



Overview

This is the third of four chapters in a humorous science-fiction story designed to “hook” year 3 students into reading chapter books. (The first two chapters are in *Junior Journal 52* and *53*). In the story so far, twins Tai and Ana have made a robot (Tidy-Bot) for the school science fair, but when the robot is zapped by lightning and comes to life, they face a series of dilemmas. They try to train the robot to follow instructions, but without much success. In this chapter, the twins discover that many other machines seem to have come to life and are also acting strangely.

As well as fostering enjoyment, this story gives students an opportunity to develop reading “stamina” on a longer text and to feel what it’s like to read a chapter book. Students in your class will probably be reading at a range of levels on the colour wheel, so this teacher support material provides suggestions for how you can vary your level of support.

The final chapter will be published in *Junior Journal 55*. PDFs of all four chapters and audio versions of chapters 1–3 as MP3 files are available at www.juniorjournal.tki.org.nz

Related texts

The three other chapters of this story (see Overview above for details)

Stories with mystery and humour: “The Desk” (*JJ 38*); “The Pet Day Problem”, “Taniwha Trouble” (*JJ 40*); “Missing” (*JJ 42*); “Something Strange Going On” (*JJ 46*); “Marcus and the Wind” (*JJ 47*); “Always Great, Never Late” (*JJ 48*); “I Spy” (*JJ 50*); “No Big Deal” (*JJ 51*)

Stories that involve misinterpretation of instructions: “Buried Treasure” (*JJ 53*, a play)

Text characteristics

Key text characteristics relating to the reading standard for after three years at school, as they relate to this text, are shown in the boxes with the solid outlines. Other boxes indicate additional characteristics.

A mix of explicit and implicit content that requires students to make connections between ideas in the text and their prior knowledge (including knowledge from previous chapters) to ask questions, form and test hypotheses, and make inferences

Some unfamiliar or unexpected words and phrases (for example, “vacuum cleaner”, “Pinky promise”, “dancing penguins”, “whizzing”, “blenders”, “plugged in”, “shop assistant”, “microwave”, “waffle maker”, “coffee machines”, “nozzles”, “What on earth ...”, “Freaky”) the meaning of which is supported by the context, the sentence structure, and/or the illustrations

Ideas and information organised in paragraphs

Some pages with no illustrative support requiring students to visualise

Zapped!
Chapter 3: Fun Time!
by Renata Hopkins

The story so far:
Tai and Ana made a robot for a school project. They called it “Tidy-Bot”. When the robot was hit by lightning, it came alive! Unfortunately Tidy-Bot wasn’t good at following instructions. The twins had to hide the robot after it caused big trouble, first at home and then at school. Later, when they got home, the twins learnt that other machines had also been behaving strangely ...

It was Saturday. Dad was out jogging, and Mum was planting tomatoes. Tai and Ana were giving Tidy-Bot a lesson in following instructions.
“It’s simple,” said Tai, looking around the messy floor. “The toys go in the toy box. The books go on the shelf. The clothes go in the washing basket.”
“Now, tidy them up,” said Ana.
Tidy-Bot picked up a soft toy and put it in the washing basket.
“Sort of,” said Ana. “Try again.”
Tidy-Bot picked up a smelly sock and tried to put it into Tai’s mouth. Ana giggled. Tai didn’t.
“We’ll never win a prize at the science fair if Tidy-Bot can’t actually follow instructions,” he said.
“Can, can, can!” said Tidy-Bot. “Bleep, bloop!”
The robot picked up a book and slid it onto the bookcase. The twins cheered.
“See?” said Ana. “All it takes is practice.”
Tidy-Bot and the twins kept practising until they heard Dad arrive back from his run.
“Hey, kids,” he called. “We’ll be off as soon as I’ve had a shower.” The family was going to the mall. Mum and Dad wanted to buy a new vacuum cleaner.

The humour in the robot’s interpretations of the children’s instructions, the behaviour of the other machines, and the illustrations

A variety of sentence structures, including complex sentences so that students are required to notice and use linking words and punctuation to track ideas

Several characters and events and two interwoven storylines (one about Tidy-Bot’s misinterpretation of instructions and one about the strange behaviour of the other machines), requiring students to keep track and notice connections

Frequent use of dialogue, some of which is not explicitly attributed, and more than one character speaking on a page

English (Reading)

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

Ideas: Show some understanding of ideas
within, across, and beyond texts.

Select from and adapt the suggestions below 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*).

Possible reading purpose

(What can the students expect to find out or think about as a result of reading this text?) Note that by chapter 3, the students are likely to be setting their own reading purpose(s) based on events in previous chapters.

- To find out what happens at “Fun Time”
- To find out if the twins manage to train Tidy-Bot
- To see if the machines are going to behave strangely in this chapter

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 students **make connections** to previous chapters to **form and test hypotheses** (predictions) and **make inferences** about the storyline(s) and characters.
- They **ask questions** and look for answers as they read.
- They look for key words and phrases to help them **visualise** events.
- The students **make connections** between all three chapters to **identify main ideas**.
- They **monitor** their reading, and when something is unclear, they take action to solve the problem, for example, by rereading a sentence or looking for clues close by.



