Shetland Ponies

OVERVIEW

This brief descriptive report provides information about Shetland ponies, where they come from, what they look like, how long they live, and what they were used for in the past and now. The clear structure supports students to find and summarise information and can be used as a model for students' own report writing. This report can be read either as an introduction or as a follow-up to the accompanying article, "Shetland Pony Steeplechase", in the same Journal.

There is an audio version of the text on the *Junior Journal 42 and 43* CD.

RELATED TEXTS

Texts about horses or ponies: "Shetland Pony Steeplechase" (JJ 42); "A Foal is Born", "Don't Fall Off!" (both in SJ 1.3.09)

Other descriptive reports with a similar structure: *Pencils and Pens* (RTR, Turquoise); *Guide Dogs* (RTR, Purple); *Extraordinary Earthworms*, *Blue Eggs* (RTR, Gold); "Our Treasure Island" (JJ 37)

TEXT CHARACTERISTICS

Key text characteristics relating to the reading standard for after three years at school are shown in the boxes.

Information organised in paragraphs

Visual language features that are clearly explained and linked to the body text, including: bold print and an asterisk to indicate a footnote; the photographs; and the photograph caption

A mix of explicit and implicit content that requires students to make connections between prior knowledge and information, for example:
- to make inferences about how the ponies were well suited to the Shetland Islands
- to visualise the size of the ponies.

Shetland Ponies

Shetland ponies come from the Shetland Islands in the far north of Scotland. They are small ponies that don't grow much higher than ten **hands***. Although they are small, they are very strong. They have small heads, widely spaced eyes, and alert ears. In winter, they have thick, warm coats and long manes. Shetlands can live for up to thirty years.

*hands – a way of measuring how tall horses are (1 hand equals 10.16 centimetres)

Because they are so strong for their size, Shetlands were bred as working ponies. They ploughed land and pulled heavy loads.

Shetland ponies were first brought to New Zealand 150 years ago. Today they are kept as pets or as harness or show ponies. They are great ponies for children to learn to ride on.
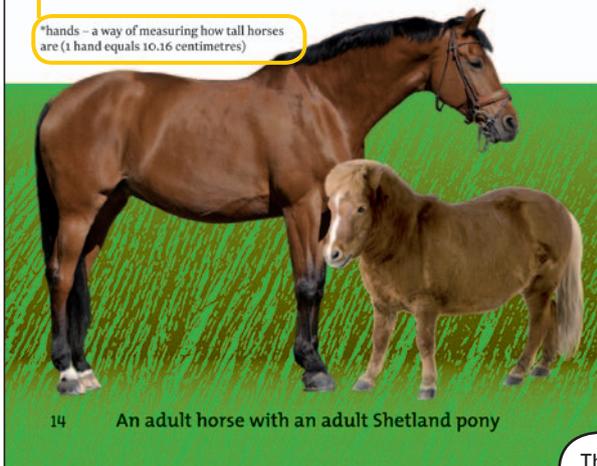
14   An adult horse with an adult Shetland pony   15
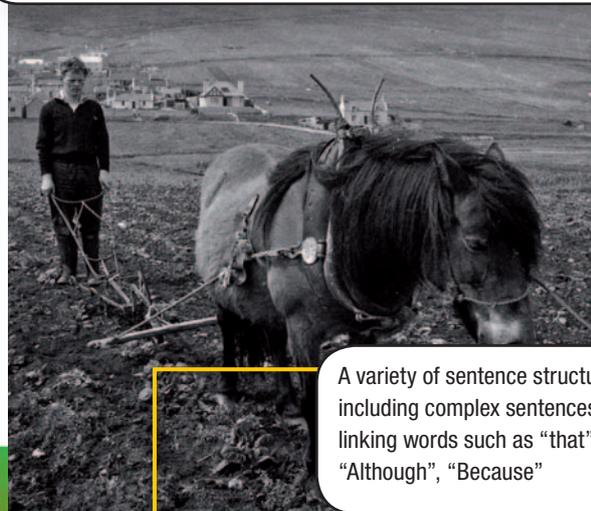
A variety of sentence structures, including complex sentences and linking words such as "that", "Although", "Because"

The references to unfamiliar settings in place (the Shetland Islands) and time and, for some students, unfamiliar concepts ("were bred as", "working ponies", "ploughed", "harness or show ponies")

Some time shifts from the present to the past and back to the present, signalled by indicators of time and changes in verb forms

Some unfamiliar words and phrases

Reading standard: after three years at school

POSSIBLE CURRICULUM CONTEXTS

READING PURPOSES AND LEARNING GOALS

English (Reading)

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

Level 2 – Structure: Show some understanding of text structures.

