



The Learning Progression Frameworks describe significant signposts in reading and writing as students develop and apply their literacy knowledge and skills with increasing expertise from school entry to the end of year 10.

## Overview

This TSM contains information and suggestions for teachers to pick and choose from, depending on the needs of their students and their purpose for using the text. The material provides multiple opportunities for revisiting the text.

Lamb's brother and sister are relying on him to perform with them in the church talent quest. But the only final Lamb cares about is the final match of the season for Manu Sāmoa. Unfortunately, the two events clash. In this humorous story, Lamb learns a lesson about the importance of being responsible and following through on commitments – and being truthful.

This story:

- features Samoan characters and a setting that is authentic for contemporary students with a Samoan heritage

- offers an opportunity for Samoan students to see their lives reflected in the journal
- has a theme of honouring commitments that will resonate with all students
- provides opportunities to evaluate cause and effect, make and justify inferences, make connections, and evaluate characters' thoughts and actions.

A PDF of the text is available at [www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz](http://www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz)

Texts related by theme **“The Rules”** SJ L3 Oct 2015 | **“Helpful”** JJ 50

## Text characteristics Opportunities for strengthening students' reading behaviours

Lamb nodded.

“And did you lie to me just so you could watch the rugby game?”

Lamb nodded again.

“Son, do you think Mose Malolo would have let down his brother and sister like that?”

Lamb knew Mose Malolo would have done anything for his brother and sister. He felt guilty from the top of his head to the bottom of his toes.

some abstract ideas that are clearly supported by concrete examples, requiring students to use these examples with their prior knowledge to understand these ideas

going to watch the match with Grandma. And when it's finished, we'll tell you what happened.”

Lamb nodded.

“Oh, and Lamb,” his mother added.

Lamb was suddenly hopeful his mother was going to let him watch the game after all. “Yes, Mum?”

“Close the door on the way out. It's freezing.”

Lamb's shoulders sagged. “Yes, Mum.”

some places where information and ideas are implicit, requiring students to make inferences based on information nearby in the text

two things he didn't want to do: (1) he didn't want to get out of bed, and (2) he didn't want to go to church.

Today was the final of the church talent quest. Lamb was singing in it with his sister, Lala, and their brother, Lio. After three rounds, it was down to the last two contestants. The winners would get a fancy meal for their whole family at a fancy restaurant in the city.

But Lamb didn't care. There was only one final that he cared about – the final match of the season for Manu Sāmoa.

some compound and complex sentences, which may consist of two or three clauses, requiring students to carefully gather and track ideas as they read

Lala and Lio appeared in the doorway.

Lala frowned. “He's acting, Mum. I bet he just wants to stay home and watch the game.”

Lamb's mother looked at him. “You wouldn't let your brother and sister down because of a game of rugby would you, Lamb? Because that would be makua – selfish.”

Lamb hesitated, then shook his head. His mother sighed.

“Lamb, is your tummy really sore?”

Lamb hesitated again, then heard himself softly say, “Yes.”

“Then you'd better stay home.”

some words and phrases that are ambiguous or unfamiliar, requiring students to use the context, illustrations, and/or written explanations to gain meaning



Go to The Learning Progression Frameworks – Reading: “Making sense of text: vocabulary knowledge” and “Making sense of text: using knowledge of text structure and features” to find detailed illustrations showing you how students develop expertise and make progress in these aspects.

## VOCABULARY

- Possibly unfamiliar words and phrases, including “talent quest”, “contestants”, “going to be live”, “squeezed”, “fling”, “temperature”, “hesitated”, “horrified”, “harmony”, “hog”, “suspiciously”, “gigantic scowl”, “guilty”, “sneered”, “family emergency”, “narrowed”, “couldn’t resist”, “squinted”, “epic”, “try line”, “reluctantly”, “cancelled”, “shoulders sagged”, “match”
- Words and phrases in gagana Sāmoa: “Se vave”, “Sole”, “makua”
- The names: “Lamb”, “Lala”, “Lio”, “Manu Sāmoa”, “France”, “Mose Malole”
- Colloquial language and expressions, including “hog the television”, “shot one last look”, “A look that said”, “push those thoughts aside”, “eh?”, “Oi”, “let down”

