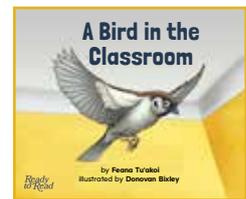


A Bird in the Classroom

by Feana Tu'akoi
illustrated by Donovan Bixley

This text is levelled at Yellow 2.



Overview

When a bird flies into their classroom, the children try to get it out, at first with no success. At last, one of them comes up with a clever plan to entice the bird outside. Students, especially those who have had similar experiences, will enjoy the drama of this story.

A Bird in the Classroom supports the development of a self-extending reading processing system, requiring students to “search for and use interrelated sources of information” and use “a range of word-solving strategies and comprehension strategies to make or confirm meaning” (*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 11). This text also provides opportunities for students to form and text hypotheses and make inferences.

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

Cross-curriculum links

Science (Living World) – levels 1 and 2 – Ecology:
Recognise that living things are suited to their particular habitat.

Related texts

- Texts about solving problems: *A Good Idea, Dragons! Dragons! Dragons!*, *The Hole in the King's Sock* (shared); *Locked Out* (Red 2); *Walking to School* (Yellow 2); *Where is Aunty?* (Yellow 3)

Text characteristics

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

The familiar setting and context

Most content explicitly stated but also some implicit content that provides opportunities for students to make simple inferences, for example, why the girl wants her classmates to stop on page 4

Illustrations that support and extend the meaning

To support word recognition, many high-frequency words, several of which (“a”, “and”, “around”, “I”, “it”, “Look”, “looked”, “out”, “said”, “shouted”, “the”, “to”, “We”) are repeated often

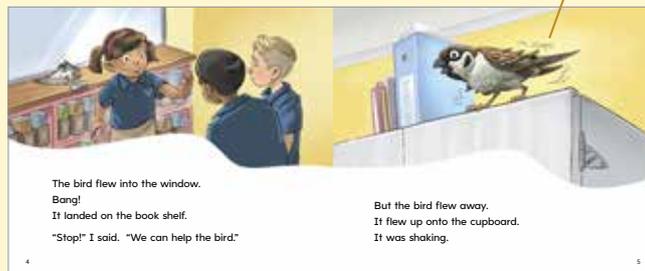
Interest words (for example, “bird”, “classroom”, “crumbs”, “cupboard”, “door”, “shelf”, “window”), including regular verbs (“jumped”, “landed”, “opened”, “shaking”, “shouted”) and irregular verbs (“flew”, “fly”, “put”, “ran”) that are likely to be in the reader’s oral vocabulary and are strongly supported by the context, sentence structure, and the illustrations

Some visual language features, such as the lines showing the dazed bird “seeing stars” on page 4 and shaking on page 5

Sentences that run over more than one line but do not split phrases

Dialogue between easily identified speakers

Several words beginning with the digraph “sh” (“shaking”, “shelf”, “shouted”)



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 to the bird in the classroom.

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’ 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 and the information in the story to form and test hypotheses and make inferences
- summarise the events in the text
- make meaning by drawing on more than one source of information, for example, using sentence structure and context to supplement information gained from partial decoding attempts
- notice some errors in their reading and to self-correct.

Introducing the story

Use your knowledge of your students to ensure that the introduction to the text activates their prior knowledge and provides appropriate support for a successful first reading. As part of the discussion before reading, draw out (or feed in) new vocabulary and language structures that you think will need support.

- Use the title and the illustrations on the cover and the title page to introduce the topic of a bird flying into the classroom. Encourage the students to share any similar experiences. *Have you ever seen a bird inside?* Discuss how the bird might feel.
- To provide support for English language learners, you could create a vocabulary list for the reading. Use an enlarged copy of the cover and/or the title page and create a word map on it, using arrows and adding other images. Ensure students hear, say, and read the key vocabulary. Use the vocabulary in sentences. Write and display example sentences, using the vocabulary. Leave blanks in the sentences and have students select from the list to fill the blank.

