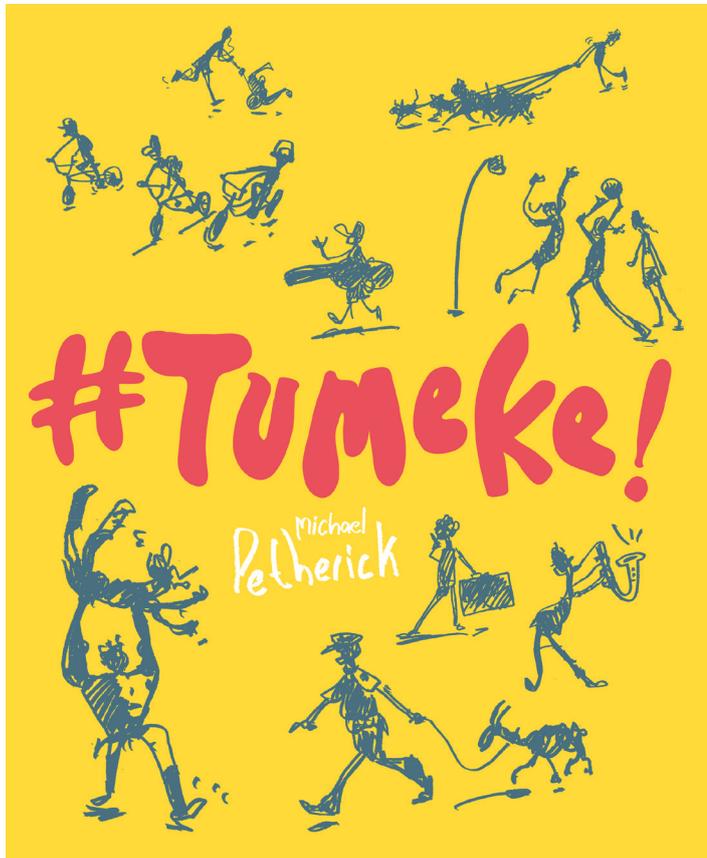




Teacher Notes for Michael Petherick's *#Tumeke!*



Description of the text

#Tumeke! is a playful intertextual work of fiction in the style of an epistolary narrative. The story is conveyed through a variety of modes as Newtown School and its vibrant, supportive community plan a Waitangi Day celebration.

The eclectic text reveals a range of characters (students, teachers, retailers, a policeman, a retired wrestler, vegetarian flatmates, an artist) and covers a period of several months, punctuated by the appearance of the Newtown community noticeboard. Numerous exchanges between characters begin from these notices, forming partial narratives, while other plot lines develop independently.

Many of the communications concern the planning of the Tumeke festival. Others follow characters' relationships, dramas, and interests.

General features

- Epistolary fiction written by a cast of characters using a variety of modes: texting, email, instagram, drawings, chat rooms, posters, notes, photographs, lists
- Set in a multicultural, inner-city suburb
- A central plot that concerns planning and preparing for a community event on Waitangi Day
- Subplots and incidents that give a sense of the wider community culture
- Different-aged characters from diverse backgrounds who are (mostly) part of the inclusive Newtown community
- Numerous relationships that develop and evolve as the plot progresses
- A range of subjects, including friendship, change, death and loss, family, community, music, food, drawing, school life
- An author with a great sense of fun, who enjoys life's oddities (and oddballs!).

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Supporting learning: how to use these notes

#Tumeke! has been designed to appeal to a wide range of ages, and the book can be approached in many different ways. There are plenty of rich opportunities for students to develop their skills as readers and writers, for example:

- text in multiple digital platforms
- unattributed dialogue and text
- discontinuous text
- complex/layered connections and meanings
- a variety of perspectives
- writing styles that demonstrate a wide range of formality and precision

These teacher notes relate to the teaching objectives across all four strands of the English curriculum: purposes and audiences, ideas, language features, and structure. They are not specific to a particular level, though we suggest working with students in years 4 to 8. *#Tumeke!* can also be used to support teaching in other areas of the curriculum.

Start with the suggestions for introducing the text, then select from the strands that best suit your teaching purpose. Mix and match these suggestions to help students use the text as a springboard for their own thinking and creativity

Introducing the text

Allow students time to explore and enjoy the look and feel of *#Tumeke!*, following up on images and features that excite them.

- What draws you in and makes you want to read more?
- Which characters seem interesting? Why?
- Do you have any predictions about how the story might unfold?
- Do any characters or elements seem weird/strange? In what ways?

In subsequent readings, you can use suggestions from the four curriculum-linked sections that support deeper and wider engagement.

Note: In these notes, the term ‘author’ refers to Michael Petherick while ‘writer’ refers to the characters in the text who communicate in a variety of ways.

Teaching Objectives and Activities

Purposes and audiences

1. Teaching objective: identify and evaluate the author's purpose and audience

Discuss the creation of #Tumeke! with the students.

