

Mrs Brown's Garden

by Dawn McMillan
illustrated by Dede Putra

This text is levelled at Red 2.



Overview

In this story, Grace helps her neighbour, Mrs Brown, by watering her tomatoes. When Dad invites Mrs Brown to their family barbecue, she and Grace arrive with a large bowl of tomatoes from her garden. This story has an underlying theme of helping others. It provides opportunities for students to make connections to their own experiences of gardening and of times when they have helped others, especially neighbours.

Mrs Brown's Garden supports the development of a self-extending reading processing system, helping students "make meaning of the text by applying their increasing ability to attend to the print detail and their growing knowledge of sentence structures, and also by using their expanding vocabulary and the illustrations" (*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 11).

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

Cross-curriculum links

Health and physical education (level 1, relationships) – Explore and share ideas about relationships with other people.

Related texts

- Texts about helping others: "Nanny" (poem card); *A Good Idea, Dragons! Dragons! Dragons!, Lost* (shared); *Grandma's Vase* (Red 1); *Locked Out* (Red 2)
- Texts about gardens or plants: "Daisy Chain", "My Flower" (poem cards);

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 in simpler forms. These characteristics are shown in boxes with a solid outline. Other boxes show additional characteristics.

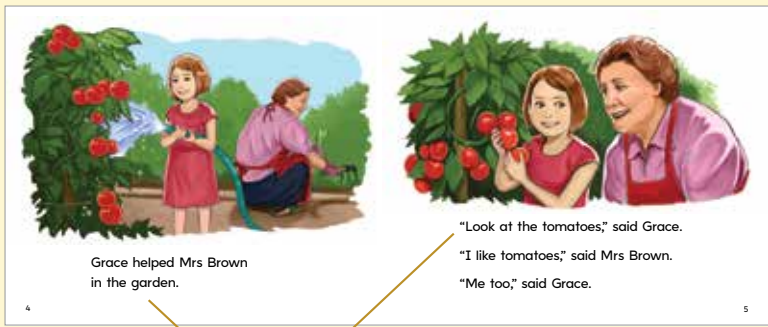
Some sentences that run over more than one line but do not split phrases

The familiar settings and context of family and neighbours

Illustrations that support and extend the meaning

Dialogue between easily identified speakers

Most content explicitly stated but also some implicit content that provides opportunities for students to make simple inferences and predictions, for example, about why Grace wants to help in Mrs Brown's garden



A range of punctuation, including speech marks, commas, and question marks to support phrasing and meaning

Several phrases describing direction and location

Question and answer structures on pages 7 and 8 ("Where is/are _____? Here is/are _____?")

To support word recognition, many high-frequency words, some of which ("And", "are", "Dad", "here", "I", "in", "looked", "said", "the") are repeated several times

Interest words that are likely to be in the reader's oral vocabulary and are strongly supported by the context, sentence structure, and the illustrations, for example, "barbecue", "bread", "fence", "garden", "Hello", "sausages", "tomatoes"

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 happened when Grace helped Mrs Brown.

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 inferences by making connections between their own experiences and the information in the text and the illustrations
- make meaning by drawing on more than one source of information, for example: meaning (context and illustrations); structure (sentence structure and word order); and visual information (print information including punctuation)
- continue building a reading vocabulary of high-frequency words
- read groups of words together in phrases
- notice some errors in their reading and take action to self-correct

Introducing the text

Use your knowledge of your students to ensure that your introduction to the text activates their prior knowledge and supports them for a successful first reading. As part of the discussion, feed in new vocabulary and language structures they will meet in the text.

- Read the title and have the students use the cover illustration to think about who Mrs Brown is and what she is doing. Help the students to recognise the tomato plant.
- Support the students to make further inferences: *I wonder why the girl is looking over the fence*. Expect the students to infer that she is interested in the garden and/or Mrs Brown. They may also infer that she lives next door.

- Discuss the title page illustration. Expect the students to make a connection with the tomatoes on the cover (and the idea that tomatoes come from gardens). Prompt them to make connections to their experiences of barbecues.
- Use the illustrations on pages 2 and 3 to clarify that the girl and Mrs Brown live next door to each other. Tell them the girl’s name is Grace. *What do you think Grace is saying to Mrs Brown?*
- Share the reading purpose.
- Browse the illustrations together to identify the main events. Rephrase the students’ responses or use prompts to elicit new language structures and vocabulary. For example:
 - to introduce the idea of helping on page 4, encourage the students to share their experiences of gardening and growing vegetables. *What are some jobs that need to be done in the garden? Do you like to help out?*
 - to support them with the context of the conversation on page 5, you could ask: *What is Grace looking at? Do you like tomatoes? Grace is smiling. I wonder if she likes them, too.*
 - to prepare them for the question format on page 7, you could discuss who is at the barbecue and who is missing. *I wonder where they are?*
- Remind the students of the reading purpose.

