



LEVEL 1 2 3 4 5

Getting Ready

THE LEARNING CONTEXT

The teacher asked her students to produce a piece of writing focusing on journeys, either real or emotional.

Through analysis of related texts, the class explored many features of effective narrative technique. They looked at the impact of:

- language features, such as similes and metaphors;
- structural techniques, such as contrast and repetition;
- vocabulary.

The students planned their writing through discussing ideas with their peers and asking questions of each other and then drafted their stories. They received individual, written feedback focusing in particular on what language features they had employed. The teacher conferenced with Soana, making some suggestions. Soana eventually revised her draft and published it.

Teacher-student conversations

Before the draft

Teacher: [to the class] Remember the models we've discussed. Make sure you use some of those features in your writing – especially figurative language. Don't forget, though, we want the writing to be as honest as possible.

After the draft

Teacher: I suggest you think about getting rid of unnecessary detail in the first section. This might help you tighten the narrative.

Soana: I'll take out anything that doesn't say exactly what I'm doing or feeling.

Teacher: Good. I also want you to look out for some intrusive spelling errors and some punctuation mistakes, especially towards the end.

INTEGRATING READING AND WRITING

Students can explore the features of effective personal experience narrative through individual, group, and whole-class analysis of published writing or writing produced by their peers. Short stories, extracts from novels, and the Journal of Young People's Writing could be particularly useful in helping the students to understand the impact of a range of literary and linguistic features in both their own and others' writing. These features might include: structural elements, such as contrast, flashbacks, and surprise endings;

language features, such as precise and varied verbs, nouns, and connotative vocabulary; figurative language; and dialogue.

WHERE TO NEXT?

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

- impact: exploring further the conscious use of contrasts in tone to help convey an idea or mood;
- surface features: paying closer attention to final editing, including consistency of tone, and using a dictionary to eliminate spelling errors.

The teacher could do this by:

- modelling texts that contain clear examples of the language skills and strategies that Soana needs to practise;
- conferencing regularly with Soana on these features.

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: Personal Experience

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



LEVEL 1 2 3 4 5

Getting Ready

STUDENT'S SECOND DRAFT

Getting ready

I felt so madly because of the cold and the darkness, but I had to get up. I slowly took off my warm, fluffy blanket and got out of bed, and shivered through my open red warm door towards the kitchen. As I reached the kitchen table my stomach started to make a rumbling sound, the sound of a hungry animal, so I took out two pieces of bread and sifted them into the toaster and turned it up to high so it would cook faster. As it popped up I quickly picked it up and dropped it on the plate. I grabbed the margarine and jam and had my breakfast. The margarine had melted on the warm toast and a small drop trickled down my side as I bit into it hungrily. I stood up and slowly stamped my feet towards the bathroom door.

Reaching my hand out to my green tooth paste ~~and~~ I sniffed the paste on my teeth brush and started to brush my teeth. Rand and Rand, Nick, Nick. Then splashed the freezing cold water on my warm face. It made me gasp. And now for my uniform.

Put my school shirt on top of my t-shirt. Button to button. I squeezed my fat ass inside my school shirt. Squeezed and squeezed until the zip finally made it to the top. I turned on the power of my stereo and the song 'Hans (off high)' came on "what would you do?" I started to sing to myself. While I collected my Rowena clipboard and sprayed on my perfume "what would you do?" I sang then I saw

I saw the sunshine through my curtains. I opened them up and the bright yellow light shined right in my face, that changed my attitude altogether. The gloom had gone. I quickly packed all my heavy books into my bag and threw it on my back. I slipped on my sandals and walked out the door with a happy smile on my face. Yeah!



Poetic Writing: Personal Experience

LEVEL 1 2 3 4 5

What the Work Shows

Soana has taken a slice of everyday experience and given it life and significance through maintaining a strong personal voice, focusing on details, and using contrast between the two sections of the story. She also demonstrates powerful use of language within the piece.

STUDENT'S SECOND DRAFT

DEEPER FEATURES

Voice

Convincingly sustains strong sense of personal voice.

Ideas

Develops and sustains a strong central idea.

Expresses ideas through interesting and substantial illustrations and interpretive comments.

Structure

Explores structure for effect, for example, repetition and the contrasts between paragraphs. Links main and supporting ideas within and between paragraphs.

Sentences

Uses a variety of sentence structures for impact.

Vocabulary

Sometimes demonstrates strong language power through choice of vocabulary.

Language features

Uses language features for impact.

Getting ready

I felt so moody because of the cold and the darkness, but I had to get up. I slowly took off my warm, fluffy blanket and got out of bed, and shivered through my open bed room door towards the kitchen. As I reached the kitchen table my stomach started to make a rumbling sound, the sound of a hungry animal, so I took out two pieces of bread and slipped them into the toaster and turned it up to high so it would cook faster. As it popped up I quickly picked it up and dropped it on the plate. I grabbed the margarine and jam and had my breakfast. The margarine had melted on the warm toast and a small drop trickled down my chin as I bit into it hungrily. I stood up and slowly stomped my feet towards the bathroom door.

Reaching my hand out to my green tooth paste I swipped the paste on my tooth brush and started to brush my teeth. Round and round, flick, flick. Then splashed the freezing cold water on my warm face: it made me gasp. And now for my uniform.

Put my school shirt on top of my t shirt. Button to button. I squeezed my fat ass inside my school skirt. Squeezed and squeezed until the zip finally made it to the top. I turned on the power of my stereo and the song from (city high) came on "what would you do?" I started to sing to myself. While I rolled my Rexona deoderant and sprayed on my perfume "what would you do?" I sang then I saw

I saw the sunshine through my curtains. I opened them and the bright yellow light shined right through, that changed my attitude altogether. The gloom had gone. I quickly packed all my heavy books into my bag and threw it on my back. I slipped on my sandals and walked out the door with a happy smile on my face. Yeah!

SURFACE FEATURES

Uses the writing conventions of grammar, spelling, and punctuation with few intrusive errors.