



The Learning Progression Frameworks (LPFs) 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

The movement of Māori to the cities in the 1950s and 1960s was one of the most significant movements of people in our recent history. Paula Morris has used stories from her whānau as a basis for “Fleet of Foot”, a work of fiction that sits alongside “Kei Te Tāone Nui”, an article in the same journal that also explores the topic of Māori urbanisation. The text has links to the Aotearoa New Zealand’s histories curriculum.

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

## Themes

- Urbanisation
- Change
- Whānau

## Related texts

“Keeping Promises: The Treaty Settlement Process” SJ L4 Nov 2017 | “Kei Te Tāone Nui: Māori and the City (1945–1970)” SJ L4 May 2021

## Strengthening reading behaviours (what to notice)

### Text structure and features

- Implied information  
(a) *Grandma called him Tamihana, but he was Tame to us – and Tom in the city;*  
(b) *“more to life than milking cows”; “Best for the boys”;*  
(c) *At first, the man who worked the doors told me to clear off; Some Pākehā didn’t like it.*
- Metaphor  
(a) *When the trolley buses stopped for passengers, their doors wheezed, just like Grandpa; Soon we’d be rolling in it;*  
(b) *Tame’s footprints were still there. I stood in them, wriggling my toes until they were coated with pale dust. His feet were still bigger than mine, the way his legs were longer.*

### Requiring students to:

- use their prior knowledge and the context to infer the meaning of the phrases, for example, (a) that maybe Tame called himself Tom in the city because he didn’t want to draw attention to his Māori heritage; (b) that the family comes from a rural background with few opportunities, especially for young people; (c) that Māori experienced racism – although it wasn’t overt or widely called out
- (a) use their vocabulary knowledge along with prior knowledge and experience and the context to interpret the meaning  
(b) synthesise the information and details across the text to interpret that the traces of himself that Tame has left behind on the milking shed symbolise his ongoing separation from his family as he grows apart from them.

## Vocabulary

Possibly challenging words and phrases      apprentice, trade, tinkers, radiogram, badgered, machinist, fabric off-cuts, usherette, matinée, greaseproof paper, luncheon, apprenticeship

## Helpful prior knowledge (pre-reading and introducing the text)

- Māori moved to the cities in huge numbers after the Second World War (before this, most Māori lived rurally).
- There are many reasons why people leave their homes and migrate.
- Life in New Zealand in the 1950s and 1960s had features that made it different to life in New Zealand today.
- Migrants or refugees often have to make difficult choices.
- Pākehā–Māori relations during the era covered in the article were often characterised by racism and many people didn’t attempt to hide their prejudice.

## Possible reading and writing purposes

- Find out how life changes for Tame and his family when they move to the city
- Analyse and discuss the impact that urbanisation had on Māori and their whānau
- Explore and compare the differences between society in the 1960s and Aotearoa New Zealand today
- Analyse the author's choice of language and content and identify her purpose.

See *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 5–8* for information about teaching comprehension strategies ([Teaching comprehension](#)) and for suggestions on using this text with your students ([Approaches to teaching reading](#)).

## Possible curriculum contexts

This text has links to level 4 of *The New Zealand Curriculum* in: [ENGLISH](#) [SOCIAL SCIENCES \(Aotearoa New Zealand's histories\)](#)

## Understanding progress

The following aspects of progress are taken from the [Learning Progression Frameworks](#) and relate to the specific learning tasks below. See the LPFs for more about how students develop expertise and make progress in these aspects:

- Reading for literary experience
- Making sense of text: reading critically
- Creating texts for literary purposes
- Creating texts to communicate current knowledge and understanding.

## Strengthening understanding through reading and writing

**Select from the following suggestions and adapt them** according to your students' strengths, needs, and experiences.

Note: Most of these activities lend themselves to students working in pairs or small groups.

- Ask the students to discuss what life was like for the narrator and his whānau in the city and in the country. *How did the family live? How did they move around? How did the children get to school? What kind of work and chores did they do in each setting?* Have them use the **Filmstrip comparison** template at the end of this TSM to make comparisons between the two, using drawings and/or words (with one filmstrip depicting city life and the other depicting life in the country). When the students finish, they could share their work.
- Prompt the students to analyse what the differences between rural and urban life meant for the whānau. *What changes did the family need to make when they moved? What do you think would have been the biggest challenge? How did the family meet the challenges? Why did Tame call himself Tom in the city? What experiences in the city might have been unexpected for the family? Was any part of their life similar in the city and the country?*
- The students could also use the **Filmstrip comparison** template to compare life in the 1950s and 1960s with life now. *What has changed the most? What do we still do? What are some things we don't or can't do? Is there anything in the story you didn't know about (for example, some people having to leave school at a young age to work, some Māori changing their name to a Pākehā name, people being paid cash for work rather than having money put into their bank account)?*
- Review metaphors with the students and then ask them to identify any they can find in the text. Discuss the meaning of the metaphors and what they are comparing. For example, "the other houses close enough to touch" – in most cases this wouldn't be literal, but they seemed that close compared with rural houses. See "Text structure and features" for more examples of metaphors in the story.
- Ask the students to think about the author's use of dialogue to help tell the story. Have them highlight dialogue that tells the reader something about the characters. They could record these on a table like the one below and then share them with a partner or their group. Some English language learners may need an explicit explanation of the meaning of some of the dialogue.

Character	Dialogue	What it tells you about the character
Uncle Hone	"There's more to life than milking cows"	He sees the city as a place of opportunity and thinks Tamihana is missing out

- Have the students choose one of the characters and write a letter or diary entry explaining how they feel about moving to the city or (if they are someone like Grandma who stayed behind) how they feel about others moving away.

# “Fleet of Foot” Filmstrip comparison

## Country life and city life

How the family lived

School

Transport

