

Level  
4–5

Literacy Learning Progressions –  
Reading and Writing

# A Guide to Supporting Reluctant Readers and Teaching Learning and Reading Strategies

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# Section 1: Reluctant Readers

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## ► About the reluctant reader

A 'reluctant reader' is a reader that for some reason is finding it difficult to engage in reading. It could be a cognitive, social, behavioural or learning difficulty. One of the first things that needs to happen is that teachers need to determine if they have reluctant readers in their class.

If you have reluctant readers in your class, then you need to determine why they are reluctant readers.

Some reasons for being a reluctant reader might be that they have challenges with:

- comprehending what they read
- motivation or self-esteem
- selecting engaging texts
- remaining interested in texts
- concentration and focus, or
- learning, or have
- special education needs.

How to identify a reluctant reader from a teacher's perspective:

- Do you have a student who has to be coaxed into any type of reading task?
- Do you have a student who appears to be 'off task' when they are supposed to be reading independently?
- Do you have a student who finds it difficult completing reading comprehension tasks?
- Do you have a student who uses distraction or avoidance techniques when probed about their reading?

If the answer is 'yes' to any of these questions you may have a reluctant reader in your class.

How to identify a reluctant reader from a students' perspective (a student diagnostic self-check):

- I know how to choose a book that I enjoy.
- I enjoy reading.
- I can stay focused while I read.
- I find reading easy.

If the student answers 'no' to any of these questions you may have a reluctant reader in your class.

► **About *Whakamīharo Mai* and *He Māia, He Toa, He Tangata Noa***

*Whakamīharo Mai* and *He Māia, He Toa, He Tangata Noa* are specifically designed to engage reluctant readers in years 7-10. The aims of these books are to:

- help learners develop the literacy knowledge, skills and strategies required to meet the reading demands of the curriculum
- provide content to motivate, excite and engage them in reading.

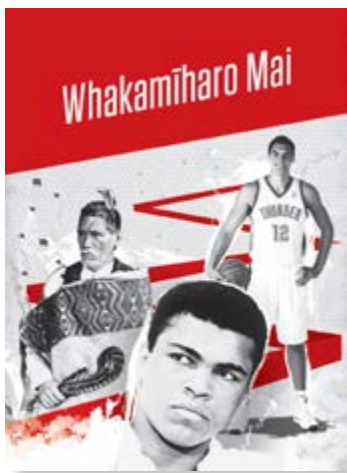
*Whakamīharo Mai* and *He Māia, He Toa, He Tangata Noa* use topics, genres, text types and formats to deliberately engage all readers, whether they are reluctant or successful, boys or girls. They cover interesting topics such as famous sportspeople, amazing facts and inspirational historical recounts. The books use a narrative approach with positive role models to engage readers, as well as providing a range of visually stimulating illustrations and formats.

What can reluctant readers get out of *Whakamīharo Mai* and *He Māia, He Toa, He Tangata Noa*?

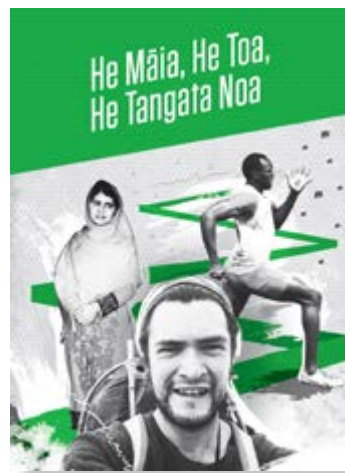
- Enjoyment and engagement in reading
- Literacy knowledge, skills and strategies at the relevant level on the Literacy Learning Progressions framework.

What can teachers use *Whakamīharo Mai* and *He Māia, He Toa, He Tangata Noa* for?

- To learn about and understand reluctant readers
- To teach the literacy knowledge, skills and strategies that are important for reluctant readers
- To learn how to support reluctant readers to read and learn.



*Whakamīharo Mai*  
Years 7-8  
Level 4



*He Māia, He Toa, He Tangata Noa*  
Years 9-10  
Level 5

# Section 2: Learning to Learn

One of the most useful tools you can give your students is the tool of ‘managing self’, where young people are empowered to make decisions and stand on their own as individuals. This is particularly important when students are reading. Having confidence is often the difference between a reluctant reader and a successful reader.

