



Overview

This TSM contains information and suggestions for teachers to pick and choose from, depending on the needs of their students and their purpose for using the text. The material provides many opportunities for revisiting the text.

When Janet set out to check the fences on her remote sheep farm in Taumaranui, she had no idea that her life would soon be in danger. Based on a real event, “Stung!” recounts what happened when Janet stepped on a wasps’ nest and was attacked by a swarm of angry insects. With no cellphone reception and no one there to help, Janet’s survival depended on incredible stamina and determination. Not surprisingly, the after-effects of the attack have been long lasting.

This story:

- is a real-life recount
- is told in the third person
- is set on a remote farm in Taumaranui
- uses expressive verbs
- is a story of survival and determination.

A PDF of the text and an audio version as an MP3 file are available at www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz

Texts related by theme

“The Jungle in My Garden” JJ 52 | *The Buzz of Bees (various)* Connected L2 May 2012 | “Shipwrecked” SJ L2 Oct 2013 | “Lost in the Bush” SJ L2 Nov 2016 | “Wasps” SJ L2 May 2019

Text characteristics from the year 4 reading standard

We have retained the links to the National Standards while a new assessment and reporting system is being developed.

For more information on assessing and reporting in the post-National Standards era, see: <http://assessment.tki.org.nz/Assessment-and-reporting-guide>

had to stop.

“Keep calm,” she told herself.

“Focus on breathing slowly.”

She tried her phone again –

still no reception. Janet knew she had to keep moving. If she lay down, she might never get up again.

Somenow she willed herself to start walking again.



some abstract ideas that are clearly supported by concrete examples in the text or easily linked to the students’ prior knowledge

Janet ran, but the swarm of wasps followed. She rolled on the ground, trying to squish them, but it didn’t help. She was desperate. Maybe the wasps were attracted to her T-shirt. She pulled it off and threw it away. It made no difference. Still the wasps kept stinging and stinging.

Finally, she ran down the hill and threw herself into a small stream. It was only then that the wasps gave up their attack.

some compound and complex sentences, which may consist of two or three clauses

padlock nearby. The helicopter flew Janet to hospital. She had received hundreds of stings. It took months

to heal. She was lucky – she had survived. But today, Janet still shivers when she hears the buzz of an insect nearby.

AUTHOR’S NOTE

This story is based on the true story of Janet Kelland, who stepped in a wasp nest on her sheep farm



some places where information and ideas are implicit and where students need to make inferences based on information that is easy to find because it is nearby in the text and there is little or no competing information

buzzing and felt a sharp pain in her leg. In a matter of seconds, thousands of wasps were all around her.

The noise was incredible. The furious insects covered her clothes and crawled under her shirt and shorts, and all the time, they were stinging. Each sting felt like a burning-hot needle jabbing deep into her skin. Janet pulled handfuls of

hair. The stinging went on and on and on. She felt like she was on fire.

figurative language, such as metaphors, similes, or personification



Reading standard: by the end of year 4

VOCABULARY

- Possibly unfamiliar words and phrases, including “quad bike”, “stirred the leaves”, “furious”, “burning-hot needle jabbing”, “no let-up”, “squash”, “attracted to”, “horribly isolated”, “option”, “intense”, “focus on breathing slowly”, “reception”, “staggered”, “paramedics”, “injected”, “relieve the pain”, “fight the effects”, “wasp venom”, “helicopter”, “survived”
- Words and phrases related to farming, including “check the fences”, “a far corner of her farm”, “paddocks”, “farmhouse”
- Adverbial phrases, including “in a matter of seconds”
- Idioms: “her heart sank”, “she willed herself to start walking once more”
- A collective noun: “a swarm of wasps”


