

Trend Task: The Plum Tree

Approach: Station

Focus: Writing a story ending

Resources: Video recording on laptop computer

Year: 4 & 8

Questions / instructions:

This activity uses the computer.

Click **The Plum Tree** button to play the video.



VIDEO SCRIPT:

[Melanie Drewery and Tracy Duncan (2002); *Nanny Mihi's Garden*; Reed Books; Auckland; New Zealand]

A beautiful plum tree grew in our street.

But all the children in the neighbourhood were really scared of the person who owned that plum tree. That's why we used to call her Nanny Scary.

Every morning, when we were on our way to school, Nanny Scary would come out of her front door. Then she would shout at us,

"Oi! You kids, you've been stealing my plums! I'm going to get you!"

One day when we were playing a game, our ball landed right in her plum tree...

The story has not been finished.

Write an ending for the story. If you already know this story, try to think of a different ending.

You have about 5 minutes to write your ending.

Continuity:

(follows appropriately from reading)

good

62 (55) 86 (80)

some

34 (34) 13 (20)

does not follow storyline

4 (11) 1 (0)

Achieving closure:

(rounding out the story)

very cohesive, satisfying ending

10 (9) 36 (25)

quite cohesive, most elements

pulled together

29 (21) 38 (41)

some sense of completion

41 (46) 19 (27)

story not completed

20 (24) 7 (7)

Creativity/originality:

high creativity

9 (3) 24 (15)

moderate creativity

44 (39) 57 (57)

low creativity

47 (58) 19 (28)

Total score:

6-7 13 (8) 40 (27)

5 20 (10) 28 (29)

4 16 (25) 13 (18)

3 19 (17) 10 (12)

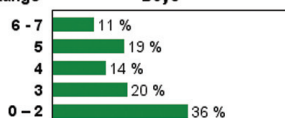
0-2 32 (40) 9 (14)

Subgroup Analyses:

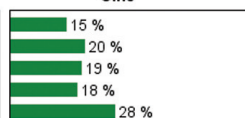
Year 4

Score Range

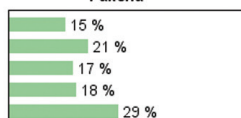
Boys



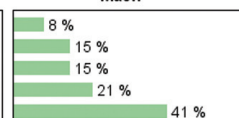
Girls



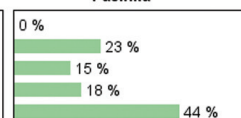
Pakeha



Māori



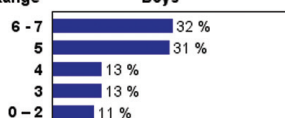
Pasifika



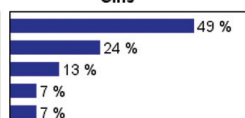
Year 8

Score Range

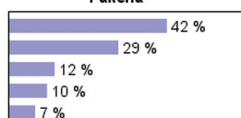
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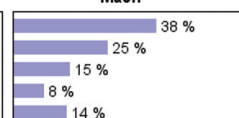
Girls



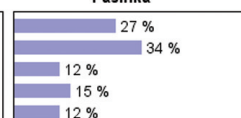
Pakeha



Māori



Pasifika



Commentary:

Many students managed the basic elements of this task well but only 13 percent of year 4 students and 40 percent of year 8 students achieved a strong conclusion to the story. There was a moderate improvement in performance at both year levels between 2002 and 2006. At year 8 level, 17 percent more girls than boys achieved the top performance level.

YEAR 4 – MID RANGE

"Oh no" the children said and ran away and hid. After that they came out of their hiding places. Soon the children had picked up courage and had started climbing it. A child reached our their have when... "Hey" said Nanny scary get down from there so the children did. First they grabed the ball, and sneaked a plum or two. A few hours later the children were playing happily.

We couldn't grab the ball. We are so scared of Nanny Scary. She will say we are stealing ~~our~~ her plums. Then one day she went for a ride with her aunty. Then every one tried to get their ball back but they never could. Then they saw some one very tall and aksed him to get the ball down he got it down but the lady saw him and said you've been stealing my plums.

The children come to get their ball they Were so scared that they didn't make one single sound they got over the fence and one of the children climbed the tree then suddenly When he neally got the ball the branch broke then the lady heard something she came out and she saw the branch on the ground and heard someone sniff and said who was that you little Boy what are you doing in my plum tree hurry get out of there before I get you. The little Boy said I was only comming to get my Ball please let Me. the other kid said please, please, please. Then the ladie said fine I'll let you get your stuid ball Down but you have to promise you will kick your ball over someone elses fence and the little kid thank you so much and lived happily ever after.

