know about interviews.

- What usually happens in an interview? Who is asking and answering the questions in this interview? Who is the “we” Matt refers to? How do you know that?

ASK QUESTIONS to support students to make connections across the text.

- What parts of the interview link back to other parts of the book? How does this help you to understand what Matt is doing?
- What parts of the interview give you new information?
- What is your opinion of the way the island has been used over the years?

MODEL the kinds of questions you might ask as you read this excerpt.

- I'm wondering what biodiversity means. Wouldn't a mix of native and introduced plants be diverse?
- Do they have electricity on the island? Or cars and other vehicles? I wonder how I could find out.
- What would “living in harmony” look like on the island?

GIVE FEEDBACK

- You used the words, the photographs, and the timeline to find information and answer your questions. That has helped you to make connections between events and information across the texts.

MONITORING THE IMPACT OF TEACHING

- If students are having difficulty with the format of this interview and find it hard to work out who is talking, briefly role-play an interview between two students.
- If students are having difficulty integrating across the articles in this text, support them with use of a graphic organiser to locate, record, and compare the key ideas and themes.

Text excerpts from all three articles

From 1889, the island was also used to quarantine animals. Many animals coming into New Zealand were kept on Mātū/Somes to make sure they weren't carrying any diseases.

In the whare kiore, Matt, the ranger, tells visitors about the island. In the last thirty years, Mātū/Somes has been replanted with 140 000 trees. The forests are growing, and there are no rodents. Now it's possible to start releasing animals and insects such as tree wētā, giant wētā, geckos, skinks, and tuatara.

What are the plans for the island?

The main plan is to give the island back its biodiversity. This means developing an island that includes everything from the smallest plant to the tallest tree.

Students
(what to prompt, support, and look for as the students are reading)

The students revisit their purpose for reading. With support, they summarise the key ideas or themes across the three articles.

With support, the students integrate and evaluate ideas across the three articles in relation to the reading purpose. They identify that the island's use has changed over time and that this has affected its plant and animal life. They understand that the changes are a result of the use of the island but also of how people view the island these days.

Teacher
(possible deliberate acts of teaching)

PROMPT students to revisit their purpose for reading in order to summarise the key ideas in the articles.

- Clarify your purpose for reading with your buddy.
- What information can you find in each article that relates to this purpose?
- Discuss and note down what you think are the key ideas or themes in each article.

MODEL integrating your ideas across the three articles.

- When I read that they are now able to release insects, I wonder why there were not insects or lizards on the island before. I go back to information and photographs in the first article ("Island Stories") to clarify that although there were animals such as cows on the island, there was not very much native bush that the insects and lizards would like. I also link to the comments in Matt's interview to understand that the plan is to increase the diversity of the insect, animal, and plant life on the island.

GIVE FEEDBACK

- You identified a key theme in the first article and were able to find parts that related to it in the other two articles. It is important to look for connections across texts when you are reading several related articles, to build your understanding.
- I noticed the way you made connections to your buddy's ideas to identify and summarise the key ideas. That was a good way of developing your thinking.

MONITORING THE IMPACT OF TEACHING

- If students are struggling to identify themes across the three articles, model your thinking more explicitly as you locate ideas in the articles. Identify and highlight key words or phrases that show the connections.
- If students are confused about how the ideas relate to each other, chart the ideas across the articles by using a graphic organiser.

DEMANDS OF THE TEXT

Students need to:

- locate the key idea in all three extracts
- identify the thematic link between them
- integrate the ideas to develop an understanding of how and why the island has changed.

METACOGNITION

- What happened when you slowed down on the longer sentences that had lots of information? What strategies helped you work out the meaning in those sentences?
- What experiences helped you to understand the articles in this book? How did using those connections help you?
- What words have you chosen to put in your vocabulary notebook? Why did you choose those words?
- What advice could you give to someone else who reads this book? What strategies would you remind them to use? How do you think those strategies would help a reader?

Suggestions for writing instruction

- Students often need support to find an idea to write about. Help them to identify ways they could use this text to form intentions for their writing.
- What questions occurred to you as you read this book? Take one of your questions, research the answer, then write it up for others to read. Think about your audience – who would be interested in reading this?
- How can you use ideas from these articles to come up with some ideas for your own writing? For example, could you research a place you know about that has been used in different ways over time? Where could you find the information you'd need?

- What kind of structure and language will you use in your writing? Why?
- Could you include an analogy? How would this help to clarify an idea for your reader?
- What photos, maps, diagrams, or illustrations would help you to get your ideas across?

Continue to support students as they develop a plan for their writing, showing them strategies they could use such as mind-maps, flowcharts, and graphic organisers. Support students to move from the plan to the first draft and to revise their writing. Provide scaffolding to help them build on their writing strengths, giving stronger support where needed and reducing it as they take control.