

At the Beach

by Janice Marriott
illustrated by Polina Outkina

This text is levelled at Magenta.



Overview

In this story, a family finds some interesting items at the beach, including a shell that wobbles! Students will enjoy the surprise at the end. *At the Beach* provides opportunities for students to make connections to their own experiences of beaches and of finding special treasures.

At the Beach supports the development of a self-extending reading processing system by helping students “apply their growing awareness of early concepts about print and their expectations that text should make sense and sound right” (*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 10).

There is an audio version of the text as an MP3 file at readytoread.tki.org.nz

Cross-curriculum links

Health and physical education (level 1, regular physical activity) – Participate in creative and regular physical activities and identify enjoyable experiences.

Science (level 1, living world, ecology) – Recognise that living things are suited to their particular habitat.

Related texts

- Texts about family activities:
The Water Slide (Magenta); *The Race* (Red 1); *Mrs Brown’s Garden*; *Rain, Rain* (Red 2)
- Texts about the beach: “Crab” (poem card); *What Does the Tide Bring In?*; *The Crocodile’s Christmas Jandals* (shared)

Text characteristics

The students are working towards the standard for after one year at school. Many of the characteristics of Green texts are also in texts at earlier levels but in simpler forms. These characteristics are shown in the boxes with a solid outline. Other boxes show additional characteristics.

The beach setting and context of a family outing, which will be familiar for many students

Clear spacing between words to support one-to-one matching

Some visual language features that support meaning, for example, the “wobble” lines around the shell on pages 6 and 7



A close match between the text and the illustrations

Some pages with more than one line of text, providing opportunities to practise return sweep

To support word recognition, many high-frequency words, several of which (“a”, “at”, “Dad”, “I”, “Look”, “Mum”, “said”, “the”) are repeated often

Interest words that are likely to be in the reader’s oral vocabulary and are strongly supported by the context, the sentence structure, and the illustrations, for example, “crab”, “sandal”, “seaweed”, “shell”, “shouted”, “wobbled”

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

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

Some dialogue (with speakers clearly identified)

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 the family goes to the beach.

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 own experiences and information in the text and illustrations to predict what will happen in the story
- confidently attempt to read a simple story for themselves
- start building a reading vocabulary of high-frequency words
- gain control over one-to-one matching, directionality, and return sweep
- notice some errors in their reading and take action to self-correct.

Introducing the text

Use your knowledge of your students to ensure that your introduction to the text activates their prior knowledge and supports them for a successful first reading. As part of the discussion before reading, feed in new vocabulary and language structures they will meet in the text.

- If possible, read the Ready to Read shared book *What Does the Tide Bring In?* before using this text for guided reading. As well as providing background information for the setting and context, discussion of the big book lets you introduce a key sentence structure in *At the Beach*: “Mum found a _____”. Look through the photos in the big book and ask what the girl found on each page: *What did she find? That’s right, she found a feather.*

- For students who need support with the setting and the language, you could create a word map for “the beach”. Display enlarged photocopies of the cover and title page and ask the students to share what they know about what’s at the beach. Record the students’ ideas on the word map, labelling the elements in the illustrations and writing other words around them. For students who have a first language other than English, you could bring objects to class and use them to introduce key nouns from the story. Show them the objects and encourage the students to name them in their first language. Tell them the English word and ask them to repeat it. Write labels for each item and read them together.
- Use the cover illustration of *At the Beach* to generate discussion about the students’ experiences of going to the beach. Discuss the items on the title page. *What else could you find at the beach?* Drop in the word “crab” if no one suggests it.
- Ask the students to predict what the story might be about. If necessary, model your thinking: *I’m thinking this might be about a family finding these things at the beach because there is a family on the cover.*
- Share the reading purpose.
- Browse through the illustrations together and discuss what’s happening. Rephrase the students’ responses or use prompts to elicit new language structures and vocabulary, for example: *Tell me what Mum “found”; Yes, Dad “found” some seaweed.*
- Encourage speculation about what the shell is doing on page 6: *What do the lines around the shell tell you?* If necessary, feed in the word “wobbled”. The students may recognise this word from the shared book *Lost*. To provide more support, you could wobble something and repeat the word to demonstrate the meaning.
- Leave the last page as a surprise for them to find and enjoy when they read the story for themselves.
- Remind the students of the reading purpose.