Text and language features

Possible supporting strategies

(These suggestions may be used before, during, or after reading in response to students' needs.)

Vocabulary

- Possibly unfamiliar words and phrases (for example, “Unfortunately”, “caused”, “machines”, “strangely”, “actually”, “practice”, “vacuum cleaner”, “agreed”, “Pinky promise”, “shook on it”, “dancing penguins”, “whizzing”, “blenders”, “plugged in”, “shop assistant”, “microwave”, “waffle maker”, “coffee machines”, “nozzles”, “spotless”, “vanished”, “beamed”, “What on earth ...”, “shrieked”, “exactly”, “calming”, “muddled”, “pointed out”, “unplugged”)

Prompt the students to remember the strategies they can use, often in combination, for example:

- when **decoding**:
 - recognising chunks or syllables within words (“Un-for-tu-nate-ly”, “as-sis-tant”, “micro-wave”, “nozz-les”, “van-ish-ed”, “ex-act-ly”)
 - using their knowledge of variations in the sounds of letters and letter combinations (“caused”, “machines”, “practice”, “calming”)
- when working out the **meaning of words and phrases**:
 - using the context of the sentence and/or the surrounding sentences
 - using the illustrations, the unfolding meaning of the story, and their prior knowledge
 - reading on to look for further information.

Readers are able to use strategies for working out unfamiliar words only when they know most of the vocabulary in the text. For English language learners who need support with vocabulary, introduce and practise selected items before reading. See [ESOL Online: Vocabulary](#) for suggestions.



Metacognition

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR STUDENTS TO BE METACOGNITIVE

Here are some ways you can build students' awareness of the processes and strategies they are using as they make meaning and think critically.

- *How did you work out what it meant when the twins “shook on it”?*
- *What helped you visualise what it was like when the machines went crazy in the shop?*

Introducing the text

- Use your knowledge of your students to ensure that your introduction to the text is effective in activating their prior knowledge and providing appropriate support for a successful first reading. By now, after having read the first two chapters, it is likely that some students will choose to read this third chapter by themselves without the support of an introductory session. If so, provide opportunities for discussion after the reading. You could help like-minded students to set up their own literature circle (See “After reading”).
- For other students, tell them that this is the third of four chapters. Have them recall what happened in the first two chapters, and then read “The story so far” to confirm their recollections. Encourage them to generate their own questions or predictions (or review earlier predictions) about what may happen in chapter 3.
- Have the students think, pair, share their own reading purpose(s) based on their questions and/or predictions. For students who need more support to decide what they want to find out from their reading, you could model some questions. (For example, *What might Ana and Tai need to do to keep themselves and Tidy-Bot out of trouble? At the end of chapter 2, Ana and Tai were noticing that other machines were behaving strangely. I wonder what might happen. What “fun time” are they going to have?*)

Reading and discussing the text

Suggestions for ways that you can support the students to achieve the learning goals are in the right-hand column of the table below. **Select from and adapt** them according to your students’ responses and interests. In “The first reading”, the focus is on students getting the gist of the chapter (for example, by tracking events and making predictions). The suggestions in “Discussing the text after the first or subsequent readings” focus on deeper comprehension and can also be used as ideas for “After reading: Practice and reinforcement”.

Adjust your level of support according to the students’ confidence and ability. If you have students reading below Purple, you could use a mixture of reading to and shared reading, with the students following their own copy of the text. You can provide opportunities for them to reread as they listen to the audio version.

Student behaviours

Examples of what to look for and support as the students work towards achieving their learning goal(s). Note that much of the processing that students do at this level is “inside their heads” and may not be obvious until after they have read the text and you are discussing it as a group.

Deliberate acts of teaching

Examples of how you can support students as they work towards achieving their learning goal(s).

The first reading

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The students read “The story so far” and use it to recollect some of the events from previous chapters. They make connections between this summary, and the title “Fun Time!”, to wonder or predict what will happen in this chapter. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If necessary, remind students to use the summary to help them recall relevant details. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As the students read page 27, they identify the setting, the characters, what the characters are doing, and why. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remind them to think about “who”, “what”, “when”, “where”, “why” to help them clarify the context for the current chapter. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• They use the new information at the end of page 27 (Dad telling the children they will be going to the mall) to ask themselves questions or review their predictions about what might happen. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prompt the students to notice how the new information might affect their earlier predictions. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On page 28, they make connections to what has happened in previous chapters to predict whether the twins’ planned surprise for Mum and Dad will be successful and to infer why Dad wants the twins to be on their “best behaviour”. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If necessary, prompt the students to think about the potential for trouble. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The students demonstrate monitoring and self-correcting. For example, to clarify the meaning of “Pinky promise” on page 28, they reread the previous sentence or sentences, and/or read on. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remind the students to think about the strategies they can use when meaning is unclear. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The students notice clues such as “a strange thing happened”, the message on the TV screens, and Tai’s comment, “Weird”, and predict that the plot is starting to develop. As they read pages 29 and 30, they use key words and phrases to help visualise what the machines are doing and how the characters are reacting to the events. The students notice that the machines seem to stop when an adult looks at them and use this to predict that Mum and Dad will blame the twins again. They confirm this as they read on. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prompt the students to look for key words and phrases that will help them visualise the scene at the mall and the characters’ reactions. If necessary, prompt the students to notice that only Tai and Ana seem to be able to see the machines going crazy. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• At the end of page 30, the students notice the surprising contrast with Tidy-Bot’s previous efforts to help but predict, based on previous events, that this won’t last (as confirmed on page 31). | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enjoy the students’ delight as they discover that Tidy-Bot has got things mixed up again. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As the students read page 32, they refocus on the storyline about the other machines and, like Ana and Tai, they begin to wonder what the machines will do next. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage the students to think about Ana and Tai’s questions. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As the students finish reading, they reflect on their purpose for reading and whether they have met it. They refer back to the text to check anything they are not sure of or to reread a favourite part. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remind the students to think about their purpose for reading. |

