



SCHOOL JOURNAL

NOVEMBER 2014



TITLE	READING YEAR LEVEL
Poi	4
Ugly	4
Idea City	4
Tons of Tomatoes	4
Ōtautahi Octopoeem	4

This Journal supports learning across the New Zealand Curriculum at level 2. It supports literacy learning by providing opportunities for students to develop the knowledge and skills they need to meet the reading demands of the curriculum at this level. Each text has been carefully levelled in relation to these demands; its reading year level is indicated above.

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Poi

by Tira Johnson

I didn't like my poi. It was lopsided. The taura was loose, and one of the hukahuka had fallen off. When I found a little hole in the plastic, I stuck my finger in and wiggled it. Some foam came out – and then a bit more. I plucked and pulled until there was a pile of crumbled foam at my feet. Then I noticed – everyone was quiet and looking at me. Mrs Waru stepped through the rows, frowning.

“Maia, the kapa haka festival is in two weeks. What are you doing?”

“My poi had a hole in it.” I held it up, and more foam fell out. “I’m trying to fix it.”

“No, Maia, you’ve ruined it.”

“Whatever.” As soon as the word left my mouth, I wished I hadn’t said it.

Mrs Waru looked stern. “Maia, if you don’t want to be here, you can sit outside Mr Hayward’s office. Haere atu! Go now!”



“You need to make good choices,” Mr Hayward said.

“Misbehaving in kapa haka isn’t a good choice, is it?”

“I’m sorry, Mr Hayward.”

“Don’t you want to practise with your friends?
They’re all working really hard.”

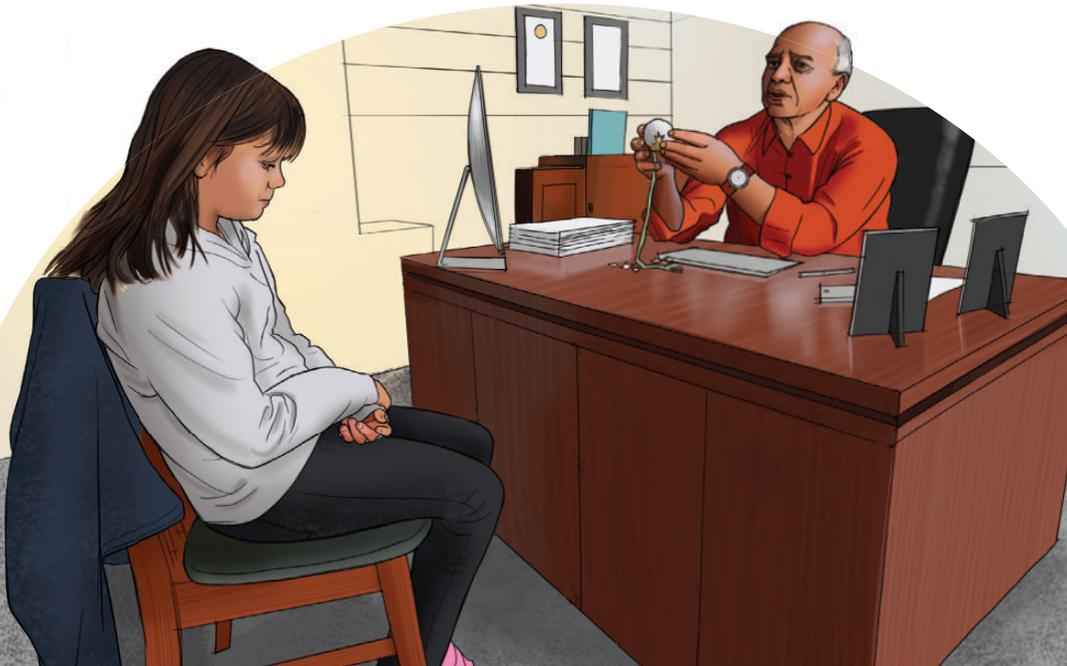
“Yes, but kapa haka is boring. I can’t sing, and I forget the words.”

Mr Hayward shook his head. “I’m sure that’s not true. But if it is boring, why did you join?”

“All my friends are in kapa haka – and my cousins,” I told him. “I want to go to the festival with them.”

“It’s not fair to the others if you’re not trying your best,” Mr Hayward said. He held up my ruined poi. “Miss Taiapa is making new poi for the festival. I would like you to help her every lunchtime instead of kapa haka practice, OK?”

