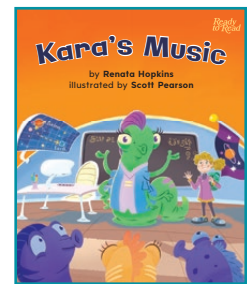


Kara's Music

by Renata Hopkins
illustrated by Scott Pearson

This text is levelled at Turquoise 2.



The Learning Progression Frameworks describe significant signposts in reading and writing as students develop and apply their literacy knowledge and skills with increasing expertise from school entry to the end of year 10. This teacher support material describes the opportunities within this text for students to develop this expertise.

Overview

Kara and her family have come from Earth to live on the planet Poktron. This humorous science fiction story explores Kara's experiences on her first day at her new school.

This story requires students to “flexibly use the sources of information in text, in combination with their prior knowledge to make meaning and consider new ideas”, and “draw on a wider range of comprehension strategies to think more deeply about what they read” (*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 13).

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

Curriculum links

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

Related texts

Science fiction stories: *Fleeb Makes Scones* (Green 1); *Fleeb Watches TV* (Orange 2); “I Spy” (JJ 50); “Zapped!” (a story by the same author, told in four chapters in JJs 52-55)

Stories about facing new situations: *Mum's New Job* (Green 2); *Joe's News* (Green 3); *My Name Is Laloifi* (Orange 1); *Easy Peasy* (Turquoise 1); *Kapa Haka, White Sunday in Sāmoa* (Turquoise 2)

Text characteristics

Kara's Music has the following text characteristics that help develop the reading behaviours expected at Turquoise.

Narrative features (setting, characters, dialogue, plot and a clear beginning, middle, and end) to enable students to draw on and build their knowledge of story structure

A mix of explicit and implicit content (in text and illustrations) and the science fiction context that provides opportunities for students to make predictions and inferences

Language features that provide opportunities for students to apply and extend their knowledge of vocabulary and word structure, for example:

- the prefix in “unexpected” and the suffix in “thunderous”
- a variety of verb forms, including irregular past-tense verbs
- the possessive apostrophes in “Kara's” and “teacher's”

It was Kara's first day at her new school. She had a new schoolbag, a new lunchbox, and special new shoes to stop her from floating into the air.

“Class, this is Kara,” said the teacher, Miss Fliss. “Kara's family has just moved to Poktron from the planet Earth.”

Kara smiled, and the other kids smiled back. At least, Kara thought they were smiling – it was hard to be sure.



For the first part of the morning, the class did painting. Miss Fliss held Kara's painting up for everyone to see. “What interesting colours Kara has used for the sky and the sun!” she said.

Kara giggled. The sky in her painting was blue, and her sun was yellow. The sky outside the window was orange, and the sun was a glittering purple.



A variety of sentence structures requiring students to attend to punctuation and linking words to clarify connections between ideas

Some vocabulary that may be new (for example, “Poktron”, “planet Earth”, “giggled”, “glittering purple”, “perfectly”, “dodge”, “tagger”, “thirsty”, “drinking fountain”, “fizzed”, “tickled”, “gulped”, “attention”, “tangled”, “strange-looking instrument”, “shoulder”, “deep breath”, “stretched”, “wiggled”, “incredible”, “unexpected”, “gasped”, “Whoops”, “thunderous”, “finally”, and some examples of onomatopoeia – “BURP”, “Plink, plonk”) that are supported by the context, the sentence structure, and/or the illustrations and that provide opportunities for students to apply their processing system

Suggested reading purpose

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

To find out about Kara's first day of school on Poktron

To find out what Kara's music is and why it's important in this story

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 goals listed below link to the descriptions of reading behaviours in *The Literacy Learning Progressions* and *The Learning Progression Frameworks*. **Select from and adapt** them according to your students' strengths, needs, and experiences – their culture, language, and identity (*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 7).

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

- **make connections** between their prior knowledge and information in the story to **make predictions and inferences**
- use key words and illustrations to **visualise** life on Poktron
- identify and track the main events in the story (**summarise**)
- **make meaning** by searching for and using multiple sources of information together
- **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 (for example, their familiarity with science fiction) to ensure that the introduction to the story activates their prior knowledge 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>
Select from and adapt the following suggestions.

