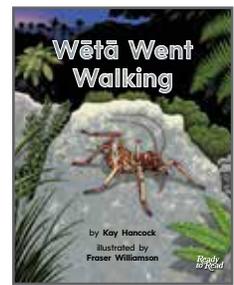


Wētā Went Walking

by Kay Hancock

illustrated by Fraser Williamson



Shared reading

Shared reading provides students with opportunities to behave like readers and to engage in rich conversations about texts that they are initially not able to read for themselves. The focus is on engagement, enjoyment, and making meaning. Shared reading involves multiple readings of a text, led by the teacher, with increasing interaction and participation by students. After many shared reading sessions, students become able to read, with increasing independence, the small books that accompany the big books.

Overview

When Wētā goes walking in the bush, Rat decides to go hunting ... Will Wētā be safe? Does he know Rat is following him? This dramatic, open-ended story is ideal for fostering students' enthusiasm and confidence as readers. The rhythmic, repetitive language encourages and supports students to read along with the teacher, even from their first day of school.

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

Related texts

Shared books that are particularly suitable for students from school entry: *Bubbles*; *Dad's Snore*; *Fantail, Fantail*; *Greedy Cat*; *I'm the King of the Mountain*; *Monster's Lunch*; *T-Shirts*

Stories and poems about New Zealand bush creatures: "Clickety-clack Cicada", "Just a Touch" (poem cards); *Fantail, Fantail* and *How Kiwi Saved the Forest* (shared); *Old Tuatara* (Magenta); *In the Bush* (Red 3)

Shared non-fiction texts about New Zealand creatures: *Stick Insects*, *Camouflage*, *New Zealand Birds*

Cross-curriculum links

English (Level 1): Selects and reads texts for enjoyment and personal fulfilment.

Science (Living World) – level 1 – Life Processes:

Recognise that all living things have certain requirements so they can stay alive.

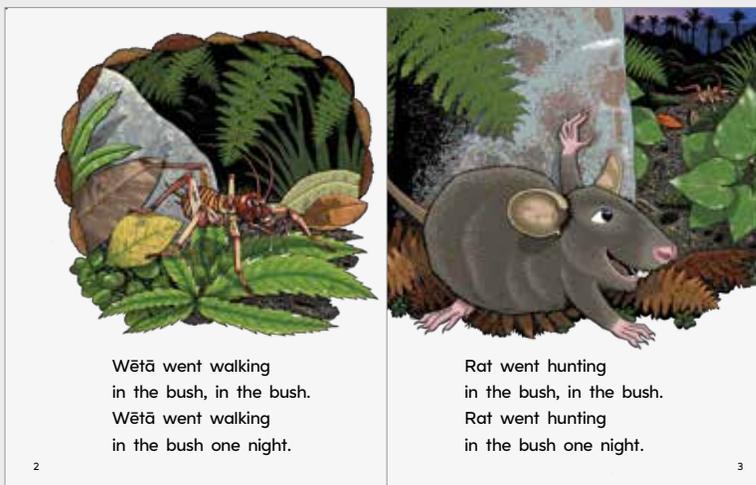
Text characteristics

Unlike guided texts, shared reading texts are not levelled. *Wētā Went Walking* has the following features that help students build the understandings they need before starting guided reading and to develop confidence as readers.

Most content explicitly stated but also some implicit content that provides opportunities for students to make predictions and inferences

Some content (the bush setting and the context of creatures hunting) that may be outside some students' prior knowledge but can easily be related to it

Many high-frequency words as a scaffold for independent reading



A dramatic storyline and engaging language features, such as repetition, alliteration, and the use of enlarged, bold print (on page 11) to encourage participation and build confidence and fluency

Interest words, some of which are likely to be in a reader's oral vocabulary (for example, "bush", "closer", "leaves", "night", "Rat", "Ruru", "stream", "Wētā", "tree") including a wide range of regular and irregular verbs and verb forms ("ate", "climbed", "crossed", "fell", "hunting", "ran", "saw", "walking", "went") and that are strongly supported by the context, the sentence structure, and/or the illustrations

Illustrations that support the meaning and may suggest new ideas or viewpoints

Many sentences that run over more than one line but do not split phrases, supporting return sweep, and wide spaces between words to support one-to-one word matching

A range of punctuation (full stops, commas, an ellipsis, and an exclamation mark) to support phrasing and meaning

Reading purposes and learning goals

(What opportunities does this text provide for students to learn more about how to “read, respond to, and think critically” about texts?)