“OK.”



Miss Taiapa frowned. "We'll need sixty-five poi."

"Sixty-five? That's heaps!" I cried.

"There are ten girls in each row and three rows."

"That's thirty," I reminded her.

"And they need two poi each, so that's ..."

I sighed. "Sixty."

"And we'll make five spares just in case some get lost."

"That's going to take forever," I complained.

"Then I'm lucky I've got you to help me," said Miss Taiapa.

"See you tomorrow at lunchtime."

I really didn't mind helping Miss Taiapa. She's in Te Whakatoi, the Art Room, and it's the best room in the school. It's full of cool stuff: crayons, pastels, paint, coloured paper, glitter, feathers, googly eyes – everything.

There on the table, ready for poi making, was a box of black wool.

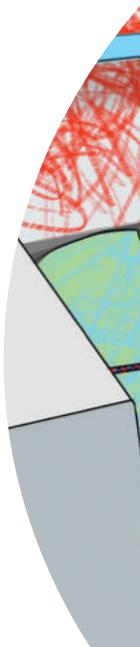
"Miss, do we have to use black wool for our poi?" I asked.

"Black is so boring. Our school colours are blue and red."

"You're so right." Miss Taiapa dug into a cupboard and pulled out more wool. We started untangling it.

"Maia, do you know how to do a four-plait for the taura?"

"Sure, one of my cousins showed me. Hey, why don't we do blue and red covers for the poi as well? The front row could have blue poi, the next row red, and the third blue. It would look awesome."



“Maia, that’s a brilliant idea. It really is,” Miss Taiapa said. “But I don’t have blue and red plastic. We’ll have to stick with what we’ve got – white.”

We started on the four-plait. I took strands of red, and Miss Taiapa took strands of blue. We tied them together with a knot. Miss Taiapa shut the knot in the top drawer of her desk and pulled tight. Then I crossed red over red, and Miss Taiapa crossed blue over blue – again and again and again. We finished the plait with another knot, leaving a length of loose wool at the end.

“Tino pai,” said Miss Taiapa. “Only sixty-four more to go.”



Lunchtimes with Miss Taiapa went faster than I'd thought. We had just about finished the taura and hukahuka when I had another idea. "What about grocery bags?"

"He aha?" said Miss Taiapa.

"Grocery bags - the ones at the supermarket. They're different colours. We could ask everyone to bring in red and blue supermarket bags. Then we can make poi covers out of those."

Miss Taiapa didn't waste any time. When the bell rang that afternoon, everyone in school had a notice to take home. By lunchtime the next day, we had plenty of blue and red grocery bags.





I cut circles of foam and scrunched them into balls.
“They can’t be too tight,” I said, “or they hurt your hand.”

“Not too loose either,” said Miss Taiapa, “or they fly around everywhere.”

I held the foam ball while Miss Taiapa tied it to the end of a plaited taura. She stretched a blue grocery bag over the foam and pulled tight. I wound sticky tape around and around the base. Miss Taiapa let me trim the extra plastic with her sharpest scissors.

There it was. The best-looking poi I’d ever seen. I spun it up over my shoulder, down off my leg, and caught it back in front of me. Perfect.

“You’re very good with that poi. Maybe you should’ve stayed in kapa haka.”

“No, I don’t think so,” I said. “I like doing this better.”

