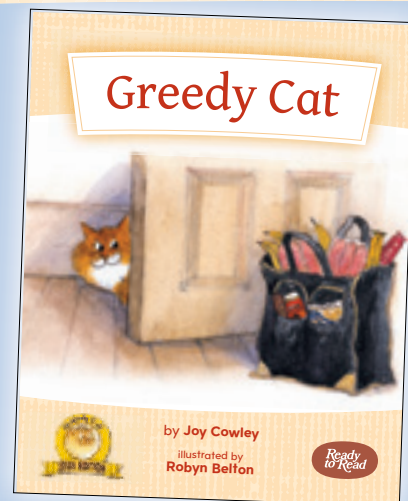


# Ready to Read Update June 2015



## Along came Greedy Cat

Greedy Cat has been charming and engaging children with his wicked antics since he first appeared in schools in 1983. Now, five of Joy Cowley's original Greedy Cat stories have been refreshed and updated. Audio versions, read by renowned New Zealand actor Ray Henwood, and teacher support materials (TSM) for these books are available from: [www.readytoread.tki.org.nz](http://www.readytoread.tki.org.nz)

### Building a strong foundation in literacy

These updated Greedy Cat stories, like all Ready to Read materials, support students in years 1–3 to develop “effective reading processing systems”<sup>1</sup> as they learn to respond to and think critically about increasingly complex texts.

The shared book, *Greedy Cat*, is the foundation text about Greedy Cat and can be read and enjoyed with students right from their first days of school. The dramatic storyline, engaging repetitive language, and Robyn Belton's delightful illustrations invite enthusiastic participation and build students' understandings about text. After multiple shared readings, students become able to independently read the accompanying small version of the book.

### Shared reading

Shared reading builds fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension; encourages enthusiasm for and enjoyment of reading; and fosters understanding of the features of a wide range of texts (including narrative, poetry, and non-fiction texts). It gives students access to texts that would otherwise be too difficult for them to read independently. (See the 21 November 2011 issue of the *Education Gazette* for a full discussion of shared reading.)

*Greedy Cat* is now the only story about this memorable and lovable cat that is available as a shared book. The other four books are for guided reading.



### Using texts for guided reading

There is an updated guided book about Greedy Cat at each colour wheel level from Magenta to Blue.

These four books are designed to be used as instructional texts for guided reading. After a careful introduction by the teacher, students problem-solve their way through the first reading, with the teacher offering support only as required. This creates maximum opportunities for each student to apply and strengthen their own reading processing system. These delightful stories can be returned to often, as students “read, respond, and think critically”.<sup>2</sup> For more information on guided reading, refer to *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4* (Ministry of Education, 2003, pages 96–100). All Ready to Read texts are accompanied by online TSM. See [www.readytoread.tki.org.nz](http://www.readytoread.tki.org.nz)

1. *The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 10

2. *The New Zealand Curriculum Reading and Writing Standards for years 1–8*

## Demonstrating some aspects of the gradient of difficulty

Ready to Read texts are carefully crafted according to levelling criteria. These criteria are closely linked to *The New Zealand Curriculum Reading and Writing Standards* and *The Literacy Learning Progressions* for students in years 1–3. The level of text difficulty “increases gradually in such aspects as vocabulary, text length, complexity of text structure, students’ familiarity with the content, and how explicitly the content is stated”.<sup>3</sup> This presents students with continual and

appropriate challenges that will advance their learning. (See *Curriculum Update 28* for more information.)

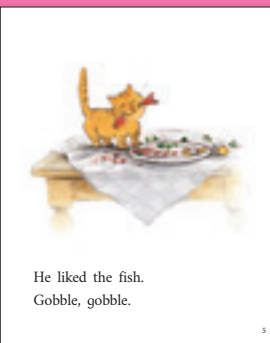
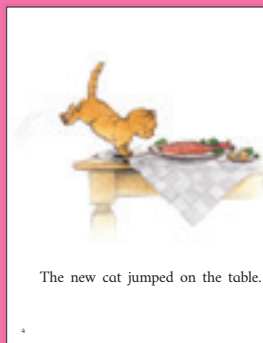
The Greedy Cat books have been revised to reflect the new levelling criteria. Having four guided reading books about the same character provides an opportunity to clearly demonstrate some aspects of this gradual increase in text difficulty – as they apply to these texts. (See the TSM for more information.)

### The New Cat

Some high-frequency words, repeated often

47 words  
1–2 lines per page  
No run-on lines

Interest words that are likely to be in a reader’s oral vocabulary and that are strongly supported by the context, the sentence structure, and the illustrations



Content explicitly stated, with a very close match between text and illustrations, but with opportunities for students to make predictions and inferences – for example, why the new cat has jumped on the table and why he is eating so much

Some variations in sentence structure with some sentence patterns repeated

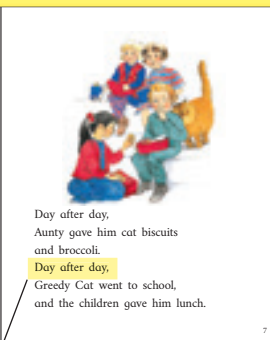
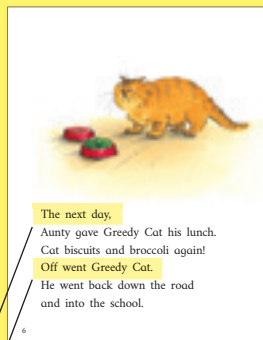
One setting (at home), a clear focus on one character, and a closely linked sequence of events