- Encourage the students to speculate about how the children could get the bird out, and share the reading purpose. Tell the students that the girl on the title page is the person telling the story.
- Browse through the book (stopping before the last page) and discuss what is happening in the illustrations. Encourage the students to predict what the students (and the bird) might do. Rephrase the students’ responses or use prompts to elicit new language structures and vocabulary, for example:
 - on page 2, to support “We all jumped up”, you could ask: *What are all the children doing when Sunil points up at the bird?*; to support “... around and around ...”, you could ask: *What is the bird doing to try to get out?*
 - on page 3, tell the students that Sunil is the boy in the illustration. Write his name and practise saying it together. (Note that you can listen to the audio of the text for support with pronunciation.)
 - on page 5, to support “shaking”, ask the students: *How is the bird feeling? What do you think a scared bird might do?*
 - on pages 6 and 7, to make the connection between the sandwich and the crumbs, ask: *I wonder what the girl is going to do with her sandwich? What do you notice by the doorway?*
- Don’t share the last page. Let the students find out if the girl’s plan is successful 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 needs help. Note their ability to use print information (in particular, initial letters, blends and digraphs) and punctuation and their ability to read the high-frequency words and groups of words together in phrases. Look for any instances of self-monitoring, cross-checking, and self-correction.
- Enjoy the students’ reaction on page 8 to the bird following the crumbs and flying out the classroom door.
- As students finish reading, they can quietly reread the story until everyone has finished.
- If a student makes an error without noticing a problem, 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.

- Some prompts that you could use include: *Did that look/sound right to you?; Are you sure?; Were you right?; Try that again ... and think about what would make sense.; Think about what would sound right and look right.; 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 if they are not familiar enough with English phonemes and vocabulary to know the answer. In this case, an explanation and further examples would be more effective.
- Reinforce students' attempts to problem-solve whether they are successful or not, for example, *You noticed the word wasn't right, and you went back and fixed it ... great fixing.*
- Other prompts could include:

Text in book	Student reads	Teacher prompt
The bird flew around and around the room.	The bird flew around and around the classroom .	<i>Have another look at the last word.</i>
It landed on the book shelf.	It fell ... on the book shelf.	Prompt the student to check. <i>Were you right? Look at how that word starts. Read the sentence again. Think of another word that would make sense and look right.</i>
We put some crumbs by the door.	We put seeds close to the door.	Prompt the student to think about the meaning. <i>What did the girl make with her sandwich? Yes, she made some crumbs.</i> Then prompt the student to cross-check. <i>Try that again and check if it looks right.</i>

- 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 to 4*, page 130.

Discussing the text

- Remind the students of the reading purpose and ask them to review their earlier predictions. *Is this what you thought would happen?*
- Help the students summarise the events in the text by asking them: *What is the main thing happening on page 2?* Record this event and move on to the next page. Construct a summary chart together as you reread each page.
- Prompt them to think critically. *Why do you think the girl's plan worked? Expect responses such as, birds like bread. What else did they do that helped? Why was the bird so scared?*
- Discuss how the students solved the problem by being quiet.

After reading: practice and reinforcement

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

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

- Have the students reread the text aloud to a partner. Listen in, noting their ability to self-monitor and to use the punctuation and context to support phrasing and expression, particularly with the dialogue. Note also how they use punctuation in the exclamations. You can use this time to note aspects that may need further attention. You could also do a quick running record with a focus student to provide more information on something 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 with similar themes (see Related texts). This also helps to extend their comprehension.

- Reread the story and then have the students share what the children might be thinking, saying, or asking about the bird on pages 7 and 8. The students can draw their own picture of the children and the bird in the classroom and use a speech or thought bubble to record their idea and paste it onto their picture. Encourage students who write in a first language other than English to complete this in that other language. Have them show you and tell you about it. If possible, provide an English translation of what they have written, but most importantly, celebrate their first language and their ability to write.
- You could practise reading the dialogue together to enjoy the drama, to practise expressive reading, and to extend their understanding of the story.
- Photocopy the pictures from pages 2, 5, and 8 and get each student to paste the pictures in a sequence. Have them write a sentence underneath about what happened. They could use this to retell the story to a buddy. For English language learners, you could supply sentence starters or cloze sentences (sentences with blanks to fill in).
- Discuss ways to solve the problem of getting the bird (or another creature) out of the classroom. The students can then write their own story.
- Revisit the story and ask the students to look closely at the verbs that describe the bird's actions. Record the phrases that include the verbs (for example, the bird: "flew into the classroom", "flew around the room", "landed on the bookshelf", "was looking for a way out" ...). You could make a list that the students could use later in their writing.
- Have them closely observe the bird in the illustrations and then look at birds in the playground. Have them paint a bird, showing it doing something (for example, flying, sitting on a branch). They could write a description of all the things they observed the bird doing.



[New Zealand Government](http://www.govt.nz)

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