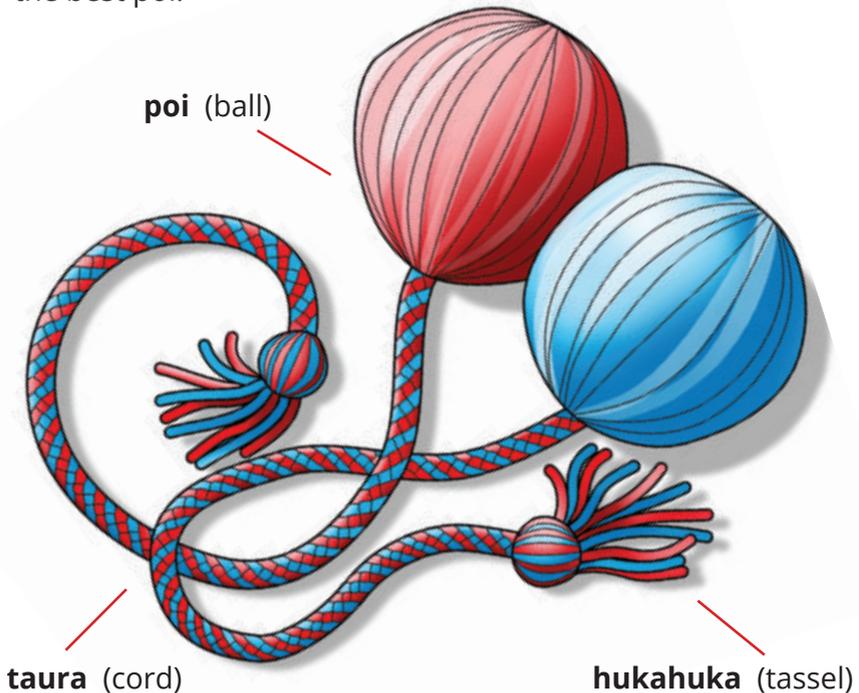
We handed out the new poi the day before the festival. The colours shone. When the girls spun the blue ones, they looked like waves. And when they spun the red ones, they looked like fire.

Mrs Waru held the spare poi. "Maia, these are beautiful, really beautiful. Maybe it was a good thing I sent you out of kapa haka."

"I'm sorry, Miss. I didn't mean to be a hōhā."

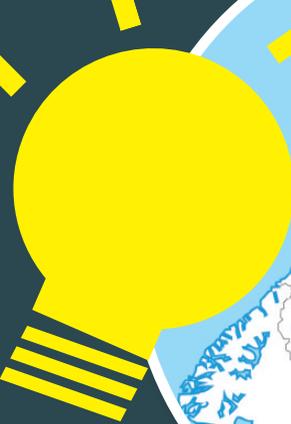
"Thank you, Maia. I think you should come to the festival with us tomorrow after all. Ask Mum or Dad to fill in your form. We need you there – Maia the kaitiaki of our beautiful poi!"

So, I went to the festival. I didn't have to sing. I didn't have to perform. I did have to go on stage though, but only once. That was when Mrs Waru asked me to accept our group's prize for the best poi.





IDEA CITY



by Renata Hopkins



Imagine a city with cardboard buildings, walls covered with leaping foxes and other colourful pictures, a washing machine that plays music, and its own superhero. It's not as crazy as it sounds – Christchurch has all these things, and more.

After the Christchurch earthquakes, lots of places that people loved were suddenly gone. Pools, sports centres, and movie theatres closed. Many of these are now open again, but others have gone forever. Luckily, Christchurch is full of people with great ideas about how to bring the city back to life. Here are some of the things they've thought up.

GAP FILLER

When you go to the movies, you sit in a comfortable seat, right? Well, after the earthquakes, some Christchurch people watched movies while riding bicycles! The bikes were hooked up to a battery, which powered the projector and the sound system.

This was one idea from a group of people who call themselves Gap Filler. They are volunteers who use ideas from the community to build exciting, new projects. The group has made a minigolf course as well as a book exchange in a fridge. They also made a Dance-O-Mat, a public dance floor that anyone in the city can enjoy. In one corner, there is a washing machine. Lift the lid, and you'll find a cord to plug in a smart phone or MP3 player. Put two dollars in the machine, and it's party time!

Another Gap Filler project is the Sound Garden. This is a collection of unusual "instruments" on a street corner. Instead of drum kits or guitars, you can play on old fire extinguishers, road signs, plastic tubes, and concrete pipes. People can join in with the diggers and cranes to make a new type of orchestra!





INVENTIVE BUILDINGS

If you'd like to go somewhere quieter, you can visit the Cardboard Cathedral. This amazing building has a roof made from cardboard tubes – a bit like the tubes inside a roll of tinfoil, only enormous! The walls of the cathedral are made from containers (the big, metal boxes used to transport things on ships and trains).

In Christchurch, containers are used in many ways. They prop up buildings and protect roads from slips and falling rocks. They have also been used to build a whole shopping mall. At the Re:Start mall, the containers have been painted bright colours. They look a bit like plastic building blocks, but inside, they have carpets, lights, and wall coverings, just like real shops.