The following set of strategy bookmark cards are for students to use in class. Students (reluctant readers and successful readers) can use them while they are reading to help them problem solve reading issues independently. This means that teachers can continue working with other groups and students can learn to internalise the strategies that can help them be successful independent readers. The student could keep the bookmark card on their desk as they are reading to remind themselves of the strategies that they should use to help them while they read.

## Vocabulary strategy for reading

### Word Detective

An area that reluctant readers can find challenging is understanding a wide range of words and their meanings. One of the ways that students will learn new words is through independent reading. Through this they will be exposed to a range of words and their meanings. This ‘Word Detective’ strategy will help students to develop skills in problem solving when they come across a word they don’t know.

## Vocabulary strategy for reading

If you are reading and don’t know a word ...



### Be a Word Detective

**1. Stop!**

**2. Think**

**3. Ask yourself:**

Have I seen any words similar to this before?

What did those words mean?

Can I work out what the word means from reading the rest of the sentence?

Can I work out what the word means from reading the rest of the paragraph?



**Vocabulary and comprehension strategy for reading**

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If you are reading and don't know a word or what something means ...



Ask a Friend

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- 1. Stop!**  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Think**  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Ask a friend:**  
Have you seen this word before?  
What do you think this means?

**Vocabulary and comprehension strategy for reading**

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**Ask a Friend**


If students are having difficulty understanding a word or a concept in a text sometimes it can be useful for them to approach a peer in class for support before approaching the teacher. This strategy will support the student to confidently approach other students as a collaborative learning strategy.



**Vocabulary and comprehension strategy for reading**

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If you are reading and don't know a word or what something means ...



Turn on your Brain

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- 1. Stop!**  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Think**  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Turn on your brain!**  
Have I ever done anything like this before?  
Have I ever learnt about this topic before?

**Vocabulary and comprehension strategy for reading**

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**Turn on your Brain**

One of the most powerful tools for readers is the tool of confidence. This strategy will help students to feel more confident in managing a task that is feeling challenging or difficult. It will give them tools for dealing with concepts that are hard and problem solving them rather than giving up.



### Comprehension strategy for reading

If you are reading and don't know a word or what something means ...



## Solve the Puzzle

1. **Stop!**

2. **Think**

3. **Solve the puzzle!**

What do I think this means?  
Could this sentence have been written in another way, or shorter?  
Can I put this sentence in my own words?  
Do I have a question about this sentence?

### Comprehension strategy for reading

#### Solve the Puzzle

Sometimes students may find it difficult to understand a text because a sentence construction is complex or confusing for them. This might be because it has a number of unknown words in it (they may need to use the 'Word Detective' strategy) or it may be because it is a compound or complex sentence. This strategy is designed to teach students how to decode the sentence by looking at why the sentence is confusing or complicated and then trying to understand it.



### Engagement strategy for reading

If you are reading and find yourself getting distracted ...



## Change your Focus

1. **Stop!**

2. **Think**

3. **Ask yourself:**

Are my eyes on the book?  
Am I still concentrating?  
Am I disturbing anyone?  
Do I need help staying focused?

### Engagement strategy for reading

#### Change your Focus

Reluctant readers can easily be disengaged in class and lose motivation. They can get distracted easily and distract others. It is important for reluctant readers to learn to manage themselves to remain on task and focused so they can have success with their reading and learning in general.

