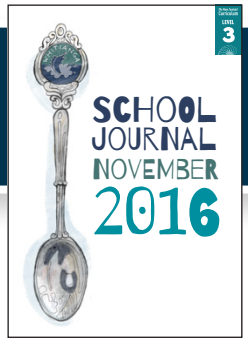


# A Sweet Business

by Bronwen Wall

School Journal  
Level 3, November 2016  
Year 5



## Overview

This report explains why and how children at Te Aro School in Wellington set up a money-making honey business. The text has a focus on financial literacy, providing insights into the decisions the students made and the steps they took to make their business a success. The report includes a clear description of the budgeting process and covers such concepts as start-up costs, wants versus needs, and selling versus koha.

This article:

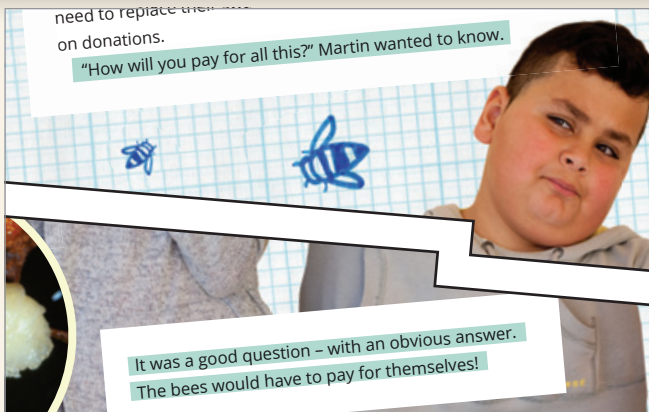
- outlines the steps between having a business idea and making it a reality

- highlights the financial decisions made when setting up a small business
- covers topical issues, such as the role of varroa mites in bee colony collapse
- includes a glossary of financial terms
- uses words and diagrams to convey information.

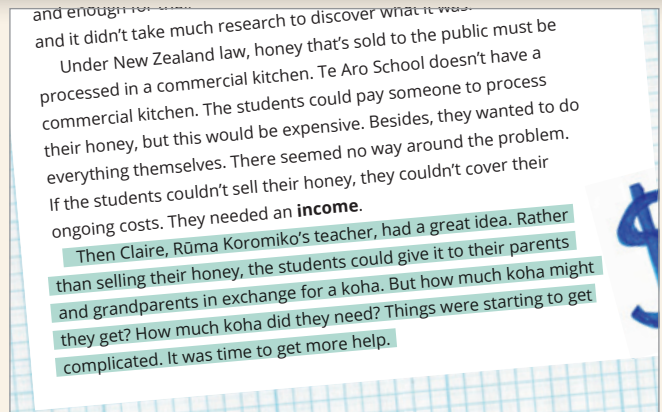
A PDF of the text is available at [www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz](http://www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz)

Texts related by theme “The Buzz of Bees” *Connected* L2, 2012 | “Fair Chocolate” SJ L4 Nov 2014 | “Backyard Chooks” SJ L2 Aug 2013

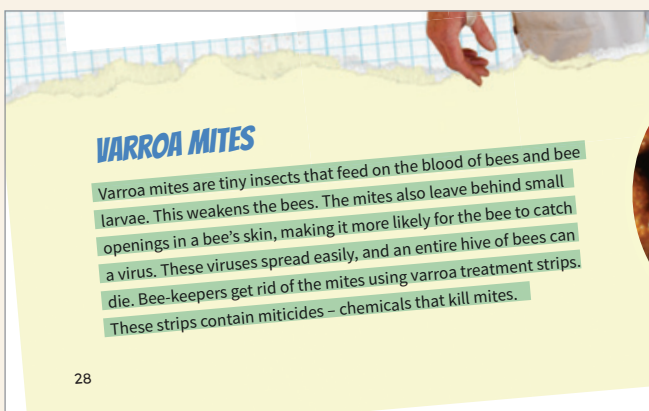
## Text characteristics from the year 5 reading standard