GREENING SPACES

Christchurch is known as the Garden City. Since the earthquakes, gardens and flowers have been used to brighten up the streets. In 2011, sculptor Andrew Drummond invited schoolchildren to help with a project called Greening Spaces. They planted colourful flowers where buildings had been knocked down. Many of the children had never planted flowers before. They learned how a garden can turn an empty place into something beautiful.



TAKING CARE OF EACH OTHER

You've heard of Batman, but what about Flat Man? He's Christchurch's own superhero. Flat Man also has a sidekick called Quake Kid. They deliver food parcels to people who need extra help. They also cheer people up by surprising them with treats. Flat Man's catchphrase is "Be a bruv, share the love."

Sharing the love is a good message – the earthquakes have made life hard for a lot of people. Because of this, a group called the All Right? team has made special posters for Christchurch. The posters remind people to take care of themselves and each other. These posters say things like "It's all right to feel a little blue now and then" and "When did you last share kai with the whānau?" Children can make their own posters with lists of things that make them happy.

The All Right? team has done lots of things to cheer people up. They've given free sandwiches to road workers. They've picked people up from bus stops in a limousine. They even got the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra to play at a supermarket! Flat Man would definitely be pleased.





STREET ART

Christchurch's main art gallery has been closed since the earthquakes, so the people from the gallery have set up exhibitions in other spaces. And street art is appearing all over town. You might turn a corner and see a huge face looking down at you. On another wall, you'll find strange creatures. Or perhaps you'll see the head of a giant moa. Most of the art is temporary. It's always changing and always surprising – a bit like Christchurch.

Buildings and roads are part of a city. But the heart of a city is its people and their ideas. The buildings and roads of Christchurch are slowly being rebuilt. The people of Christchurch are helping to rebuild the heart of their city too, one good idea at a time.

Ōtautahi Octopoem

Christchurch is green.
She is the spring time
in a Gap Filler.
A musical washing machine.

Christchurch is a garden
that grows ideas.
Her heart and her people
stand tall. Kia kaha.

Kerrin P. Sharpe





Tons of Tomatoes

by Georgina Barnes



To grow tomato plants, you need a good, rich soil, right?
Well, not always ...

Johnny's Uncle Reupena (Roo-pen-a) grows his tomatoes without soil.

"How do you do that?" Johnny asks.

"Come and see," smiles Uncle Reupena.

"Wow! This is amazing," says Johnny. They are walking towards a house that's as big as twenty classrooms. It's also totally clear because it's made of glass.



No Soil Allowed

Inside the glasshouse, there are rows and rows of tomato plants. Uncle Reupena tells Johnny that there are 3800 of them! The plants are in bags – two plants share each bag. In the bags, Johnny can see something brown like soil, but it looks hairy like bark.



“I thought you grew without soil. What’s that?” asks Johnny.

“That’s coconut fibre,” Uncle Reupena replies. “It helps to hold the plants in place. It’s good to use because it’s totally free of disease – unlike soil. But coconut fibre doesn’t have any minerals.”

Johnny knows that plants need minerals to grow. His plants at home get their minerals from the soil.

