

AFTER THREE YEARS AT SCHOOL

THE READING STANDARD



After three years at school, students will read, respond to, and think critically about fiction and non-fiction texts at the Gold level of Ready to Read

(the core instructional series that supports reading in the New Zealand Curriculum).

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF TEXTS AT GOLD LEVEL

Texts at Gold level have been designed with characteristics that include:

- some unfamiliar contexts and settings;
- shifts in time and/or place;
- (in narrative texts) many characters and events and more than one storyline;
- a mix of explicit and implicit content within text and illustrations that requires students to make connections between ideas in the text and their prior knowledge in order to make simple inferences;
- some pages with no illustrations;
- some unfamiliar words and phrases, the meaning of which is supported by the context or illustrations, including descriptive vocabulary, subject-specific vocabulary, and commonly used words that have multiple meanings;
- visual language features such as subheadings, text boxes, footnotes, glossaries, indexes, and diagrams and maps that are clearly explained and linked to the body text;
- ideas and information organised in paragraphs;
- a variety of sentence structures, including complex sentences;
- frequent use of dialogue, some of which is not explicitly attributed, and more than one character speaking on a page.

These characteristics support the development of reading behaviours that are described on page 11 and illustrated on the fold-out pages here.

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ILLUSTRATING THE READING STANDARD

“Night is a Blanket” by Barbara Hill; illustrated by Clare Bowes

This text is levelled at Gold 1.

In this story within a story, a grandfather tells a bedtime story to his grandchildren to explain how the moon was formed.

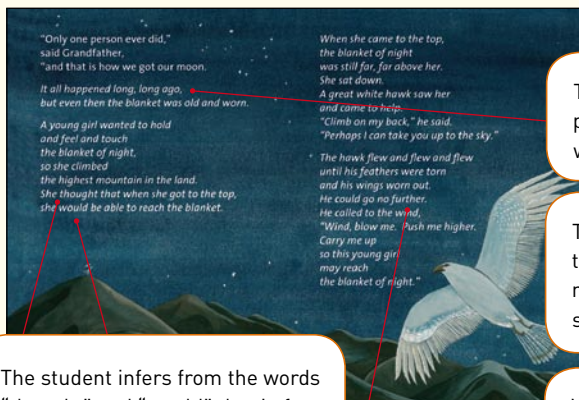
This text is one of a collection of linked stories and poems in a miscellany (also called *Night is a Blanket*). It gives students opportunities to compare ideas about night and the moon across a range of texts and text forms.

This poetic, descriptive text, with its evocative but non-specific illustrations, requires students to keep track of and visualise a relatively complex series of events and settings.

The following example highlights the sorts of reading behaviours teachers could expect to observe in students who are meeting the standard. Sometimes these behaviours will be in response to teacher prompts and questions, and sometimes they will be spontaneous as the students notice and respond to the ideas in the text. These behaviours may be during the first or subsequent readings and discussion.

The student uses clues, such as the title, Grandfather’s references to the night, the sky, and sleep, the fact that he is speaking softly, and the visual language (the text set within a starry sky) to infer that Grandfather is telling the children a bedtime story.

The student uses Grandfather’s descriptive language (for example, “dark”, “old and full of holes”, “shining away”, and “peeping through the holes”) to help them visualise Grandfather’s image of night as a blanket.



The student uses such features as speech marks, dialogue attribution, italic print, and the phrase “It all happened long, long ago” to help them identify where in the text the bedtime story starts.

The student makes connections to their knowledge of the elements of a fairy tale or traditional tale (for example, a challenging task, a series of helpers, and magical elements) to make predictions about what will happen in Grandfather’s story. The student reviews and refines their predictions as they read.

The student infers from the words “thought” and “would” that in fact the young girl was wrong.

While reading, the student notices and makes connections between the ideas about night as a blanket to help them visualise and track the events in Grandfather’s story. For example, the repeated references to the idea of the blanket being old and worn prepare the reader for the fact that it tears so easily when the girl tries to grab it.

The student can discuss how storytellers (like Grandfather) make their stories sound interesting. The student can retell the story of the young girl using some of the same techniques, for example, using repetitive phrases (“long, long ago”, “flew and flew”), poetic language structures (“He could go no further”), and expression to convey a sense of mystery and suspense and the idea of great effort on the part of the characters.



The student infers from the final paragraph that the children have fallen asleep.

The student can use the ideas in the text to help them describe what is happening to the “blanket” of night when there is a starry night.