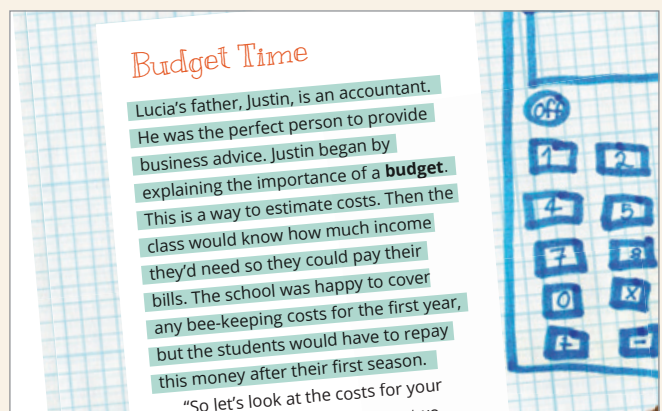
abstract ideas, in greater numbers than in texts at earlier levels, accompanied by concrete examples in the text that help support the students' understanding



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



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



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

Reading standard: by the end of year 5

# Possible curriculum contexts

## ENGLISH (Reading)

Level 3 – Structure: Show a developing understanding of text structures.

## ENGLISH (Writing)

Level 3 – Structure: Organise texts, using a range of appropriate structures.

## EXPLORING FINANCIAL CAPABILITY

This article can also be used as a context for discussing budgeting and financial management. For more about financial capability, go to: <http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-resources/Financial-capability/Financial-capability-progressions>

## Possible first reading purposes

- To find out how some children set up a small business at their school
- To ask and answer questions about how a small business works.

## Possible subsequent reading purposes

- To identify the process needed to ensure that a business will be successful
- To explore the concept of needs and wants in relation to money.

## Possible writing purposes

- To write a report about a similar enterprise at your school
- To explain how to look after bees
- To evaluate the pros and cons of having a beehive at your school.



The New Zealand Curriculum

# Text and language challenges

(Some of the suggestions for possible supporting strategies may be more useful before reading, but they can be used at any time in response to students' needs.)

## VOCABULARY

- Possibly unfamiliar words and phrases, including “roundabout”, “Langstroth hive”, “swarm”, “significantly”, “larvae”, “maintenance”, “processed”, “commercial”, “exchange”, “accountant”, “unavoidable”, “register”, “adrenalin injector”, “negotiable”, “harvest”, “viable”
- Hyphenated words, including “bee-friendly”, “bee-keeper”, “first-time”, “start-up”, “top-bar”, “first-aid”, “honeycomb-shaped”, “non-essential”, “one-off”
- The idioms “earning their keep”, “a catch”, “sweet”, “down the track”.

## Possible supporting strategies

- Identify words and phrases that may be unfamiliar. Discuss and explain them briefly as they arise. Provide further support for financial capability terms that are new to students.
- Explain that a Langstroth hive is the standard hive used for most bee-keeping. It contains wooden frames on which the bees build their honeycomb. The photograph on page 26 shows a child holding a frame.
- Direct the students to the vocabulary supports: the glossary and the diagrams. Make a list of unfamiliar terms that students can add to (or add examples of) during and after reading. Develop word cluster maps to show the links between academic words.
- The hyphenated words should not require support for reading, but they make an interesting topic for later discussion, for example, how words can be combined to give a specific or more concise meaning.
- *The English Language Learning Progressions: Introduction*, pages 39–46, has useful information about learning vocabulary. See also ESOL Online, Vocabulary, for examples of other strategies to support students with vocabulary.

## SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED

- Knowledge that bees produce honey
- Knowledge of the role of bees in pollinating flowers
- Some personal knowledge of buying and selling
- Some understanding of the difference between wants and needs and how they relate to spending
- An understanding of basic financial capability ideas and terms, such as budget, profit and loss, income, and costs
- Some familiarity with the issue of varroa mites in bee-keeping.

## Possible supporting strategies

- Prompt the students to recall what they know about bees: their role in the garden, what they produce, where they live, why they are important, and what threatens them. If students appear unfamiliar with bees and honey production, consider showing a video. There are many clips available online.
- Review what the students already know about the difference between what they want and what they need. Invite them to share any experience they have had of a school, group, or community business.
- For the purposes of reading the article, it is not necessary for students to know that bee populations have been diminishing around the world. However, you may wish to have background information available for any students who are interested.

