



Overview

Dave Gilberd is a luthier, a maker of stringed instruments. This report describes how Dave makes a ukulele. A note at the end of the report provides additional information about how the ukulele got its name. This journal includes a linked article, “The Kiwileles”, which provides information about students who play in a ukulele orchestra.

“The Ukulele Maker” requires students to “confidently use a range of processing and comprehension strategies to make meaning from and think critically about” texts (from *The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 14).

There is a PDF of this text and an audio version as an MP3 file at www.juniorjournal.tki.org.nz

Related texts

Texts with instructions for students to follow: “Build Your Own Double Waka” (JJ 33); “Pine Cone Pals” (JJ 36); “Fold a Flower” (JJ 37); “Make a Mini Worm Farm” and “Wrist Wrappers” (JJ 39); “Fingerprints” (JJ 54)

Other texts that describe a process: “Our Recycled Worm Farm” (JJ 40); “Fronting the Show” (JJ 41); “A New Home for Mokomoko” (JJ 43); “Making Paper” (JJ 44); “Making a Road” (JJ 50); Tafoe O!” (SJ Level 2 Nov 2018)

Texts that feature musical instruments: “The Kiwileles” (in this journal); “Starting with Strings” (SJ L2 Aug 2015)

Text characteristics

“The Ukulele Maker” includes the following features that help develop the reading behaviours expected at Purple.

The structure of the text as a report, with an introduction, a series of main points (in this case, the steps involved in making a ukulele), and a conclusion, as well as an additional note about how the ukulele got its name

A mix of explicit and implicit content that requires students to make connections between their prior knowledge and information in the report to track ideas and make predictions and inferences

Making a ukulele

The first thing Dave does when he makes a ukulele is to draw a plan. The plan shows the size and shape of all the pieces he will need to make and how all the pieces will fit together.

Then Dave chooses the wood for the ukulele. The wood needs to look and sound beautiful and be strong but flexible (easy to bend). Dave taps the wood to hear if it makes a nice sound.

Dave draws the shape of the ukulele body on one of the pieces of wood, then he cuts a hole in it. This is the “sound hole”. It makes the sound of a ukulele louder. Then Dave cuts out the shape.

Next, Dave cuts out the other pieces of wood and sands each piece to make it smooth. Then he takes the strips of wood for the sides of the ukulele and wets them. He uses a hot iron to bend the wet wood into the right shape.

The parts of a ukulele

Labels in the diagram: head, neck, body, bridge, strings, sound hole, fretboard, tuning pegs, frets.

Language features that enable students to apply and extend their vocabulary knowledge, for example:

- familiar words used in unfamiliar ways
- the use of parentheses to indicate definitions
- the pronunciation guide on page 18

Ideas and information organised in paragraphs

A variety of sentence structures, requiring students to attend to punctuation and linking words and phrases including indicators of time to clarify the links between ideas

Visual language features, including subheadings and labelled photographs and diagrams

Vocabulary that may be unfamiliar, including subject-specific vocabulary (for example, “ukulele”, “guitars”, “luthier”, “stringed instruments”, “violins”, “flexible”, “sound hole”, “fretboard”, “tuning pegs”, “frame”, “jig”, “bracing”, “clamp”, “slots”, “oil”, “nylon”, “threads”, “Hawaiian”, “Hawai’i”, “Pacific Ocean”) and commonly used words with multiple meanings (“bridge”, “strings”, “body”, “neck”, “head”, “sands”, “posts”, “note”), the meaning of which is supported by the context, the sentence structure, the visual language features, and/or definitions or explanations

Cross-curriculum links

English (Reading)

Level 2 – Processes and strategies: Selects and reads texts for enjoyment and personal fulfilment.

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

Technology (Technological knowledge)

Level 2 – Technological products: Understand that there is a relationship between a material used and its performance properties in a technological product.



The New Zealand Curriculum

Suggested reading purposes

Possible learning goals

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

- To find out about Dave Gilberd
- To find out how a ukulele is made
- To think about why Dave Gilberd makes ukuleles

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

The goals 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 prior knowledge and information in the story to **make predictions and inferences**
- **ask questions** and look for or think about possible answers
- identify the steps involved in making a ukulele and the reasons for them (**summarise**)
- **monitor** their reading and, when something is unclear, take action to solve the problem, for example, by checking further sources of information, rereading a sentence, or looking for clues close by.



The Literacy Learning Progressions



Sounds and Words

Introducing the text

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 your introduction to the text is effective in building or activating their prior knowledge and providing appropriate support for a successful first reading.

Select from and adapt the following suggestions.

For English language learners, you could talk through the article, before the whole group session to introduce key vocabulary (in English and in their first language if possible) and provide support with text features that may be unfamiliar. Encourage the students to share any experiences they have of ukuleles or similar instruments. Discuss the labelled photograph on pages 12–13 and have the students use it as a guide to labelling the parts on a real ukulele. You can find further information about features of texts that may need support at [The English Language Learning Progressions](#).

