

Hideous and Hilarious

Teacher Notes by Raymond Huber

Introducing History:

Look at the title and the cover picture. What kind of stories do you think these might be?

Name 5 important events about New Zealand's history. See if they are found in the book. Note: This could be a whole class voting activity.

Read the 'Introduction' by Barbara Else. What is her job as editor of a collection of short stories?

What does 'the past' mean to you? How far back can you remember—what's your earliest memory?

'History is about facts' –page 9- but do you agree with this? State why or why not. Many of these stories are not true yet they are called 'history' stories. Why is that?

How do people find out what happened in the past? Where do they look? How do we know if information is true?

'History repeats itself'. What does this mean? If we know about the past, can it warn us about not making the same mistakes? (Consider the war stories in this book.)

CREATIVE WRITING

Point of View

Many of these stories are written from the point of view of a child.

Stories 1, 3, 5, 11 and 15 for example, What are the advantages of

this kind of story-telling? How does it help put the reader 'on the spot'?

Write a paragraph that describes your very first memory from your viewpoint. Now rewrite the scene from the point of view of someone watching you.

Two stories are written from an animal's point of view. See stories 39 and 30. **Retell** story 3 from the bird's point of view.

* **Write** a description of the world seen through the eyes of a New Zealand native animal. Your adventure could be about a pigeon flying or a gecko being kidnapped.

* **Retell** Story 18 from the moa's point of view.

Endings

Some of the stories leave unanswered questions. Read stories 26, 27 and 18.

* **Write** an ending for Story 26 that explains what happens when they go up the secret path.

Write a **letter** to continue Story 27. Imagine your letter is from someone 50 years in the future.

* **Write** a sequel to Story 18, about another of Dr. Clock's adventures in time (past or future).

Language Features

* Descriptive language: Read story 3. What kind of words are used to describe the earthquake? **List** some of the verbs and adjectives.

'A concrete ocean' is an effective metaphor. Why? **Draw** this scene.

'Like a drunk giraffe' is an amusing simile. **Write** some similes to describe wild movements using other wild animals. Illustrate them.

* Sayings: Read story 13. What does the saying 'the bee's knees' mean? (page 73)

Define these bee sayings:

'busy as a bee'

'she was the queen bee'

'they swarmed around me'

'a hive of activity'

'like bees to a honey pot'

Illustrate one of the sayings in cartoon form.

* Puns. Words that have a double meaning are used in story 25.

Explain these puns: 'a close shave', 'on the right track', 'a tip-off'.

TRADITIONAL TALES

What is a 'traditional story'- page 10- and why is it important to people from a particular country?

Legends: Legends are tall stories told in all cultures. Legends may have some basis in fact. Real events, heroes, and animals are exaggerated.

Read story 2. What kind of bird might Pouakai have been in real life?

Research Haast's Eagle. Read Historical Note 2 on page 153. Find the book about Kopuwai by Queenie Rikihana Hyland.

Read story 11. What other ape-like legendary monsters is this based on?

Read story 24. What real life animal might this be like? Draw a picture of what you think the monster is like.

Design a movie poster for one of these legendary monsters: Bigfoot, dragon, kraken, taniwha, yeti, Loch Ness.

Nature myths

Nature myths are stories told by cultural groups to explain the natural world- such as landscape features, the seasons and fire.

Read story 14. What geographical feature is explained by this?

Draw a comic strip version of Suna getting bigger.

Write a myth that explains an unusual landscape feature in your area, eg. a hill, river, cave etc.

Read story 16. What does it mean about stories 'floating in the rivers, resting on distant mountains, carved into every bay...'?

Read story 24. This story may be an explanation of whirlpools or dangerous animals in the sea. **Paint** a whirlpool.

Fairy Tales

Read story 29. **List** the fairy tales referred to in the story. In which country did the Grimm brothers collect their fairy tales?

What are the New Zealand equivalents of fairies, dragons and giants?

Read story 24. This is like a fairy tale. **Identify** similarities to Rumpelstiltskin, Puss in Boots, Wolf and the 7 Kids, Jack the Giant Killer.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Gold Mining

Read story 1. **Research** gold miners in Otago using the internet and books. How did they get the gold out of the ground/ rivers? **Draw** a diagram of one method. Where is gold still mined in New Zealand? Read story 30. Why was it called a 'gold rush'? What countries did the miners come from? What was a bushranger?

Living in the Past

Read story 4. **Compare** the daily jobs, food and transport on page 31 with life today. What technology do we have today that's different? Read story 15. **List** the winter English traditions we still practice in our summer Christmas (see notes on page 156). Read story 25. What is the machine pictured? How has the technology of washing clothes changed over hundreds of years? **Illustrate** a timeline showing changes.

