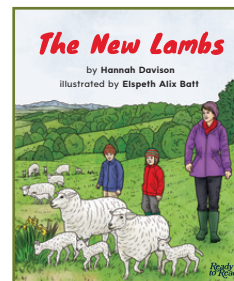


The New Lambs

by Hannah Davison
illustrated by Elspeth Alix Batt

This text is levelled at Green 1.



Overview

When Jake and Emily find two abandoned lambs on their farm, they take them home to care for them. Emily's lamb quickly starts drinking the warm milk, but Jake's lamb does not ...

This story supports the development of a self-extending reading process. It requires students to "use a range of sources of information in text, along with their prior knowledge, to make sense of the texts they read", to monitor their reading, and to "use strategies such as asking questions and making inferences to help them think more deeply about the ideas in the text" (*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 12).

There is an audio version of the text as an MP3 file at www.readytoread.tki.org.nz

Related texts

Stories that involve caring for animals: *A Bird in the Classroom*, *Feeding the Birds* (Yellow 2); *Nibbles* (Blue 1); *Where's Nibbles?* (Green 2)

Other stories that involve empathy and kindness: *My Brother* (Green 1); *Mum's New Job* (Green 2); *Joe's News* (Green 3)

Cross-curriculum links

English (level 1): Selects and reads texts for enjoyment and personal fulfilment.

Text characteristics

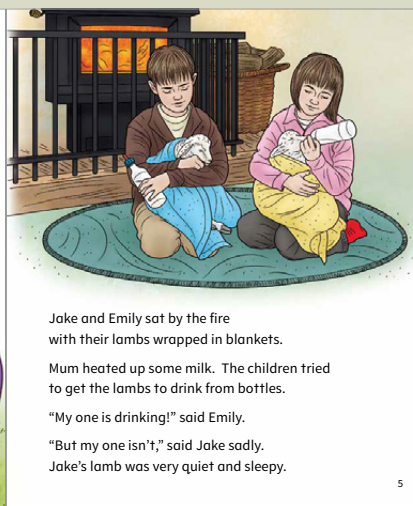
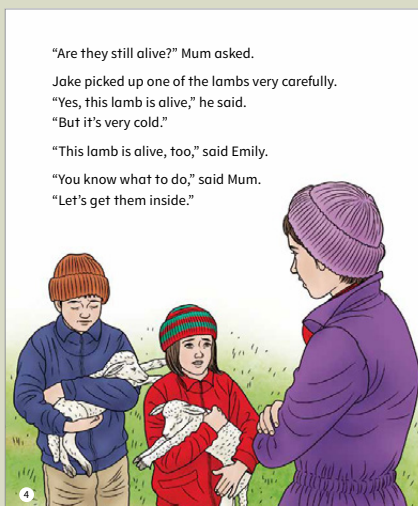
The New Lambs has the following text characteristics that help develop the reading behaviours expected of students reading at Green.

Most content explicitly stated but also some implicit content that provides opportunities for students to make predictions and inferences

Illustrations that support and extend the meaning but may not exactly match the words

A clear narrative structure (beginning, middle, and end) with indicators of time ("all afternoon", "at last", "that night", "too long", "in the morning") to clarify the sequence of events

A mix of a setting (on a farm) that is likely to be familiar to many students and a context (caring for abandoned lambs) that may be unfamiliar



Sentences that run over more than one line, and several lines of text on every page

Dialogue between easily identified speakers

A range of punctuation, including speech marks, commas, question marks, and exclamation marks to support phrasing and meaning

Interest words that are likely to be in a reader's oral vocabulary and that are strongly supported by the context, sentence structure, and/or the illustrations (for example, "farm", "sheep", "lambs", "tiny", "cold", "all alone", "Poor", "alive", "carefully", "blankets", "milk", "bottles", "sadly", "quiet", "sleepy", "hungry", "breakfast", "nose"), including a wide range of verbs and verb forms (for example, "helping", "check", "cried", "lying", "asked", "picked up", "heated", "tried", "drink", "drinking", "stayed", "started", "die", "wait", "called", "bumping", "think", "laughed")

Vocabulary features that provide opportunities for students to build and apply their knowledge of letters, sounds, and words (for example, words with digraphs ("check", "children", "much"; "she", "sheep"; "laughed") and words with silent letters ("know", "lamb", "two", "wrapped"))

Reading standard: After one year at school

The Literacy Learning Progressions

Suggested reading purpose

(What can the students expect to find out or think about as a result of reading this text?)

To find out what happens when Jake and Emily find some lambs that have been left all alone

Possible learning goals

(What opportunities does this text provide for students to learn more about how to “read, respond to, and think critically” about texts?)

The behaviours listed below link to *The Literacy Learning Progressions*. **Select from and adapt** them according to your students’ strengths, needs, and experiences – their culture, language, and identity (*Reading and Writing Standards for Years 1–8*, Knowledge of the learner, page 6).