For English language learners, you could talk through the illustrations on the cover, title page, and first few pages before the whole-group session to build confidence with vocabulary and to provide support with text features that may be unfamiliar. You can find further information about features of texts that may need support at ELLP.

- Have the students read the title and use the cover illustration to discuss the setting and characters. Explain the meaning of the possessive apostrophe and expect the students to infer that the girl is Kara. Confirm that this story is set on an imaginary planet called Poktron (shown on the map in the illustration).
- Encourage the students to make connections to their ideas about space and planets (from films and TV as well as factual information) and to notice some ways that the Poktron classroom is different from a classroom on Earth.
- Draw attention to Kara's schoolbag and the fact that she is waving. Prompt the students to infer that Kara is new to this school and to speculate about why she is there and what her "music" might be. Turn to the title page illustration and have them review their predictions.
- Use the page 2 illustration (which is the same as the cover) to recap what the students have noticed about Poktron and Kara so far. Prompt the students to notice, on page 3, that Kara's painting looks different from the scene outside the window and to speculate why.
- You could have the students think, pair, share their questions about the story. Remind them that asking themselves questions is a good way of thinking about what they are reading.
- Together, decide on the purpose/s for the reading. The students could begin reading the story for themselves at this point or, if you think they might need more support, you could also discuss the illustrations on pages 4–5. Provide sticky notes for students to record any questions they have or aspects they want to come back to after reading. Remind them of strategies they can use to solve words and clarify meaning.

Monitoring the reading

- Observe the students as they read the story by themselves, intervening only if it's clear that a student needs help. Increasingly, the processing students do at this level is "inside their heads" and may not be obvious until after they have read the text and you are discussing and rereading it as a group. There will be opportunities to provide further support with word solving and comprehension on subsequent readings.
- Remember to base these prompts on what you know about the student's prior knowledge. For example, asking an English language learner if a word or sentence sounds right may not be useful if they are not familiar with English syntax and vocabulary. In this case, an explanation and further examples would be more effective, or simply tell them the word.
- See the table on the following page for examples of possible student errors and teacher responses.

Text in book	Student reads	Teacher prompt
... but it still wasn't easy to dodge a tagger with six arms!	... but it still wasn't easy to dodge a tiger with six arms!	<i>Does that make sense? Is there a tiger? Try that again.</i>
The bubbles fizzed and tickled as she gulped them down.	The bubbles fizzed and tickled as she g ...	Provide support in blending the sounds in the word. If the student is still not sure (because the word is new to them), tell them the word and discuss it later.
They waved them around to get the teacher's attention .	They waved them around to get the teacher's a ... ten ... (The student stops.)	Support the student to draw on what they know. Write a known word (for example, "fraction", "fiction", or "injection") and have the student read it. <i>What is this part ("tion")? Now try that word ("attention") again.</i>
The noise was incredible .	The noise was in ...	Support the student to focus on one "chunk" at a time. <i>Yes, that's "in". Now say the next part ... and the next.</i>

- Other prompts that you could use include: *Are you sure?; Is there a part of the word that you know?; Can you find your mistake and fix it?; What can you see in that word that will help you?; What sound could that make?; What else could you check?*
- 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 revisit this story several times, focusing on different aspects and providing opportunities for the students to build vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. **Select from and adapt** the suggestions below. Many of the discussion points listed here also lead naturally into after-reading activities.
- Remind the students of their purpose for reading. *What was Kara's music? Enjoy the idea of her class thinking that Kara's burping was music. What else did you find out about the planet Poktron?*
- Encourage the students to think critically. For example:
 - How did Kara get ready for her first day of school?
 - Why did Miss Fliss describe Kara's painting as "interesting"?
 - What made Kara burp?
 - Why do you think the class enjoyed Kara's burp so much?
 - Why is Kara's music important in this story?
- Have the students reread the story, stopping to discuss points of interest, including aspects they have marked. You could explore such features as:

- what helped the students visualise what school was like on Poktron. Have them identify clues in the text and illustrations. Create a Venn diagram together to show how Poktron is the same as or different from school on Earth.
- Kara's reactions to her new school. What might she have liked best (or found most strange or difficult) about her first day? Prompt the students to draw on evidence in the story and make connections to their own experiences of being in new situations. You could record their ideas on a chart, as in the partially completed example below.