The student compares the images in this text with those in other texts about night or the moon. The student draws on the ideas to create their own personal image of night or the moon.

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ILLUSTRATING THE READING STANDARD

Sun Bears Are Special by Philippa Werry

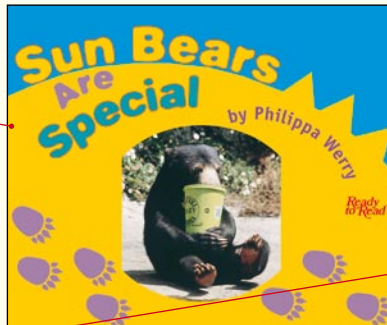
This text is levelled at Gold 1.

This report describes a family of Wellington Zoo's sun bears to illustrate the general characteristics of sun bears and the difficulties involved in breeding them.

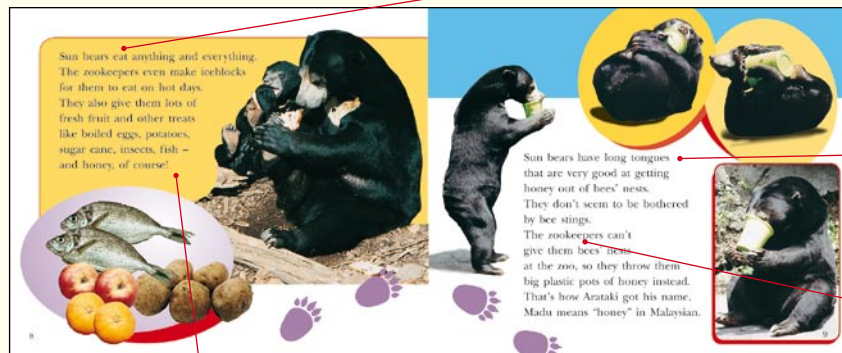
This text begins with an apparently straightforward comment about why sun bears are special and then gradually adds more and more information about their special features. The text ends with a strong statement that sun bears are endangered. Students need to identify, and make connections between, information from a number of places to fully identify why sun bears are special.

The following example highlights the sorts of reading behaviours teachers could expect to observe in students who are meeting the standard. Sometimes these behaviours will be in response to teacher prompts and questions, and sometimes they will be spontaneous as the students notice and respond to the ideas in the text. These behaviours may be during the first or subsequent readings and discussion.

After a discussion of the cover, the student can make connections to their prior knowledge of bears or of other non-fiction texts about animals to predict some words and/or information they would expect to find in a text about sun bears.



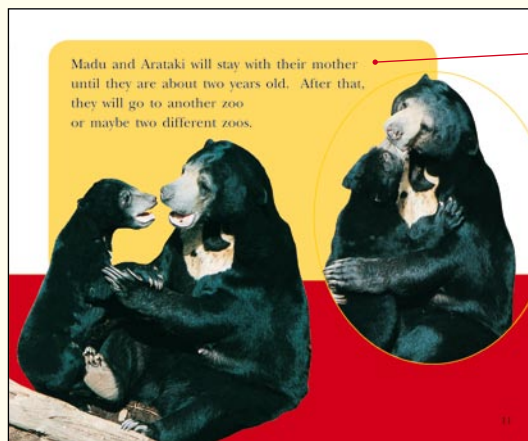
With support, the student can use clues in the text to keep track of the sequence of events. Examples are the photo of the cubs and the use of the present tense on page 2, the change to the past tense on pages 5–7 (describing the time before the cubs were born, their birth, and when they were young), the change back to the present on page 8, the description of future events on pages 11–12, and the information on the inside back cover.



The student uses their growing word knowledge and the context of the sentence to notice and clarify the mismatch between the sound and appearance of the word "tongues".

The student can identify some multi-syllabic topic words (for example, "Malaysian", "babies", "zookeepers", "adult", "enclosure", "insects") and say how they worked them out.

The student can use the information about sun bears' eating habits to infer what they would eat if they lived in the wild in Malaysia rather than in a zoo.



The student can make connections between the ideas in the text, particularly those on page 5 and the inside back cover, and with any prior knowledge they have about wild animals, to infer why the cubs won't be staying with their mother.

With support, the student uses clues such as the title, the friendly tone, the use of the word "sadly", and the information on the inside back cover to infer the author's point of view about sun bears.

The student can make connections between the pieces of information (in text, photographs, and illustrations) to support a particular idea or answer a question. For example, they can use information from the cover, the title page, and pages 8–10 to infer why sun bears are also called honey bears, or they can explain, or offer an opinion about, why sun bears are special.