



LEVEL **I iii** 2 3 4 5

## The Best Pet

### THE LEARNING CONTEXT

This teacher regularly provided questions for the students to discuss with a partner and report back on to the class. She recorded their ideas on the whiteboard.

To begin this session, the teacher introduced the concept of a “pet” and discussed it with the class. “What is a pet?” “Why do we have pets?” “What types of animals are pets?” After writing “I think a \_\_\_\_\_ is the best pet” on the board, she told the students to choose which animal they thought would make the best pet and provide a reason for their choice. She asked them to think about what they would like to do with their pet. The students shared their ideas with a partner orally and then reported back to the class.

The teacher set criteria for writing:

- “I want you to state what animal would make the best pet.”
- “I want you to explain why this animal would make the best pet.”
- “Remember you’re writing this for other children. You want them to agree with you.”

The students wrote independently for twenty minutes while the teacher roved and encouraged them by asking the following questions:

- “What animals do you like? What animals do your family like?”
- “What activities would you like to do with your animal?”
- “How would you look after a \_\_\_\_\_?”

### Teacher-student conversations

#### During the writing of the first draft

Teacher: I like the way you say cats don’t do any harm. Have you got a cat at home?

Shruti: Yes.

Teacher: What does your cat do?

Shruti: He plays with me all the time and sleeps on my bed.

Teacher: That’s fun. You could tell us about that so that people can see why a cat makes a good pet.

#### After the first draft

Teacher: I like the way you’ve spoken to the reader. Look at your exclamation mark ... what does that mean?

Shruti: You almost shout, like “BUT”.

Teacher: What about your spelling? Are there any words you feel you need to fix?

Shruti: No, they’re all OK.

### INTEGRATING READING AND WRITING

The teacher could:

- explore this topic in shared, guided, and independent reading;
- find a variety of material on pets and have the students relate their personal experiences to the texts;
- discuss the language in the texts with the students to introduce them to new vocabulary;
- encourage the students to explore and compare the language features of their own and others’ writing, especially the ways that writers argue their point of view;
- focus on and discuss sentence types with the students in shared reading sessions.

### WHERE TO NEXT?

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

- ideas: by encouraging more detailed supporting evidence;
- structure: by looking at the sequence and flow of ideas;
- vocabulary: by encouraging her to take risks with vocabulary, using written texts as models.

The teacher could also encourage Shruti to revise and edit her work.

The teacher could nurture these skills in a rich language environment, where reading and writing are supported by discussion. She could teach specific skills in the reading and writing programmes, especially in modelling and feedback sessions.

### CURRICULUM LINKS

#### Level 1: Writing Functions

**Transactional Writing:** Students should write instructions and recount events in authentic contexts.

#### Levels 1 and 2: Reading and Writing Processes

**Exploring Language:** Students should explore choices made by writers, and identify and use the common conventions of writing and organisation of text which affect understanding.

**Thinking Critically:** Students should identify and express meanings in written texts, drawing on personal background, knowledge, and experience.

*English in the New Zealand Curriculum, pages 35–36*

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## The Best Pet

STUDENT’S FIRST DRAFT

Monday 10 September  
 I think a cat is the best pet to have because it will never do <sup>any</sup> harm. And every day and night you can play with your pet. You can even sleep next to it. BUT! dont tuch it when it is eating. Ples get a cat.



# Transactional Writing: Argument

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## What the Work Shows

Shruti has expressed an opinion clearly, strongly, and confidently and has appealed directly to the reader to persuade them to agree with her point of view.

STUDENT'S FIRST DRAFT

### DEEPER FEATURES

#### Impact

Conveys an opinion.

#### Ideas

Demonstrates some subjective reasoning in ideas.

Supports ideas with simple details and comments.

#### Sentences

Uses simple sentences with some variation in beginnings.

Attempts complex sentences.

#### Vocabulary

Uses key content words and some high-frequency words confidently.

#### Language features

Speaks directly to the audience.

I think a cat is the best pet to have because it will never do eney harm. And every day and night you can play with your pet. You can even sleep next to it. BUT! dont tuch it when it is eating. Ples get a cat.

### SURFACE FEATURES

#### Grammar

Writes a simple sentence correctly.

#### Punctuation

With support, understands and uses capital letters, full stops, and exclamation marks.

#### Spelling

Spells most high-frequency words correctly.

Records dominant sounds in order.

### REFERENCES

The first page of this exemplar has been slightly shortened to fit. To see the fuller version, go to [www.tki.org.nz/r/assessment/exemplars/eng/](http://www.tki.org.nz/r/assessment/exemplars/eng/)