Monitoring the reading

- Observe closely as the students read the text to themselves, intervening only if a student clearly needs help.
- Note their one-to-one matching, their directional movement and return sweep, and their ability to self-monitor and make sense of their reading. They may recognise and use some known words and letters.
- Provide support for individual students as necessary. For example, on page 3, if a student has difficulty with “some”, prompt them to think about the meaning. *What has Dad found? Look at the picture.*
- 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 them the opportunity to notice the error and fix it themselves. Use appropriate prompts to draw their attention to the error.

Text	Student reads	Teacher prompt
The shell wobbled!	The shell moved!	<i>Yes, the shell moved. But this word doesn't start like “moved”. Remember when we talked about what the shell did? The shell w___.</i>
“Look at the shell!” I shouted.	“Look at the shell!” I said.	<i>Does this word look like “said”? This word starts like “shell”. “Look at the shell!” I sh...</i>

- Other prompts for self-monitoring include: *Did that sound right to you?; Are you sure?; Were you right?; Try that again.; Think about what would make sense.; Did your eyes match the words?; Look at the beginning of the word.; Read the sentence again.*
- Remember to base these prompts on what you know about the students' prior knowledge. For example, asking an English language learner if a word sounds right may not be useful. In this case, an explanation and further examples would be more effective.
- Reinforce attempts to problem-solve whether a student is successful or not.
- For further suggestions to support students to self-monitor (to cross-check, confirm, and self-correct), see *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4*, page 130.

- Enjoy the students' reaction to the ending. If some students in the group don't know the word “crab” or what a crab is, quietly tell them.
- As students finish reading, they can quietly reread the story until everyone has finished.

Discussing the text

- Encourage the students to share their responses to the ending. *Is that what you thought would happen? Has anything like that ever happened to you?*
- Prompt the students to think critically: *I wonder if the girl's mum and dad knew there would be a crab in the shell.*
- Enjoy rereading page 8 together, modelling expressive reading: *They look excited on this page. How might she say that?*

After reading: practice and reinforcement

After-reading tasks should provide practice and reinforcement. **Select from and adapt** these suggestions according to what you have observed about the needs of your students. Where possible, make links to other 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.

- Have the students read the story to a partner. Encourage expressive, fluent reading. Listen in, providing feedback and noting aspects that may need further attention. You may 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 text while listening to the audio version. Audio versions also provide English language learners with good models of pronunciation, intonation, and expression.
- Provide many opportunities for the students to enjoy reading other stories and poems about similar topics (see Related texts).
- Reread the shared text *What Does the Tide Bring In?* (see the TSM for this book at www.literacyonline.tki.org.nz). Have the students draw an item or creature they might find at the beach. Add their picture to a group chart or mural and label it.
- Create an opportunity for the students to go on a treasure hunt in the school playground and use it as the basis for language experience writing.

- Have the students paint or draw something surprising they have found (at the beach or somewhere else) and write about it. Provide a sentence frame that you have prepared: I looked in the sand/in my gumboot/on the path. I found a feather/weta/shiny stone.
- Find out more about hermit crabs.
- Explore words that have similar meanings to “wobble” (“shake”, “move”, “wriggle”) or about things that wobble (the monster in the shared book *Lost*; jelly; little children learning to walk; springs). Find rhymes and stories with these sorts of words or ideas.
- Revisit the text together to locate repeated high-frequency words. *Can you find the word “said”?* *Read what Mum said on that page. Can you find “said” on the next page?*
- Have word games and activities available that reinforce automatic recognition of high-frequency words, for example, matching games and making words with magnetic letters.



New Zealand Government