Possible supporting strategies

- Identify words or phrases that may be unfamiliar to the students. English language learners in particular may be unfamiliar with some of the words and phrases related to farming.
- Remind the students of strategies for working out the meaning of unfamiliar words, for example, using the context, using the illustrations, or breaking the word into its parts.
- Draw on the students' own experiences of being stung by a bee or wasp or bitten by a spider to introduce terms such as “venom”, “intense pain”, and “pain relief” if they don't arise naturally.
- In pairs, have the students work on grouping and categorising the vocabulary words, then share their categories and explain their reasoning. Alternatively, you could provide category headings (for example, Farming, Pain, Emergency Services, Time Connectives, Verbs) and have the students hunt for words that fit each one.
- Explore other common collective nouns, for example, a “school of fish” or a “flock of sheep”.
- *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

- Some knowledge of wasps, including that they can attack in swarms and that multiple wasp stings (or, if you are allergic, a single sting) can be lethal
- Some knowledge of farming, including the need to check fences on a regular basis and that farmers often use quad bikes to get around their farm
- Some knowledge that, in rural areas, farms can cover large areas, cellphone coverage can be poor, and emergency services might take longer to arrive than in urban areas

Possible supporting strategies

- Draw on the students' prior knowledge about wasps and bees, including their experiences of being stung by them. Discuss the differences between bees and wasps, for example, that bees only sting once and only when provoked, whereas wasps can be aggressive and can sting multiple times.
- Make connections with the non-fiction text “Wasps” in this Journal.
-  Use Google Maps or a satellite image of Taumarunui to identify its remote location and the extent of farmland in the area.
- Look out for opportunities to challenge gender norms if children are surprised that the farmer is female.

TEXT FEATURES AND STRUCTURE

- A third-person recount told in chronological order
- A mix of simple, compound, and complex sentences
- Descriptive language, including the use of expressive verbs
- Figurative language, such as similes, metaphors, and personification
- Use of internal monologue
- Repeated words or phrases, for example, “Still the wasps kept stinging and stinging”
- Some use of dashes to indicate additional information

Possible supporting strategies

- Remind the students of other recounts they have read. Have the students think, pair, and share the features of recounts, such as setting the scene, events unfolding in chronological order, and a conclusion.
- Text reconstruction tasks can help the students notice the features of various text types. Copy the story and cut it up into separate paragraphs. The students try to put the paragraphs in the correct order, then they compare their text with a partner's and discuss any differences, and finally they check their text with the original text. Discuss how they worked out the correct order.
 - *Which words helped you to know the order the paragraphs went in?*
 - *Which paragraphs were difficult to order?*
 - *What made them difficult?*
 - *How did you decide where to place them?*
- Help the students to understand the connection between ideas in longer sentences by identifying the clauses, phrases, linking words, and punctuation.
- Revise what similes, metaphors, and personification are and how they can be used to create visual images and evoke sensations. Support the students to make connections with their own experiences of being stung, including sensations of sharp stinging pain and heat.
- Discuss ways that self-talk can help people to get through challenging situations, and have the students share the ways they encourage themselves mentally when doing something strenuous, such as running in a cross-country race.
- Discuss the effect of repeating words to emphasise the prolonged nature of the wasp attack.



Possible curriculum contexts

ENGLISH (Reading)

Level 2 – Ideas: Show some understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts.

Level 2 – Language features: Show some understanding of how language features are used for effect within and across texts.

ENGLISH (Writing)

Level 2 – Ideas: Select, form, and express ideas on a range of topics.

Level 2 – Language features: Use language features appropriately, showing some understanding of their effects.

Possible first reading purpose

- Find out what happens when a farmer accidentally steps on a wasps' nest.

Possible subsequent reading purposes

- Identify how the writer has used descriptive language in a recount
- Identify the impact of a wasp attack
- Explore the features of a recount.

Possible writing purposes

- Write a recount of an event
- Describe a time when you were stung by a wasp or bee or bitten by a spider
- List steps you can take to avoid being stung by a wasp
- Investigate and report on the difference between wasps and bees.



Instructional focus – Reading

English Level 2 – Ideas: Show some understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts.

Level 2 – Language features: Show some understanding of how language features are used for effect within and across texts.