- Have the students use the title and photos on pages 10–11 to clarify the topic and that this is a non-fiction text. Prompt them to share any experiences or knowledge they have of ukuleles or similar instruments, including knowledge from reading “The Kiwileles”. You could create a KWL chart and record the students’ ideas in the “K” column (what we know).

- Browse through the article together (including the note about “The Jumping Flea” on page 18) to predict what they will find out and to generate questions to add to the “W” column of the chart (what we want to find out).
- Discuss the names and parts of a ukulele as shown in the labelled diagram on pages 12–13, adding any new questions to the chart, for example, about “tuning pegs” or “frets”. (If possible, also have a real ukulele available.)
- Together, set the reading purpose. Share the learning goal(s). Briefly review ways of finding out the meanings of unfamiliar words, including the use of definitions in parentheses.
- Give the students sticky notes to mark or record any information that relates to the KWL chart or other aspects, including new vocabulary that they might want to return to later.

Reading the text

For the first reading, encourage the students to read the text by themselves. Observe their confidence and perseverance, intervening only if it's clear a student needs help. Much of the processing that they do at this level is "inside their heads" and may not be obvious until the discussion after the reading. There will be many opportunities to provide support with word-solving and comprehension on subsequent readings.

 You may find it helpful to project pages 12–13 so that the students can easily refer back to the labelled photo of the ukulele.

Student behaviours

Examples of the sorts of behaviours (developed over several readings) that will help students achieve their learning goal(s)

They make connections between information in the article and their prior knowledge to make predictions and inferences.

- They refer to the labelled diagram on pages 12–13 to predict what the next steps in the process might be.
- They infer from the repetition of "waits for the glue to dry" and the ellipses that making a ukulele involves many steps and takes a long time.

They ask questions and look for or think about possible answers.

- They keep their questions in mind (or refer to the KWL chart) as they read and look for information that seems relevant.
- They use their sticky notes to mark possible answers.
- They notice and mark aspects they would like to find out more about.

They identify the steps involved in making a ukulele and the reasons for them.

- They use the photo captions to clarify the links between the text and the photos.

- They make connections between the photographs and key words (the photo captions, the descriptions of Dave's actions, and the indicators of time) to track the steps in the process.
- They notice linking words in sentences (for example, "to", "that", "so") to explain why Dave carries out each step.
- They refer back to the labelled diagram on pages 12–13 to clarify the link between the various steps in the process and the finished ukulele.

They demonstrate self-monitoring and problem solving.

- They use a range of strategies to solve unfamiliar words, including searching for definitions in parentheses.
- They reread to check phrasing and clarify connections between ideas in sentences with multiple phrases (for example, "The jig has little posts that help Dave make sure the pieces are in the right place and that keep the ukulele still while he works on it").
- They note aspects that they are not sure about to come back to and discuss later.

Deliberate acts of teaching

How you can support individual students (if needed)

- Prompt the students to note things they are not sure of or that are of particular interest. Remind them that you will discuss their questions and ideas after the reading.
- Encourage them to refer back to the labelled diagram on pages 12–13 to help clarify what the finished ukulele will look like.
- Remind the students of strategies they can use for solving unfamiliar words (for example, looking for the biggest known word "chunk" and applying their knowledge of letters, sounds, and word structure) and for clarifying meaning (rereading or reading on, referring to the photographs and captions, looking for definitions or explanations, and/or thinking about the overall meaning of the sentence or paragraph, particularly in regard to familiar words used in unfamiliar ways).

Discussing and rereading the text

You can revisit this text several times, focusing on different aspects and providing opportunities for the students to build comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency. **Select from and adapt** the following suggestions according to your students' needs and responses to the reading. Some of the suggestions overlap, and several can be explored further as after-reading activities.

 For some suggestions, you may find it helpful to project the PDF of the article so that you can zoom in on relevant sections.

- Remind the students of the reading purpose and ask them to share their initial responses. *Was there anything that surprised you?* Encourage them to refer to their sticky notes to share aspects they found particularly interesting, for example, new vocabulary such as "luthier" or the concept of the "jumping flea".
- Update the KWL chart adding answers the students have found to their questions to the "L" column (what we have learnt). *What helped you to find the information?* Also add any new questions the students have.
- Encourage the students to think critically:
 - *Why is it important to add each piece "in a particular place in a particular order"?*
 - *How does Dave make sure he gets things right?*
 - *What makes Dave a good luthier?*
 - *If you could talk to Dave about what he does, what questions would you ask?*
 - *Why do you think people love ukuleles?* (Prompt the students to also draw on ideas from reading "The Kiwileles".)