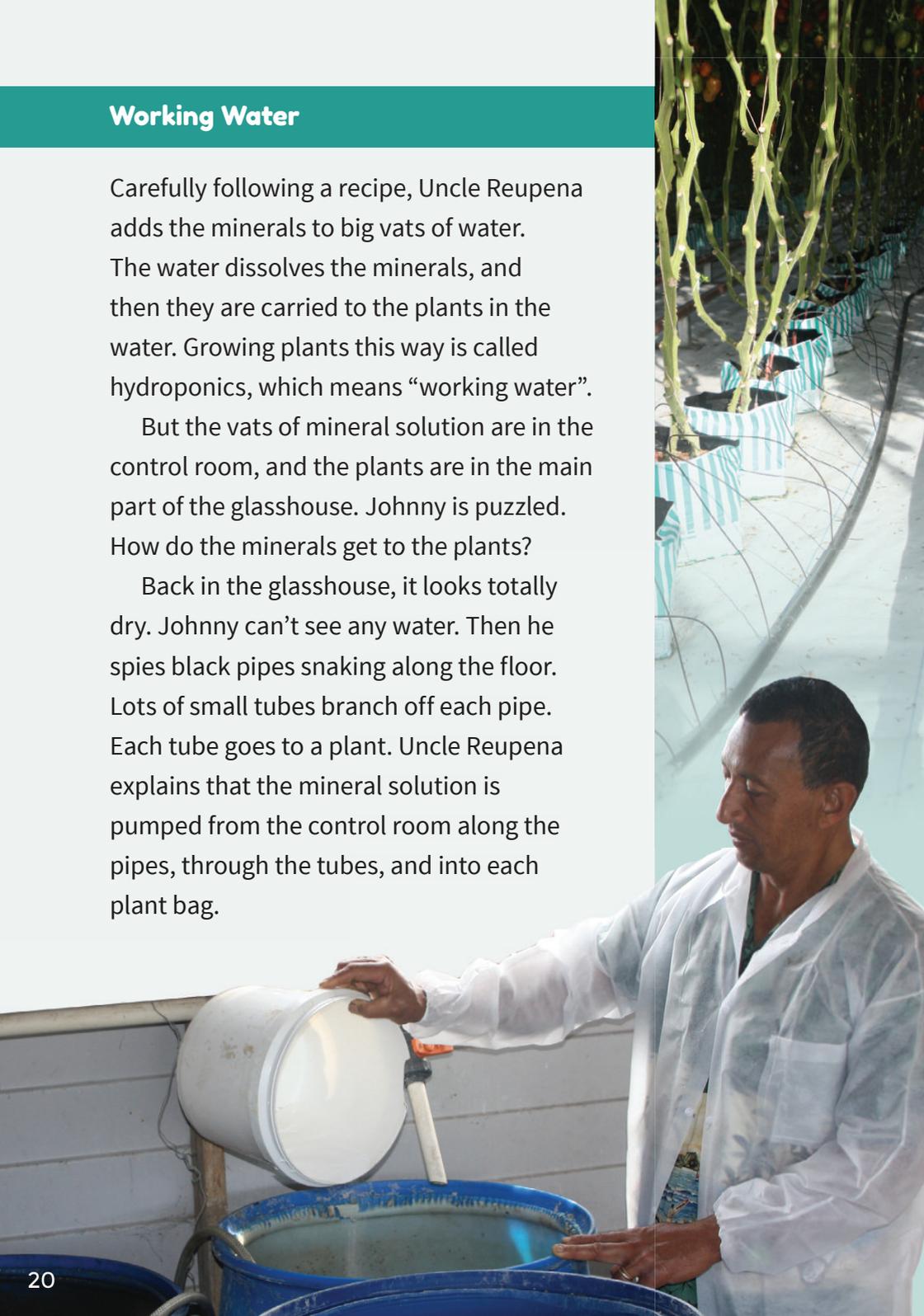
“I have to buy minerals by the bagful,” Uncle Reupena says. The minerals he buys are powders and crystals.

Working Water

Carefully following a recipe, Uncle Reupena adds the minerals to big vats of water. The water dissolves the minerals, and then they are carried to the plants in the water. Growing plants this way is called hydroponics, which means “working water”.

But the vats of mineral solution are in the control room, and the plants are in the main part of the glasshouse. Johnny is puzzled. How do the minerals get to the plants?

Back in the glasshouse, it looks totally dry. Johnny can't see any water. Then he spies black pipes snaking along the floor. Lots of small tubes branch off each pipe. Each tube goes to a plant. Uncle Reupena explains that the mineral solution is pumped from the control room along the pipes, through the tubes, and into each plant bag.



With Strings Attached

Johnny notices strings that drop from the ceiling. There is one for each plant. The plants look small now, but they will eventually grow up the strings. “Tomatoes are actually vines,” Uncle Reupena says. “They can grow as long as 30 metres – that’s as long as three buses!”

Uncle Reupena shows Johnny how to tie the plants to the strings. Then he points at a row of plants. “You tie down this side of the row, and I’ll do the other side,” he says.

The knot is tricky, and the stems are very delicate. Uncle Reupena finishes his side while Johnny is still on his first plant.

“You win,” says Johnny. “It’s really hard!”





Flying Workers

“Can you see my workers?” Uncle Reupena asks.

Johnny can’t see anyone. Then Uncle Reupena shows him a box. On the outside of the box, there is a picture showing its contents. Johnny smiles. “Bumblebees!”

In his garden at home, Johnny has seen how pollen sticks to the legs and bodies of bees as a yellow dust. As they fly from flower to flower, the bees shift the pollen around. When the flowers have been pollinated, they transform into fruit.