First reading

- Note that “Stung!” deals with some potentially sensitive themes, especially for children who have been attacked by wasps, have witnessed a wasp attack, or are allergic to bees or wasps. Have the students read “The Striped Invader” (the non-fiction text on wasps, pages 18–23) before introducing this story so that you are aware of the students’ experiences and any areas of anxiety. If students are anxious about wasp attacks, reassure them that what happened in the story was a very rare event.
- Set the purpose for reading. Before reading, have the students share in pairs a story about a time they or someone they know was stung by a bee or wasp or bitten by a spider.
- Remind the students to ask questions and make predictions about what will happen in the text, revising these questions as they continue reading. Have them read the title and the first paragraph and then share predictions and questions about what will happen next.
- Give the students the opportunity to read the rest of the story in its entirety to find out what happens to Janet after she steps on the wasps’ nest.

If the students require more scaffolding

- Prompt the students to make connections with times when they have been stung by a bee or wasp or bitten by a spider.
- Remind the students to use the illustrations, as well as the words, to identify the setting, the character, and what is happening.
- Address any vocabulary that is challenging for the students. Refer to the Vocabulary section of “Text and language challenges” on page 2 for further teaching suggestions.
- Give the students a graphic organiser so that they can complete a story map as they read. If the students are not familiar with story maps, introduce the concept and have the students complete one in pairs or as a group.
- Ask questions to check that the students are making inferences as they read. For example:
 - *Why did Janet think she wouldn’t get up again if she lay down?*
 - *Why did the paramedics race towards Janet as soon as they reached the farmhouse?*
 - *Why did Janet hear rather than see the helicopter arrive?*
 - *Why does Janet still shiver when she hears an insect buzzing?*
- Provide sticky notes before reading so that the students can note their questions and any ideas and vocabulary they are not sure of. At the end of the first reading, discuss the questions they still have.

Subsequent readings How you approach subsequent readings will depend on your reading purpose. Where possible, have the students work in pairs to discuss the questions and prompts in this section.

The teacher

Have the students discuss in pairs the mood of the opening paragraph, describing the feel of the scene in their own words, for example, peaceful, calm, happy.

Have them analyse the way the writer has created this mood.

- *If you were in this scene, what would you see, hear, and feel?*
- *What words has the writer chosen that create the mood of the scene? Were they effective? Use examples from the text to back up your answer.*
- *What is the pace of the passage? Are things happening quickly or slowly?*
- *What connections can you make with your own experiences?*

Compare this passage with another passage in the story, for example, the text on page 13 or 14.

The teacher

Have the students discuss the ending of the story, comparing the inferences they made about the impact of the attack. They could respond in pairs to prompts or questions, for example:

- *Think about the immediate effects that the wasp attack had on Janet. What were they? How do we know?*
- *What were the lasting effects of the wasp attack? What evidence in the text supports your inferences?*

The students:

- identify the words and images that make the opening paragraph seem bright and happy: the warm sun, the light breeze, the birds singing, the beautiful natural environment
- make connections with their own experiences of being in a safe and happy space
- compare the words used in a different passage, for example, the text on page 13, identifying words that have unpleasant associations (“furious”, “crawled”, “stinging”, “burning-hot”, “needle”, “jabbing”, “was on fire”)
- identify places where the writer has used repetition to show that the wasp attack keeps on going
- evaluate the effectiveness of the writing in creating a sense of pain and distress.

The students:

- use their knowledge of how scary or traumatic events can leave a lasting effect to make inferences about why Janet still reacts to the sound of a buzzing insect
- make comparisons between the physical scars that healed over time and the emotional scars that Janet is left with
- explain how they made their inferences using examples from the text.

Subsequent readings (cont.)

The teacher

Revise or lead a discussion about key features of recounts and the structure they commonly take:

- setting the scene
- events described in chronological order
- time connectives
- a concluding comment about the event.