Monitoring the reading

- Observe the students closely as they read the text to themselves, intervening only if a student needs help. (Some possible prompts are provided below.)
- Note how they attempt words for themselves, their use of initial letter information, their ability to read the high-frequency words and to read groups of words together in phrases, their attention to basic punctuation, and any instances of self-monitoring and self-correction.
- If a student makes an error without noticing, wait until the end of the sentence or the page before intervening. Waiting gives them the opportunity to notice the error and fix it.

- Provide support for individual students as necessary. For example:

Text	Student reads	Teacher prompt
Grace looked over the fence.	The student has a problem getting started.	Remind the student that the girl's name is Grace. <i>Look at the picture. What did Grace do? Yes, she looked over the fence. You read it now.</i>
Grace helped Mrs Brown in the garden.	Grace is helping Mrs Brown in the garden.	<i>What did Grace do? Read that sentence again.</i>
"I like tomatoes," said Mrs Brown.	Student stops at "like".	Prompt them to think about the meaning. <i>What do you think Mrs Brown is saying about the tomatoes? Perhaps she likes them. Try that again.</i>

- Other prompts that encourage self-monitoring include: *Did that look/sound right to you?; Are you sure?; Were you right?; Try that again.; Think about what would make sense.; 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. In this case, an explanation and further examples would be more effective.
- Give feedback (without disrupting the flow of the reading) when the student self-monitors. For example, *You said, "Come to a barbecue", and then you changed it. How did you know that word was "for"?*
- For further suggestions to support students to self-monitor (to cross-check, confirm, and self-correct), see *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4*, page 130.
- As students finish reading, they can quietly reread the story until everyone has finished.

Discussing the text

- Remind the students of the reading purpose and ask them to identify (summarise) the events in the story.
- Prompt the students to think critically. *What have you noticed about how the characters help each other?* Construct a chart to record the students' ideas. Refer the students back to the text and the illustrations to find how the characters helped.

Name	How they helped
Grace	She watered the tomatoes.
Mrs Brown	She shared her tomatoes with the family.
Dad	He invited Mrs Brown to the barbecue. He got the sausages and cooked them on the barbecue.
Mum	She got the bread.

- Have the students identify the punctuation that supports the reading on pages 7 and 8, for example, *Where are the speech marks to show you that Dad is talking? (Dad speaks twice, so students may need help with this.) What shows you that Dad is asking a question?* Enjoy rereading these two pages together, modelling expressive reading of the questions and answers. *Grace and Mrs Brown look very pleased on this page. How might they say that?*

After reading: practice and reinforcement

After-reading tasks should provide practice and reinforcement. **Select from and adapt** these suggestions according to what you have observed about the needs of your students. Where possible, links should be made to other texts, including texts generated from language experience and shared writing, and to the wider literacy programme (oral language, writing, handwriting, alphabet and word games and activities) and other curriculum areas.

- Have the students reread the text to a partner. Listen in, providing feedback and noting their ability to self-monitor and to use the punctuation to support phrasing and expression. You may also use this time to do a quick running record with a student to provide more information on an aspect 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 reread this text and to read other stories and poems with similar themes (see Related texts). This also helps to extend their comprehension.
- Encourage expressive, fluent reading by having the students reread the story to another student. Ask them to make it sound really interesting.
- Ask them to reread the story, looking for clues and sharing their ideas about why Grace likes Mrs Brown’s garden. They may infer that Grace likes the garden because she likes Mrs Brown, that she likes the tomatoes, she likes to help Mrs Brown, and she likes to use the hose.
- Have the students draw or cut pictures from a magazine of vegetables they like. Use the pictures to make a group chart. Other students can add their names beside their vegetable choices.
- Create “where” questions and “here” answers around the theme of “getting ready” for a family meal or activity. This book includes typical New Zealand barbecue ingredients. With students from other countries, ask them to share the names for typical ingredients for barbecues or other family meals. Create questions and answers around these.
- Ask individual students to locate high-frequency words in the text. *Can you find the word “said”?* *Now can you find “said” on this page?*
- Have word games and activities available that reinforce automatic recognition of high-frequency words, for example, matching games and making words with magnetic letters. Provide bilingual word games and activities where appropriate.

We like vegetables!	
Picture	“I like _____,” said _____. “Me too,” said _____.
Picture	“I like _____,” said _____. “Me too,” said _____.

- Discuss when the students have helped a friend or neighbour or someone in their family. Have them draw a picture and write a caption.
- To reinforce the use of phrases such as “over the fence”, “in the garden” and “at the tomatoes”, play a card game that features pictures of items the students know and matching pictures of these items in different locations. Spread the location cards out face up and pile the item cards face down. Students pick up a card with an item on it and ask “Where is _____?”, and the other player has to select the correct location card and answer “It is/ They are _____.” If they give the correct answer, they keep the pair. Ensure the students know the items and locations and that you have introduced the answer structures: “It is _____. They are _____.” You can also play games with real items in the classroom to reinforce both the nouns and phrases for location.



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