“I used to do the pollination myself,” Uncle Reupena says.

Johnny tries to imagine Uncle Reupena flying around the glasshouse like a bee!

“It was a big job,” Uncle Reupena continues. “There are over seventy flowers to pollinate on each plant. I had to walk around and touch every flower with a feather. Imagine having to do that to 3800 plants!”

These days, the bumblebees do the pollination. The bees live for only a month, so Uncle Reupena replaces them every three weeks.

Checking Up

As Johnny is leaving the glasshouse, Uncle Reupena shows him a box with two plants in it.

Every day, Uncle Reupena places a meter in the water that runs out from these two plants. The meter is a measuring instrument that tells him whether or not the plants are getting the right amount of minerals. If they're not, Uncle Reupena has to quickly adjust the recipe in the vats. Otherwise, the two plants and all the other plants in the glasshouse could die.

Johnny has enjoyed finding out about hydroponics. He says goodbye to his uncle but promises he will return to sample some of the crop.



Six Months Later

Walking towards the glasshouse, Johnny sees that it now looks completely full of plants! Inside, leaves and bunches of tomatoes cram every space. It's time to pick the fruit. Johnny wonders what the picking machine will look like. It will have to fit between the rows and not squash the fruit.

When Uncle Reupena gives Johnny a green crate, Johnny realises his hands will be part of the picking machine.

Uncle Reupena's wife, Eseta, their children, and their grandchildren all help to pick the tomatoes for market.

"We've been picking tomatoes for four months now," Uncle Reupena says. "By the end of the season, we'll have picked about 300 000. When we've picked them all, we'll pull out the plants and get ready for next year's crop."

He points to a big crate of tomatoes. "Now, you still have one more job to do. It's time for the taste test!"

Are the tomatoes ...
too watery?
not sweet enough?
or simply delicious?



An Interview with Reupena



When and where were you born?

I was born in 1957 in Magiagi, Western Sāmoa, but I came to New Zealand to do a horticultural apprenticeship.

What is the first thing you grew?

Actually, the first thing I grew was tomatoes! That was when I was fourteen years old, and I was at Leulumoega Fou College.

What was it like to do an apprenticeship, and what did you learn?

I had to work hard in a nursery every day for nine hours. At night, I would study. I did that for over three years. I learned how to grow everything – trees, plants, flowers, and vegetables.

Why did you decide to grow tomatoes?

Flowers are beautiful, but people always have to eat, so I chose to grow vegetables. And tomatoes are still the most popular vegetable. A tomato is actually the fruit of the plant, but it is used as a vegetable in cooking.

What would you say to anyone who wants to be a horticulturist?

It's good fun, and it's also amazing to watch the plants grow. Out of a little seed comes a big plant, and a big plant feeds a lot of people.



Ugly

by Paul Mason

“That’s just totally wrong!” Chris swiped his finger angrily across the tablet screen.

“What’s totally wrong?” asked Dad.

“This World’s Ugliest Animals competition. They’ve got the kākāpō in the top six!” Chris showed his father. “The top six! The kākāpō? No way.”

Dad shook his head. “Well, there it is, as clear as day – ‘the kākāpō, New Zealand’s flightless parrot’.”



“But why’d they have to pick on the kākāpō?
The kākāpō’s a great bird.” Chris stared at the large
parrot on the screen. Its green feathers were like
fern fronds. It had a soft, brown face and dark eyes.
No chance the kākāpō was ugly.

“Well, why don’t you do something about it seeing as
you’re so worked up,” suggested Dad. “Protest! Make a
poster. Go on a demonstration,” he joked.

