



Example 1: English, Reading, Level 1 - Greedy Cat

FROM THE ONLINE RESOURCE *INCLUSIVE PRACTICE AND THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM*

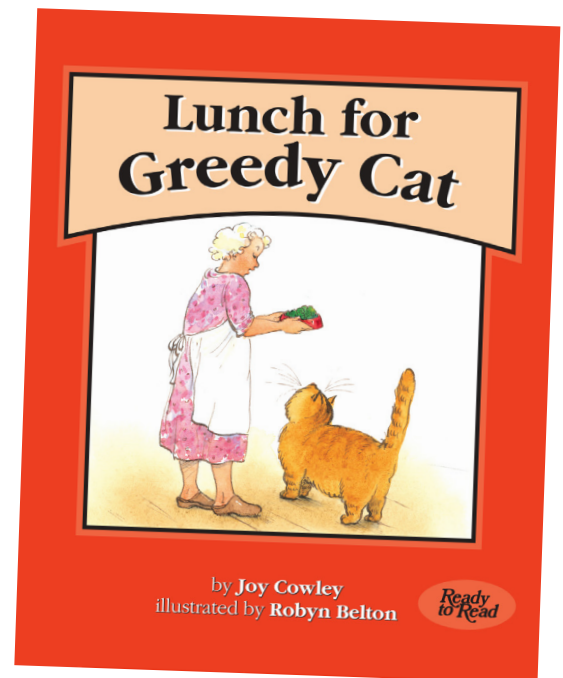
This example demonstrates how a teacher used differentiation in an English reading lesson to support all her students to explore *Lunch for Greedy Cat* by Joy Cowley. She differentiated content so all students could engage with and think about the book at their reading level.

Task

After shared reading of the big book *Lunch for Greedy Cat*, the students were each given a small copy of the book and chose from a range of reading responses:

- Read the book with your buddy onto the iPad and share with another pair.
- Draw a picture of Greedy Cat. Inside his tummy, write a story that explains why he is always hungry.
- Draw Greedy Cat. Around the outside of the picture, write all the words you know that rhyme with 'cat'. Then create a sentence using as many of the rhyming words as you can.
- Put the pictures of the story in order. Match the right word for what Greedy Cat ate with each picture. Tell the story to your buddy.

These ideas were recorded on a chart with simple sketches or examples beside the instructions to remind the students.



New Zealand Curriculum achievement objectives

- Acquire and begin to use sources of information, processes, and strategies to identify, form, and express ideas:
 - has an awareness of the connections between oral, written, and visual language
 - uses sources of information (meaning, structure, visual and grapho-phonetic information) and prior knowledge to make sense of a range of texts
 - selects and reads texts for enjoyment and personal fulfilment (level 1).

Opportunities to use and develop key competencies

Students were *participating and contributing* when they worked together as a community of learners supporting each other and listening, sharing, practising skills, and talking together. Students were *thinking* and developing knowledge as they made sense of text through a wide range of experiences and interactions. As they learned together, students were *using language, symbols, and texts* to make meaning and connections in reading.

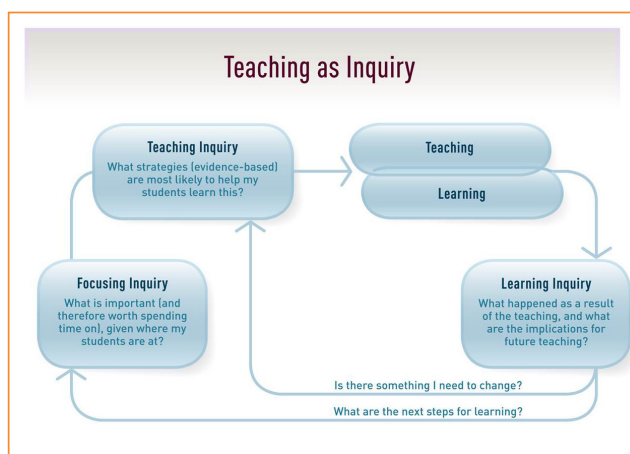
Class description

Miss Rose teaches a class of 19 students in years 1-2. Several students require additional support to actively participate and learn in reading lessons.

