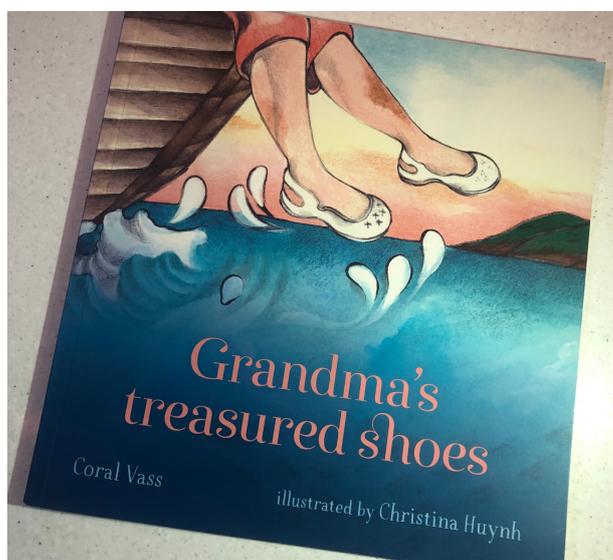




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Interacting through Reading No 1: Grandma's Treasured Shoes



Lesson Sequence Overview

[Grandma's treasured shoes](#) by Coral Vass and Christina Huynh (2020, National Library of Australia) begins with Grandma in the present and moves back in time to her home country through simple yet carefully chosen descriptions of Grandma's shoes and their role across her life. One particular pair of shoes are 'treasured' as they represent memories and her journey as a refugee fleeing Vietnam. To complement the book, The story of refugees in Australia is told in an informative section at the back of the book, focusing on the arrival of the Vietnamese by boat in the 1970s.

The following learning sequence has been designed to maximise interaction and engagement with the book and to connect to the experiences and identity of students as they are supported through carefully designed tasks before, during and after reading the text. Through the strategies and interactions learning has been designed to link reading and writing through use of the teaching and learning cycle (Derewianka & Jones, 2016 and Rossbridge & Rushton, 2015).

It is necessary to read the book several times before implementing the sequence. The following table summarises strategies designed for interacting with the book.



Before Reading	During Reading	After Reading	Writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'I notice ...' • Prediction and confirmation chart • I see, I think, I wonder • Listening for key information • Identifying inspiration • What are treasured shoes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading without interruption • Return to Prediction and confirmation chart • Reread with think alouds • Reread whole text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making connections to text • Drawing treasured shoes • Interview • Noticing word choice 	Purpose: to describe Form: poem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modelling / text deconstruction • Joint construction • Independent construction

Before Reading

'I notice ...'

Display the front and back cover of [Grandma's treasured shoes](#). Using the stem 'I notice ...', ask students to record what they notice on post it notes and share with the class. Point out that the title is a noun group with 'Grandma's' and 'treasured' describing the shoes in terms of who they belong to (note apostrophe) and their value.



Prediction and confirmation chart

Record predictions using the following statements on a prediction and confirmation chart. Return to confirm after reading.

Statements	Prediction before reading		Confirmation after reading	
	True	False	True	False
The book is about Grandma's favourite shoes.				
Grandma is on the front cover.				
Grandma will be the main character in the book.				
Grandma likes to buy lots of shoes.				
The main character is sitting on a jetty.				
The book is about losing shoes at the beach.				
The book is set in Australia.				
The book is set in a particular time period.				

I see, I think, I wonder

Display a range of images related to the context and setting of the book. Complete the [I see, I think, I wonder visible thinking routine](#) (Harvard, Project Zero) by asking:

- What do you see?
- What do you think about that?
- What does it make you wonder?



Responses may be recorded for connecting to after reading. Ask students if any of their thinking might connect to 'Grandma's treasured shoes'.

Listening for key information

Tell students that they are going to watch a video about refugees ([BTN, 2015](#)) that will help them think further about the broader context of the book including the historical, social and physical setting. Before viewing allocate one particular question to students or pairs.

- What can threaten the lives of people in some countries?
- What is a refugee and what is the origin of the word refugee?
- What countries have many refugees come from in recent years?
- How do refugees arrive in many countries?
- What surprised you?
- What puzzled you?

Whilst viewing the video, students listen for information particularly related to their question and record responses. After viewing, students form groups with each student having responded to a different question. Students share and discuss their responses. Regroup after sharing and ask students what the video may have to do

with [Grandma's treasured shoes](#). Predictions may also be revisited at this point as contextual knowledge may result in different predictions.

Identifying inspiration

Locate the name of the author and illustrator on the cover of [Grandma's treasured shoes](#). Visit the [website of Coral Vass](#). Jointly highlight information about inspiration for the text and its content. For example, the collage of different refugees' shoes, the image of the actual shoe that inspired Christina Huynh and artefacts her family members brought with them on the boats from Vietnam to Australia.