Immigration

Many of the stories are about migrants to New Zealand.

Chinese: Read story 8. Which Chinese customs were different to New Zealand ways? How was grandmother's childhood different to Mei's life?

Italian: Read story 21. What 'gold' did the Italian bring to NZ?

German: Read story 29. **Translate** these German words mean from the context: abschied, Weihnachten, Neuseeland, Lebkuchen, pfeffernusse, Gluhwein, Deutschland.

Interview someone who has come to New Zealand from a different culture. Why did they come here? What attitudes have they experienced from people here?

War

Read story 10 and story 26. Why were the Europeans fighting against the Maori? **Research** this. Do children still fight in wars in the world? What is your **opinion** about this.

What does the white bird symbolise in story 10?

Read story 13. Why were the Marines in NZ? (see note on page 155). Why was sugar rationed? Why do guns make people feel different? (Page 73)

Read story 28. What happened to the ANZAC soldiers (see note page 159)? Why is this a very effective anti-war story (even though the war is barely mentioned)?

Role of Women

Read story 8 and story 12. What was the role of women over 100 years ago? How were girls treated compared to boys? Was this fair? Is it true today?

Debate topic: A mother's role is to bring up her children.

SCIENCE

Geology

Read story 3. What causes earthquakes like this? Why did the sea go out? **Map** the 5 major quakes in New Zealand from the past.

Read story 7. Why did the hill explode when the water poured in? (page 45). What is a 'shock wave'? What is under Lake Taupo now? Read story 20. List the dates of eruptions of Ruapehu in the past 20 years.

Draw an illustrated **diagram** of the world's 5 biggest volcanic eruptions (including Taupo). Show the size of each.

Zoology

Introduced Animals: Read story 9. Create a **timeline** of events showing the spread of rabbits.

Humans introduced many animals to NZ that have caused problems. What have these animals done?: hedgehogs, rabbits, rats, cats, stoats, ferrets. Introduced animals wiped out many native birds.

Illustrate a *Wanted poster* for one of these deadly predators: weasel, rat, feral cat.

Whales: Read story 5. What were whales hunted for? (see note p. 153). Did the Maori hunt whales? (Read *The Last Whale* by Renee van de Weert). What is the problem with hunting whales today?

CLOSE READING

Story 2- Pouakai

When in history does this story happen? What clues tell you this. How did people survive then? What kind of bird traps were there?

Draw the trap, then **design** a different trap for Pouakai.

Do you feel sorry for the bird? How have sharks suffered from a similar fear?

Compare with Sindbad's adventure with the giant Roc bird.

Create a story-map of the main events in the tale.

Story 3- Billie Blue

Why did he mention 'real' butter and jam?

Why is Billie acting so strangely?

Are animals sensitive to disasters? Find out.

Read another version of the Napier disaster.

Story 5-Whale Watching

What was 'flogging' and 'firewater' (page 34)?

Why did they throw sea water over him?

What might the whale have had? page 37.

Why did he not tell a lie?

What does 'whale watching' mean today?

How has the attitude to whaling changed?

Story 9- Uncle Russell's Revenge

Why are the words 'sporting purposes' repeated?

Are rabbits defenceless?

Debate- Is it right to hunt wild animals for sport?

There is a lot of alliteration here. What does 'robust and resilient' mean? 'Rampant reproduction'? 'Ran roughshod'?

Write a short poem about rabbits using only the letter 'r' if possible.

What does the last line mean?

Story 16- Legend of Hape

Every name has a story. What does your name mean?

What is 'club foot'?

Was it fair to send only the strong and good-looking on the expedition? (page84). **Explain** your answer.

Is it fair to exclude people with disabilities from some activities or jobs. Consider people like Stephen Hawking.

What does he 'defied time and space' mean?

What is a karanga?

Story 17- Silly Old Goat

'Poor doesn't have to mean scruffy'- what does this mean?

What would you do in this situation? For example, an adult has lied to you or ripped you off.

Why do adults often get believed before children?

How did she get revenge?

Story 22- The Clay Boy

What time in history is this story set in? Is it fact or invention?

Why was it considered 'bad' to draw pictures?

What did a man need to learn in those days?

What kind of attitude did the boy have?

Draw an animal picture with clay, chalk, burnt wood and rock. Which is best?

Find out where cave drawings are found (see page 158).

Story 25- The Tip-Off

What does the title mean?

Do you have habits you are told off for?

How many different ways could Grandad have lost his finger tip?

How much could a penny buy in the 1930s?

What does micro-surgery do?

Write a story about an injury you have had.