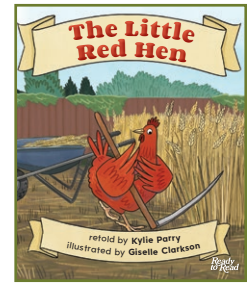


# The Little Red Hen

retold by Kylie Parry  
illustrated by Giselle Clarkson

This text is levelled at Green 1.



## Overview

This retelling of “The Little Red Hen” allows students to experience the pleasure of reading a literary text for themselves. Engaging features in this story include the humour, the fantasy context (the animals behaving like humans), strong characterisation, a series of repeated events, literary language, and a clear underlying message.

This text supports the development of a self-extending reading process. It requires students to “use a range of sources of information in the text, along with their prior knowledge, to make sense of the texts they read”, to monitor their reading, and “use strategies such as asking questions and making inferences to help them think more deeply about the ideas in the text” (*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 12).

There is an audio version of the text as an MP3 file at [www.readytoread.tki.org.nz](http://www.readytoread.tki.org.nz)

## Cross-curriculum links

Health and physical education (level 1, relationships) – Explore and share ideas about relationships with other people.

## Related texts

Other versions of “The Little Red Hen”

Other traditional tales, including the Ready to Read shared books *The Ant and the Grasshopper* (a play) and *Jack and the Beanstalk*

Stories with talking animals (or other creatures) as main characters: *A Good Idea*, *Dragons! Dragons! Dragons!*, *Haere Atu!*, *I’m the King of the Mountain*, *The Ant and the Grasshoppers* (shared); *Purr-fect!* (Yellow 3); *I Want to Fly* (Blue 2)

Stories with clear underlying messages: *A Good Idea*, *The Ant and the Grasshoppers* (shared); *Purr-fect!* (Yellow 3)

Texts about making bread: *Bread* (shared); *Waiting for Rēwana Bread* (Blue 3)

## Text characteristics

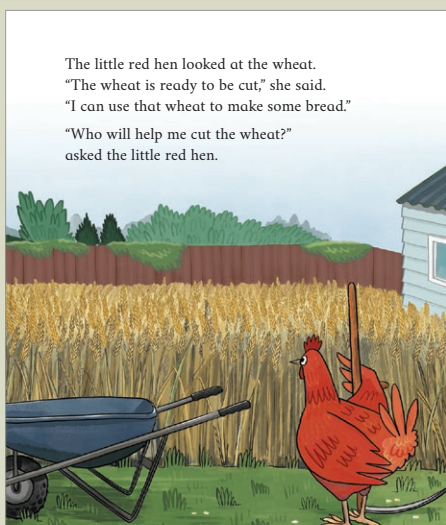
The students are working towards the standard for after one year at school. The characteristics of Green texts as they relate to this text are shown in the boxes with a solid outline. Other boxes show additional characteristics.

A mix of familiar content (the traditional tale; the context of baking) and content that is likely to be unfamiliar to some students (the processes of cutting and grinding wheat)

Most content explicitly stated but also some implicit content that provides opportunities for students to make predictions and inferences

A range of punctuation, including speech marks, commas, question marks, and exclamation marks, to support phrasing and meaning

Illustrations that support and extend the meaning but may not exactly match the words



The little red hen looked at the wheat.  
“The wheat is ready to be cut,” she said.  
“I can use that wheat to make some bread.”  
“Who will help me cut the wheat?”  
asked the little red hen.



“Not I,” said the dog.  
“Not I,” said the duck.  
“Not I,” said the pig.  
“Then I will do it myself,” said the little red hen,  
and she did.

Sentences that run over more than one line but do not split phrases, and several lines of text on every page

Dialogue between easily identified speakers

The literary phrasing (for example, “Not I”, “In rushed”, “All by myself”) and the use of repetition for effect (for example, the repeated questions and answers)

Interest words, most of which are likely to be in a reader’s oral vocabulary and that are strongly supported by the context, the sentence structure, and/or the illustrations (for example, “dough”, “flour”, “grind”, “ground”, “knead”, “kneaded”, “laughed”, “mix”, “Mmmm”, “oven”, “rushed”, “water”, “wheat”, “yawned”, “yeast”), including noun phrases (“little red hen”, “big brown mixing bowl”, “delicious smell”) and some irregular verb forms (for example, “cut”, “got”, “left”, “woke”, “ground”, “made”)

Reading standard: After one year at school

The Literacy Learning Progressions

## Suggested reading purpose

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

We are reading this story to find out what the little red hen is going to do.

## Possible learning goals

(What opportunities does this text provide for students to learn more about how to “read, respond to, and think critically” about texts?)

The behaviours listed below link to *The Literacy Learning Progressions*. **Select from and adapt** them to set your specific learning goal. 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)

This text provides opportunities for students to:

- **make connections** between their prior knowledge (in particular, knowledge of this traditional tale) and the story to **make predictions and inferences**
- **ask questions** about aspects they are unsure of
- identify the main elements in the story (**summarise**)
- make meaning by searching for and using multiple sources of information rather than one source
- monitor their reading and self-correct where necessary, for example, by rerunning text or checking further sources of information.