# Section 3: Reading Activities for *Whakamīharo Mai* (Years 7–8)

Title	Characteristics of text	Synopsis	Key strategies used in reading activity
<a href="#">‘Ka Whawhai Tonu Mātou mō Ake, Ake, Ake!’ Comprehension Task</a>	<p><b>Writing Purpose:</b> To explain and describe</p> <p><b>Text Type:</b> Factual recount</p> <p><b>Text Structure:</b> Description, sequence and order</p>	A historical recount of the Battle of Ōrākau.	Activating prior knowledge Predicting Comprehension Evaluating Skimming Scanning Inferring Monitoring
<a href="#">‘Te Tino o ngā Tino’ Timeline Activity</a>	<p><b>Writing Purpose:</b> To describe</p> <p><b>Text Type:</b> Personal description</p> <p><b>Text Structure:</b> Description, sequence and order</p>	This article profiles the great boxer, Muhammad Ali. The reader is taken on a journey through significant events in his life that really highlight his outstanding qualities, demonstrating why he is one of the greatest boxers of all time. The information is presented in the form of a timeline from his birth to the present day.	Identifying the main idea Skimming Scanning Summarising Inferring Evaluating
<a href="#">‘Ngā Mata o te Ariki Tāwhirimātea’ Event Map</a>	<p><b>Writing Purpose:</b> To explain and describe</p> <p><b>Text Type:</b> Narrative</p> <p><b>Text Structure:</b> Description</p>	This article shares the least commonly known version of Matariki. It tells the story of this constellation from the perspective of Tāwhirimātea. Peppered throughout this article are scientific facts that support this traditional narrative piece.	Identifying the main idea Skimming Scanning Summarising Evaluating
<a href="#">‘Ngā Pitopito Kōrero Mīharo’ Information Table</a>	<p><b>Writing Purpose:</b> To describe</p> <p><b>Text Type:</b> General description</p> <p><b>Text Structure:</b> Description, compare and contrast</p>	With a style similar to the <i>Guinness World Records</i> , this article will engage and excite the reader with 20 amazing and interesting facts. This is an article that lends itself to comparing and contrasting.	Skimming Scanning Summarising Synthesising
<a href="#">‘Poaka Nui – Ka Mate, ka Ora, ka Mate’ Narrative Plot Graph</a>	<p><b>Writing Purpose:</b> To explain and describe</p> <p><b>Text Type:</b> Personal recount</p> <p><b>Text Structure:</b> Sequence and order</p>	A light and funny personal recount of a pig-hunting expedition gone wrong.	Identifying the main idea Skimming Scanning Summarising



## ▶ 'Ka Whawhai Tonu Mātou mō Ake, Ake, Ake!' Comprehension Task

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- Activating prior knowledge:** Before we start reading this book write down three things you know about the New Zealand Wars or three questions you have about the New Zealand Wars.
- 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
- 

- Prediction task:** This story is called 'Ka Whawhai Tonu Mātou mō Ake, Ake, Ake!'
1. What do you think will happen? 2.
  2. Who do you think it is about? 3.
  3. What do you think the characters in the story will do? 4.
  4. If you were in a battle what would you do/how would you feel? 4.
- 

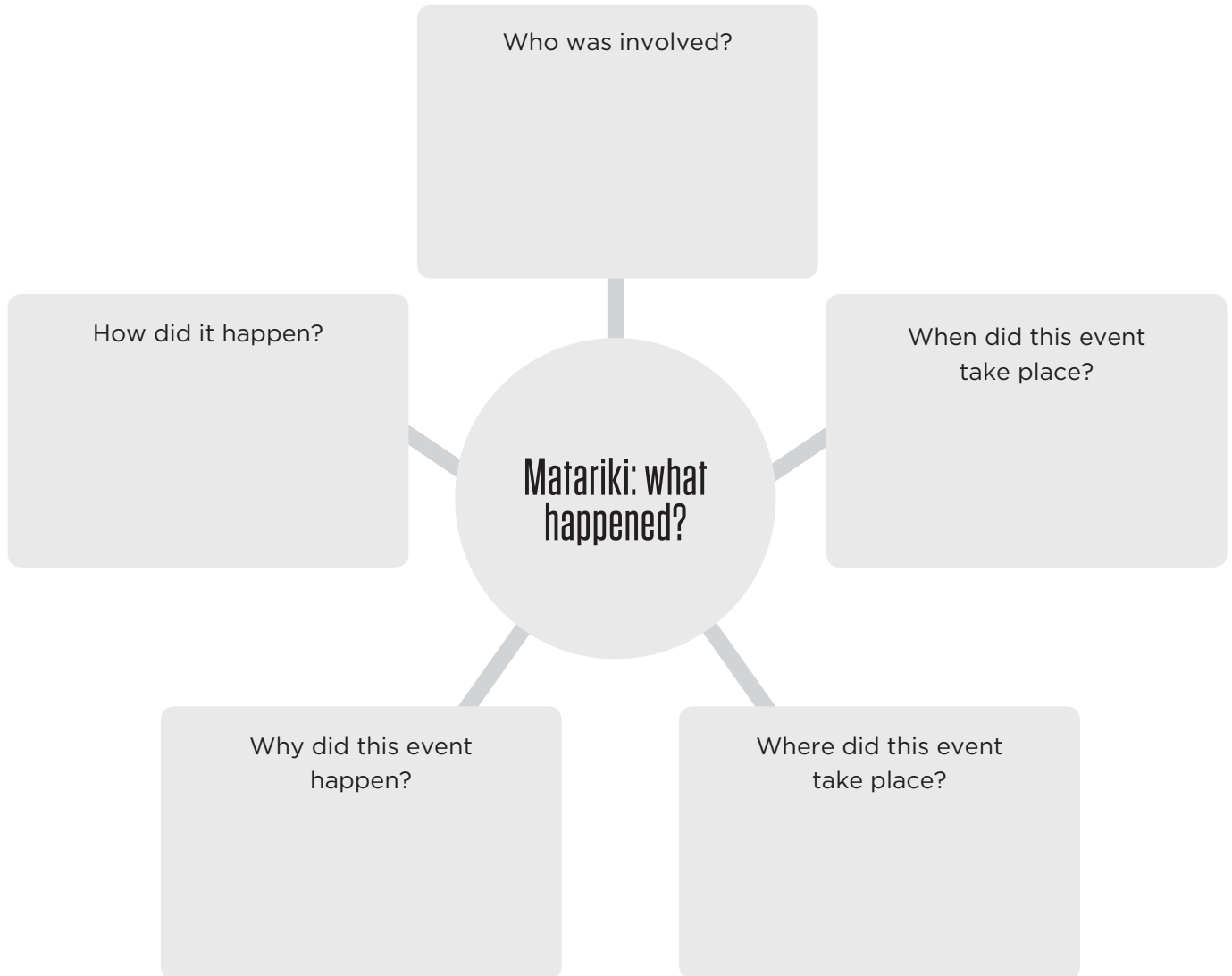
- Comprehension:**
1. Where did this battle take place? 1.
  2. Who was fighting? 2.
  3. How many people were fighting on each side of the battle? 3.
  4. What happened? 4.
  5. Why were they fighting? 5.
- 