## Possible supporting strategies

- Identify words or phrases that may be unfamiliar. Remind the students of strategies for working out unfamiliar vocabulary, such as looking at the context and thinking about the surrounding information, finding root words, using knowledge of word patterns and prefixes or suffixes, and making connections to prior knowledge.
- While the words in gagana Sāmoa are not translated, “Se vave” is explained, and the other words can be worked out from the context. For support with accurate pronunciation of the Samoan words and names, you could consult colleagues, students, parents, or other community members, use an online resource such as <http://pasifika.tki.org.nz>, or listen to the audio version of the story.
- Note the use of the macron to indicate a long vowel. Students may be familiar with this from te reo Māori. Prompt them to share and compare some examples.
- Some recent arrivals to New Zealand may not be familiar with rugby. If possible, explain or show them how the game is played and provide them with the topic vocabulary. Discuss the term “try” and brainstorm other games where players score a “try”. Also discuss the term “match”, which has several meanings.
- Some recent arrivals may also have difficulty interpreting gestures and body language as they can have different connotations in other cultures. Provide them with explicit interpretations.
- Vocabulary to express feelings and emotions, as well as colloquial language, can be difficult for new learners of English. Play “Memory” or “Concentration” to help teach these words. Make a set of cards, with the target vocabulary. Also make a matching card for each word with either an illustration or definition on it. Spread all the cards face down on the desk. The students choose a card then pick up a second card, hoping to match it with their first card. If they’re incorrect, they place the cards down in the same spot so the next student can use that information to make a better guess. If correct, they take the match and have another turn.
- *The English Language Learning Progressions: Introduction*, pages 39–46, has useful information about learning vocabulary.
- See also ESOL Online, [Vocabulary](#), for examples of other strategies to support students with vocabulary.

## SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED

- An awareness of Samoan culture
- Awareness that Samoans form a significant group in Aotearoa New Zealand
- Experience of school and family life, including church and concerts
- Experience of having made a commitment to do something and then finding it clashes with something they would prefer to do
- Experience of feeling guilty about a poor choice and of having emotions manifest in the body’s reactions
- Experiences of interactions with parents and siblings
- Some knowledge or experience of rugby and/or fandom and the significance of “the final match of the season”

## Possible supporting strategies

- Discuss the various commitments we have in families and how they can sometimes conflict with our personal preferences. Share an example from your own life, then invite the students to share their experiences of difficult choices between duty and desire. *What did you decide? How did you feel about your decision at the time? Did your feelings change?*
- Help the students find Sāmoa on a map.  You could use Google Maps. Any students in the class from Sāmoa could locate their village. Zoom in.
- Explain that Samoans are the largest Pacific ethnic group living in New Zealand. While many people with Samoan ethnicity were born in Sāmoa, an increasing number are born here. (See Ministry for Pacific Peoples: [Pacific People in NZ.](#)) Samoan students may like to share what is culturally significant to them. They could discuss how this family is similar to or different from their own.
- Ask the students what they know about Manu Sāmoa and what makes this team so special. Clarify, if necessary, that it is the Samoan national rugby team. (See [Samoa Rugby Union.](#))

## TEXT FEATURES AND STRUCTURE

- A narrative told in the third person, but sometimes giving the thoughts and perspectives of the main character
- A story that is told chronologically, with a short time break indicated by asterisks
- The use of dashes and ellipses to indicate pauses or sentences trailing off
- An unusual compound-complex opening sentence, supported by punctuation and numerals
- A considerable amount of dialogue, including unattributed dialogue

## Possible supporting strategies

- Review the students' knowledge of narrative structure. You could use a graphic organiser like the one below to support students who are less familiar with the classic narrative structure in English.

Orientation	Who, what, where?
Issue	What's the problem or question?
Main events	What happens?
Resolution	How is the issue or question resolved?

- Point out that there is a lot of dialogue in this story. Explain that writers use dialogue to move stories along and to reveal relationships through inference rather than description. Remind the students that they can recognise dialogue by the use of quotation marks, and that when a new person speaks, the dialogue always begins as a new paragraph. Point out that we're not always told who is speaking. Often, we have to work this out from clues in the context or in the dialogue. For example, it may be obvious that the speaker is responding to what another person has said or done or they may use the other person's name as they speak.



Sounds and Words

## Possible curriculum contexts



*The Literacy Learning Progressions: Meeting the Reading and Writing Demands of the Curriculum* describe the literacy knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students need to draw on to meet the demands of the curriculum.

### ENGLISH (Reading)

Level 2 – Ideas: Show some understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts.

### ENGLISH (Writing)

Level 2 – Ideas: Select, form, and express ideas on a range of topics.

### HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Level 2 – Relationships: Identify and demonstrate ways of maintaining and enhancing relationships between individuals and within groups.

### Possible first reading purpose

- Find out what happens when Lamb lets his family down.

### Possible subsequent reading purposes

- Identify the impact of Lamb's decision
- Explore and explain the writer's message.

### Possible writing purposes

- Describe a moment when you felt caught between doing the right thing and missing out on something
- Recount an experience of when your family all achieved something together
- Describe a time when you made the right choice rather than let down others.



