



LEVEL 1 2 3 4 5

# My Nana Is So Small

## 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 Cameron'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

#### During the conference stage after the first draft

Teacher: You've said your nana is slow. What makes her slow?

Cameron: Because she talks to people along the way.

Teacher: Could you tell us that?

Cameron: OK.

Teacher: Your nana is small. What does she have trouble doing because she's small?

Cameron: Um, she has trouble reaching the clothes line.

Teacher: Yes, now I can imagine her standing on her tiptoes to hang out the washing. It helps the reader get a picture of your nana when you add details like that. Maybe you could tell us that, too?

Cameron: [Nods.] Yeah, she needs help to hang out the washing.

Teacher: You've mentioned her muffins. What are your favourites?

Cameron: Chocolate chip.

Teacher: How might you include that?

## WHERE TO NEXT?

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

- layout: gaining more consistent control over initial non-capital letters;
- structure: sequencing ideas logically (the reader has to jump from clothes lines to eye colour to muffins);
- vocabulary: finding verbs that intensify his meaning (for example, exploring alternatives to "talks");
- language features: choosing the best possible imagery (for example, thinking about whether the colour of leaves is the best image for his nana's eyes).

The teacher could promote these skills within a rich language environment where oral interaction supports reading and writing. The skills will be specifically taught during guided and shared reading sessions, modelled and shared writing sessions, and in conferencing times.

## CURRICULUM LINKS



### Level 2: Writing Functions

**Poetic Writing:** Students should write on a variety of topics, shaping ideas in a number of genres, such as letters, poems, and narrative, and making choices in language and form.

### 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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# My Nana Is So Small

STUDENT'S SECOND DRAFT

My Nana is abit Slow  
 because She talks to people  
 along the path. her hair looks like  
 a biak birds nest it's Short and  
 Curly and it's stile like that  
 in the morning. She's got skin  
 that looks like screwed up Celopane  
 and the Creases are getting  
 depper With time. She is so small  
 sometimes my nana need help  
 to reach the clothes line. her  
 eye are the colour of leaves.  
 Her muffens tast exallent my  
 favourite is Chocolate Chip. I can  
 point to any plant in the garder  
 and she no's it. When She goes  
 Visiting her dog Jess comes to.





# Poetic Writing: Character

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## What the Work Shows

This is a very affectionate and personal response to a loved family member. Cameron has taken risks with vocabulary and has experimented with language, particularly the use of similes, to add interest and keep the reader engaged.

STUDENT'S SECOND DRAFT

### DEEPER FEATURES

#### Voice

Personal voice apparent, especially through the use of a conversational tone.

#### Ideas

Focuses on and begins to develop specific aspects of character that are personally significant, with some supporting detail and comment.

#### Sentences

Uses mainly simple and compound sentences, with some complex sentences.

#### Vocabulary

Uses simple language, but this includes some precise adjectives.

#### Language features

Uses similes and metaphor to add interest.

My Nana is abit Slow because She talks to people along the path. her hair looks like a blak birds nest it's Short and curly and it's Stile like that in the morning. She's got skin that looks like Screwed up Celopane and the Creases are getting depper with time. She is so small sometimes my nana need help to reach the Clothes line. her eye are the colour of leaves. Her muffens tast exallent my favourte is Chocolate chip. I can point to any plant in the garden and she no's it. When She goes Visiting her dog Jess comes to.

### SURFACE FEATURES

#### Spelling

Spells most high-frequency words correctly.

Shows knowledge of consonant sounds, blends, and vowel sounds.

Shows some knowledge of common spelling patterns.

#### Punctuation

Begins to use capital letters, full stops, and apostrophes with some consistency (though sometimes incorrectly).

#### Grammar

Uses most grammatical conventions with support.

Some complex sentences have minor errors.