Have the students complete a story map showing key stages in the recount, for example, the setting, the wasp attack, the journey back to the farmhouse, and so on. Ask the students to identify key turning points in the story. Have them share their ideas about when Janet was at her lowest point.

METACOGNITION

- *What did you predict that the story would be about when you read the title and the opening paragraph? What did you base these predictions on? How did your predictions change as you read the story?*

The students:

- find and use the time connectives to identify the sequence of events and the time period the story covers
- make connections between their understanding of the features of recounts and key events in the story, identifying the setting, main events, and concluding statements
- discuss whether the hardest part of the experience for Janet was the attack itself, the walk home, or something else, using descriptions and examples in the text as evidence.

GIVE FEEDBACK

- *I think your inference that Janet was really scared is right, and you backed it up by pointing to the phrase “she felt horribly isolated and alone” when you were discussing it with your partner. Now talk with your partner about why that phrase told you that she was scared.*



Reading standard: by the end of year 4



The Literacy Learning Progressions



Assessment Resource Banks

Instructional focus – Writing

English Level 2 – Ideas: Select, form, and express ideas on a range of topics; Language features: Use language features appropriately, showing some understanding of their effects.

Text excerpts from “Stung!”

Examples of text characteristics

Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

Page 17

Janet rode the last few kilometres to the farmhouse, getting there just as the ambulance arrived. The paramedics jumped out and ran towards her. They covered her with cold, wet towels and injected her with medicine to relieve the pain and fight the effects of the wasp venom.

Some time later, Janet heard the sound of a helicopter ...


RECOUNTS

The purpose of a recount is to share an event or experience with readers.

Discuss ways to make recounts engaging for readers, for example, by identifying major events or information and expanding on these in an interesting way rather than retelling every minor detail.

Give the students time to choose an event or experience that they want to recount, sharing their initial ideas with a partner. Have them brainstorm components of the event or experience before selecting which to include in their recount and sequencing them.

For more information on writing recounts, see [Recounts](#) at English Online.

DIGITAL TOOLS  The students can use [Popplet](#) or [Mindmap](#) to outline the sequence of events.

Encourage the students to use their descriptive language skills to help readers visualise what is going on.

Generate a [learning intention guide](#) for the students to use to assess and reflect on their writing.

Page 12

The sheep watched her as she climbed the hill. Birds sang in the native forest. The sun shone, and a light breeze stirred the leaves of the trees. It was a great day to be alive.

MOOD

Mood is the atmosphere that a writer creates and the emotions it evokes in readers.

As a class, compile a list of words, colours, and images that create different moods.

Create a mood dice or spinner that uses moods instead of numbers, for example, gloomy, happy, wild, humorous, eerie, fun. Have the students come up with a setting, for example, a walk in the bush. Students can use the dice or spinner to find out what mood they need to create.

Page 13

Then, suddenly, Janet’s foot sank into a hole. She had stepped into a wasps’ nest! At once she heard a loud buzzing and felt a sharp pain in her leg. In a matter of seconds, thousands of wasps were all around her.

TIME CONNECTIVES

Time connectives are used to order events. When writing a recount, it’s good to use a variety of time indicators to avoid being repetitive. Time connectives can also be used to create a sense of drama.

Have the students highlight examples of time connectives that describe when an action happens, for example:

- Then suddenly ...
- At once ...
- All the time ...
- At that moment ...

Have groups of students compile lists of time connectives for:

- sudden changes, for example, “in a flash”
- sequences of events, for example, “not long after”
- things that signal a conclusion, for example, “finally”, “at long last”.

Have the students peer-review each other’s writing to identify the time connectives they have used and to highlight any repetition.

METACOGNITION

- How does the purpose of a recount change the way it is written? For example, how might a diary entry be different from a recount in a news article? In what ways might they be similar?

GIVE FEEDBACK

- You’ve followed the structure of a recount, setting up the scene and describing what happened in chronological order. One thing I felt was missing was some descriptive detail to help bring the story to life. Can you think of some ways to make the scene easier to visualise?