



# Poetic Writing: Character

LEVEL 1i 1ii 1iii 2 3 **4** 5

## My Grandad Wears Slippers

### THE LEARNING CONTEXT

Because The Learning Context and Integrating Reading and Writing sections for the character exemplars are so closely related, they have been combined in a shared introduction, which applies to all the character exemplars. It suggests the approach Jack's teacher may have taken to working with the class on character writing. It also suggests ways in which teachers can integrate character writing with reading.

### Teacher-student conversations

During the motivation, the teacher asked the students to think about how to be specific in their description, and how they might make the character come alive.

Teacher: You have provided some very specific details about your grandad. I know a lot about him after reading your work. Why did you list all those things in the daily routine?

Jack: Because that's exactly what they do. My grandad does the same routine all the time.

Teacher: Remind me to show you how another favourite author of mine "lists".

### WHERE TO NEXT?

To move Jack towards the next learning step, the teacher might help him to focus on:

#### Structure

- developing a satisfying conclusion. This piece has no summative sense
- experimenting with structure for effect, e.g., using repetition and flashback.

#### Language features

- use dialogue to add to characterisation.

Contexts for such learning could include the teacher:

- demonstrating or modelling these points in group or individual learning sessions (including examples of how other writers have managed them)
- continuing to give the student specific feedback on his success and next steps with these points.

### CURRICULUM LINKS

*English in the New Zealand Curriculum*

#### Level 4: Writing Functions

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

#### Level 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.

### REFERENCE

Ministry of Education. (1994). *English in the New Zealand Curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media.



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**WHAT THE WORK SHOWS:** Jack has presented a comprehensive character portrait of his grandfather that engages the reader through its considerable attention to detail. The beginning and middle of the portrait are particularly strong.

Student's second draft

### Deeper features

#### Voice

Sincerity of voice sustained in the portrayal of character.

#### Ideas

Focuses on developing main attributes of character.

Uses substantial detail and illustrations.

#### Structure

Structures writing logically - physical features, actions, qualities.

Organises ideas into paragraphs.

#### Sentences

Uses a variety of structures effectively.

#### Vocabulary

Selects a range of vocabulary to suit the audience and purpose.

Uses vivid adjectives.

#### Language features

Gives attention to detail in portraying a visual image for the reader, and providing clues to character.

My grandad wears slippers and is the former owner of the apple orchard that covers most of his land. He has the look of an old bagpiper and he has greying hair that is balding. He has an old weatherbeaten face, like his father's who was a sailor. He has a longish thin nose and projecting cheekbones. He has blue eyes and tightened lips his face is deep and cavernous. He wears an old chequered shirt and khaki shorts. When he goes outside he wears leather sandals. He is medium height but not big and bulky.

He loves telling and reading stories to us. He is always kind, only when you really tick him off he goes on his strict side. He has a good sense of humour and he loves his vegetable garden. He always works in there growing beans, potatoes, carrots and lettuce. He doesn't tell jokes but he is a funny person all the same.

My granddad is probably always thinking about his vegie garden or his computer. He loves playing about with his computer. He and my grandma have a daily routine. Wake up, go and eat breakfast, go to the beach, come home, work on the garden, have a sleep, fiddle with the computer, work on garden, pick beans, dig up potatoes etc for dinner, eat dinner, set table for tomorrow, go to sleep, wake up etc etc etc. He loves his garden so much he'd probably buy a whole greenhouse for it if he had enough money.

Grandad, as I said, is always telling stories. You might think that it is something anyone can do but he's just got that gift that makes even Romeo and Juliet or other stories like that sound really cool. He always makes us laugh he is very protective of his vegie garden and he doesn't let us go in but we go in anyway. At the beach where we go every morning regularly he always goes out with his body board and catches good waves (2 - 3 feet) even though he is 70 something. They have a really big steep lawn and we ride down on the skateboards he reckons it's fun and he loves it when we come and bring our body boards.

### Surface features

#### Grammar

Uses most grammatical conventions correctly.

#### Spelling

No intrusive errors.

#### Punctuation

Appropriate punctuation used independently.



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## My Grandad Wears Slippers

Student's second draft

My grandad wears slippers and is the former owner of the apple orchard that covers most of his land. He has the look of an old bagpiper who has greying hair <sup>that is balding</sup> and he has an old weather beaten face, like his father's who was a sailor, he has a longish thin nose and projecting cheekbones. He has blue eyes and tightened lips to his ~~face is deep and cavernous~~ ~~face~~ ~~face~~ he wears an old checkered shirt and khaki shorts, when he goes outside he wears leather sandals. He is medium height but not big and bulky.

He loves telling and reading stories to us he is always kind, only when you really tick him off he goes on his strict side. He has a good sense of humour and he loves his vegetable garden he always works in there growing beans, potatoes, carrots and lettuce. He doesn't tell jokes but he is a funny person all the same.

My grandad is probably always thinking about his veggie garden or his computer he loves →

(continued over)



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 have a sleep, fiddle with computers,  
 work on garden, pick beans, dig up potatoes  
 ect for dinner, eat dinner, get table  
 for tomorrow, go to sleep, wake up ect ect  
 ect he loves his garden, so much he'd  
 probably buy a whole greenhouse for it  
 if he had enough money.

Grandad as I said is always telling stories  
 you might think that's something anyone can  
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