The New Zealand Curriculum



Go to The Learning Progression Frameworks – Reading: “Reading for literary experience”, “Reading for organise ideas and information for learning”, “Making sense of text: using knowledge of text structure and features”, “Making sense of text: reading critically” to find detailed illustrations showing how students develop expertise and make progress in these aspects.

### First reading

- Share the purpose for reading.
- Remind the students of strategies that are particularly useful on a first reading, such as rereading to look for clues, asking questions, making connections with their prior knowledge, and/or reading on to see if the meaning becomes clearer.
- Remind the students of the elements of a narrative, which includes a central issue or problem that needs to be resolved. Point out the title and ask the students to predict what the central issue might involve.
- Have the students read pages 8–12 and look at the illustrations to check their predictions and identify how the writer orientates us to the story.
- Discuss who will be affected by Lamb’s choice and what we already know about those characters’ responses to it. Encourage the students to keep thinking about this as they enjoy reading the rest of the story independently.

### If the students require more scaffolding

- To help the students make sense of the unattributed dialogue on pages 10 and 11, prompt them to visualise the scene. Remind them that if dialogue is unattributed, there are often clues to indicate who is speaking.
- As the students read, prompt them to use the illustrations to check their understanding and make links to their personal experience of family life and of disagreements. Encourage them to share their responses with a partner. *What does Lala think about all this? What is her face saying?*
- Point out that while we are told the story by a third person, sometimes we get to see inside Lamb’s head to know what he is thinking. *Whose voice are we hearing when we read, “Manu Malolo was the man”? Does that sound like the narrator to you? Can you find other parts of the story where we get inside a character’s head like this? Why do you think the writer has used this technique?*
- Check that the students understand that the asterisks at the bottom of page 11 indicate the passage of time.

**Subsequent readings** How you approach subsequent readings will depend on your reading purpose.

Where possible, have the students work in pairs to discuss the questions and prompts in this section.

### The teacher

Check that all the students understand the sequence of events.

- *Have a talk with your buddy to remind yourselves what happened.*

Prompt the students to recall the elements of a narrative. Add a third column to the graphic organiser on page 3, and have the students use it in pairs to create a summary of the story. Scaffold the students through this task with prompts and questions that help them make inferences about the people in the story, how they are affected by Lamb’s choice, and how they respond to it.

- *What is going on in Lala’s mind? How would you feel if you were in her shoes?*
- *What do we learn about Lamb’s grandmother from this story? How aware is she of what is happening? How can you tell?*
- *I wonder why Mum really wanted the door closed.*
- *What do you think of the way Mum handled the situation? What makes you say that?*

### The students:

- identify the main elements of the story and organise them in sequence, using a template
- make connections to their own lives and make and justify inferences as they think about the effects of Lamb’s choice and how the various family members responded
- make inferences and think critically about Lamb’s mother’s response to his choice, justifying their responses with examples from the text.

## The teacher

Discuss how Lamb's thoughts and feelings change through the story. You could use a template like the one below to focus on what we learn about his thoughts, feelings, actions, body language, and spoken words.

Page	Thoughts	Feelings	Actions	Body language	Dialogue
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
We can infer that Lamb is ...					

Use the first five rows of the template to discuss how Lamb's thoughts and feelings change as he carries out his subterfuge but then feels increasingly guilty. Prompt the students to notice how his guilty feelings affect his whole body. Discuss the way our inner feelings can come out in our physical feelings.

As a group, discuss what the story shows about Lamb and record this in the final row.

- *What sort of person do you think Lamb is? Do you like him?*
- *Do you think he will do the same thing again?*

## The teacher

Prompt the students to think about why the author wrote this story and to decide whether it is successful in putting across his message.

- *Talk to your partner about why you think the author wrote this story. What was his message?*
- *Was this a good way of getting his message across?*

### METACOGNITION

- *Which character did you identify with most? Why is that? What did the writer do to help you identify with that character?*
- *How easy did you find it to read the words in gagana Sāmoa? What helped you to understand these parts of the text?*

## The students:

- use clues in the text and the illustrations to make inferences about Lamb's feelings and personality
- track Lamb's changing thoughts and emotions as he feels increasingly guilty
- explore the way emotions can manifest in our bodies by making inferences and connecting to the descriptions in the story
- identify and discuss what they have learnt about Lamb and whether he is a likeable person, using examples in the text to support their opinions.

## The students:

- identify and explore the writer's message
- evaluate the effectiveness of the story through making connections to the story, their own experiences, and to other texts they may have read.