Students can also watch Coral Vass on [CBCA NSW Branch Lunchtime Storytime with Coral Vass reading Grandma's Treasured Shoes](#) (3:13–10:22) discussing her inspiration. They can add or confirm any other points regarding inspiration. Links can again be made to the front cover.

What are 'treasured shoes'?

Provide students with a list of types of shoes represented by noun groups. Ask students to indicate if they themselves would consider particular shoes to be 'treasured'. Use the [Think, Pair, Share visible thinking routine](#) (Harvard, Project Zero) to discuss what might make a pair of shoes 'treasured' and how this reflects the values and experience of individuals. Students may add others to the list.

Would these be 'treasured shoes'?	Yes	No	Unsure
beach shoes			
red shoes			
grown-up success shoes			
walk to the park shoes			
fearful shoes			
salty but safe shoes			
ballet shoes			

During Reading

Reading without interruption

Discuss connections made to the cover with the before reading activities and then read the whole text without interruption. (Preferably the book is read by the teacher or a reading by Coral Vass can be found at [CBCA NSW Branch Lunchtime Storytime with Coral Vass reading Grandma's Treasured Shoes](#) (10:40–18:10).

Prediction and confirmation chart

Return to the prediction and confirmation chart and ask students to confirm their predictions by justifying with reference to the book.

Reread with think alouds

Reread [Grandma's treasured shoes](#) using think alouds. For example:

- I notice the end paper at the beginning of the book has small hearts floating.
- I wonder if the picture is of Grandma and her granddaughter. I'm not sure if both are characters in the text (p2).
- I wonder what 'oodles and oodles of shoes' means and what that tells us about Grandma. The use of 'has' makes me think the focus is on the present (p3).
- I notice many different pairs of shoes named with noun groups and shown in the images (p4-5).
- I notice a shift with the use of 'but' and the phrases 'from a long time ago' and 'a land far away'. This is shown in the image. I wonder about the setting of time and place. Maybe this connects to what we have learnt about refugees and Vietnam (p6-7).
- I notice the use of noun groups again but they all describe one pair of shoes. Could these be the treasured shoes? They are described and shown as less positive but special at the same time (p8-9).
- The use of 'Once' shifts the setting back in time. The shoes are described with noun groups in many different ways. They are described based on their everyday use (p10-11) but then there is a change (p12-13) and then they are described to show fear and action (p14-17).
- As she leaves on the boat, the description changes again (p18-19). I wonder how she feels on arrival as her shoes are replaced with 'new shoes' and then a range (oodles and oodles). The adjectives in the noun groups seem positive. I think they make her feel happy in her new home (p20-29).
- There are items in the cupboard that remind me of images of Vietnam. I notice that Grandma kept her shoes from Vietnam. They are now described with a more extended noun group – 'the weary little pair that led her here' (30-31). I think that's because they are her treasured shoes.
- I notice the shoes are finally described as 'our most loved shoes'. I wonder why the word 'our' has been used.
- I can see that the text at the end of the book is information about refugees coming to Australia. The images remind me of some of the images we looked at before reading. I think this information helps to make what seems like a simple book far more interesting and complex (p34-35).

Reread whole text

Read the whole text again without teacher interruption. Students may wish to add their own responses during this reading. The text may be read several additional times throughout the lesson sequence.

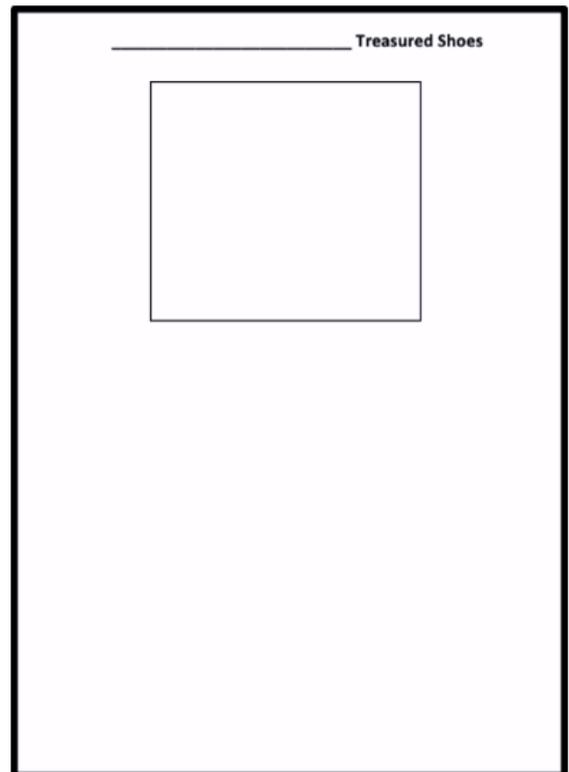
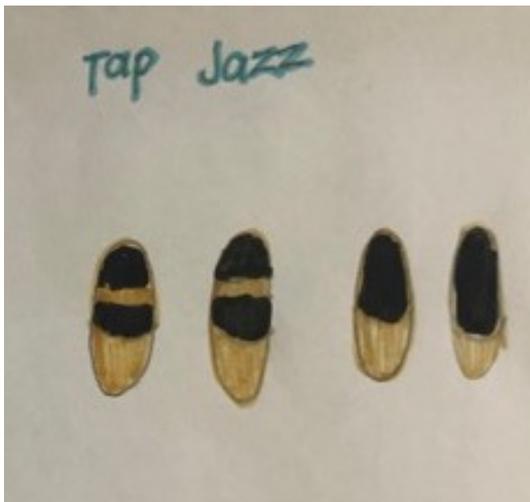
After Reading

Making connections to text

Read the information text about Australia's Refugees and the Author and Illustrator at the back of the book. In small groups, ask students to add post it notes to the main text to make connections to the information text and to previous knowledge or knowledge developed before reading.