- Evaluating the text:**
1. How did this text make you feel? 1.
  2. What do you think the author is saying? 2.
  3. What is your opinion about what happened? 3.
-



## ► 'Ngā Mata o te Ariki Tāwhirimātea' Event Map

Read the story 'Ngā Mata o te Ariki Tāwhirimātea' and then fill in the following Event Map.



Write a paragraph explaining why this origin story is important to us now:

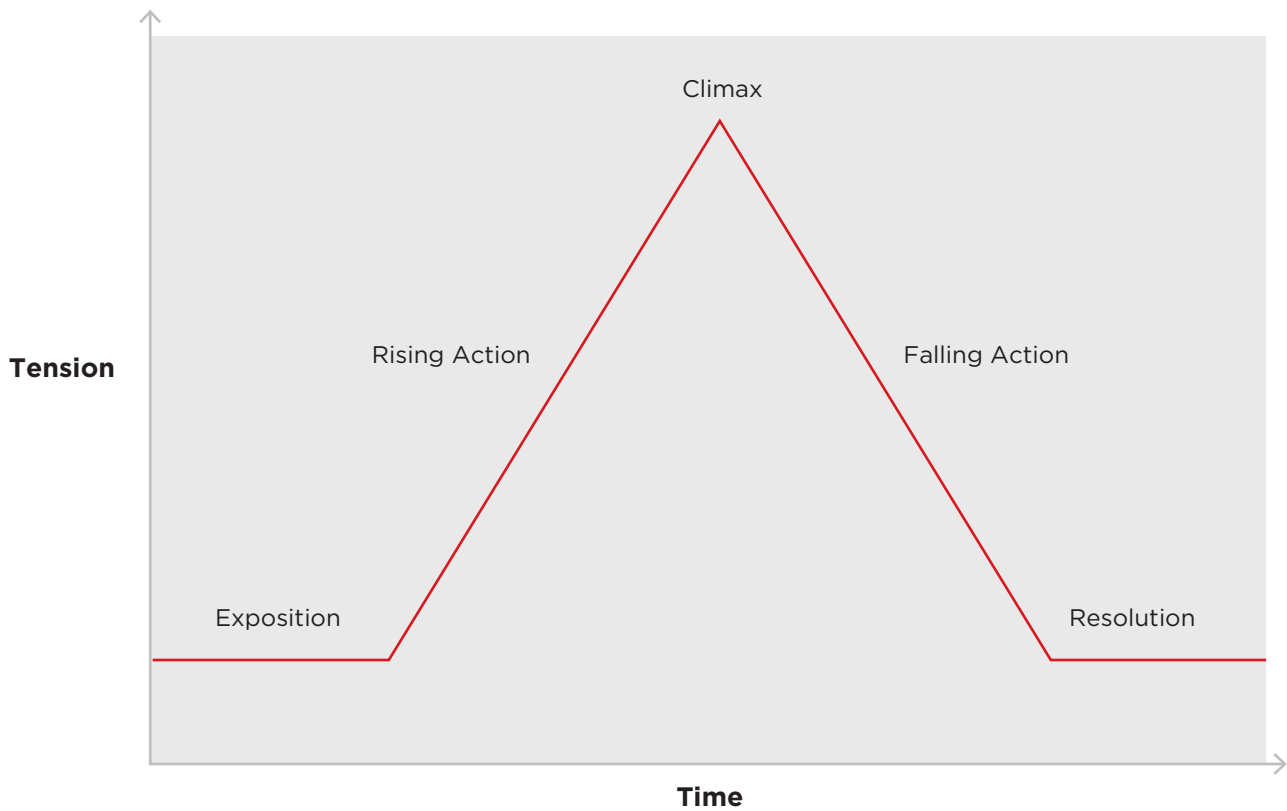
## ► 'Ngā Pitopito Kōrero Mīharo' Information Table