### GIVE FEEDBACK

- *You worked out that Lamb's Mum was smarter than he thought ... she was pretty sure he was fibbing but wanted to give him a chance to follow his conscience. Then you worked out why she did this by making connections to your own life. Making those kinds of connections can help us to understand a story and to get more out of it.*



# Instructional focus – Writing

**English** Level 2 – Ideas: Select, form, and express ideas on a range of topics.

**Health and Physical Education** Level 2 – Relationships: Identify and demonstrate ways of maintaining and enhancing relationships between individuals and within groups.

 Go to The Learning Progression Frameworks – Writing: “Creating texts to communicate current knowledge and understanding”, “Writing meaningful text: using knowledge of text structure and features”, and “Using writing to think and organise for learning” to find detailed illustrations showing you how students develop expertise and make progress in these aspects.

## Text excerpts from “The Choice”

## Examples of text characteristics

## Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

Page 12

At nine o'clock, Lamb sneaked into the lounge, still dressed in his pyjamas. A game show was playing on the television. His grandmother seemed to be watching it, but when Lamb looked more closely, he could see that she was asleep. Yes!

### PERSONAL RECOUNT

*A recount retells an experience or event that happened in the past. Its purpose can be to inform, entertain, or reflect on what happened. The events should be told in the order they happened. A personal recount tells the reader about something the writer has been involved in.*

Prepare the students to write a personal recount, describing a difficult choice they have faced or a time when they and their family worked together to achieve something. Explain that sometimes we write a personal recount just for ourselves, such as in a diary, but at other times, we write it for another person, such as in a letter. As in all writing, the purpose and audience affect what we decide to write and our choices about how to write it. Have the students discuss with a partner:

- their purpose for writing, who their audience will be, and what they want their reader to know about
- how they will orient their readers to their recount and what those readers need to know for the recount to make sense
- what feelings they want to convey and how they will reveal the thoughts and feelings of the other characters.

Remind the students of the features of a recount. Suggest they use a graphic organiser, like the one they used for reading, to plan their recounts. Have them share their plans and give each other feedback before starting to write.

 They could use Google Docs to write and share their plans.

Page 14

“Tell me the truth, Lamb. Did you lie to me?”

Lamb nodded.

“And did you lie to me just so you could watch the rugby game?”

Lamb nodded again.

“Son, do you think Mose Malolo would have let down his brother and sister like that?”

### DIALOGUE

*Dialogue is an excellent way of revealing a character's thoughts and feelings without having to describe them.*

Remind the students that dialogue often tells the reader what a character is really thinking and feeling. Revealing characters' feelings, attitudes, or values is important when you're trying to show differences between characters.

Direct the students to reread this short passage on page 14 and then act it out in pairs.

- *What do you learn about Mum and her values? Why does she repeat the word “lie”?*  
*What makes her mention Mose Malolo?*
- *What does Lamb's response show about how he is feeling?*

Have the students go back to their draft recounts and identify a place where they could include some dialogue to move things along in place of a description. Prompt them to use words their characters might actually say so that they show their readers something about the character's feelings and attitudes. Remind them to consider words they could use in place of “said” to help convey those feelings and attitudes.

Page 11

Lamb's mum looked at him suspiciously for a moment. Then she turned to Lio and Lala. “Come on, you kids, we're going to be late.”

Lala's face was one gigantic scowl. “Enjoy your dumb game, Lamb,” she whispered. She shot one last look at him as she left the room – a look that said “You're a liar, and I know it.”

Suddenly Lamb's tummy *did* feel sore – not because he felt sick but because he felt guilty.

### USING EMOTIVE LANGUAGE

*Writers use emotive language to help express how they or their characters are feeling.*

Have the students reread this passage on page 11 and unpack the emotions of the characters. Ask them to identify the words and phrases that show how Lamb and his mother and sister are feeling.

Have them check their plans and review the feelings they wanted to convey in their recount. Ask them to decide if they have achieved this or if they could change any words or phrases, in particular verbs and adverbs. Encourage them to use “show not tell” to get more of an emotional response from the reader.

- *You have written that the little girl was heartbroken, but I wonder if you could show this without telling us what she was feeling? Did she have tears rolling down her cheeks? Did she go away and sit quietly in her room by herself?*

### GIVE FEEDBACK

- *You wrote that your koro “beamed” when you all finished planting his veggie garden. That was a great way of communicating how good he felt – and how good you all felt on that day. Adding these kinds of precise details can help to bring your writing to life.*

### METACOGNITION

- *Tell me what you wanted your reader to feel when they read your recount. What changes did you make to your draft to generate the response you were looking for? When you shared your recount with your partner, did they respond the way you wanted them to?*