"Go away or else" so the kid's ran away and went home. Then they told their mum about their day. The mum asked if they had been bothering nanne scary they liad and said "no." Then they ran to their rooms. They started playing and they never bothered nanne scary again.

and we did not want to go over because she is scary said the 2 boys. Then Nany scary came out and said what are you doing in my plum tree she said. Wwwwe are getting our ball she said. Well then I will get it for you. That was the first time they herd hersay that. She got the ball and said here you go then they were best friends with Nany scary.

YEAR 4 – HIGH RANGE

we didn't wnat to go and get our ball because nanny scary would growl us. We left our ball in the plum tree but when we were walking to school one day we climdbed the plum tree to try and get our ball but then nanny said get out of ~~our~~ my plum tree well I tried to get down but I couldn't but when I was up there I got some plums to take home. I heard the bell go and I was late to school. When I got down it was lunch time and I was hungry so I went to school. I had a big lunch well I had a plum That I got of the tree for lunch to. I had a scary time up in the tree but I got the ball.

oh no We siad how are we ment to gwet our ball Now I know said one of the boys And he told them the plan. One of the boy picked a Plum the lady ran after him why (while) he was doing that the other boy climbed up the tree and got it back down we have our ball back he shoutled and then they both ran home why (while) the other boy gave her back the plum when they were home the boy who got the ball gave everyone a plum and the laghg (laughed) good job everyone he siad.

One of the kids was to scared to go into the old laddies ~~bae~~ yard but the other boy was a bit ~~eldere~~ older and braver so he quietly slipped into the old ladys yard climbed up on to the first branch and "bang!" the old ladys door swang open as soon as she got outside she spotted the boy in the tree She was so angry her face went bright red then in the tree the boy was really scared he climbed even more up the tree and his head hit the ball and the ball fell out of the tree and the other was gone the boy who was still in the tree had no branches to hold on to he fell out and ran away.

We went through her gate and looked up It was nanny scary! She stomped on our ball and it popped!! We ran out of her gate and ran home She yelled "I'm going to get you". We called all the kids in the neighbour-hood, We need a meeting! Nanny Scarys plum tree is bugging us all! "I want to make some delicious plum juice" one kid said. Another kid said "I want to make a huge tree hut" everbody was shouting and arguing some girls started screaming. The next day we went over and talked to nanny Scary we offered to make her plum juice and we would scoop up all the rotten plums that fell on her lawn. She said yes! So now nanny scary is nanny happy and we have yum plum juice and a cool tree hut!

The Plum Tree : Exemplars

YEAR 8 – MID RANGE

"Oh no" I said. "This is bad" said Jhonny. We knew we had to get the ball out other wise nanny scary would be mad. Jhonny, being the stupid one, decided to try and climb up the tree. He jumped over her fence and started climbing up the tree. I stond on the road watching him. About half way up he stoped and picked a plum of th tree. "Holy moly theese are the best plums ever" he said. "Thats nice Jhonny but your ment to be getting the ball" I said slightly frustrated. He kept on climping until he could reach the branch that the ball was in. He shook it and the ball fell... down onto nanny scarys roof. It hit with a thump. I just ran. I don't know what happened to jonny though. I haven't seen him since.

So we went over to the plum tree and started to climb it the ball was right up the tree. It took us a while to get the ball and finally I got it when we reached the bottem Nanny Scary was waiting for us She growled us then she told me that all we had to do was ask for some plums and that we should have asked if we could our ball so from now on we call her Nanny Nice because she was really nice but we never knew it.

We didn't know what to do so we went up to her front door and knocked. She opened the door and shouted "You kids get out of my yard or I will hit you" we ran away till we couldn't hear her anymore. We had to think of a new plan to get our ball back.

So that night we snuck out of hour houses and met by her house. We were both scared but we built up enough confidance to get it back we snuck through her fence and climbed up the plum tree untill we reached our ball we go it and we picked as many plumbs as we could carry. Then we ran back to our houses as fast as our legs could carry us then incase she woke up. The next day we were walking to school and the plum tree was bare and thats how we got our ball back from the old Nanny scary.