Read through the 'Ngā Pitopito Kōrero Mīharo' article. Choose the top 10 most amazing facts. Rank the facts from 'most amazing' to 'least amazing' and then complete the rest of the summary table.

	What happened?	Who was involved?	Why was it amazing?
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

## ► 'Poaka Nui – Ka Mate, ka Ora, ka Mate' Narrative Plot Graph

Read the story 'Poaka Nui – Ka Mate, ka Ora, ka Mate' and then answer the questions after referring to the narrative plot graph.



### Describing the narrative arc of the story:

What happens in the exposition of this story?

What happens in the rising action of this story?

What happens in the climax of this story?

What happens in the falling action of this story?

What happens in the resolution of this story?

# Section 4: Reading Activities for *He Māia, He Toa, He Tangata Noa* (Years 9–10)

Title	Characteristics of text	Synopsis	Key strategies used in reading activity
<a href="#">‘He Toa Taumata Rau’ Comprehension Task</a>	<b>Writing Purpose:</b> To describe and explain <b>Text Type:</b> Factual recount <b>Text Structure:</b> Sequence and order	This article takes the reader on a journey through Te Rauparaha’s life, from birth to death. It describes some of his greatest feats, expeditions and challenges.	Activating prior knowledge Prediction Monitoring Identifying Summarising Inferring Synthesising
<a href="#">‘Ngā Tino Māui-tikitiki Toa o ēnei Rā’ Information Table</a>	<b>Writing Purpose:</b> To inform and entertain <b>Text Type:</b> Personal description <b>Text Structure:</b> Description	This article profiles 10 daredevils and risk-takers through mini-biographies. It will inform, excite and engage the reader with short, sharp interesting facts about 10 people from around the world.	Skimming Scanning Summarising Evaluating Inferring Synthesising
<a href="#">‘Usain Bolt’ Characterisation Description Activity</a>	<b>Writing Purpose:</b> To describe <b>Text Type:</b> Personal description <b>Text Structure:</b> Description, compare and contrast	This is an article about the fastest man in the world – Usain Bolt. It has many aspects that will engage the reader. It describes his origins and personal characteristics, and highlights his achievements in a way that will really wow the reader. The article compares him with other runners both past and present, and with the cheetah, and reveals how to run with great speed and agility.	Skimming Scanning Summarising Inferring Evaluating Synthesising
<a href="#">‘Mai i Muriwhenua ki Murihiku’ Characterisation Graphic Organiser</a>	<b>Writing Purpose:</b> To describe <b>Text Type:</b> Personal description <b>Text Structure:</b> Description	This article shares the story of Jory Akuhata’s mostly bare-footed journey from the tip of the North Island to the bottom of the South Island. It explains to the reader the goal he set for himself, the journey it took to achieve his goal, the challenges he overcame and the things he learnt along the way.	Identifying the main idea Skimming Scanning Summarising Inferring Evaluating Synthesising