Our inferences about Kara	Our evidence
She might be a bit nervous and worried.	It's her first day at a new school. She wasn't sure if the other kids were smiling. Everything was strange.
She has a sense of humour.	She giggled when Miss Fliss said the colours in her painting were "interesting" and when she burped. She laughed when the water floated. She made up a funny song.
She's confident about joining in.	Kara played tag. She put her hand up at music time. She agreed to teach the class a song. She smiled as she sang.

- the speech marks to indicate dialogue and the attributions to clarify who the speaker is. Encourage the students to read the dialogue in a way that reflects the characters' reactions.
- the use of onomatopoeia ("plink, plonk", "BURP"). Encourage the students to think of words (including made-up words) to describe the sound of the singing on page 6.
- how the students worked out (or tried to work out) unfamiliar words, for example, by looking for the biggest known chunk; using their knowledge of letters, sounds, and word structure; thinking about what makes sense; rereading; or reading on to the next word. You could explore such aspects as:
 - the clues to the meanings of descriptive verbs such as "dodge", "gulped", or "gasped".
 - the irregular past-tense verb forms (for example, "held", "thought", "rang", "hung", "heard", "taught", "sang"). Reread the sentences where the words occur and discuss their meanings. Remind the students that not all verbs in English can have "ed" added.
 - the use of possessive apostrophes, as in the title. Find more examples in the text and have students think of other examples from their daily lives (the teacher's pointer, Emma's hat).

- the impact on meaning of the prefix in “unexpected” or the suffix in “thunderous”. List other examples (“uncomfortable”, “untidy”, “unsure”, “unwell”, “unlucky”, “unhappy”; “dangerous”, “adventurous”, “mountainous”) and explore their meanings.

After reading: practice and reinforcement

After-reading tasks should arise from your monitoring of the students 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, and word games and activities) and other curriculum areas.

For English language learners, [SELLIPS](#) also has ideas for purposeful and relevant tasks.

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

- Provide many opportunities for students to reread this story and other related texts.
- The students can build up their comprehension and fluency by rereading the book 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.
- To support summarising, the students could work individually or in pairs to create a comic strip to retell the story. Have them identify five key events and then create a panel for each event that includes a drawing, a sentence, and a speech or thought bubble. Alternatively the students could draw and write about how Kara is feeling at the beginning, middle, and end of the story.
- Have the students use an adaptation of a [Say It](#) activity. (This activity is particularly supportive for English language learners in providing opportunities to practise using new vocabulary.) Write prompts on cards and have the students take turns to turn over a card and respond to the prompt. For example:

You are Kara. Tell us what you thought when you found out your family was going to live on Poktron (or when you first saw the other students at your new school or what you most enjoyed about your first day).

You are Miss Fliss. Tell us what you thought when you saw Kara’s painting (or heard Kara’s music or what you think it will be like to have Kara in your class).

You are Kronk. Tell us why you like to play music (or what part of Kara’s music you liked the most – the burp music or her song – and why).

- Have the students work in pairs to match up sentence halves from the story and then arrange the completed sentences in sequence. (Adjust the level of challenge by varying the number and complexity of the sentences.) For example:
It was Kara’s first day / at her new school.
The sky outside the window was orange, / and the sun was a glittering purple.
At morning break, Kara played tag / with some of her new friends.
When she pressed the button, / bubbles of water popped out and floated into the air.
Kronk took a strange-looking instrument / out of a basket.
Kara stood up, took a deep breath, / and opened her mouth.
They all tried to copy / the thunderous sound.
When the class finally stopped burping, / Kara taught them some real Earth music.
- Have the students explore the differences between Poktron and Earth. For example, they could:
 - work in pairs to add to the Venn diagram started when discussing the story
 - draw pictures of playtime at their school and at Kara’s school and add captions and labels for aspects that are the same or different
 - write a letter to a pen pal on Poktron, describing a normal day at school on Earth. Prompt the students to think about what would be most interesting for a student on Poktron to read about
 - design a musical instrument for a creature with six arms. They could give the instrument a name and add labels to describe its components.
- Have the students choose three words with the prefix “un” and draw pictures to illustrate the meaning of the words with and without the prefix. Support them to use a dictionary to find further examples.