

School Journal Story Library

Level 3

School Journal Story Library is a targeted series that supplements other instructional series texts. It provides additional scaffolds and supports for teachers to use to accelerate students' literacy learning.

In the End

by Mal Peet
Readability level: years 5–6



Overview

When Billy was a young man in 1912, he saw his town torn apart by strikers and strike breakers as workers fought for their rights in the goldmining town of Waihi. Years later, Billy is fighting in the trenches in Europe and has become friends with another Waihi man, Don. But Don's memories of the strike are very different from Billy's. In a graphic novel format that is set during both wars, dramatic events lead to a revelation that changes the way Billy and Don think about "sides".

The story of the same name in the Level 4 *School Journal*, October 2013, has been reversioned here as a graphic novel, suitable for readers at level 3. It also relates to the article "War in Waihi" in the same journal, and a brief summary of the facts accompanies this story. The events and ideas will require some background knowledge and maturity, and it has the challenge of two settings, both in the distant past for today's students. The basic facts about the strike in Waihi are outlined on the last page (page 12). This would be useful for building knowledge with the students before reading the text.

Text characteristics from the year 5–6 reading standard

a significant amount of vocabulary that is unfamiliar to the students (including academic and content-specific words and phrases), which is generally explained in the text by words or illustrations

figurative and/or ambiguous language that the context helps students to understand

sentences that vary in length and in structure (for example, sentences that begin in different ways and different kinds of complex sentences with a number of subordinate clauses)



some ideas and information that are conveyed indirectly and require students to infer by drawing on several related pieces of information in the text

abstract ideas, in greater numbers than in texts at earlier levels, accompanied by concrete examples in the text that help support the students' understanding

illustrations, photographs, text boxes, diagrams, maps, charts, and graphs that clarify or extend the text and may require some interpretation



Reading standard: by the end of year 6

Possible curriculum contexts

SCIENCE (Ecology)

Level 3: Understand how people remember and record the past in different ways.

ENGLISH (Reading)

Level 3 – Language features: Show a developing understanding of how language features are used for effect within and across texts.

Possible reading purposes

- To enjoy a rich and complex story in a graphic format
- To learn about and discuss two events from New Zealand's history
- To consider how people respond to local and global community challenges in different ways.



The Writing Hub

Text and language challenges

VOCABULARY:

- Possible unfamiliar words and phrases, including “dug in”, “trench”, “flickering”, “our lines”, “stretcher bearers”, “medic”, “field hospital”, “the strike”, “rioting”, “battery”, “steam-driven”, “tiptoed”, “urge”, “thundered”, “silent films”, “ridiculous”, “Police Commissioner”, “brute”, “hard-faced”, “bully-boys”, “softened up”, “strikebreakers”, “scabs”, “blacklegs”, “unemployed”, “scum”, “traitor”, “escort”, “rampage”, “one end of a gun from the other”, “resumed”
- The colloquial words and expressions, including “took the hit”, “took off”, “a goner”, “mate”, “the good old days”, “dead right”, “sort it out”, “took a bullet”
- The figurative language, including “like insects”, “wonderfully strange”, “made of the most fragile glass”, “as if I might float free”, “blood-red banner”, “brought the house down”, “our hearts in our mouths”, “silent gunfire”
- Connotations of the word “strikebreakers”.

Possible supporting strategies

Read through the text carefully to identify words, phrases, and expressions that your students may find challenging. Depending on your students, it may be possible to have them work in pairs to discuss challenging words and expressions and then discuss possible meanings and alternatives.

Use the images on the cover and/or other images or audiovisual clips to elicit and introduce key vocabulary. Discuss and record key words and definitions. You could make a word map on the topic of war or conflict.

Before and after reading, discuss the words and expressions that have colloquial, figurative, or connotative meanings. Make sure the students understand these words and how they change in different contexts. English language learners may benefit from exploring and comparing examples of similar kinds of words in their first language.

The English Language Learning Progressions: Introduction, pages 39–46, has some useful information about learning vocabulary.

SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED:

- Some awareness of New Zealand's involvement in the First World War
- Some awareness of mining
- Some awareness of unions and strikes, especially in the past
- Understanding that people's actions and decisions in a conflict may be shaped by many factors
- Understanding the reasons why people remember and record events in the past in different ways
- Knowledge of how texts may be structured and presented for dramatic effect.

Possible supporting strategies

Read this text in the context of a broader study. For example, read aloud and discuss the article “War in Waihi” (SJ L4 Oct 2013) to support students' understanding of the 1912 miners' strike; read and discuss articles about the First World War in SJ L3 May 2014. Ensure students are aware of New Zealand's contribution to war and the concept of fighting for one's country, even at a distance.