### Lunch for Greedy Cat

Many high-frequency words, several of which are repeated often

157 words  
2–7 lines per page  
Some sentences run over two or three lines

Interest words, including regular and irregular verbs, that are likely to be in the reader’s oral vocabulary and are strongly supported by the context, the sentence structure, and/or the illustrations



Most content explicitly stated, but also some implicit content that provides opportunities for students to make predictions and inferences – for example, how Greedy Cat will feel about his diet and whether Aunty will be successful

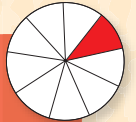
Variation in sentence structure, including some sentences with indicators of time and some with literary language

Dialogue on several pages

Two main characters (with contrasting opinions) and several shifts in time and place

## Greedy Cat Is Hungry

Mostly high-frequency words, several of which are repeated often



111 words  
2-5 lines per page  
Some sentences run over two lines

Interest words that are likely to be in the reader's oral vocabulary and are strongly supported by the context, the sentence structure, and/or the illustrations



Content explicitly stated, with extra information (such as Greedy Cat's expressions) shown in the illustrations, but with opportunities for students to make predictions and inferences – for example, that Greedy Cat is sitting in front of the fridge because he wants food

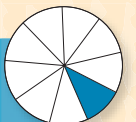
Some variations in sentence structure, including some sentences ending with a short phrase

Dialogue on several pages

One setting (at home), several characters (with contrasting opinions about Greedy Cat), and a closely linked sequence of events

## Greedy Cat's Door

Many high-frequency words



200 words  
6 or 7 lines on most pages  
Some lines have more than eight words

Interest vocabulary, including noun phrases, adjectives, a wide range of verbs, and examples of onomatopoeia, that are likely to be in the reader's oral vocabulary and are strongly supported by context, sentence structure, and/or the illustrations



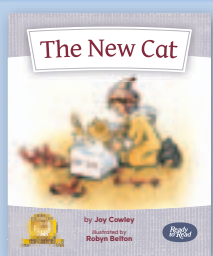
Most content explicitly stated, but also some implicit content that provides opportunities for students to make predictions and inferences – for example, what will happen to Greedy Cat when he gets stuck and why Dad decides to help out

Variation in sentence structure, including some sentences with indicators of time and some with literary language

Dialogue on every page

Several main characters (with contrasting opinions), several shifts in time, and an unexpected but entertaining plot complication

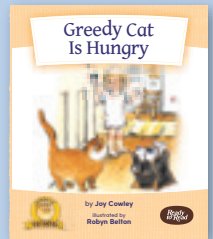




## Teachers talk about Greedy Cat – some comments from trialling

### The New Cat

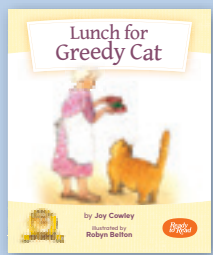
*“They knew who the cat was as they had been reading the shared book. He’s such a lovable character.”*



*“My children love Greedy Cat so they were interested in seeing what he was like as a kitten.”*

### Greedy Cat Is Hungry

*“I like the new structure of this text as well as the new information. The interest words are easily solved.”*



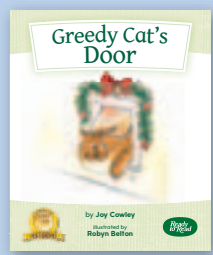
*“Students love reading about Greedy Cat. He is always a favourite.”*

### Lunch for Greedy Cat

*“The students loved the idea of Greedy Cat tricking Aunty.”*

*“The kids loved his facial expression on page 6 and his happy snuggle on page 7.”*

*“Good to see more text on a page.”*



### Greedy Cat's Door

*“The students found this story hilarious! I haven’t taken a reading group with this much laughing for a while!”*

*“The children loved the picture on page 7 – great prompts for what the characters were thinking or feeling.”*

## The Cat comes back in 2016

In early 2016, there will be five new Greedy Cat books written by Joy Cowley and illustrated by Robyn Belton. There will be a brand new story at each level, from Green to Gold. Watch this space!

## Teacher support materials

The Ready to Read TSM provide information about the learning opportunities within the texts. They describe key characteristics of the texts and they provide guidance on how teachers can scaffold students to develop their own reading process. The TSM also provide information about related texts within the Ready to Read series, including links between texts for shared reading and guided reading, and between instructional reading and the wider classroom literacy programme.

## Finding out more

Go to [www.readytoread.tki.org.nz](http://www.readytoread.tki.org.nz) for links to:

- TSM and audio files for all Ready to Read texts
- information about Ready to Read in literacy programmes
- the latest communications to schools.

## Words on Wellington – New Zealand Literacy Association Conference

Lift Education, on behalf of the Ministry of Education, will have a display stand at the New Zealand Literacy Association Conference in Wellington (30 September – 2 October). Bernadette Wilson (Ready to Read editor) and Kay Hancock (Ready to Read consultant) will also present a workshop with the latest news about the series, including the development of two new non-fiction texts for shared reading.

## We’d love to hear from you

We’d love to hear about how you have used these books and any of the other Ready to Read materials. Please share your feedback by contacting our publishing supplier at: [readytoread@lifteducation.com](mailto:readytoread@lifteducation.com)

Replacement copies of Ready to Read may be ordered from Ministry of Education Customer Services online at: [www.thechair.minedu.govt.nz](http://www.thechair.minedu.govt.nz) by email: [orders@thechair.minedu.govt.nz](mailto:orders@thechair.minedu.govt.nz) or freephone 0800 660 662, freefax 0800 660 663