Drawing 'treasured shoes'.

Ask students to draw their own shoes that have been 'treasured' at some point during their life. Use a proforma that they will later write on. Students state why their shoes are treasured in a sharing circle.



Interview

Provide students with an interview table to record responses to the questions below. In pairs ask one student to take on the role of Grandma while the other student interviews Grandma. Repeat the process with students interviewing other students in the class. Repeat again by asking students to interview a family member at home. (This could become the planning for constructing a piece of descriptive writing about each person and their treasured shoes.)

Where were you born?

Where else have you lived?

Can you think of a pair of treasured shoes?

Do you still have the shoes?

Can you describe the treasured shoes?

Why are your shoes treasured?

Noticing word choice

Ask students to identify the range of adjectives describing shoes throughout the book. Place on word cards and ask students to group based on what they notice about the words and their meaning. For example, words may be grouped as positive or negative, special or everyday, from the past or present, giving qualities or implying action etc.

Focus on grouping words in terms of those adjectives giving a quality to shoes, eg fancy, plain, old, muddy, as opposed to those that convey a sense of movement, eg. working, walking, racing, escaping. Ask students what it is that gives this feeling and point out the addition of the suffix 'ing' to what would normally be verbs but in this case they are adjectives as they are describing the main noun. Locate in the text where the adjectives with the 'ing' suffix tend to occur. This is clear particularly in the section of the text where Grandma flees Vietnam. Discuss how this choice makes the reader feel or react.

Writing

Modelling / text deconstruction

Display a model text (eg p14-19 from [Grandma's treasured shoes](#)) or the teacher may write their own model text as in the example below. Have the **verbs** and **noun groups** colour coded. Ask the students to share what they notice about the text.

Whilst talking out the text make the following explicit:

- I think the text reads like a poem that describes.
- The choice and description of the shoes is particular to the character/writer and reveals much about their identity.
- It seems like simple language but the choices across the poem are very carefully chosen to tell how the writer feels about the shoes and how the connection to the shoes has changed over time.
- The first and last stanzas are positive but for different reasons. The middle two stanzas are more negative feelings about the shoes but the shift in time and experience changes the feelings towards the shoes.

Jo's Treasured Shoes



They **were** holiday shoes,
Exciting shoes, travelling shoes,
Adventure through Italy shoes.

Concerned shoes, confused shoes,
Anticipating shoes and unpacked
shoes.

Disappointed shoes,
Hidden shoes,
Rejected shoes,
Covid shoes.

They **became** stay at home shoes,
Acceptance shoes,
Dog walking shoes.

- The text is dominated by **noun groups** with the adjective choices across the text being key to the shifts in meaning.
- There are only two **verbs** (were, became) which are **relating verbs** that assist with describing and also the use of 'became' shows the change in the description of the shoes.

Joint construction

Select another pair of 'treasured shoes' from the teacher, or a student or use an example from the interviews conducted earlier. Before constructing display an image of the chosen shoes. Jointly construct another poem. Revisit the purpose and the response the writer would like from their reader. Encourage students to justify the choice of noun groups to describe shoes, particularly the choice of adjective to convey changes in meaning from the past to present, quality to action and everyday to treasured.

The purpose of joint construction is to handover to the students so there should be 50/50 participation between the teacher and students. This will require the teacher to facilitate the writing but in particular the conversation about the text based on the modelling and metalanguage used in the modelling/deconstruction lesson. This can be achieved through thinking aloud, posing open questions and pausing to invite students into the conversation. Other strategies such as think, pair, share and writing ideas on mini whiteboards as well as sharing the pen are useful for ensuring joint participation in the process.

Independent construction

Students independently write their own poem about the shoes they have already drawn and shared with others. Encourage them to think about the language choices in the model text and joint construction. Some students may choose to write in their first language. For students needing additional support, continue with small group joint construction or pair/group writing. Conference after writing to discuss the choices made, particularly regarding the adjectives within the noun groups and how choices show change across the poem.

After writing students share their poem in small groups or with the whole class. Students should also take their poem home to share with their family.

References

- Derewianka, B & Jones, P (2016) *Teaching language in context [2nd Ed.]*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne.
- Rossbridge, J & Rushton, K (2015) *Put it in writing*, PETAA, Sydney.