## ► 'He Toa Taumata Rau' Comprehension Task

<p><b>Activating prior knowledge:</b></p>	<p>Before we start reading this book write down everything you know about the haka 'Ka Mate'.</p>	
<p><b>Prediction task:</b></p>	<p>This story refers to the haka 'Ka Mate'. What do you think the story might be about?</p>	
<p><b>Comprehension:</b></p>	<p>What words would you use to describe Te Rauparaha?</p>	
<p><b>Going beyond the text:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Brainstorm all of the different ideas that are talked about in this story. For example: whare wānanga, war.</li> <li>2. Pick one of these ideas and come up with a key research question that you are interested in investigating.</li> <li>3. Come up with three open-ended research questions.<sup>1</sup></li> <li>4. Complete your research task.</li> </ol> <p>1. An open-ended question is a question that requires more than a one-word answer. For example, What was one of the effects of this war on the people of the area? or, Why do you think the people chose to do this?</p>	<p>Ideas in 'He Toa Taumata Rau':</p> <hr/> <p>My research topic:</p> <hr/> <p>My questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol>

## ► 'Ngā Tino Māui-tikitiki Toa o ēnei Rā' Information Table

Read through the 'Ngā Tino Māui-tikitiki Toa o ēnei Rā' article. Rank the feats from 'most amazing' to 'least amazing' and then complete the rest of the summary table.

	What happened?	Who was involved?	When and where did it happen?	Why was it an amazing risk to take?
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				