Discussing the text after the first or subsequent readings

- The students share their responses to the chapter, including their ideas about possible answers to the twins' questions on page 32 and what this might mean for the final chapter.
- The students identify a favourite section, for example, the scene in the appliance store, and share their ideas about what made it dramatic and funny.
- The students think critically about the behaviour of Tidy-Bot and the other machines. They refer to possible clues in the text such as the significance of the message, "It's Fun Time!", and why the machines only seem to come to life when the adults are not looking. They form an opinion about whether Tidy-Bot is genuinely trying to help or whether they think its behaviour is the same as the machines.
- The students recall events from earlier chapters and, with support, identify ideas that keep recurring (See also "After reading").
- Encourage the students to share their responses to the reading. *Was there anything that surprised you?* Brainstorm predictions about what might happen in chapter 4.
- Have the students choose a part of the chapter they particularly liked, and together, explore what made it effective (for example, the language, the surprise elements, the contrasting points of view of the characters).
- Encourage them to think critically about Tidy-Bot in relation to the other machines. *Do you agree with Tai that the machines seemed to like being naughty? Is Tidy-Bot like the other machines?*
- Support the students in identifying some main ideas that run through all three chapters (for example, Ana and Tai getting blamed for what the robot does, the twins keeping the robot secret, and other machines behaving strangely). Create a chart with these three headings and have the students add one or two examples. They could continue this as an after-reading activity.

Supporting metacognition

With support, the students reflect on their learning.

- The students identify a challenge in the text and explain how they solved it, for example, by working out the meaning of a word or phrase by rereading the sentence, looking for clues in surrounding sentences, thinking about what they already know about the story, and/or referring to the illustrations.
- The students explain how setting their own purpose (and perhaps adjusting it during the reading) helped them, for example, to focus on main ideas and keep track of what was happening.
- Remind the students of the reading purpose and learning goal(s).
- Ask the students to identify a challenge they had when reading and explain how they solved (or attempted to solve) it. (Note any aspects to follow up on.)
- *How did setting your own reading purpose help you read this chapter?*

After reading: Practice and reinforcement

- The students can reread the chapter as they listen to the audio version. Audio versions also provide English language learners with good models of pronunciation, intonation, phrasing, and expression.
- Encourage the students to read more widely, for example, by reading chapter books to them, having students talk about books they have enjoyed, and taking the class to the school or public library. Build up a class list of favourite, easy chapter books. For help with selections, see <http://schools.natlib.govt.nz/creating-readers/genres-and-read-alouds/young-fiction#choosing>
- You could encourage students to set up a literature circle to discuss the chapter. (See *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1–4*, page 102, for information about literature circles and *Learning Through Talk: Oral language in years 1–3*, page 69, for ways to support group discussions.)
- The students could write their predictions for the final chapter.
- Support deeper comprehension (and encourage rereading) by having the students:
 - work with a partner to identify four to six main events in chapter 3 and recreate them in the form of a simple cartoon strip
 - draw a picture of the machines going crazy and add speech bubbles or thought bubbles for two or three of the human characters
 - turn the chapter into a play or Readers' Theatre
 - work in pairs to create a comparison chart or Venn diagram of what Tidy-Bot is like and what the other machines are like, using clues in the text.
- Have the students work in pairs to identify examples of the main ideas that run through all three chapters and add them to a group chart.
- To build vocabulary, students could:
 - explore the effect of the prefix "un" in "Unfortunately" (page 26) and "unplugged" (page 32) and generate further examples
 - explore the different shades of meaning in the verbs "beamed", "grinned", "giggled", "shrieked", "stomped", "cheered", "slammed", "laughed", "grumbled". Have the students find and highlight the verbs on a printout of the text so that they can use the context of the sentences to support the meaning, then have them work with a partner to arrange the verbs on a continuum of meaning from happy to unhappy. (Note that there is no "right" answer. The value of this activity is in the students focusing on meaning and discussing and negotiating as they make decisions.)
 - start (or add to) a collection of favourite words or phrases from the chapter (for example, "pinky promise", "shook on it", "what on earth", and "yikes"). Encourage (and model) their use in conversation and the students' writing, where appropriate. This may be particularly helpful for English language learners.