- **Cindy, Matthew, Hettie, and Henry** have been at school between six and nine months and are reading at the Red 1 level of Ready to Read. Their school entry assessments suggested these students required support to develop oral language and concepts about print. They also have difficulty processing language and attending to tasks. They currently participate in a Talk to Learn programme. A teacher's aide supports the class during reading and writing time every day to enable the teacher to spend one-to-one time with each of these students.
- **Mai Ling** has spina bifida and a heart condition. She uses a walker and tires easily. She receives support (as needed) from a physiotherapist and an occupational therapist from the local Ministry of Education office through the Physical Disability Service. They work with Mai Ling's teacher to make suggestions for adapting the environment so Mai Ling can access the classroom with minimal effort. Mai Ling is a bright and active class member who is learning at the same level as most of her peers. She is reading at Green 3 in Ready to Read.
- **Rikki** has Smith-Megenis syndrome, which means his learning and skill development is likely to be slower than other children. He is reading at Magenta in Ready to Read. Rikki can become upset when people don't understand him or when he doesn't understand what people want from him. He finds it hard to cope with a lot of sensory information (e.g., noises, lots of children in his space) and tires easily. The school has a documented plan for supporting Rikki's personal care, and managing when he has a seizure; all staff who work in Miss Rose's classroom have a copy of the plan. Rikki has complex needs and receives additional support through the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS), which includes support from a multidisciplinary team from the local Ministry of Education office. He has an individual education plan (IEP) which documents the priority goals his team have agreed on and shows how Rikki will access the classroom curriculum.

Teaching as inquiry

Miss Rose employed a range of evidenced-based strategies to support all the students in her class to participate and learn in this reading lesson. The students were working at different levels as they developed skills and acquired confidence in reading. She clearly differentiated content so all students could engage with *Lunch for Greedy Cat* and think about the book at their reading level. Miss Rose used a range of assessment approaches for this reading, including parental comments and learning stories.



Miss Rose actively supported reading across diverse contexts by providing multiple opportunities for students to engage with classmates and their families in a range of reading activities. Prior to this lesson, the class had worked on the topic of pets and their care. They had regularly shared the big book *Greedy Cat*, reading it together as a class and with a senior buddy during reading activities, listening to it with a friend on the computer and iPad, and using puppets to retell the story. They had multiple opportunities to explore the text and the vocabulary by creating and sharing digital flashcards on the iPad using the Write About This app and matching text to pictures as part of reading time activities. The students were all given a note to put in their homework books asking family to share the book with their child.

In this lesson, Miss Rose used senior student buddies to give her class support with reading. She made sure she used clear language, gave as few instructions as possible, and had visuals and signs to support task instructions. After grouping the students to do tasks with buddies, she worked more intensively with one group herself. She made some careful adaptations to ensure that other students could work with a buddy or teacher's aide. Students had multiple opportunities to engage with the vocabulary and explore the meaning of the text.

Focusing inquiry

What was important (and therefore worth spending time on), given where Miss Rose's students were at?

Miss Rose had identified that some of her students would need extra support to access the reading task. She used formative assessment by listening to students reading within their guided reading lessons and taking anecdotal notes in the group modelling book. She completed running records every three to four weeks for five students (Cindy, Matthew, Hettie, Henry, and Rikki) who required additional support to progress towards literacy expectations. These students were also being closely monitored by the learning support coordinator (LSC), Mr Lee. The students in the class had instructional reading levels from Magenta to Purple. She understood that some students could read *Lunch for Greedy Cat* fluently while others were learning how pictures and text are related and beginning to recognise high-frequency or interest words, such as 'cat' or 'school'. She thought about students' ability to communicate and how their skills could best be used to engage with the reading content and support future learning goals.

Teaching inquiry

What teaching strategies (evidence-based) helped Miss Rose's students learn?

Differentiating the task

- Miss Rose had organised senior students to act as buddies for the juniors and had taught them how to support the juniors through peer tutoring. She set up the reading task with the buddies at the beginning of the lesson, and they shared the book with small groups working on one of the task options.
- Miss Rose then concentrated on working with Cindy's group. She gave them each *Lunch for Greedy Cat* and a photocopy of some pages of the book. In this copy, the students used a pen to highlight every place where the words 'Greedy Cat' were written. They were focusing on one-to-one matching and recognising the word 'cat'. As they were currently learning the alphabet and the sounds of each letter, they then looked through the text for every word starting with the letter 'c'. They practised retelling the story to Miss Rose based on what they understood from the pictures. They each took a photo of their favourite page from the book using the iPad. They practised reading the page and used the Book Creator app to record their reflection on the story. They were encouraged to read aloud, with a friend and along with the audio recording of the book.

Learning inquiry

What happened as a result of the teaching, and what were the implications for future teaching?