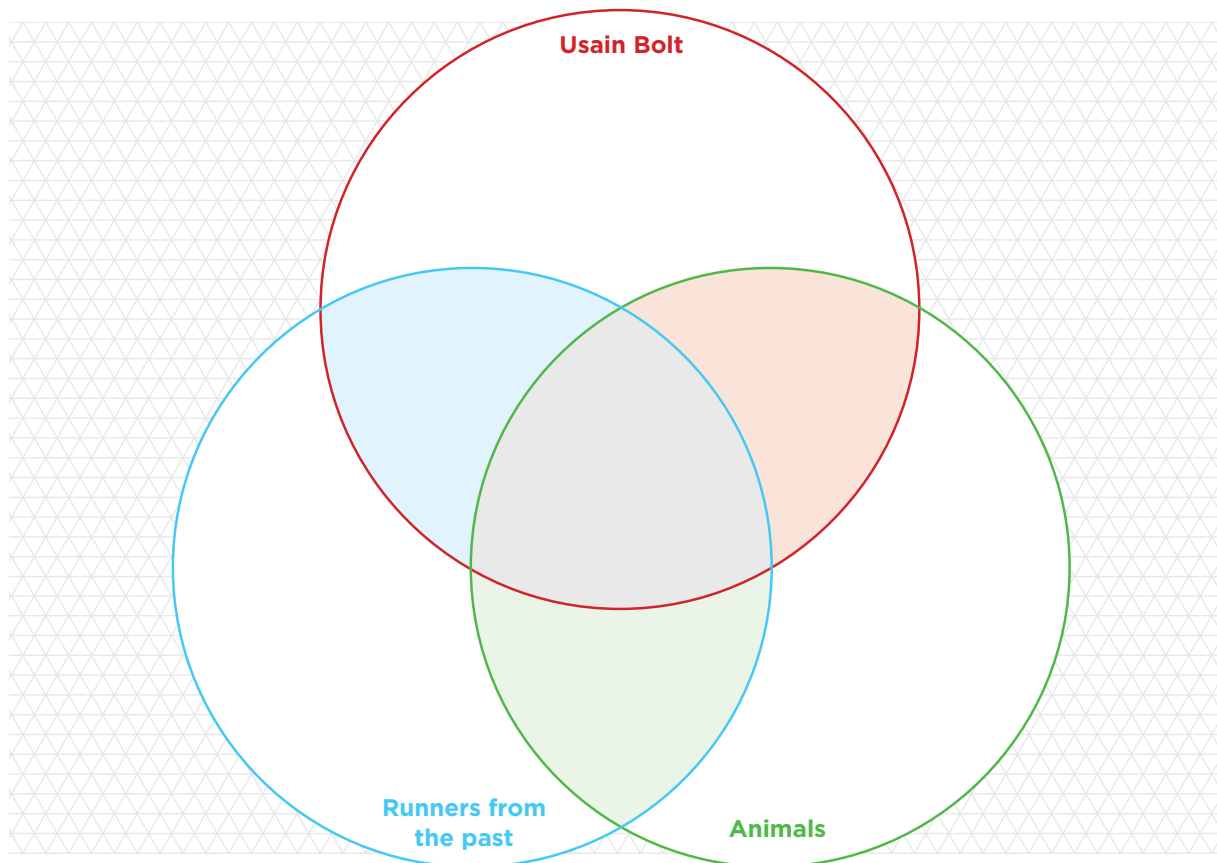


## ► 'Usain Bolt' Characterisation Description Activity

Fill in the following compare and contrast chart to show the characteristics of the different groups in the story about Usain Bolt.

- Any words or phrases that you would use to describe just Usain Bolt, write in his circle only.
- Any words or phrases that you would use to describe just the animals, write in the animals' circle only.
- Any words that you would use to describe just the runners from the past, write in their circle only.
- Any words that you would use to describe two groups, or all three groups, write in the part of the circle that overlaps.


Or you could select another group, individual or animal that is not in the story such as a well-known sportsperson to compare and contrast with Usain Bolt. You may need to carry out some research to complete the activity.



Write a paragraph summarising what this chart tells us about Usain Bolt:

## ► 'Mai i Muriwhenua ki Murihiku' Characterisation Graphic Organiser

Read the story 'Mai i Muriwhenua ki Murihiku' and complete the graphic organiser below about Jory's journey.



Jory's goal:

Words to describe Jory's personality:

Some of Jory's challenges:

Words to describe Jory's appearance:

Things Jory learnt from his journey:

Things I learnt from Jory's journey:

# Section 5: In Pursuit of Success

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## ► Reflection Writing Task

How does it feel when you hit a barrier or try something new to achieve a goal?

All the stories in *Whakamīharo Mai* and *He Māia, He Toa, He Tangata Noa* are about people who have achieved something incredible by overcoming barriers, rising to challenges or trying something new. Sound familiar? Think about a time when you came across a barrier or took on a challenge, something that might have been difficult or new.

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What were you doing?

---

When you came across the barrier/challenge describe what you could see:

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When you came across the barrier/challenge describe what you could hear:

---

When you came across the barrier/challenge describe how you felt:

---

What did you do when you came across this barrier/challenge?

---

What did you learn about yourself?

## ► Bravery Task

Each of the stories in *Whakamīharo Mai* and *He Māia, He Toa, He Tangata Noa* are about people who showed bravery and courage as they worked to overcome their barriers and achieve their goals. Complete the following activities to help you think about the concept of bravery and courage.

1. Do some further research into one of these individuals and create a poster about who they are, what they have achieved and the barriers they have overcome.
2. Design a medal or trophy for one of these incredible people. Make sure the award recognises their incredible achievement visually.
3. Write a speech about one of these amazing people. Make sure you include who they are, what they achieved and the barriers they overcame to achieve their goal.
4. Keep a journal for the next week documenting anything that was difficult. Think about what strategies you used to deal with the challenge and what strategies you could have used.

Journal Template:

<b>Day:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
What happened that was good:	
What happened that was challenging or difficult:	
What I did to deal with the difficult moment in my day:	
What I could have done to deal with the difficult moment in my day:	

## ► Goal Setting Task

In each of the stories in *Whakamīharo Mai* and *He Māia, He Toa, He Tangata Noa* the people set themselves goals and work hard to achieve these great feats. Use the following template to set yourself a goal that you want to achieve. Maybe it could be linked to reading? Or rising to meet a challenge in your life at the moment?

### SMART Goal

<p><b>S</b></p> <p><b>Specific</b></p>	<p>What do I want to achieve?</p>
<p><b>M</b></p> <p><b>Measurable</b></p>	<p>How will I know I have achieved my goal? Quantity? Level? Amount?</p>
<p><b>A</b></p> <p><b>Achievable</b></p>	<p>How can I make sure that I achieve this goal?</p>
<p><b>R</b></p> <p><b>Realistic and relevant</b></p>	<p>Is this a helpful goal for me right now? Why?</p>
<p><b>T</b></p> <p><b>Timeframe</b></p>	<p>When will I achieve this goal by?</p>

# References and Resources for Further Reading

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