## TEXT FEATURES AND STRUCTURE

- A report with an introduction, sections with subheadings, and a concluding paragraph
- A text box to explain the varroa mite problem
- Diagrams to compare wants and needs and income and expenses
- Problems and solutions
- Photographs to illustrate ideas in the text
- Different verb tenses in the various text types.

## Possible supporting strategies

- Review the purposes of reports and their structures and discuss what students would expect to find in an article called “A Sweet Business”.
- Skim the article with the students to confirm their predictions and to allow them to gain a feel for the collaboration between children and adults: this is reflected in the use of children’s drawings and diagrams as well as the photographs.
- Some English language learners would benefit from exploring verb tense changes in the different sections. This could be through an interactive cloze activity where students add the missing verbs to a piece of selected text or through a verb story activity, for example, comparing the paragraph about varroa mites with another paragraph from the text.



Sounds and Words

### First reading

- Set the purpose for reading.
- Skim and scan the text together, using the headings, photos, and diagrams to gain an overall impression of what the article is about.
- Read the title and first page together, then direct the students to read section by section through the whole text. *As you read each section, stop to think about any questions you have. For example, after the first section, I wondered where the bees would come from.*
- Ask the students to make a brief note of their questions before reading on.
- Explain that they will use these questions to guide their next reading. *As you reread, you'll be looking for places where your questions might be answered.*

### If the students struggle with this text

- Write the article headings on a chart, leaving space for questions after each one. At the end of the Bee Man section on page 28, model and record one or two questions on the chart: *How can they afford to set up a hive? How is Martin going to help them? What does “significantly” mean?*
- Prompt the students to continue asking questions for each section, but encourage them to read on – many questions will be answered as they read and those that are not will be discussed after reading.
- As the students finish reading, review their questions together and clarify any misunderstandings before using the questions to guide a second reading.

### Subsequent readings

How you approach subsequent readings will depend on your reading purpose.

You may wish to have the students use their first rereading to locate and discuss answers to their questions.

#### The teacher

Ask the students to focus on the process, from the idea to the plan and then to the action. Record the main steps on a sequence of events chart.

- *Why did the students set up the beehive in the first place?*
- *What gave the students the idea for the business? How did Martin's knowledge help?*
- *What decisions did the students have to make along the way? What factors influenced their decisions?*

You could use an information transfer activity like the one below to gauge students' understanding of the text. Such activities also provide an opportunity for students to reuse new vocabulary. They could create a flow diagram, which could then be used as a prompt for an oral retelling of the events.

Problem	Solution
<i>How to attract bees to the school garden?</i>	<i>Get a beehive and plant bee-friendly plants.</i>

#### The teacher

Ask questions to help the students understand the difference between set-up and ongoing costs and to identify the solutions needed to meet the ongoing costs.

- *Find the place where the students identify the costs of setting up. If they didn't have help from Martin and the school, do you think they would have been able to get started? What would you have done?*
- *What were the ongoing costs? How did they decide to pay for these?*
- *What can you infer about koha? How did using a koha get around the problem of needing a commercial kitchen?*
- *What are the pros and cons of the koha system?*

#### The students:

- reread to identify the steps in the process: the initial idea, the start-up help from Martin and the school, identifying costs and planning ways to meet them, making a budget, going into production, recovering the costs from koha
- integrate information across the text to determine key factors that influenced the students' decisions (such as free labour, help from others, families willing to pay koha, income exceeding outgoings).

#### The students:

- make connections between information in the text and their own experience (for example, of the cost of buying and maintaining a bicycle, a tablet, or a pet) to think critically about the Te Aro students' chances of becoming bee-keepers without Martin's help
- synthesise information about costs with their own experiences of meeting ongoing costs to come up with other possible options, such as fund raising
- integrate information in the text, about the laws around selling honey with what they already know about koha, to infer that because koha is voluntary and has no fixed amount, it is not the same in law as buying an item
- think critically about the pros and cons of using koha as they evaluate the need for a budget to help with decision making.