Display the following prompts: “Can people on both sides of a conflict be right?” and “What things influence people's decisions in times of conflict?” to generate a discussion about how and why people respond to conflicts in different ways and how people make decisions in a conflict, for example, about which side they support.

Students who share a first language other than English would benefit from exploring the topic in this language. If possible, provide written and/or audiovisual information in their first language to help them prepare for reading and writing in English. Note: be sensitive to students who may have had experience of war.

TEXT FEATURES AND STRUCTURE:

- Graphic text format, where meaning is carried by the illustrations as well as the words
- Use of speech bubbles and narrative boxes
- First-person narrative
- Flashback to 1912 between two narratives set in 1917 (visually shown by the change in colour palette)
- Set in wartime Europe (1917) and Waihi, New Zealand (1912)
- Meanings that are often inferred rather than stated directly
- Language signalling time and sequence: “the third of October 1917”, “then”, “Next thing”, “two days later”
- Language giving locations and directions: “over our trench”, “into our trench”, “back to our lines”, “to the field hospital”.

Possible supporting strategies

Skim the first few pages of the text together to identify the illustration style and the mood it evokes.

Draw a timeline of the story, supporting students to identify the two periods and events (make use of the change of colour palette to show the change in time). During reading, students can refer to the timeline and add details to it to help them place the actions and the characters.

To support students to identify language that signals time and sequence, you could also note the time markers (or other information) that tell the reader when events occur. Alternatively, you could use a graphic organiser to note each activity, when it occurs, and where. In this way, the students need to identify the time markers and other signals of sequence, as well as focus on language to show location. If appropriate, you could start creating lists of language that show time and location, including examples from the text. Use these lists to refer to when working with future texts and to help students use this language in their writing.



Sounds and Words

Instructional focus – Reading

Social Sciences (Social Studies, level 3: Understand how people remember and record the past in different ways.)

English (Level 3 – Language features: Show a developing understanding of how language features are used for effect within and across texts.)

Text excerpts from *In the End*

Bullets sang through the air like insects. I was sure I was going to die.
“Get down! Get down!”

Don shouted at some men standing over our trench – they were just shadows in the flickering light. He thought they were our men.

They weren't.

DEMANDS OF THE TEXT

Students need to:

- identify the text format and how to read it
- ask questions and search for answers
- make connections between the text and their own experiences
- form hypotheses about the setting and what might happen in the story.

Students (what to prompt, support, and look for as the students are reading)

*The students use their knowledge of text types to identify the layout of a graphic text and the features of a first-person narrative. They locate information in the text and illustrations, **making connections** between this information and their own prior knowledge of warfare to **infer** the action and **visualise** the men's emotions.*

*They **ask questions** about why Billy is sure he will die and who the men standing over the trench might be.*

*They use the descriptive language and their own experiences to **infer** that in the noise and flickering light, it would be hard to tell which soldiers were on your side.*

*The students **make connections** between the words “They weren't”, their understanding of the situation, and the last illustration to **infer** that the men standing over the trench were German soldiers. They **make predictions** about what might happen next.*

Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

PROMPT the students to monitor their understanding as they read.

- We've been talking about the First World War (refer to other First World War texts in SJ L3 May 2014), and you've already seen that this is set in 1917. You know the narrator (Billy) and his mate Don are fighting the Germans.
- Use what you know about that war to work out where this part of the story might have been set.
- What words and images help you understand what is happening? Can you imagine what the situation was like?
- Why do you think Don shouted at the men?
- Use information you've read from the story so far and your own knowledge to predict what might happen next.

GIVE FEEDBACK

Notice the strategies that the students are using to:

- find information
- work out the meaning of words, sentences, or paragraphs
- answer questions, particularly by using different sources of information.

Provide feedback to reinforce these strategies and guide them as they meet other challenges.

MONITORING THE IMPACT OF TEACHING

- Check for understanding by asking students to retell the events in their own words, adding information they gained from the illustrations. If they are not sure about what is happening, model your thinking. For example, describe the experience of mistaking someone in the smoky “flickering light” at a bonfire to show how you use your experiences to understand how Don mistook the soldiers.
- Use images and/or audiovisual clips to support the students' understanding. Encourage students who share a first language other than English to discuss their ideas in this language.

Text excerpts from *In the End*

“No, listen Billy. There’s something ... something I’ve got to tell you before I go.”

“What is it?”

“It’s about the strike.”

