



Poetic Writing: Character

LEVEL 1 2 3 4 5

Dad Has Green Eyes

ABOUT THE INTRODUCTION

The Learning Context and Integrating Reading and Writing have been combined and expanded as a single introductory sheet (A4) accompanying the seven character exemplars. This shared introduction suggests the approach Matthew's teacher may have taken to working with the class on character writing. It also suggests ways in which teachers can integrate their classes' work on character writing with reading.

Teacher-student conversations

After the first draft

Teacher: Does Dad react when Grandma says that he's got a "horrible haircut"?

Matthew: Not really.

Teacher: I wonder if it would be worth putting that in? It might tell you something about Dad's nature. What do you think?

Matthew: Maybe it might suggest that he's pretty easy-going. [Matthew then added the words "but dad doesn't mind".]

Teacher: I love the bit about the king and the shoe salesman. Where did you get that idea from?

Matthew: I don't know. It's just always in my mind when he helps me with my soccer boots.

Teacher: It gives me a really good picture in my mind – you up a tree with Dad at your feet!

WHERE TO NEXT?

To move Matthew towards the next learning step, the teacher could help him to focus on:

- structure:
 - continuing to work on appropriate stops for paragraphing

- looking for ways to make good links between paragraphs (for example, through ensuring that most paragraphs begin differently);
- vocabulary: using precise and varied verbs (for example, alternatives to "gets");
- proofreading: checking for occasional spelling and punctuation errors.

The teacher could do this by:

- modelling the points that the students need to work on in group or individual learning sessions, which could include exploring examples of how other writers have managed them;
- continuing to give Matthew specific feedback in conferencing times.

CURRICULUM LINKS



Level 3: Writing Functions

Poetic Writing: Students should write on a variety of topics, shaping, editing, and reworking texts in a range of genres, and using vocabulary and conventions, such as spelling and sentence structure,

appropriate to the genre.

Levels 3 and 4: Reading and Writing Processes

Exploring Language: Students should identify, discuss, and use the conventions, structures, and language features of different texts, and discuss how they relate to the topic.

Thinking Critically: Students should discuss and convey meanings in written texts, exploring relevant experiences and other points of view.

English in the New Zealand Curriculum, pages 35–36



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Dad Has Green Eyes

STUDENT'S SECOND DRAFT

Dad has green eyes that get larger
when he laughs.
Dad always gets a pretty short hair cut
and when ever we go to go Grandma
from Grandma's house just after he's had
a hair cut Grandma say oh Steve let
your grow will I don't like
she but dad says "Steve doesn't mind that's a horrible hair cut"
Dad always wears shorts and T shirt but some
times wears shorts at work and when
hes painting.
Whenever I can't find my object
hes usually out on his quest to
kill all the gorse or just mowing near
the lawns. Every school week night dad comes
up to me holding a sharp knife
and some sort of food. He asks
me what I want in my sandwiches
when I say "nothing" he groans
and rolls his eyes and points the knife
to the ground. When its time to get
my soccer boots on dad comes into the
room untie cutting my boots and losing them
ready to put on. He sits there like
I'm a king and hes a shoes salesman.
When I tell dad I can't find any clothes
he marches into my room a looks
behind the door and says "know
wonder your got know no clothes
then waiting here for the monthly
pick up truck to come and
collect them. I say then I "yeah"
it hasn't come yet?"



Poetic Writing: Character

LEVEL	1	2	3	4	5
			3		

What the Work Shows

Matthew has worked hard to capture some quirky moments of his father's life and especially to depict his own relationship with his dad. He has used a mixture of observation, anecdotes, and humour to capture these moments. Together they form a sincere and loving picture of what appears to be a close bond.

STUDENT'S SECOND DRAFT

DEEPER FEATURES

Voice

Sincerity of voice is apparent throughout, mostly through humour and the intimacy of the anecdotes.

Ideas

Develops ideas that are personally significant, adding detail and comment.

Structure

Attempts to shape ideas for effect (for example, in the first paragraph, physical appearance and actions are interwoven with character traits).

Begins to organise some ideas into paragraphs.

Language features

Uses focused, evocative vocabulary for effect.

Uses imagery to enhance description of character traits.

Uses direct speech to support characterisation.

Dad has green eyes that get larger when he laughs.
 Dad always gets a pretty short hair cut and when-ever we go to Grandma's house she says "Steve thats a horrible hair cut" but dad dosent mind.
 Dad always wears shorts and T shirt but some times wears pants at work and when hes painting.
 Whenever I can't find my dad he's usually out on his quest to kill all the gorse or just mowing the lawns.
 Every school night dad comes up to me holding a sharp knife and some sort of food. He asks me what I want in my sandwiches when I say "nothing" he groans and rolls his eyes and pionts the knife to the ground. When its time to get my soccer boots on dad comes into the room untying my boots and loosening them ready to put on. He sits there like I'm a king and he's a shoes salesmen. When I tell dad I can't find any clothes he marches into my room a looks behind the door and says "know wonder your've got no clothes their waiting here for the monthly pick up truck to come and collect them" then I reply "yeah it hasn't come yet".

SURFACE FEATURES

Spelling

Spells most high-frequency words correctly.

Demonstrates a good understanding of most basic sounds and patterns in written English (for example, has changed "losing" to "loosening") but still makes occasional basic mistakes (for example, "know"/"no", "piont"/"point", "when-ever"/"whenever").

Punctuation

Punctuates with increasing independence but still makes errors, for example, variable use of capital letters, full stops, commas, and apostrophes in contractions.

Grammar

Uses most grammatical conventions correctly, for example, sentences and consistent use of tense.