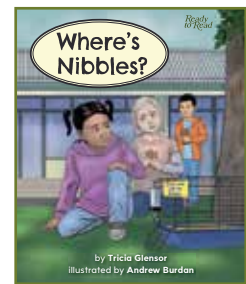


Where's Nibbles?

by Tricia Glensor
illustrated by Andrew Burdan

This text is levelled at Green 2.



Overview

Where's Nibbles? describes another adventure in the life of this guinea pig from Tawa School. In this story, Nibbles gets out of her cage and the children can't find her anywhere. They become even more worried when they see the cat from next door. Where is Nibbles?

This story 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

Related texts

Stories that involve searching: *Lost*, *The Safe Place* (shared); *The Missing Socks* (Blue 2); *The Great Car Clean-out* (Green 1); *A Place to Sleep* (Green 3)

Stories and poems about pets: the Greedy Cat stories; "Bedtime Cat" (poem card), "Catsways" (a poem in *Splish Splash!*), *Me and My Dog* (shared); *Nibbles*, *Skipper's Happy Tail* (Blue 1); *No, Skipper!* (Blue 3); *A Place to Sleep* (Green 3)

Text characteristics

Where's Nibbles? has the following text characteristics that help develop the reading behaviours expected of students reading at Green.

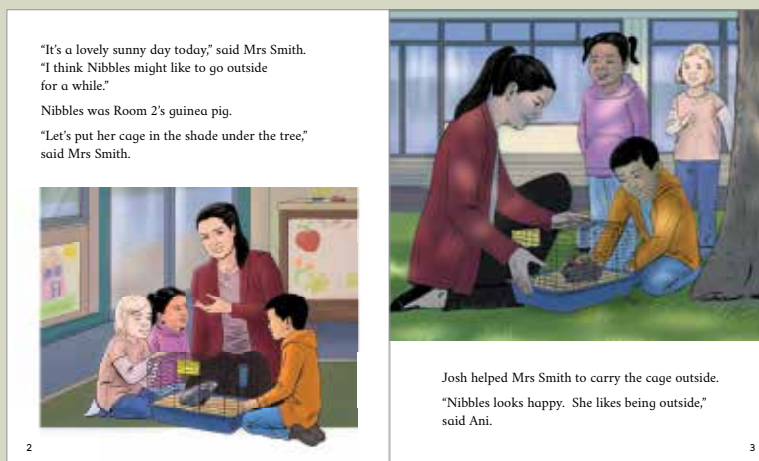
Most content explicitly stated but also some implicit content that provides opportunities for students to make predictions and inferences

Mostly familiar vocabulary, including many high-frequency words, but also some new interest words and descriptive language (for example, "cage", "carry", "Clever", "empty", "grey clouds", "grass", "for a while", "hook", "jacket", "long grass", "lovely sunny day", "moved", "next door", "nowhere to be found", "pointed", "raced", "rain", "reached", "rushed", "sandpit", "searched", "shade", "slipped off") that are strongly supported by the context, the sentence structure, and/or the illustrations

A clear narrative structure with a distinct beginning, middle, and end

A familiar setting (at school) and a familiar context of caring for a pet

Dialogue between easily identified speakers



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

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

Word features that provide opportunities for students to build and apply their knowledge of letters, sounds, and words. These include words that begin with the same digraph or consonant blend ("classroom", "clever", "closer", "clouds"; "grass", "grey"; "shade", "she"; "slide", "slipped"); compound words ("before", "classroom", "everyone", "everywhere", "inside", "maybe", "nowhere", "outside", "sandpit", "today"); and words ending with "y" as an "ee" sound ("carry", "empty", "happy", "Lily", "lovely", "quickly", "story", "Suddenly", "sunny", "very")

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

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 happens when Nibbles goes missing.

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 according to your students’ strengths, 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, over several readings, to:

- **make connections** between their own experiences and information in the story to **make predictions and inferences**
- **ask questions** about the story and think about possible answers
- 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

- A short video on the importance of introducing the text is available at <https://vimeo.com/142446572>
- 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.
- A few days before reading this book, add *Nibbles* to the students’ browsing boxes to remind them of the characters of Nibbles, Mrs Smith, Josh and Ani.

For English language learners, you could talk through the cover illustration and the first few pages before the whole-group session to build confidence with vocabulary. 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>

- Tell the students that you have another story for them to read about Nibbles. Have them briefly recall (summarise) who Nibbles is and what happened in the first story.
- Discuss the title and cover illustration. The students may recognise Ani and Josh. You could tell them that the other character is named Lily. (Lily also appears in *Nibbles* on page 2 but is not named in that story.) Expect the students to infer that Nibbles is missing and the children are worried. Ask the students to predict what the children will do. *Why is it important that they find Nibbles? What could happen?*
- Use the title page to introduce the idea that Nibbles’s cage has been put outside under a shady tree.
- You could ask the students to share any questions they have about the story. Write these down to refer back to after reading (for example, *Why is the cage outside? How did Nibbles go missing? Will the children find Nibbles?* You could support the students by modelling “I wonder ...” statements.
- Discuss the illustrations on pages 2 and 3, prompting the students to adjust (or confirm) their earlier predictions or questions. As part of the discussion, draw out (or feed in) any vocabulary and language structures you think will need support (for example, “guinea pig”, “cage”, “shade”, and the names of the characters).
- Share the purpose for reading.
- The students could begin reading the story for themselves or, if you think they need more support, you could discuss the illustrations on pages 4–5. Some may notice that Josh appears to be wearing a different top. Encourage the students to speculate (make inferences) about the reason for this.