Select from and adapt the suggestions in this teacher support material 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).

Each reading purpose is accompanied by learning goals. The learning goals are the sorts of behaviours that you want your students to demonstrate after multiple readings of this text and when reading other texts.

Often the first reading of a shared text will be with the whole class. The focus is on making meaning. The teacher leads the reading (with students invited to join in as they feel confident) so that they can focus on responding to the content and thinking about the theme or main idea. Deeper understanding of ideas and exploration of language and other text features can be developed over subsequent readings.

A suggested purpose for the initial reading

(What can the students expect to find out or think about as a result of reading this text?)

To find out what happened when Wētā went walking

Possible learning goals

During the first reading, the students can:

- **make connections** to their prior knowledge
- **make predictions and inferences**
- **ask questions** about the story and think of possible answers
- follow the events in the story (**summarise**)
- attend to the print as the teacher points to it and reads aloud
- notice some ways the print and the illustrations work together to build meaning
- hear language patterns and the teacher’s intonation as a support for joining in the reading.

Introducing the story

To build vocabulary for English language learners, read the title and discuss some of the illustrations before you read the shared book with the whole group. Feed in and explain some of the key words, such as “Wētā”, “bush”, “Rat”, “stream”, “tree”, “leaves”). Where possible, make connections to the words in the students’ first language/s and encourage students who speak the same first language to discuss the story together in that language.

You can find useful guidance about supporting English language learners at: [ESOL Online](#)

- Read the title and the names of the author and the illustrator. Encourage the students to share what they know about wētā (for example, what they look like, how big they are, how they move, what they eat, where they live). Explain that wētā are nocturnal and draw attention to the dark background in the cover illustration, showing that it’s night. Encourage them to predict where and why Wētā might go walking at night. The title page illustration shows part of the journey.
- Share the purpose for reading. *Let’s find out what happened when Wētā went walking.*

Reading and discussing the story

- Adapt the following suggestions according to your students’ responses. Encourage them to share their predictions, questions, and inferences as the story unfolds.
- Pages 2 and 3 – Briefly explore the illustrations before reading. Expect the students to notice the new character, Rat. You may need to clarify that these are two separate illustrations, one focusing on Wētā and the other focusing on Rat. Encourage the students to begin wondering about the story. Model your own thinking: *I’m thinking about what Rat might be doing in the bush. I wonder if Wētā knows Rat is there ...*
- Use a pointer to help the students follow the print as you read. From page 3, briefly pause before each repetition of “in the bush” as an invitation for the students to join in if they like.
- Pages 4 to 9 – Continue to discuss the illustrations in each double-page spread before reading and encourage the students to share their predictions or questions about what might happen. As you read, use intonation to draw attention to the slight changes in the text pattern (for example, on page 4, from “one night” to “that night”; on page 7, from “a tree” to “the tree”) and to convey the growing suspense and potential danger to Wētā. After reading page 9, ask the students to predict whether Rat will catch Wētā and why or why not.
- Pages 10 to 12 – Enjoy the students’ discovery of the new character, Ruru. Briefly discuss what the students know about ruru (in particular, what they like to eat). *What is Ruru looking at?* If necessary, clarify that Ruru is bigger than Rat but looks smaller here because he is further away. To maintain the dramatic momentum of the story, read to the end without stopping for discussion.