Miss Rose: *It's important I spend concentrated time every day with these students so I really get to know how they understand concepts of print and the best way to teach them. Having a favourite page laminated is quite useful and I will get them to read this page to the class. Although I know it's mostly rote learning, it's great for their confidence to read to the class and have the class recognise them as readers.*

Cindy: *My name starts like 'cat', but it sounds different. We both have a big 'C'. I got a pink pen and coloured in all the 'c' words.*

Hettie: *I don't like broccoli either - I'd let Greedy Cat have cake 'cos it starts with 'c' too.*

Through differentiations and adaptations, the teacher provided support for students to access the task.

With your colleagues, discuss:

How do you ensure that **all** students can access texts and develop as readers?



Teaching inquiry

What teaching strategies (evidence-based) helped Miss Rose's students learn?

Adapting strategies and materials

- Mai Ling needed some adaptations to access the task. Miss Rose checked:
 - that Mai Ling had her slope board to support the reading book and make it easy to see
 - if Mai Ling wanted her buddy to help her turn the pages
 - that the reading activities were organised in the classroom so that Mai Ling could independently use her walker to access them.
- Rikki was most likely to engage with learning material when it was presented on the desktop computer in the classroom. Rikki's senior buddy had read *Lunch for Greedy Cat* onto the computer. During the lesson, Rikki listened to the text. The computer also had software to support vocabulary and word recognition. Using this, Rikki listened to words from the book and clicked on the corresponding picture which made the written word appear on the screen.
- Mrs Conti, the class teacher's aide shared the story and flashcards with Rikki's parents using Dropbox so he could share his schoolwork at home with his family.

Learning inquiry

What happened as a result of the teaching, and what were the implications for future teaching?

Mai Ling's mum: *She seems to be doing just fine with her work. The big thing for me is getting her to recognise when she is tired or might need help and to ask for it. She doesn't need any special plans or anything and she's keen to go to school, so it's all good really.*

Principal: *When I walk into that room, I always see Mai Ling being an active, participating member of the class, just like her peers.*

Jack (senior buddy): *I sat with Rikki when he was listening to the story. He was looking at me, and I think he knew it was my voice on the computer. Rikki can't talk, but I'm sure he can read 'cos he pushes the button and turns every page, and smiles when the words come up.*

Miss Rose: *I'm noticing that Rikki seems to spend longer listening to the books in his library than he used to. I wonder if some of his family might like to read books for him onto the computer. He might like to hear their voices at school.*

Rikki's dad: *We have the same software as school on the home computer. Rikki won't repeat at home any work that he's done at school, but he sees us look at what comes home, and it's good for us to know what he's doing. The computer is a useful way to get Rikki involved in learning. We don't always do the same home tasks as other kids in the class, but sometimes we do things in other ways. We have a good relationship with Emily (teacher) so we just text or email with how things are going at home.*

The teacher provided practical and technological adaptations to help her students access the reading task.

With your colleagues, discuss:

What kind of adaptations could you use to improve your students' access to tasks?



Teaching inquiry <i>What teaching strategies (evidence-based) helped Miss Rose's students learn?</i>	Learning inquiry <i>What happened as a result of the teaching, and what were the implications for future teaching?</i>
<p>Allowing for multiple ways of responding</p> <p>Miss Rose was aware that she needed to plan a range of reading responses to the text. Each response targeted a group of learners' next steps based on their reading goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cindy, Matthew, Hettie, and Henry's group (level Red 1) was learning to recall the order of the story and attend to the initial letter in a word. The activity that involved ordering pictures from the story and matching a 'food word' to each picture was developed for this group. • The activity in which students wrote words that rhyme with 'cat' supported Mai Ling's group (level Green), who were developing their knowledge of rhyming words. Mai Ling was able to type her words on the iPad then used her voice to capture her sentences. She then shared this with a buddy. • Rikki likes cats and had brought his cat to school recently to share with the class. He drew a picture of his own cat and with the support of the teacher's aide wrote about her under the picture. Rikki copied words like 'cat', 'brown' and 'my' from the flashcards while the teacher's aide wrote the rest of the sentence. 	<p>Miss Rose: <i>Planning the reading responses can take longer due to the way I am catering for group needs, but it's definitely worth it. Students are getting better at selecting the task that meets their group's goals and not just one they feel like doing because it looks fun. I try not to direct them to the task but refer them back to their goals sheet to think which task meets it.</i></p> <p>Mai Ling's mum: <i>I like the way Miss Rose considers Mai Ling's needs from the start in class activities. Mai Ling tires easily, so writing can be difficult for her. She is getting better at writing on an iPad using the on screen keyboard.</i></p> <p>Mrs Conti (class teacher's aide): <i>I noticed the high engagement from the class with the activities. Rikki loves cats and just wanted to tell his classmates, Miss Rose, and me all about his cat again.</i></p>
<p>Assessing to recognise learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miss Rose assessed an aspect of Rikki's word knowledge using word cards from the story of <i>Lunch for Greedy Cat</i>. She put two word cards on the desk in front of him (e.g., 'cat' and 'Katie') and said, <i>Show me 'cat'</i>. He pointed correctly to the words 'cat', 'cake', 'mum', and 'meow'. 	<p>Miss Rose: <i>Today Rikki and I spent some time looking at his Greedy Cat flashcards. I think Rikki has learnt lots of new words, and I'm learning, too, about how best to teach him and recognise what he knows.</i></p> <p>Mrs Conti: <i>I noticed that Rikki is now pointing to the start of the word on the flashcards, and for the first time he spelt the word 'cat' independently. Miss Rose suggested that I should add in other words that start with 'c' and see if he recognises 'c' and can sort them into groups with the same initial letter.</i></p>