Science (Living World)

(Levels 1 and 2) – Ecology: Recognise that living things are suited to their particular habitat.

SUGGESTED READING PURPOSE

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

To find information about Shetland ponies

SETTING A LEARNING GOAL

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

Some behaviours you could expect to see as the students read in order to meet the reading purpose are suggested below. **Select and adapt** from them to set your specific learning goal(s). 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).

The students:

- ask questions and look for answers in the text
- identify and summarise main points
- infer how the ponies were well suited to the Shetland Islands
- use word-solving strategies to decode and/or work out the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases.

TEXT AND LANGUAGE FEATURES

VOCABULARY

- Some unfamiliar words and phrases, for example, "Shetland Islands", "the far north of Scotland", "widely spaced", "alert", "manes", "Shetlands", "bred", "working ponies", "ploughed", "harness or show ponies"
- The comparison "so strong for their size"
- Common words with more than one meaning: "hands", "coats", "show"
- The mathematical language "1 hand equals 10.16 centimetres."

POSSIBLE SUPPORTING STRATEGIES

Monitor students' **decoding** attempts by noticing their use of key words during discussion and/or by asking questions that require the students to use key words. Prompt students to remember the strategies they can use, often in combination. For example:

- breaking longer words into syllables, chunks, or familiar components ("Shet-land", "Scot-land")
- drawing on knowledge of spelling patterns and phonics ("alert", "bred", "ploughed"; changing the "y" in "pony" to "ies" in the plural form, as for "babies", "cries")
- rereading the phrase or sentence around the target word to confirm decoding attempts.

Monitor students' **word-solving strategies** to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases. Prompt students to remember the strategies they can use, often in combination, for example:

- thinking of the overall context and making connections to their own experiences
- rereading or reading on so that they can use the next word or the overall context of the sentence or paragraph; for example, to clarify that "hands" is a unit of measurement and "harness" is linked to the word "ponies"
- using visual language features, such as: the bold print and asterisk for "hands" to indicate the footnote; the photographs; the caption.

Have a dictionary available to confirm or clarify word meanings.

Provide opportunites for students to use rulers to measure.

INTRODUCING THE TEXT

- Tell the students they are going to read about Shetland ponies. Show the students the photograph and caption on page 14 and ask them what they can tell you about the differences between the horse and the pony.
- Share the reading purpose and learning goal(s).

METACOGNITION

Effective readers are metacognitive. They are aware of the processes and strategies they draw on and are able to explain how they used these to successfully make meaning and think critically. Examples of metacognitive behaviours, or strategies that promote metacognitive behaviours, are threaded through the notes and indicated by ⓜ

EXPECTED STUDENT BEHAVIOURS
(what to look for, prompt, and support as the students work towards achieving their learning goal)

ⓜ As they read or reread this text, students notice when meaning has broken down. They draw on a range of strategies to correct the problem and can explain what they did.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR STUDENTS TO READ, RESPOND, AND THINK CRITICALLY

ⓜ Ask questions: *How did you know that bit was wrong?* Or *I noticed that you reread that bit when you got confused. How did rereading help you?*

ⓜ Use prompts: *How did you know that bit was right? Think about the strategy you used. How did it help you?*

ⓜ Give feedback: *I noticed that you read this as… and then you fixed it up by …*

READING AND DISCUSSING THE TEXT

In order to meet the reading purpose: **The students ask questions and look for answers in the text. They identify and summarise the main points about Shetland ponies and think critically about why they were so well suited to the Shetland Islands.**

EXPECTED STUDENT BEHAVIOURS
(what to look for, prompt, and support as the students work towards achieving their learning goal)

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR STUDENTS TO READ, RESPOND, AND THINK CRITICALLY

PAGE 14

The students ask questions using the title, photographs, and their prior knowledge.

Set up a KWL chart with the following headings: I know, I want to know, I learnt. Have the students share what they already know and any questions they have. Add these to the chart. If necessary, model your thinking: *I wonder why they're called Shetland ponies.*

The students make connections between the information in the text (including the footnote) and what they already know to visualise the size of a Shetland pony. They read the caption to confirm that a fully grown Shetland pony is much smaller than an adult horse.

Prompt the students to make the connection between the bold print for "hands", the asterisk, and the footnote. If necessary, model how to do this. *I know that if there is an asterisk symbol after a word, there will be a definition of that word further down the page.* Prompt them to visualise and estimate what "ten hands" looks like. (After the reading, use rulers or pieces of paper cut in 10.16 – centimetre lengths to check.)