- Enjoy the students’ responses to the ending and encourage them to share their predictions about what will happen to Rat.
- Prompt the students to also share their predictions and inferences about Wētā. *Will Wētā be safe? Did Wētā know that Rat was following him?* Encourage the students to refer to the story and the illustrations to support their ideas. Clarify that there are no “right” answers and that everyone can have their own opinion.
- Reread the story, encouraging the students to join in as they feel confident.
- You can also use *Wētā Went Walking* as a springboard to reading other books (See Related texts) and to writing. The students might also like to find out more about wētā (and/or rats and ruru).
- Make the audio version available for students to listen to and enjoy.
- Have the students identify the problems that Rat had (the things that stopped him from getting to Wētā).
- Working in pairs, have the students put photocopies of the illustrations from pages 2–5 in sequence, referring to the big book as needed. This requires close attention to the detail of the illustration and lots of talk as the students make their decisions. Once the students are confident in doing this, you could increase the challenge by adding copies of more pages or copies of the sections of text.
- Beginning with pages 2 and 3, ask the students to tell you (from looking at the illustrations) what happened at the beginning of the story: *What was Wētā doing? What was Rat doing?* Read the text together to confirm. (Note that it is best to use the past tense in your questions – “What was” rather than “What is” – so that the students’ responses match the past-tense structure of the text.) Continue to do this with each double spread. Draw out the idea that several things happened in the middle of the story. *What happened at the end?* Record the students’ ideas in a summary chart such as the partially completed one below, tracking the actions of each character.

Subsequent readings

You can return to this story many times to build students’ understandings and explore different purposes. Subsequent readings of the big book may be with a group of students who have similar learning needs rather than with the whole class. **Select and adapt from** the suggestions described below). Note that several of the suggestions overlap.

Suggested reading purpose

To think about what happens in this story

Learning goals

Over a number of sessions, the students can:

- identify and discuss the events in the story – who, what, where (**summarise**)
- identify what happened at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end (**summarise**)
- identify and discuss how the illustrations tell them more about the story (**make connections**)
- form an opinion about the characters (**evaluate**).

Choose one of the suggestions for each session.

- Ask the students to summarise the story. There are several ways to approach this. For example:
 - Go back through the book, looking at the left-hand pages and asking the students to say what Wētā did. Then repeat with the right-hand pages and what Rat did.
 - Draw out the idea that all three characters were looking for food. Ask the students to say how each character went about doing that.

At the beginning of the story		In the middle of the story		At the end of the story		
Wētā	Rat	Wētā	Rat	Wētā	Rat	Ruru
went walking	went hunting	crossed the stream climbed a tree	fell in the stream climbed the tree	ate leaves	saw Ruru ran away	saw Rat flew after Rat

- Use the completed chart for follow-up activities. For example, the students could:
 - draw their favourite part of the story and paste it into the appropriate place on the chart.
 - draw a picture of what the characters are doing in one of the double-page spreads and add captions, using the language of the story or making up their own.
- The students could make “ice-block stick” puppets of the main characters and use them to retell the story or perform the story as a play.
- Together, create a bush scene in the sand tray using leaves, blue paper or cellophane, a twig for the tree, and so on, and use it to map out Wētā’s and Rat’s journeys. Encourage the use of the positional vocabulary and action verbs as students orally retell the story. Or, the students could make a mural of the story, adding phrases from the story as captions.

- Explore how the illustrations help the reader to understand and enjoy the story, for example, they show: that it's night time, how much bigger Rat is than Wētā, where Wētā is going, how close Rat is getting, Rat looking sneaky, Rat falling in the stream, and Ruru watching Rat.
- Encourage the students to share their opinions about which character is the most interesting and why. Use the illustrations (and/or the summary chart described above) to support a discussion about what each of the characters did in the story. The students could then think, pair, share their opinions. Provide a writing frame to help them write their opinion as a sentence. For example: I think _____ is the most interesting character because he _____ . (I think Rat is the most interesting character because he was sneaky and he fell in the water.)

Suggested reading purposes

To think about what makes this story exciting

To think about what makes this story sound good to read aloud

Learning goals

Over a number of sessions, the students can:

- identify parts of the story that sound exciting
- identify and enjoy some language patterns.

As you reread the story, choose one of the suggestions below for each session.

- Support the students to listen for parts of the story that sound exciting. For example:
 - Use intonation to help the students to notice the small but important changes from page to page. Draw out the idea that the changes (from “went walking” to “went hunting”, “one night” to “that night”, “a tree” to “the tree” and so on) make the story sound exciting because it shows that the danger is building for Wētā.
 - Draw attention to the punctuation and print features that support meaning, such as the use of the ellipsis on page 10 to suggest that something exciting is going to happen, and the enlarged, bold print and exclamation mark on page 11 to show that these words should be read loudly (and that Rat knows he is in big trouble).
- Prompt the students to notice repeated words and phrases. *Why do you think the writer keeps using the same words?* Draw out the idea that the repeated parts sound good and are fun to read aloud. Support

the students to innovate on the pattern of the phrases. Enjoy making up new sentences together:

We went swimming
in the pool, in the pool.
We went swimming
in the pool this week.