## Introducing the story

- Use your knowledge of your students to ensure that the introduction to the story activates their prior knowledge and supports them for a successful first reading. Build students’ familiarity with the story by reading a picture book version with them a few days before reading this book. (Some of the ideas about making bread in this story build on information in *Waiting for Rēwana Bread* (Blue 3) and the shared book *Bread*, but some ideas will be new so expect the students to build their understanding over several readings.)

To build English language learners’ vocabulary, talk through the illustrations on the cover and first few pages before the whole-group session. You can find useful guidance about supporting English language learners at <http://esolonline.tki.org.nz/ESOL-Online/Teacher-needs/Pedagogy/ESOL-teaching-strategies/Reading>

- Read the title and encourage the students to share any knowledge they have of this tale. Discuss what the little red hen is doing in the illustrations on the cover and title page. Clarify that she is using a scythe to cut the wheat and (on the title page) that she is grinding the wheat to make flour. As part of the discussion, draw out (or feed in) new vocabulary and language structures that you think will need support. Encourage the students to ask questions.
- Spend some time discussing pages 2 and 3. Encourage the students to predict (based on the previous discussion) what the hen plans to do with the wheat. Make connections to the students’ knowledge of using flour for baking cakes and bread. Discuss the illustration of the animals on page 3. *What does the picture tell you about them? Do you think they are going to help the little red hen?*
- Share the purpose for reading.
- Browse through the illustrations on pages 4–7, briefly discussing what the characters are doing. Expect the students to begin noticing that the hen is doing all the work herself. Keep drawing out (or feeding in) language that you feel may need support (for example, “Not I”, “grind”, “big brown mixing bowl”, “flour”, “yeast”, “dough”, “yawned”, “knead”, “left it to rise”, “oven”, “delicious smell”, “In rushed ...”). Prompt them to make connections to their experiences of play dough (or making bread) to help them visualise what it means to “knead the bread”. Demonstrate the movement if necessary.
- Enjoy speculating about the animals’ change of attitude on page 7. Draw attention to the aroma lines emanating from the bread in the oven to provide support for the word “delicious”. Expect the students to predict the ending, based on their knowledge of the traditional tale. They can confirm this when they read the story for themselves.

## Monitoring the reading

- Observe closely as the students read the story quietly to themselves. Note their attempts to solve unknown words and any instances of self-monitoring, cross-checking, and self-correction. Provide support to individual students as necessary. For example, if a student stops at an unfamiliar word such as “grind” or “yeast”, remind them of the introductory discussion and to look for parts of the word they know. Use questions or prompts to support meaning, for example: *What is the little red hen going to do with the grinder?* If necessary, tell them the word. There will be opportunities to explore the new vocabulary after the first reading.

- If a student makes an error without noticing, wait until the end of the sentence or the page before intervening, unless they stop reading. Waiting gives the student an opportunity to notice the error and fix it. Use appropriate prompts to draw their attention to the error. For example:

Text in book	Student reads	Teacher prompt
“Who will help me cut the wheat?” asked the little red hen.	“ <b>How ... how</b> ... will help me cut the wheat?” asked the little red hen.	Prompt the student to think about meaning. <i>What’s the hen asking? Can you think of another question word? If necessary, reassure the student about the initial sound for “who”. Now try again, and think what would make sense.</i>
“Not I,” said the dog. “Not I,” said the duck. “Not I,” said the pig.	“Not <b>me</b> ,” said the dog. “Not <b>me</b> ,” said the duck. “Not <b>me</b> ,” said the pig.	Prompt the student to check. <i>That makes sense, but have a closer look. What word has the author chosen here?</i>
“Who will help me mix some dough?” she asked.	“Who will help me <b>make</b> some dough?” she asked.	<i>That makes sense, but if that word was “make”, what letters would you expect to see? Have a closer look.</i>

- Other prompts that you could use include: *Are you sure?; Think about what would make sense.; Does that look right and sound right?; You said .... Can we say it that way?; Look at the beginning of the word.; Were you right?; Look for something you know in that word.; What else could you check?*
- Remember to base these prompts on what you know about the students’ prior knowledge. For example, asking an English language learner if a word or sentence sounds right may not be useful if they are not familiar enough with English phonemes and vocabulary or syntax. In this case, an explanation and further examples would be more effective.
- Reinforce the students’ attempts to problem-solve, whether they are successful or not, for example: *After you read “yelled” in that sentence, I noticed you reread it and changed it to “yawned”. That was great checking and fixing.*
- For further suggestions about ways to support students to self-monitor (to cross-check, confirm, and self-correct), see *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1–4*, page 130.

## Discussing and rereading the story

- You can reread this story several times, focusing on different aspects and providing opportunities for the students to build comprehension and fluency. Many of the discussion points listed here also lead naturally into “After reading” activities.
- Ask the students to share their responses to the ending. *Was it fair?* The students could compare this retelling of “The Little Red Hen” with other versions they know.