**Subsequent readings** How you approach subsequent readings will depend on your reading purpose. You may wish to have the students use their first rereading to locate and discuss answers to their questions.

Some English language learners would benefit from speaking frames to scaffold their use of English for critical thinking.

### The students:

- ask and answer questions to determine the differences between needs and wants, for example, they ask why the students didn't buy a new hive right away and then find the answer, ("... a big expense. Let's see how the first year goes") and infer that the old hive is good enough to start with
- use their vocabulary knowledge to confirm that words such as "unavoidable", "isn't necessary", "wasn't negotiable", and "not essential" help them to distinguish wants from needs.

### METACOGNITION

- How did asking questions then looking for answers in the text deepen your understanding? Is this a strategy you use often? Does it work best with fiction or non-fiction? Why?

### GIVE FEEDBACK

- *You compared the start-up and ongoing costs in the article with your experience of getting a new dog: there are a lot of ongoing costs! Connecting to your own experience helped you understand about the costs of maintaining the beehives.*



Reading standard: by the end of year 5



The Literacy Learning Progressions



Assessment Resource Banks

# Instructional focus – Writing

English Level 3 – Structure: organise texts, using a range of appropriate structures.

## Text excerpts from “A Sweet Business”

## Examples of text characteristics

## Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

Page 26

Imagine running a business that employs thousands of workers. The kids at Te Aro School in Wellington do just that. They're in the honey business, and their workers are honey bees.

### INTRODUCTION

*The introduction to a report lets readers know in one or two sentences what they're going to find out about.*

Encourage and support students to consider their purpose for writing and to make a decision about the structure that will best meet their purpose.

- Think about the topic and the audience, then look through School Journals and other publications for examples of a structure that will work well for you.
- The introduction is a bit like an advertisement: it uses just a few sentences to give your readers a taste of what's to come. Can you use a teaser or humour to hook your readers? How will you make them want to keep reading?

Page 29

Martin was quick to remind the students that bee-keeping involves ongoing costs ... They couldn't rely on donations.

“How will you pay for all this?” Martin wanted to know.

It was a good question – with an obvious answer. The bees would have to pay for themselves!

### PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

*A factual article often describes a process where problems arise and solutions are found. This can often set the framework for the article as the writer describes how each problem is solved.*

Guide the students to identify one or more problems and solutions to write about. Use this extract as an example.

- Many reports start with some kind of problem, and the report tells how the problem is resolved.
- In this extract, the writer lets us know that the problem will be the ongoing costs of bee-keeping. Then she reveals the answer, and the rest of the article shows how they went about making the bees pay for themselves.
- For your topic, what is the main problem that has to be solved? How will you show your readers what the solution is and how it is reached?

Students could complete a table to show each problem and its solution prior to writing.

Page 35

Two years down the track, the school's honey business is a great success. The bees are busy in the school garden, and the honey – in smart, matching honeycomb-shaped jars – is in hot demand. “It's so delicious, everyone wants some,” Lucy says. There's even money in the bank to pay for some new bee suits – and a top-bar hive.

Now that really is a sweet business.

### CONCLUSION

*A report needs a conclusion or final paragraph that pulls all the ideas together and gives readers a sense of satisfaction. Writers often return to words and ideas used in the introduction to round off the report and show how the original idea or problem has been resolved.*

Read the extract aloud and invite the students to compare it with the introduction.

- What is similar about the start and the end of this report?
- When you've reached the end of your writing, how do you know it's finished?
- Are you able to round things off with a conclusion that lets your readers know it's the end? Have you left any ideas dangling?
- Share your work with a partner and together read the first and last paragraphs. Is there a good sense of an ending?
- Were you able to make links back to the introduction?

### METACOGNITION

- What helped you decide to write this as a report? How did the structure of a report help you organise your writing?

### GIVE FEEDBACK

- You made the problem clear at the start and then you explained every step on the way to the solution. I can easily understand what they did, why they did it, and what the end result was.

Writing standard: by the end of year 5

The Literacy Learning Progressions