The teacher planned a range of reading responses that allowed all students to work independently.

Read more about ways to [differentiate the classroom programme](#) to ensure that curriculum content and expected responses to it are adjusted to each student's strengths and needs.

With your colleagues, discuss: How do you ensure that **all** your students are able to access planned reading responses and experience success in the shared reading lesson?

The teacher used modelling books and flashcards to assess reading achievement, and learning stories to share individual goals.

Teaching inquiry

What teaching strategies (evidence-based) helped Miss Rose's students learn?

- Miss Rose used a modelling book with each reading group as a way of collecting ongoing evidence of learning. She and her students all wrote in the book, and she wrote students' names beside the responses. For example, when working with Cindy, Matthew, Hettie, and Henry, she was observing how each student put words together in simple phrases, used initial letters to decode new words, and which punctuation they knew. She had drawn a table at the bottom of the page and wrote the students' names in the grid as she noticed.
- Miss Rose and Mrs Conti had set up an individual blog for Rikki to share his learning with his family. Rikki's IEP goals include interacting with his classmates during learning activities, and engaging with a chosen book on the computer and turning the pages. The teacher's aide made notes when she noticed Rikki engaging in a positive way with his peers and materials, and she took photos and videos to capture evidence of Rikki achieving his IEP goals. She posted the photos and videos to the blog to document Rikki's learning, and she showed the photos and video to Rikki to see if there was anything he'd like to add. Over time, these posts began to demonstrate Rikki's progress and achievement.

Learning inquiry

What happened as a result of the teaching, and what were the implications for future teaching?

Miss Rose: *The modelling books are really useful in maths for gathering evidence over time, so I decided to try them in reading too. I use the table approach all the time, as it's a quick way to record against the literacy progression indicators. Today I noticed that all students were attending to initial letters in unknown words. Henry and Cindy need further support to read with some expression when there is an exclamation mark. I'll get their buddies to practise with them next week.*

Miss Rose: *Using technology such as video and photos are an excellent way of capturing learning. This year we're trying a blog as it's more interactive and evidence of Rikki learning can be added at school or by his parents at home. The use of small video snapshots has been a hit. Rikki is really keen to show his classmates and his parents each video as it's posted to the blog.*

Rikki's mum: *I loved reading about how Rikki is learning lots of new words. We did a similar task at home – we all use little whiteboards as placemats now. I write words on them at teatime and we practise them. Rikki is really fast at trying to recognise the word. His brother wrote "Dad is greedy" on his placemat. Rikki looked at it and must have understood because he pointed at his dad and really laughed. I wrote about this on Rikki's learning blog for his teacher and teacher's aide to read.*

Read more about how [contributions from whānau](#) can help you build a rich knowledge of the learner.



With your colleagues, discuss:

How do you ensure meaningful assessment to recognise learning for **all** your students? How can you ensure that **all** students have sufficient opportunities to practise and respond to content?



Next steps

Now that you have explored this example, work with colleagues to:

- consider the challenges and opportunities in relation to inclusion for *your* students
- decide on the next steps in your English teaching to ensure *all* your learners are participating, learning, and achieving
- plan for a future meeting to review the impact of your next steps and what *now* needs to happen.



Recommended resources



[Ready to Read Teacher Support Material](#) can be found on [Literacy Online](#).