Oli went riding
on her bike, on her bike.
Oli went riding
on her bike one day.

- Explore the alliteration. Read the title, emphasising the initial sound of each word. *Listen for the beginning sounds. What do you notice?* Draw out the idea that it's fun to read groups of words with the same beginning sound. Enjoy other examples (“Rat climbed closer”, “Ruru saw Rat, Rat saw Ruru”, Rat ran away”). Prompt the students to notice examples of repetition and alliteration in other shared books and poems. (You could also use these examples to build knowledge of letter–sound relationships, as described in the following section.)

Suggested reading purpose

To read with phrasing and expression

This purpose can be returned to many times, with the students building up their confidence, independence, and fluency. The students' shared reading or independent reading of the big book or the small book versions also gives you opportunities to observe what they can do.

Learning goals

Over a number of sessions, the students can:

- Draw on their prior knowledge (for example, of the story, vocabulary, concepts about print, and letter–sound relationships) to read with appropriate phrasing and expression

Choose one of the suggestions below for each session.

- Provide many opportunities for students to reread the big book, using a pointer to practise reading left to right, return sweep, and one-to-one word matching.
- As suggested previously, make the audio version available for students to listen to and enjoy. Audio versions are particularly supportive for English language learners because, as well as clarifying pronunciation, they provide good models of the prosodic features of English, such as intonation and phrasing.
- As the students become very familiar with the story, support the concept of “print telling the story” by asking them to show you the part that tells you that Wētā crossed the stream, climbed the tree (and so on).

- Build the students' knowledge of letter–sound relationships (and the concept of what a word is). For example:
 - *This word* (run your fingers under the word) *says "bush"*. Read the word again. *Can you hear /b/? Here it is*. Point clearly to the initial letter.
 - Run your finger under the word "went" and say: *This word is "went"*. *Can you hear the /w/ sound?* Read the word again. Point to the "w". *Let's look at other words that start like "went"*.
 - Model your thinking as you demonstrate word solving. *I wonder what this word ("leaves") could be*. Run your finger under the word. *It starts like this*. Say the sound /l/. *What could it be?* Have the students use the illustration to check. Read the whole phrase (for example, "Wētā ate leaves") with the students and emphasise the initial /l/ sound.
- Discuss the convention of using capital letters for names (Wētā, Rat, Ruru) and make connections to their own names and the names of familiar characters from books (for example, Fantail, Monster, Greedy Cat). You could also draw attention to the use of capital letters for book titles and, often, for signs.
- Build alphabet knowledge by drawing attention to the upper-case and lower-case forms of "w" ("Wētā", "went", "walking") and "r" ("Rat", "Ruru", "ran"). Encourage the students to notice other examples as they come across them in their wider reading and writing.
- Help students build recognition of high-frequency words. *Show me the word "in"*. *Can you find it again on this page? Can you find the word "the" on this page? Can you find it on the next page?* As part of independent reading activities, provide word-matching games and cards with words students can copy using magnetic letters.
- Build students' vocabulary and awareness of word structure by focusing on some of the past-tense verbs in the story, beginning with the regular verbs "crossed" and "climbed".
 - Look at pages 4 and 6 and ask: *What did Wētā do?* Record the verbs on a chart, saying the verbs as you write them: *That's right, Wētā **crossed** the stream / **climbed** the tree*. Draw the students' attention to the -ed ending in "crossed" and "climbed" and show what the words look like without the ending. Make connections to other regular verbs the students are becoming familiar with (look – looked, play – played, jump – jumped).
 - In a separate session, focus on the irregular verbs: Wētā **ate** some leaves; Rat **fell** in the stream, **saw** Ruru, **ran** away). Explain that some words in English can't have -ed added and that we use different words instead ("ate" not "eated", "fell" not "falled", "saw" not "seed", "ran" not "runned"). Practise creating oral sentences together. Explicit teaching about aspects of syntax such as this is especially helpful for English language learners.