This text provides opportunities for students, over several readings, to:

- **make connections** between their own experiences and information in the story to **make predictions and inferences**
- identify the main events in the story (**summarise**)
- **make meaning** by searching for and using multiple sources of information rather than one source
- **monitor** their reading and self-correct where necessary, for example, by rerunning text or checking further sources of information.

Introducing the story

- Use your knowledge of your students to ensure that the introduction to the story activates their prior knowledge (for example, about the implications of new-born lambs being left all alone) and supports them for a successful first reading. A short video on the importance of introducing the text is available at <https://vimeo.com/142446572>

For English language learners, talk through the illustrations on the cover, title page, and first few pages before the whole-group session, to build confidence with vocabulary. To further support vocabulary you could also show a short video clip such as: [Heels2Boots Farm Life](#)

You can find useful guidance about supporting English language learners at [ESOL online](#)

- Use the title and cover illustration to begin a discussion about what the story might be about (who? what? where?). Expect the students to recognise the farm setting and encourage them to share any experiences they have of farms and baby animals.

- Discuss the title page illustration of the lambs lying all alone by the tree without their mother. *What might happen to them?*
- Prompt the students to make connections between the discussion so far and the illustrations on pages 2 and 3. Tell them the names of the children. As you discuss the illustrations, draw out (or feed in) words and phrases such as “check”, “tiny”, “cold”, “all alone”, “Poor little lambs”, that you think might need support. Encourage the students to predict what the children will do. If necessary, clarify what will happen if the lambs are not looked after.
- Use the illustrations on pages 4–7 to review the students’ predictions. Discuss how Jake and Emily are caring for the lambs. Continue to feed words (for example, “carefully”, “alive”, “wrapped in blankets”, “heated up”) into the discussion. You could heighten the suspense of the story by drawing attention to the difference between Emily and Jake’s lambs on pages 5 and 6, and encouraging the students to predict what Mum and Jake might be talking about on page 7.
- Save the surprise on page 8 for your students to discover when they read the story themselves.
- Share the purpose for the reading.

Monitoring the reading

- Observe closely as the students read the story quietly to themselves. Note their confidence and perseverance, their attempts to solve unknown words, and any instances of self-monitoring, cross-checking, and self-correction. Provide support to individual students as necessary. There will be opportunities to provide further support with word solving and comprehension on subsequent readings.
- If students are making errors without noticing a problem, wait until the end of the sentence or page before intervening, unless they have stopped reading. Waiting gives them the opportunity to notice and fix it themselves. Use appropriate prompts to draw their attention to the error.
- Remember to base these prompts on what you know about the students’ prior knowledge. For example, asking an English language learner if a word sounds right may not be useful if they are not familiar enough with English phonemes and vocabulary to know the answer. In this case, an explanation and further examples would be more effective, or simply telling them the word.

- These are some examples of possible student errors and teacher responses:

Text in book	Student reads	Teacher prompt
They could see	They called (stops reading)	Tell the student to read on. Expect them to use the meaning to self-correct.
They could see two tiny lambs	They could see two t-i- tinny lambs	Prompt the student to check the meaning. <i>The lambs are very small. You said ... Did that make sense? Try that again.</i>
“The mother sheep has left them here in the cold, all alone ,”	“The mother sheep has left them here in the cold, all al - ”	<i>The mother has left the lambs by themselves. They are all a ...</i> Pause for the student to come in with the word. If necessary, articulate the next sound (<i>all a ... l ...</i>).
Jake and Emily sat by the fire with their lambs wrapped in blankets	Jake and Emily sat by the fire with their lambs – wapped ...	Prompt the student to use the picture or read on. If necessary, reassure them about the silent “w” (and note to come back to this after reading).
said Jake sadly .	said Jake s-a-d-ly (articulates individual letters and “ly” but looks perplexed)	Prompt the student to integrate visual information with meaning. <i>How is Jake feeling? Read that again but this time, put those sounds together smoothly.</i> If necessary, model how to blend the individual sounds.

- Other prompts that you could use include: *Are you sure?; Think about what would make sense; Were you right?; Does that look right and sound right?; You said ... Can you find your mistake and fix it?; Look at the beginning of the word; What else could you check?; What can you see that will help you?; Read the sentence again.*
- Reinforce the students’ attempts to problem-solve, whether they are successful or not, for example: *I noticed you went back and read that again. Good checking.*
- For further suggestions about ways to support students to self-monitor (to cross-check, confirm, and self-correct), see *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1–4*, page 130.

Discussing and rereading the story

- You can reread this story several times, focusing on different aspects and providing opportunities for the students to build comprehension and fluency. Many of the discussion points listed here also lead naturally into “After reading” activities.
- Enjoy the students’ responses to the story. *Is this what you thought would happen?* Discuss how Mum and the children cared for the lambs. Encourage the students to ask questions about anything they are not sure of.

