



# THE EMBARRASSMENT EXPERT

If you want to become an expert in embarrassment, you must first learn the ways of the thumping heart; of the blush that reveals your predicament shimmering across your face like a comet; of the hands that reach to cover your face as if to hold your universe together.

Then you must learn the secret ways to stop being embarrassed. Only the true expert can master these techniques.

When embarrassment strikes, imagine it is a temporary STOP sign, grasped in a roadworker's hand. Before long, it will turn into a GO sign, the people in their cars streaming by. Or the moment is a summer storm, you an island on a map. Soon the storm will pass over before folding itself up into a calm day.

If your face feels as though it is crawling with ants, imagine those ants are marching away, never to return. Are your toes curling? They're the roots of a tree. Your hands are quivering leaves. Soon a cooling breeze will rush over your trunk. Your strong branches will lift you up. From here you can watch the embarrassment go by, just a slow cloud in the sky.

Finally, if you want to become an embarrassment expert, you must learn the most difficult technique of all, which is to laugh and keep laughing until the moment grows fainter and fainter and like a comet fading, vanishes into yesterday.

*Ashleigh Young*

# The Embarrassment Expert

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Published 2014 by the Ministry of Education  
PO Box 1666, Wellington 6011, New Zealand.

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Enquiries should be made to the publisher.

ISBN 978 0 478 44633 3 (online)

Publishing services Lift Education E tū

Series Editor: Susan Paris

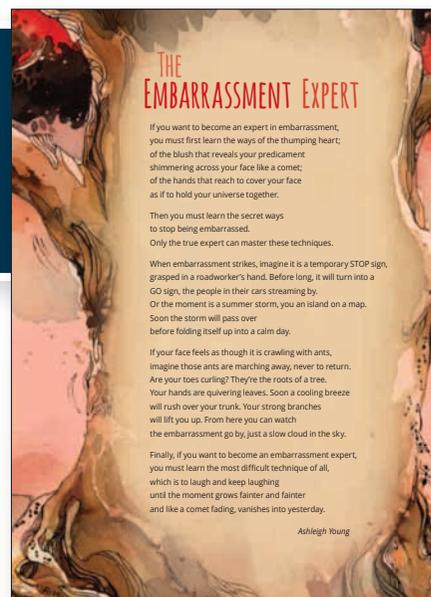
Designer: Adam Pryor

Literacy Consultant: Melanie Winthrop

Consulting Editors: Hōne Apanui and Emeli Sione



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



## SCHOOL JOURNAL LEVEL 4, NOVEMBER 2014

<b>Curriculum learning area</b>	Health and Physical Education
<b>Reading year level</b>	Year 7
<b>Keywords</b>	embarrassment, poem, poetry, metaphor, simile