Monitoring the reading

- Observe closely as the students read the story quietly to themselves. Note their confidence and perseverance, 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 has difficulty with the word “shade” on page 2, remind them of the introductory discussion, to look for parts of the word they know, and think about what would make sense.
- If a student makes an error without noticing a problem, wait till the end of the sentence or page before intervening unless they stop reading. Waiting gives them the opportunity to notice the error and fix it themselves. Use appropriate prompts to draw their attention to the error. For example:

 Sounds and words

 The Literacy Learning Progressions

Text in book	Student reads	Teacher prompt
Josh helped Mrs Smith to carry the cage outside.	Josh helped Mrs Smith to carefully the cage outside. (The student stops and looks puzzled.)	Acknowledge the student's self-monitoring and support them to identify and fix the problem. <i>You've noticed something wrong. What part are you not quite sure about? (If necessary: What did Josh help Mrs Smith do?) Try that sentence again.</i>
the children raced over to see Nibbles.	the children ran over to see Nibbles.	Prompt the student to attend to visual information. <i>That makes sense, but if the word was "ran", what letters would you expect to see? Have a closer look.</i>
"Oh, no! That's the cat from next door," she said.	"Oh, no! This the cat from next door," she said.	Prompt the student to think about structure. <i>Are you sure? Does that sound right? (For an ELL student this may sound right, so you could say: In English, we say "That's the cat from next door".)</i>
"Come on, everyone," called Mrs Smith.	"Come on, everyone," ... (The student stops reading)	Prompt the student to integrate meaning and visual information. <i>What is Mrs Smith doing? What can you see that will help you in that word? Read the sentence again.</i>

- Other prompts that you could use include: *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?; You said "...". Can you find your mistake and fix it?*
- 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 "look" in that sentence, I noticed you reread it and changed it to "hook". That was great checking.*
- 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.

- Encourage the students to share their responses to the story (and make connections to any experiences of looking for lost pets). *Did you guess where Nibbles might be? How did you feel when Lily noticed the cat?*
- Ask the students to summarise the story. Discuss what happened at the beginning (setting the scene), the middle (Nibbles going missing, the children searching and then having to go inside), and the end of the story (finding Nibbles).
- Revisit the questions the students had before reading the story and discuss whether these have been answered. Encourage them to speculate about where Nibbles might have been hiding and why the children couldn't find her.
- Encourage the students to think critically.
 - *Why did Mrs Smith say that Nibbles might be inside?*
 - *Why was Josh's jacket under the tree?*
 - *Why did Nibbles go under Josh's jacket?*
 - *Why did Ani think Nibbles was clever?*
 - *What might they do next time they put the cage outside?*
- Have the students reread the story, stopping to discuss points of interest. You can revisit the story over several sessions, exploring such features as:
 - how the writer and illustrator show how the characters were feeling. Discuss how the descriptive language affects the mood of the story, for example, the contrast between "a lovely sunny day", "happy", "raced over", "very sad", and "lots of big grey clouds", and the dramatic impact of adverbs such as "Suddenly" and "quickly".
 - the descriptive term "nowhere to be found". Discuss the impact of using this phrase rather than other alternatives (for example, "still missing", "lost", or "But the children couldn't find her"). You could also discuss the use of "searched" as an alternative to "looked for".
 - the use of speech marks to indicate dialogue, the attributions to clarify who the speaker is, and the use of alternatives to "said" ("cried", "called", "yelled"). Encourage the students to read the dialogue in a way that reflects the drama of the unfolding storyline.
 - how students worked out (or attempted) unfamiliar words or phrases (for example, by thinking about what made sense, looking for the biggest known part of a word, noticing inflected endings, reading on to the next word, or rereading).

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 with a partner. They could read each other alternate pages. 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.
- Support the students to reread and discuss other stories with similar themes or topics (see Related texts). You could read non-fiction about guinea pigs to your class and encourage all the students (not just the ones in the reading group) to find further information texts in the school library.
- 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.
- Support summarising by having the students identify the beginning, middle, and end of the story. A possible framework is shown below. The students could work in pairs to fill in the chart. Provide extra support for English language learners by having copies of the illustrations for them to put in order and orally retell the story first.
- The students could create thought bubbles for a main character at the beginning, middle, and end of the story.
- Ask the students to draw and write about where they would search if Nibbles got lost at their school and why they would look there. Alternatively, the students could work in pairs to draw and write about where Nibbles might have been while the children were looking for her. Encourage them to refer to the book to create the details for their picture.
- Write “thinking critically” questions on cards. Have pairs of students choose a question and think, talk, and write about it.
- Have the students work in pairs to list the pros and cons of having a classroom pet. As well as drawing on any personal experiences of pets, they could use both Nibbles books (and perhaps some non-fiction texts) for ideas.
- Write some compound words from the text on cards (for example, “classroom”, “everyone”, “everywhere”, “inside”, “nowhere”, “outside”, “today”) and cut them into their component words. Mix the cards up and have the students work in pairs to recreate the compound words. Add in some word cards the students can use to create new words (for example, “some-where”, “bed-room”, “be-side”, “some-one”, “any-one”).
- Have word games available that encourage students to sort words by common characteristics, such as initial blends, initial digraphs, inflected endings (“ed” and “ing”) or ending with “y” as an “ee” sound. As well as words from this story, include words they have met in their previous reading and writing.

Where's Nibbles?		
Beginning (Who, what, where?)	Middle (What was the problem? What did the characters do?)	End (How was the problem solved?)
Mrs Smith and the children put Nibbles's cage outside.	The children found the cage door open and Nibbles gone. The children searched, but they couldn't find her.	Josh found Nibbles under his jacket.