



LEVEL 1 2 3 4 5

The Memories of Nena Mahele

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 Kristle'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.

Kristle's teacher asked her to select a character who was close or important to her, because this would provide more material for use in her writing.

Before the drafting process, the teacher encouraged Kristle to "step back" a little, showing the reader the sort of person her nena was by using specific anecdotes, rather than simply writing about her warm feelings for her.

The teacher used questions as prompts to help Kristle find specific details within this incident. Kristle then worked on putting more detail into her character description.

Teacher-student conversations

Teacher: Tell me about a special time that you spent with Nena.

Kristle: There were lots of special times, like the time I broke the washing line.

Teacher: So, tell me about that.

Kristle: Well, I broke the washing line, and I was so scared, but Nena just gave me a hug.

Teacher: That would be a good little story to include, because that helps to show what kind of person Nena was. Let's talk more about that time ...

WHERE TO NEXT?

To move Kristle towards the next learning step, the teacher could help her to focus on:

- vocabulary: exploring a wider variety of vocabulary, including more precise verbs, especially through the use of a thesaurus (for example, "go into her room" could be written as "sneak into her room");
- language features: experimenting with the use of dialogue as a way to enhance characterisation.

As Kristle undertakes more rigorous final editing and proof-reading, she needs to work with both deeper and surface features:

- to eliminate overwriting;
- to look for more appropriate imagery;
- to check especially for tense consistency and correct sentence formation.

The teacher could:

- model the points that Kristle needs to work on in group or individual learning sessions, which could include exploring examples of how other writers have managed them;
- continue to give Kristle specific feedback in conferencing times.

CURRICULUM LINKS



Level 5: Writing Functions

Poetic Writing: Students should write on a variety of topics, shaping, editing, and reworking texts in an extended range of genres, selecting appropriate language features and using conventions of writing accurately and confidently.

Levels 5 and 6: Reading and Writing Processes

Exploring Language: Students should, using appropriate terminology, describe, discuss, analyse, and apply the distinctive conventions, structures, and language features of a range of texts and explain how they suit the topic and purpose.

Thinking Critically: Students should interpret, analyse, and produce written texts, identifying and discussing their literary qualities, and explore and identify attitudes and beliefs in terms of personal experience and knowledge of other texts.

English in the New Zealand Curriculum, pages 35–36

NCEA links

Poetic Writing: Character

Achievement Standard: English 1.1 Produce creative writing. Unit Standard: 8813 Produce poetic written text in simple forms.



LEVEL 1 2 3 4 5

The Memories of Nena Mahele

STUDENT'S FIRST DRAFT

The Memories of Nena Mahele 19 - 1998

All nenas are different, but my nena was a one of a kind. Nena Mahele was a raving, most wonderful person as every nena should be and Niuean. She had a nickname given by her grandchildren that was 'Nana Ma'.

Nana Ma is my dad's mum. He was always acting tough around her but my brothers and I always knew that he was a 'momma's boy'. Always checking up on her.

From the time I was born along with my brothers, she had always been there for us, just like the wind passing through the air. She had a scent of delicious fragrance that travelled towards my nostrils and then to my brain. I remembered most of the time, I would go into her room and smell all the different bottles of perfume. She would always have a gift waiting for me to open, whether it was old or new. The wonders of delight that I was special enough to be getting a gift for no reason, it was like having a birthday every time we went. My brothers would always get a little bit jealous, but it was alright, nenu always made them their favourites.

Nana Ma didn't look like any old nenu, but a nenu that was kind and blossomed every time we met eyes. She wore all sorts of colours that were in fashion in those days. I know because I was into the clothes that she wore. She really like island music. That kept her company every time that she was alone.

On one of the days we went over, my family and I had a beautiful work that was filled with satisfaction. After we ate my parents started talking to nenu and catching up from what they done during the week. So my brothers and I went our own ways of what we wanted to do while they were finished talking. We all done what we wanted to do. Nenu told one of those washing lines that go round and bring a little child as I was. I was swinging on it until... it broke. The top half fell off. I ran quickly inside. Nana came out and was fussing with anger. At last... she bring a little child. I tried to fall asleep instantly and fast. When I woke up, she was staring at me with her hand, bleaming eyes and hugged me. I was confused but then she said 'it had already been broken' then later on 'you just made it worse'. We just began to giggle very lightly. The fact is that I did get into trouble when I got home, but from that moment, it has been to show that my 'Nana Ma' has always been my best buddy in the world.

From the moment she has passed away, it was like losing a wing from a butterfly. Since I've grown year by year, my wing is starting to bloom with happiness from our memories that we've shared.

In loving memories of Nana Ma



Poetic Writing: Character

LEVEL 1 2 3 4 5

What the Work Shows

Kristle sustains personal voice convincingly. She uses illustrative, reminiscent details and maintains a sincerity of tone to demonstrate her strong connection to her nena. These aspects tend to compensate for surface errors that sometimes border on the intrusive.

STUDENT'S FIRST DRAFT

DEEPER FEATURES

Voice

Sustains personal voice convincingly.

Ideas

Develops ideas with detail, focusing on specific aspects of interest.

Supports the main points with interesting and substantial illustrations, interpretive comments, and evaluations.

Structure

Links ideas within and between paragraphs.

Sentences

Uses a variety of sentence structures for effect.

Language features

Uses imagery for effect.

The Memories of Nena Mahele 19 – 1998

All nena's are different, but my nena was a one of a kind. Nena Mahele was a caring, most wonderful person as every nena should be and Niuean. She had a nickname given by her grandchildren that was 'Nena Ma'.

Nena Ma is my dad's mum. He was always acting tough around her but my brothers and I always knew that he was a 'momma's boy'. Always checking up on her.

From the time I was born along with my brothers, she had always been there for us, just like the wind passing through the air. She had a scent of delicious fragrance I remembered most of the time, I would go into her room and smell all the different bottles of perfume. She would always have a gift waiting for me to open, whether it was old or new. The delight that I was special enough to be getting a gift for no reason, was like having a birthday every time we went. My brothers would always get a little bit jealous, but it was alright, nena always made them their favourites.

Nena Ma didn't look like any old nena, but a nena that was kind and blossomed every time we met eyes. She wore all sorts of colours that were in fashion in those days. I knew because I was into the clothes that she wore. She really like island music. That kept her company every time that she was alone.

On one of the days we went over, my family and I had a beautiful lunch that was filled with satisfaction. After we ate my parents started talking to nena and catching up from what they done during the week. So my brothers and I went our own ways while they finished talking. Nena had one of those washing lines that go round and being a little child as I was, I was swinging on it until . . it broke, the top half fell off. I ran quickly inside. Nena came out and was fluttering with anger. Being a little child, I tried to fall asleep instantly and fast. When I woke up, she was staring at me with her hard, blooming eyes and hugged me. I was confused but then she said 'it had already been broken' then later on 'you just made it worse'. We just began to giggle very lightly. The fact is that I did get into trouble when I got home, but from that moment, my 'Nena Ma' has always been my best buddy in the world.

From the moment she passed away, it was like losing a wing from a butterfly. Since I've grown year by year, my wing is starting to bloom from our memories that we've shared.

'In loving memories of Nena Ma'

SURFACE FEATURES

Uses the writing conventions of syntax, spelling, and punctuation but with a few intrusive errors.