I knew Don meant the goldminers’ strike in Waihi in 1912. Don had worked in the Martha Mine with my dad. We liked to talk about home and the good old days, which Don said weren’t that good at all. He was dead right.

“What about the strike, Don?”

Don’s eyes had closed, and he didn’t answer. So I waited, remembering.

DEMANDS OF THE TEXT

Students need to:

- make predictions about what Don wants to tell Billy
- draw on prior knowledge about the 1912 strike to understand that people had different points of view about it
- understand the expressions, “good old days” and “dead right”
- consider whether the good old days were good for everyone
- make predictions about what Billy is remembering.

Students (what to prompt, support, and look for as the students are reading)

The students **make connections** between the text and the **inferences** they have made about Don’s condition to further infer that Don has some kind of secret to tell Billy. They **make predictions** about what Don wanted to say and check them as they read on, confirming or changing their predictions.

The students **make connections** between this text and what they know about strikes to **infer** that Don’s memories of the strike might be very different from Billy’s. They **ask questions** to work out why Don was “dead right”.

The students **make predictions** about what Billy is remembering while Don sleeps.

Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

EXPLAIN that a useful reading strategy is to make predictions as you read.

- Making predictions helps you to think about and search for answers. When you read on, you check to see if your predictions were right or if you need to change them.

ASK QUESTIONS to help students make predictions.

- Given the state Don is in, what do you think he wants to tell Billy?
- Why is it so important? Why hadn’t he already shared it with Billy?
- What do you predict will happen?

ASK QUESTIONS to support students to make connections and draw inferences.

- Why do people refer to the past as “the good old days”?
- What does Billy mean by “dead right”? Is he saying the old days were good or not?
- What connections of your own help you infer that people’s memories or experiences of an event can be different?
- What words in the boxed text help you think that Don’s and Billy’s memories of the strike could be different?

DIRECT the students to write down what they predict Don wants to tell Billy.

MODEL some possible predictions if necessary, for example:

- I’m predicting Don will die before he can tell Billy what is on his mind.
- I think Don has hidden some gold from the mine and he wants to tell Billy where to find it.
- Maybe Don has a secret about what he did in the strike, and he feels bad about it. Maybe he killed or hurt someone.

Tell the students what information you used to make those predictions.

TELL the students to share their predictions with a partner, explaining their reasons. Listen in as the students share their predictions and give on-the-spot feedback to help them stay on task and make predictions that are relevant to the text so far. Remind them to give reasons for their thinking if their predictions are far-fetched. Note that the students will not be able to confirm their predictions about Don until the narrative returns to the “present”, but they may adjust them as they read about the strike.

GIVE FEEDBACK

Notice how successfully students are using connections to make predictions and provide explicit feedback to reinforce these strategies and to guide them as they meet further challenges.

MONITORING THE IMPACT OF TEACHING

- If students are not able to make inferences about Don’s and Billy’s experiences, remind them what they have learnt about the strike and the difference viewpoints that led to violence. Discuss the concept of “point of view” to support the students to infer that memories and records of events may vary according to a person’s actions and feelings at the time. Talk about the ways memories and points of view can change over time.
- Some students may need support to fully understand the events and to make the inferences they need to. Support students to use a graphic organiser like the example below to record the events and the main character’s feelings (and how they have inferred these feelings). Model making inferences and filling in the graphic organiser. At selected points in the story, give students opportunities to discuss and revise their ideas in pairs and as a whole group.

Event	Billy’s feelings	How I know

Text excerpts from *In the End*

I heard Don draw a sticky-sounding breath like he was trying to speak.

"I lied to you, Billy. I wasn't in it with the union. I was a blackleg. A scab."

I stared at him. I couldn't think of a thing to say.

"I've been ashamed of it ever since. I was ashamed at the time. I need you to forgive me. Can you do that?"

All I could hear was his scratchy breathing. Then after a few minutes, I took his hand.

"You're all right, Don. We ended up on the same side in the end."

DEMANDS OF THE TEXT

Students need to:

- identify the change of setting as the flashback ends
- check the predictions they had made earlier
- make inferences about why Don lied and why he told Billy the truth
- integrate information to gain full understanding.

Students (what to prompt, support, and look for as the students are reading)

The students locate and use clues in the illustrations and the words to identify that the narrative resumes where it had left off at the end of page 4. They understand that Don is alive, and they check their predictions.