- Prompt the students to think critically:
 - *Why did Jake pick up the lamb “very carefully”?*
 - *How did the children “know what to do” (on page 4)?*
 - *Why was Jake worried about his lamb being sleepy?*
 - *What did Mum mean when she said the lamb “might have been in the cold for too long”?*
- Have the students reread the story, stopping to discuss points of interest. You can explore such aspects as:
 - the clues in the text and illustrations to Jake’s feelings. Encourage the students to speculate about what he might be thinking on pages 4–8.
 - the use of speech marks to indicate dialogue, the attributions to clarify who the speaker is, and the alternatives to “said” (“asked”, “cried”, “called”, “laughed”). Encourage the students to read the dialogue aloud in a way that reflects the unfolding storyline.
 - how the lambs are described, both before and after they were cared for (for example, “tiny”, “lying by the tree”, “in the cold”, “all alone”, “Poor little lambs”, “alive”, “very cold”, “very quiet and sleepy”, “hungry”, “looking for milk”). The students could add their own descriptive words and phrases (for example, “curled up”, “shivering”, “nearly dead”, “safe”).
 - the adverbial phrases in some sentences that provide extra information, for example:
 - indicators of time (“All afternoon”, “At last”, “That night”)
 - descriptive information (often at the ends of sentences):
 “Over there, by the tree!”
 They could see two tiny lambs lying by the tree.
 “The mother sheep has left them here in the cold, all alone,” said Emily.
 Jake picked up one of the lambs very carefully.
 Jake and Emily sat by the fire with their lambs wrapped in blankets.
 The little lamb started bumping its nose into Jake’s legs, looking for milk.

Discuss how these phrases add helpful information, such as when, where, what, how, or why. Ask questions and have the students locate the answers within the sentences, for example:

Page 4 – **How** did Jake pick up the lamb?

Page 5 – **What** were the children holding when they sat by the fire?

Page 8 – **Why** was the lamb bumping its nose into Jake’s legs?

Remind the students of the importance of reading on until the full stop to get the full meaning of the sentence. (See also “After reading”.)

- how the students worked out new words (or tried to) for example, by looking for the biggest known part of a word, thinking about what makes sense, reading on to the next word, or rereading.
- interesting word features, such as the long vowel sound in “tiny”; the silent letters in “two”, “lambs”, “know”, “wrapped”; and the /f/ sound for “gh” in “laughed”). Remind the students of the need to think about the meaning, as well as what they know about letters and sounds, as they are reading.
- the irregular past-tense forms of some verbs (for example, “were”, “ran”, “left”, “sat”, “was”). Reread the sentences where the words occur and support the students in identifying the relevant present-tense forms. Explain that there are some verbs that can’t have “ed” added (for example, “ran” not “runned”, “left” not “leaved”, “sat” not “sitted”).

- Provide opportunities for students to reread this story and other related texts. You could also read picture books with farm settings or about caring for animals to the whole class.
- To support summarising, the students could draw four things the children did to care for the lambs and add captions. Alternatively, they could draw and write about a time in the story that was sad and a time that was happy.
- Ask the students to draw before and after pictures of the lambs and add descriptive words or phrases.
- The students could choose three illustrations of Jake and add thought bubbles.
- Support the students in finding answers to any questions they have about newborn lambs and how to care for them.
- The students could draw and write about their own experiences of caring for baby animals or pets.
- Build the students’ knowledge of irregular past-tense verb forms. Give the students cards with the present- tense and past-tense forms for them to match up. (You could include some regular verbs as well.) Provide further support, particularly for English language learners, by together making up oral sentences that include the irregular verbs.
- Build students’ confidence with sentence structure by supporting them in innovating on sentences from the story, as in the examples shown below. Model how to create a new sentence by changing a few words or phrases. Extend this to include sentences that are not about *The New Lambs*.

After reading: practice and reinforcement

After-reading tasks should arise from your monitoring of the students’ needs during the lesson and provide purposeful practice and reinforcement. Where possible, make links to other texts, including texts generated from language experience and shared writing, and to the wider literacy programme (oral language, writing, handwriting, alphabet and word games and activities) and other curriculum areas.

Select from and adapt these suggestions, according to the needs of your students.

- Ask the students to reread the story with a partner. Listen in, noting their ability to self-monitor and to use punctuation to support phrasing and expression. You could also use this time to do a quick Running Record with a student to provide more information on an aspect you have noticed.
- The students can build their comprehension and fluency by rereading the story while listening to the audio version. Audio versions are particularly supportive for English language learners because, as well as clarifying pronunciation, they provide good models of the prosodic features of English, such as intonation and phrasing.

Who?	Did what?	What?	How?
Jake	picked up	one of the lambs	very carefully.
Emily	looked at	the lambs	sadly.
Monster	looked at	the store-room door	thoughtfully.
Rocky	ran after	Josh	as fast as he could.