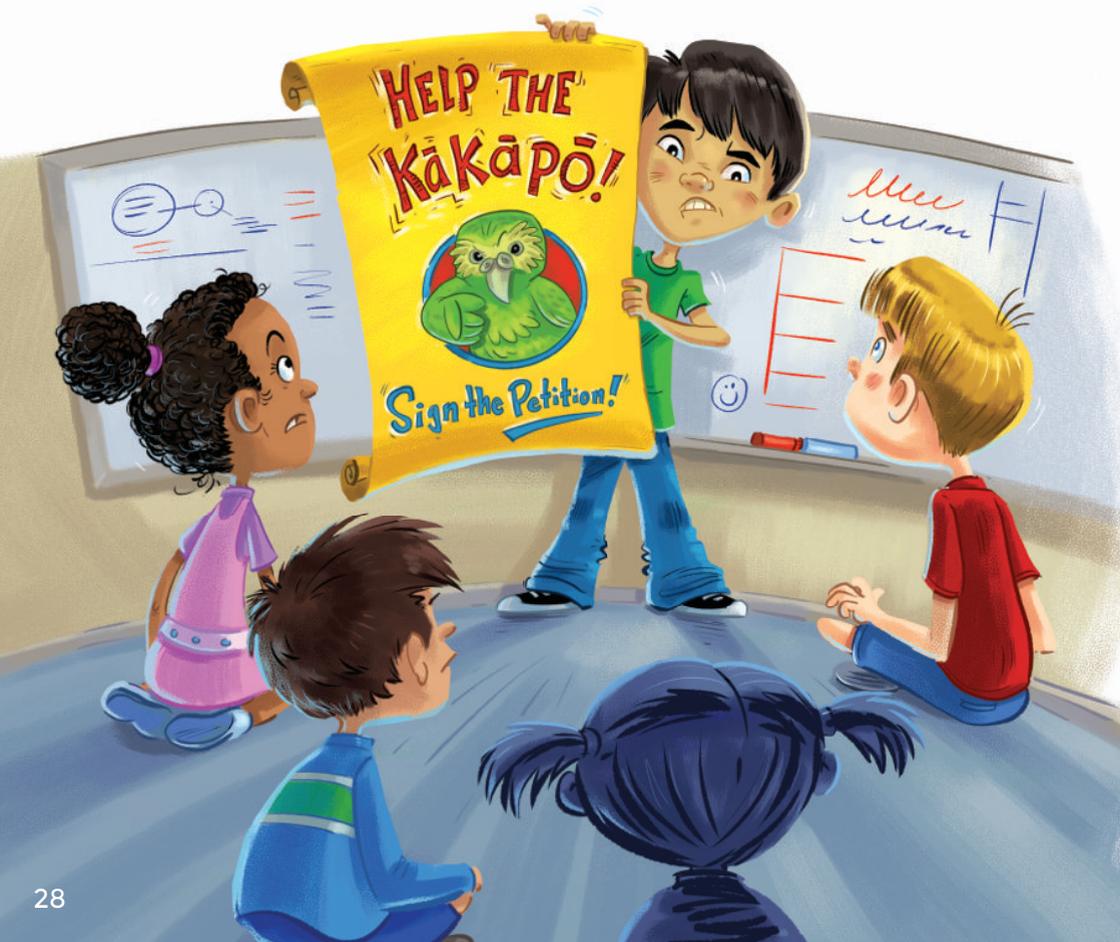
“I think I just might,” said Chris.



The next day, Chris marched into school clutching a rolled-up poster. At news time, he stood at the front of the class and opened it up. In the middle was a big picture of a kākāpō. The kākāpō was pointing with one of its wings and saying “Help the Kākāpō!” and underneath the picture, it said “Sign the Petition!” Some of the kids giggled.

“What’s the petition for?” asked Mr Stevens.

“Some organisation has called the kākāpō one of the world’s ugliest animals,” said Chris. “I want them to take the kākāpō off the list.” He told the class about the website.



“Let’s take a look,” said Mr Stevens, bringing it up on the projector.

There on the screen was a fish. But not just any fish. It was like a blob of pale, pink jelly that someone had dropped on the floor. It had a big, floppy nose; a sad, rubbery mouth; and tiny eyes.

The whole class went “Ewwwww!”

“Yuk, what is that?” asked Amelia.

“The blobfish,” read Mr Stevens. “According to this, it’s the winner of the World’s Ugliest Animal competition.”

“They’ve got that right,” said Jackson.

Mr Stevens scrolled down the webpage to some of the other animals. There was a small, furry animal called an aye-aye, an elephant seal with a dangly trunk, and a mole with a weird, star-shaped nose spread over its face. There were lots more. Each one made the class groan.

Chris held up his poster again. “You see what I mean? How can they include the kākāpō with those guys?”

“Well, I think that blobfish is kind of cute,” said Emily. The rest of the class went “Ewwwww” again.

“That warthog is pretty cool looking, too,” said Mark.