- Have the students reread the article, stopping to discuss points of interest including anything the students have marked with sticky notes. You could also explore such aspects as:
 - the names and descriptions (in words and/or photographs) of the parts of the ukulele and the equipment Dave uses
 - the steps involved in making a ukulele. Prompt them to notice the explanations (sometimes within sentences and sometimes in the following sentence) of the purpose of each step, for example (on page 12): *Show me the part that tells you why it's important for Dave to draw a plan.* Draw attention to the use of words that link ideas within sentences, such as “to”, “that”, “so”: “Dave taps the wood to hear if it makes a nice sound,” “The jig has little posts that help ...”, “Now all Dave has to do is to tune the ukulele so each string ...”
 - how the students worked out (or tried to work out) unfamiliar words or phrases. You could discuss:
 - what words such as “bridge”, “string”, “body”, “neck”, “head”, “note”, and “sand” mean in relation to ukuleles. Create sentences orally together that demonstrate the different meanings each word can have (see also After reading).
 - ways of finding word meanings, for example, by using the photographs and their labels or captions and noticing definitions in parentheses, follow-on sentences that provide extra detail (“... glues the bracing ... The bracing will make the ukulele stronger”), and linking words and phrases such as “This is”, and “a frame called a jig”. You could also discuss the use of inverted commas for “sound hole” to show that this is a special term, followed by an explanation.

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 texts, including texts generated by the students, and to the wider literacy programme (for example, oral language, writing, handwriting, and word games and activities) and other curriculum areas. **Select from and adapt** these suggestions, according to the needs of your students.

For English language learners, *Supporting English Language Learners in Primary School* (SELLIPS) also has ideas for purposeful and relevant tasks.

- Provide many opportunities for the students to reread this text and to read other procedural texts (see Related texts). Encourage them to try out the instructions for the activities.
- The students can build their comprehension and fluency by rereading the text as they listen to the audio version. Audio versions are particularly supportive for English language learners because, as well as clarifying pronunciation, they provide good models of the prosodic features of English, such as intonation, stress, and phrasing.
- Support the students to research any questions from the KWL chart that are not answered in the article or to find out more about other aspects of interest, for example, the use of a jig to hold the pieces in place, the use of a hot iron to shape wet wood, or the features of other stringed instruments (how they are the same as or different from a ukulele).
- To support inferring, have the students work in pairs to list the skills and qualities a luthier might need, based on information about Dave on pages 10–11 as well as the information about the process. They might include ideas such as being accurate in measuring and cutting, liking things to look good, being determined to get things right, or having patience (waiting for glue to dry).
- Have the students work individually or in pairs to complete a cloze activity, as in the example below, to build understanding of vocabulary and sentence structure. You could provide the missing words or the students could locate them in the text. This activity is particularly supportive for English language learners.
- To support summarising, give the students sentence starters and have them work in pairs to complete the sentences (by filling in the third column of the table below). The table format draws attention to the “what and why” structure and the linking words. Alternatively, you could write the two halves of the sentences on cards for the students to match up.

What Dave does	Linking words	Why Dave does this (This column is for the students to complete in their own words.)
Dave draws a plan	to	tell him the size and shape of the pieces and how they fit together.
He cuts out a sound hole	to	make the sound louder.
He sands each piece	to	make it smooth.
Dave wets the side strips and uses a hot iron	to	bend the wet wood into the right shape.
He puts the pieces in a jig	to	check that everything is in the right place and won't move.
He glues on the back and puts ties through the slots	to	hold it in place.
He stops the strings from slipping through the holes in the bridge	by	tying a knot in the end of each string.
He twists the tuning pegs	to	pull the string tight to change their sound.

English language learners could match the summary sentences with printouts of the labelled photographs from the text.

A _____ is a person who makes ukuleles. The first thing Dave does when he makes a ukulele is to _____ a _____. Then he chooses wood that is _____ and _____. He draws the shape of the _____ on the wood and then cuts a _____ in it. After that he _____ the wood and _____ it using a hot iron. He puts the pieces of wood into a frame called a _____ to make sure everything is in the _____ place. He glues the _____ together in a particular order and then he has to _____ for the _____ to dry. When everything is dry, Dave _____ the ukulele to make it smooth and _____ it with a clear oil. He adds nylon _____ and tunes the ukulele to make sure each _____ makes the right _____. It takes about a _____ for Dave to make a ukulele.

Word list (scrambled): plan, hole, string, wait, sands, wets, week, note, bends, jig, draw, ukulele, strong, glue, luthier, flexible, strings, paints, right, pieces

- To provide practice in clarifying word meanings, you could:
 - have the students identify five parts of a ukulele and write a description of each part (what it looks like and what it's for)
 - provide a list of other subject-specific vocabulary (for example, “ukulele”, “guitars”, “luthier”, “stringed instruments”, “violins”, “flexible”, “frame”, “jig”, “glues”, “bracing”, “clamp”, “slots”, “oil”, “nylon”) and have the students choose six words to write definitions or explanations for. Alternatively, you could have the words and definitions on cards and have the students match them up.
 - have the students write pairs of sentences that demonstrate two different meanings that words such as “bridge”, “string”, “body”, “neck”, “head”, “note”, and “sand” can have.