- Encourage them to think critically. *Do you think this story has a message?* (Some students may notice similarities to *The Ant and the Grasshoppers*.)
- Remind the students of the reading purpose and have them summarise what the little red hen did. (This is likely to create an opportunity to reinforce some of the irregular verb forms, such as “cut”, “made”, “left”, “ground”. This will be particularly useful for English language learners as the irregular verb forms need to be explicitly taught in most instances.)
- Have the students reread the text, stopping to discuss points of interest. You could draw attention to such features as:
  - the contrasts between the little red hen and the other characters, as suggested in the text and the illustrations
  - the repeated phrases, “Who will help me?”, “Not I”, “Then I will do it myself”, “and she did”
  - the use of speech marks to indicate dialogue and the variety of attributions, such as “said”, “laughed”, “asked”, “yawned”. (Encourage the students to read the dialogue in a way that reflects the unfolding storyline.)
  - words with inflected endings (“looked”, “asked”, “laughed”, “yawned”, “mixed”, “kneaded”)
  - words with interesting features, such as the change from “grind” in the present tense to “ground” in the past tense; the silent letters in “who”, “knead”, “kneaded”, and “dough” and the /f/ sound for “gh” in “laughed”.
- Remind the students to check for meaning when they come across words that seem odd or unfamiliar.

## After reading: practice and reinforcement

After-reading tasks should arise from your monitoring of the students’ needs during the lesson and provide purposeful practice and reinforcement. Where possible, make links to other reading texts, including texts generated from language experience and shared writing, and to the wider literacy programme (oral language, writing, handwriting, alphabet and word games and activities) and other curriculum areas.

Select from and adapt these suggestions, according to the needs of your students.

- Ask the students to reread the story to a partner. Listen in, noting their ability to self-monitor and to use punctuation to support phrasing and expression. You could also use this time to do a quick running record with a student to provide more information on an aspect you have noticed.
- The students can build their comprehension and fluency by rereading the story while listening to the audio version. Audio versions also provide English language learners with good models of pronunciation, intonation, and expression.



- Read (or reread) other versions of “The Little Red Hen” and discuss the differences. You could write your own version together.
- Read and discuss other stories with similar messages, for example, the Ready to Read shared books *A Good Idea* (about co-operation) and *The Ant and the Grasshoppers* (about the need to work as well as play).
- Use the text for Readers’ Theatre, with students taking on the role of each character and you (and any other students) taking on the role of the narrator. Alternatively, the students could act out the story using puppets.
- Have the students work in pairs to create a flow chart of the tasks the hen did. They could use pages 6–7 of the shared book *Bread* as a model. Alternatively, the students could create a flow chart of their own experiences of making bread.
- Support the students in finding answers to any questions they have about processing wheat or making bread. This could include rereading *Bread* and *Waiting for Rēwana Bread* and watching a video clip.
- The students could write and draw about their experiences of baking or helping with jobs at home.
- Have the students compare the behaviour of the hen with the other animals by adding descriptive words and phrases to pictures of the characters.
- The students could choose the character they find the most interesting (using information in the illustrations as well as the text) and write a few sentences explaining the reason for their choice.
- Explore the language of the story. The students could:
  - brainstorm synonyms for “delicious” (for example, “lovely”, “mouthwatering”) and “rushed” (for example, “ran”, “raced”, “hurried”)
  - work in pairs to identify the words associated with processing the wheat and making bread and create a glossary
  - explore the noun phrases. Support the students to identify some examples (“the little red hen”, “big brown mixing bowl”, “a delicious smell”) and discuss how they add more information. Have the students create noun phrases that describe the other characters, for example, “the black and white dog”, “the duck with sunglasses”, “the yawning pig”, “the lazy animals”
  - experiment with alternatives for the repeated phrase “Not I” (for example, “Not me”, “I won’t”, “No way”). They could incorporate their ideas into a retelling of the story.
- Explore some of the “surprising spellings” such as the silent initial letters in “who” and “knead”, the silent “gh” in “dough”, or the /f/ sound for “gh” in “laughed”. Start a “discoveries” chart and encourage the students to add other examples of interesting spellings as they discover them in their wider reading.
- Focus on some of the irregular past-tense verb forms (for example, “put”, “cut”, “got”, “left”, “woke”, “ground”, “made”). Reread the sentences where the words occur and support the students in identifying the relevant present-tense forms. Explain that there are some verbs that can’t have “ed” added (for example, “cut” not “cutted”, “left” not “leaved”, “ground” not “grinded”). Give the students cards with the present-tense and past-tense forms for them to match up. (You could include regular verb forms as well.)

Provide further support, particularly for English language learners, by making up oral sentences together, using the irregular verb forms. You could provide a further scaffold by giving them speaking frames or by designing a cloze task where the irregular verbs are omitted. For example,

Who cut your hair?

My mum \_\_\_\_\_ my hair.

“Who will help me cut the wheat?”

said the little red hen.

The little red hen \_\_\_\_\_ the wheat.