When that happened one of the kids were forced to go over to the house. One kid went there. Suddenly there was a scream the kid ran out and they never got it back. So they decided to face their fears. They all went over there are climbed the tree. They got the ball. Then came the old women nanny scary. They got a good look at here face. They weren't scared. So they took plums from the tree and ate them with great relish. So nanny Scary moved out.

YEAR 8 – HIGH RANGE

Scattering a dozen of the juicy red fruit on the soft grass. One of us dodged over the short wall and scampered up the bright trunk, as lithe as a squirrel. I held my breath as he returned to my side, laughing uneasily. We hid behind the wall, but Nanny Scary didn't come. My over-confident best friend, Shay, let out a deep hearty laugh. "Well, old Nanny Scary is a bit slack on the job now, isn't she?" Shay sniggered. "How about I fetch us some lunch?" I nodded half heartedly, then gasped in alarm as Shay swung himself over the wall and ducked down behind the tree, hastily scooping up plu- luscious plums. He tossed one to each of us and pulled a face at Nanny Scary's window. Most of us kids started munching our plums, but we all grimaced at how sour and bitter they were. The juice inside was brown and gungy, and half the kids gagged or choked. Soon there lay a pile of half eaten plums at the base of the wall. Shay was still in the garden, with his back against the tree and a smug expression on his face. He hadn't noticed ~~how~~ what we were doing. Soon we heard a gentle snore and we realised he was asleep. Suddenly, the door opened and Nanny Scary poked ~~his~~ her gnarled face out. I rushed in to help Shay as she marched over to her plum tree. I had never seen her this close before! Her crooked nose was like a dagger pointing out of her frowning face. Her eyebrows sliced downwards towards the beginning of her nose. "So you've tasted my plums, have you?" she growled, picking one herself and biting into it. I grimaced as I watched the foul sludge running down her chin. "Perhaps you'll treat me with more respect after this!" She woke Shay and forced him to eat ten of her ghastly plums, as he writhed in agony. No child even glanced at the tree again.

Nobody was brave enough to go and get the ball from Nanny Scary's plum tree, so they all decided to go home. Except for Jack. He wanted his ball back, so he jumped over Nanny Scary's fence and ran as fast as he could to the plum tree. The ball was caught in the fork of a branch which was too high for him to reach. He hung of a lower brance and shook it with all his might. A few plums fell down, but no ball. So he pulled himself up onto the branch and made his way to were the ball was struck. He climed through branches and leaves stained by plum juice and bird poo, but his eyes remained on the ball. He almost fell out of the tree when he heard:
"Oi! Get out of my plum tree you theif! You've been stealing my plums haven't you!"
He leaped down the the branches, grazing and cutting his arms and legs, jumped the fence again and bounded home, eager to leave that crazy old Nanny Scary behind him.

Once every fort-night on a Saturday Nanny Scary picks her plums, probably for some evil witch potion. Someone had got another ball and they were playing cricket while Nanny Scary was gathering her fruit. Jack saw her holding holding the largest plym she'd ever seen, when she bit into it. Realizing that it was no plum, the ball came out of her mouth with her false teeth stuck in it!

We didn't know what to do. We knew that if she found our we'd be doomed. So within minutes we ran home to try & figure out how we were going to solve this problem.
"How about spray painting the ball the same colour as the plums?" Someone suggested. It was a good idea, until one morning when Nanny Scary picked the ball up thinking it was a plum.
"Why, this isn't a plum!" she exclaimed as she bit into the hard rubber ball. Her face lit up in a red hot fire colour as she stompped outside of her house glaring us all in the eye.
"You kids have been messing with my tree again, wait till I tell your parents." Nanny Scary had a long discussion with all our parents in the street, ~~when it finally finished~~ that went on for hours. It was weird what Dad & Mum had told me that night.
"You kids destroyed Nanny Scary's plum tree & stealing the plums from it. All you had to do was ask her for one!"
I sat on my bed listening to Mum in silence. "What's going to happen now?" I asked.
"Nanny Scary is moving to a retirement home... as well as the plum tree!"
All of us kids had a mini meeting after we all heard the news.
About a week later Nanny Scary moved the tree. We were all gutted no more ripe juicy plums to steal.
The for sale! sign went up the next day. ~~We all crowded~~ The 'sold' sign went up the day after. We all crowded around to see who our new neighbours were. An old couple probably in their 70's. We all watched to see them move in with all their valuables. A grand piano, garden gnomes, big wooden wardrobes. Not bad & an apple tree...