“It just goes to show,” said Mr Stevens. “We all have different ideas about what is beautiful and what is ugly. There’s an old saying, ‘Beauty is in the eye of the beholder’.” He turned to Chris. “You can hand out the petition at lunchtime if you like,” he said with a smile.

At lunchtime, Chris set up a table on the courts. “Sign my petition!” he called out. “The kākāpō needs you!” Quite a few students signed their names.

“Pretty cool how you’re helping wildlife,” said Emily as she signed the petition. “More people ought to do stuff like this.”

That night, Chris found the contact details on the organisation’s website. With his dad’s help, he wrote an email telling about his campaign and all the names on the petition. He ended by saying how he wanted the kākāpō taken off the ugly list. Then he hit send.

The next day at breakfast, Dad said, “You’ve got mail.”

“That was quick,” said Chris, taking the tablet from Dad.

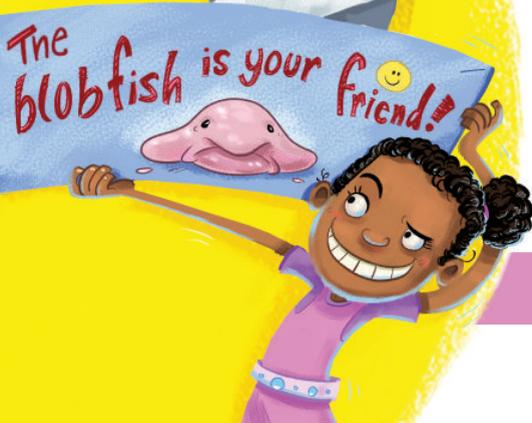
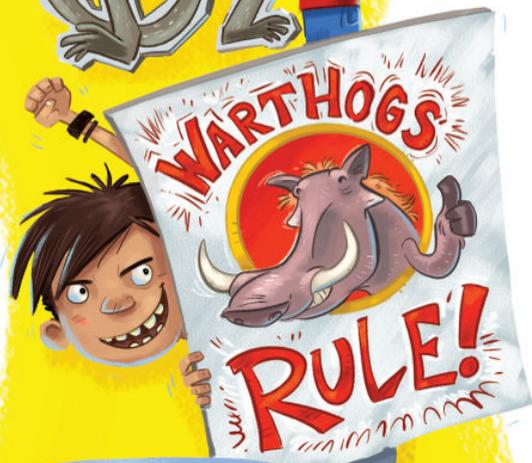
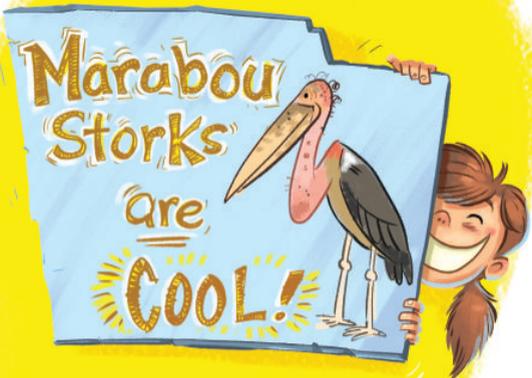
He read the email. “Oh,” he said. It wasn’t quite what he was expecting.

“What did they say?” asked Dad.

“They said that they don’t really think the kākāpō is ugly. They just came up with the Ugliest Animals Competition to get people’s attention. Most of the animals on the list are endangered,” Chris read. “It was to get people to think about them, not just the beautiful endangered animals like pandas.”

“Well, it got you to sit up and take notice,” said Dad.

“True,” said Chris. “I guess that means it’s kind of OK for the kākāpō to be on the list.”



Before school, Chris made some changes to the words on his poster. He added “Make a donation for kākāpō conservation – see Chris.”

Just as he was finishing, Emily marched into the classroom with a banner that showed a pink splat. Above the splat, it said “The blobfish is your friend!”

Then Mark came struggling through the door with a “Warthogs Rule!” poster, followed by Jackson holding a cardboard monkey. Amelia brought up the rear with an enormous sign saying “Marabou Storks are Cool!”

“Wow, this whole ugly animal thing really does work,” thought Chris. “Hey,” he said with a smile. “I’ve got something to tell you ...”

illustrations by Scott Pearson



Warthog



Proboscis Monkey

**Ugliest Animals:
Some of the Top Ten**



Aye-Aye



Kākāpō



Elephant Seal



Marabou Stork

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