Have an atlas or globe handy to show the students where the Shetland Islands are. Discuss what the weather might be like there. Provide a dictionary (if necessary) to find the meaning of "alert".

To support the students to find out the meanings of "coats" (in this context) and "manes", have them look at the adjectives in the second to last sentence and at the photos. *What do you think a coat is to be thick and warm? What other animals have coats? What is long? What other animals have manes?*

Draw attention to the pronouns and linking words to help students identify the links within and between sentences. *What do "they" and "that" in the second sentence refer back to? The third sentence begins with "Although they are small." What does "although" tell us about what comes next? About the relationship between "small" and "strong"?*

The students can identify and summarise information that is relevant to their questions.

Model how to identify and summarise information: *I'm thinking about what this paragraph is telling me. It starts by telling me where the ponies come from … The next paragraph …*

Have the students refer to the KWL chart. *Is there information on page 14 that answers any of the questions on our KWL chart?*

With support, the students clarify the meanings of some unfamiliar words ("bred", "ploughed", "harness"). They use the photograph and their knowledge of spelling patterns to work out "ploughed".

There are several concepts on this page that are likely to be unfamiliar to students, so allow plenty of time for discussion and prompt them to remember the strategy of rereading to check and clarify information. (See Possible Supporting Strategies on page 2 for more information.)

To provide support to understand "bred", have students use the context of the sentence and their knowledge of breeds of dogs, cats, or other pets. You could discuss the qualities and the characteristics of particular breeds of animals and how these make them suitable for certain jobs.

If necessary, tell the students that "ough" (as in "ploughed") has different sounds in other words. Use the photo to explain what ploughing is if they don't know. (The main idea here is that the ponies can pull heavy things.)

The students use the dictionary to check the meaning of "harness".

Model using a dictionary to clarify the meaning of "harness". Prompt the students to infer what "harness ponies" are.

The students notice the shifts in time from the present to the past and back to the present, signalled by indicators of time and use them to keep track of the information.

🔘 Ask questions: What helps you know that this paragraph is telling us about what happened in the past?

Prompt the students to make connections to the idea of the ponies being "small but strong" and "strong for their size". (Even though the ponies are small, they work hard.)

The students infer why the ponies were well suited to the Shetland Islands. For example, they use the clue of the thick coats to make the inference that the Shetland Islands are very cold.

Tell students to reread the text, looking for connections between ideas, to help them make inferences. Prompt them to think about such things as why thick winter coats would be important and how the ponies were useful to the Shetland people. *Why are Shetland ponies useful for the Shetland Islands? What does it tell us about the Shetland Islands?* Have the students think, pair, and share their inferences.

The students review the reading purpose and the information they have recorded on the KWL chart. They identify any questions not answered or anything in the text that they found unfamiliar and/or surprising.

Revisit the reading purpose and learning goals.

🔘 With support, the students reflect on their learning. They explain some strategies they used, for example, how they found and summarised information in order to answer a question.

🔘 The students identify some challenges in the text and how they worked (or tried to work) them out.

🔘 Support the students to think critically. *Now that we've read the whole text, is there anything you think we should add or change?*

🔘 Ask questions: *What connections did you notice between ideas? How did making connections to your knowledge of horses help you visualise the size of a Shetland pony?*

Provide feedback. If necessary, model or explain some strategies they could use.

AFTER READING

- Students can reread the text as they listen to the audio version on the *Junior Journal 42 and 43* CD. Audio versions provide English language learners with good models of pronunciation, intonation, and expression.

- Recall the introductory discussion and have the students create a Venn diagram to show the similarities and differences between Shetland ponies and horses. Alternatively, enlarge the page 14 photograph in a photocopy and have the students add descriptive labels to each animal.

- Provide opportunities for the students to research any further questions about Shetland ponies.

- Have the students use the text as a model for writing a report after researching another animal they are interested in. Analyse the paragraph on page 14 to identify the topics and create a writing frame for the students to write a paragraph about their chosen animal. Draw a table. Reread the paragraph on page 14 together and identify the topics. Write these topics in the left-hand column. For students who don't require much support, you could leave the right-hand column blank. For students who need more support, you could give prompts and sentence starters like the examples below. For some students, you may want to model using the writing frame to create your own paragraph, or co-construct another model, before asking them to write their own.

Name and origin or habitat	_____ come from/live in _____
Size	They are _____