*The students **make connections** between what they have learnt about Billy's family and Don's words to **infer** that Don had lied because he didn't want Billy to hate him. They **integrate** information from across the text and from their own experiences of human behaviour to consider why Don lied and how Billy will react. They **make connections** between the text and their own experiences to **make inferences** about why Don wants Billy to forgive him.*

*They **evaluate** Billy's response to Don's confession and **draw conclusions** about how and why people's views can change.*

*Students **ask and answer questions** about what being "on the same side" means.*

Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

PROMPT the students to refer to the timeline made before reading.

- Where are we now in the timeline? How do you know that?

ASK QUESTIONS to support the students as they check their predictions and make inferences.

- What's happening now?
- Have your predictions been confirmed or do you need to make some changes?
- Why do you think Don lied to Billy? What can you infer about how Don feels about his role in the strike?
- What evidence did you use to make that inference?
- What has changed for Billy since 1912?

EXPLAIN that when we use the text and our own knowledge to make inferences, we can also think more deeply about the ideas in the text. We can come up with our own understanding of these ideas, based on what we believe as well as what we've read. This is called integrating information.

- Now that you've read the whole story, what do you think about Billy's response to Don? What are your reasons?

MODEL

- When we read a text and think about it in the light of our own experiences, we can integrate new information we've read and come up with a new understanding about the topic – or about life. For example, this is how I integrate new information.
- I remembered how much Billy's family hated the strikebreakers and now Billy knows that Don was one of them. Billy remembered that times were tough for everyone during the strike. I thought about how Don and Billy had come to rely on each other in the war. I understand that now, they are on the same side fighting the Germans, and they are also "on the same side" as friends. This made me think about the way our attitudes can change when we're in different situations.

ASK QUESTIONS to support the students to integrate information.

- How did your own understanding of how people behave help you understand this story?
- Has your thinking changed as a result of reading this? For example, about what being "on the same side" means?
- What thoughts or ideas from the story and your own experience have helped you understanding the ending?
- What theme or message do you think the writer wanted you to understand?

GIVE FEEDBACK

Notice the strategies that the students are using to:

- find specific information
- work out the meaning of words, sentences, or paragraphs
- use several sources of information to answer questions.

Provide feedback to reinforce these strategies and guide them as they meet other challenges.

MONITORING THE IMPACT OF TEACHING

- For students who are struggling, work through the story and create a timeline. Then during a second reading, focus on making inferences and making predictions (perhaps with a graphic organiser).
- Identify specific points at which a student loses focus or looks puzzled. Support them to reread parts of the text and discuss with them where they are losing meaning, moving backwards and forwards through the text if necessary to help them follow the structure.
- Model or prompt the use of strategies that will help students understand a particular word, sentence, or idea.
- Reading the non-fiction section on page 12 aloud will give additional support as students combine ideas from the two time periods in the story with the factual events of 1912.

METACOGNITION

- When you are reading a complex text that has different time settings, how do you keep track of important ideas and information? What strategies help you?
- Show me a place where your own experiences or knowledge helped you to understand the ideas in this story. How did using those connections help you?
- Do you find graphic texts like this easier or harder to read than regular texts? What makes the difference for you?
- What ideas about text structure and format did you notice that you would like to use in your own writing?

Suggestions for writing instruction

- Many students will be attracted to the graphic style of this book and may want to try it themselves. Work through the frames, supporting the students to identify the elements a writer and illustrator need to include. It might be simpler to select either the war story or the strike story, prompting students to see the similarities they have with most narratives. Provide a standard story frame that students can use for outlining the story elements. Fold a sheet of A4 paper three times, creasing the folds well. When opened up, the sheet has eight frames that the students can use to plan the story. Students can use several sheets as they plan, working from the completed writing frame onto this “story board”. Allow plenty of paper and time for students to rearrange the frames. Once the story board is working well (the story flows well, there are places for speech and narrative to be written) the students can make a final draft of their graphic story.
- There are vivid examples of the use of colloquial and figurative language in the story. List these on a chart and discuss their meaning. Using a few examples, read the original sentence from the text, then read it with a more mundane version (for example: changing “Bullets sang through the air like insects” to “There were a lot of bullets”). Encourage the students to find places in their own writing where they could use vivid language.
- Students could plan and write and/or present orally a short essay or poem around the theme of “We all finish up on the same side in the end”.
- Ask the students to imagine they are strikebreakers. Allow time for discussion of what it would feel like to be despised, drawing on ideas in the book such as those on page 8 (“I guess there were ...” “They made them feel small”). Students can then write about the strike from the point of view of a strikebreaker, telling how they feel and why they choose to take on this job.



Writing standard: by the end of year 6



The Literacy Learning Progressions



Assessment Resource Banks