- Who wrote this book? How do we know?
- Who created the noticeboards? The images?
- Why do you think the author wrote this book? Do you think he has achieved his purpose/s?

Activity: making connections beyond the text

Encourage students to think about their own communities. This can lead to a variety of writing/research projects. For example, students could research their own community to create a map or diagram about its people, places, activities, and resources.

2. Teaching objective: identify the writer's purposes and perspectives

Discuss the concept of the book's characters as the writers of the book. Using an example, explore how each writer shapes their text for their purpose and audience. Examples could include the communication between Briony's mother and Ms Ropata (pages 62–63 and 75); or Constable Rutene, his brother Hemi, and the manager of the Newtown International Wiri Crew (pages 111–114).

Activity: innovating on a text

Discuss the communication between Briony's mother and Ms Ropata more closely.

- Imagine Briony's mum and Mrs Ropata happen to meet at the local supermarket. How would they talk to each other? Would they be polite? What would they say? Think about the setting and their roles and reputations in the community.
- Script a short scene in which they discuss Briony and the festival.
- Try out the meeting scene with a friend, then perform it to the class.

3. Teaching objective: evaluate the ways writers use language and ideas to suit their purposes

Discuss the differences between written and face-to-face communication and the reasons for these differences. Under what circumstances does one approach work better/is more suitable than the other?

- Would Briony's mum have had better luck getting her way if she'd arranged to meet Ms Ropata at a cafe? In the principal's office?
- Would Monty and Steve have had better luck arranging a meeting if they'd talked in person or on the phone?

4. Teaching objective: use prior knowledge to interpret abstract ideas

Ask the students to think about the various names used by characters in *#Tumeke!*

- What do you call alternative names people choose for themselves online or elsewhere? (handle, alias, moniker, user name, pseudonym, pen name)
- Why do people do this? List some of the reasons (to be anonymous, to avoid bullying, to be cyber safe, as a disguise, for humour, to show a different persona).

As an example, briefly discuss Pete.

- What do we know about Pete? How old is he? What are his main interests?
- How appropriate is Pete's alias (Deadly Ice Dagger) given what we learn about him?

Activity: exploring character and audience

Encourage students to develop a character study based on one of the writers from *#Tumeke!*

- Choose a character who has a real name and an alias, for example, Mr Tan/Mysterious Dragon or Rishi/the Rhyme Ninja. Use words or drawings to build a profile of that character in the different ways they present themselves. What is the context or setting for each version of the character? What is the audience for each version?

5. Teaching objective: understand the connections between purpose, audience, and modes of communication

As the Newtown festival approaches, the event is publicised in several ways. Compare the use of a blog (page 134), an Instagram (page 141), and a poster (pages 144–145) to attract people to the festival.

- Who is the likely audience for each mode? Why do you think that?
- Which elements of each example show the variety and diversity of Newtown? How will this help attract an audience?
- Can you think of other ways in which interest in the festival could be generated? (radio, fliers, church noticeboard).

Ideas

As the students read the book, support them to make connections between the different ideas in the text and the way the author has chosen to present them.

1. Teaching objective: use connections with prior knowledge to infer meaning

Brainstorm what readers will know about the Newtown community from reading the noticeboards.

- What are the obvious facts about Newtown? What do we know right away from reading the notices? What don't we know?

Encourage students to think more deeply about what the author is showing readers about Newtown. Remind them to consider their own knowledge of a community to support their inferences.

- How does the author show us the diversity of this community?
- Is it a community you'd like to be part of? Why? How does it compare with your own community?

2. Teaching objective: identify and evaluate the big idea or theme

Discuss the main ideas or themes of the book.

- What are most of the items in the book about?
- Why is the festival important? What are the organisers hoping to achieve?
- Is a festival a good way to do this?
- What items in the book tell us that the community values and respects Waitangi Day and what it really means? (Briony's homework on pages 88–89; various notices on the noticeboard)
- Is Tumeke an appropriate name for a festival? Why do you think that?

3. Teaching objective: make connections within, across, and beyond the text

Encourage students to tease out relationships within and between the stories. For example, explore the evolving friendship between Constable Rutene and Anahera Ropata.

- How does the author show us what each character is like?
- How does he show us the way their relationship develops? (don't forget the small details, such as the use of lolly cake images, the hearts on the Tumeke committee minutes, Anahera's list on page 147).
- How does their story connect with the book's main ideas?

Activity: story analysis

Encourage students to innovate on a minor plotline from the book, for example, continuing the text conversations between the Pandits about the curry and cake stall (page 153) or Dreadflock's performance anxiety on page 130. Alternatively, you can provide students with a template to complete for one or more of the stories in *#Tumeke!*

Story analysis template

Who is involved?	How do they communicate?	What do they want?	How do they get what they want?	What is the result?
How does this story help to develop the book's main themes?				

4. Teaching objective: interpret abstract ideas and complex storylines

If possible, copy the noticeboards and committee minutes and discuss their features, beginning with the noticeboards.

- What is the purpose of a community noticeboard?
- What can you tell about the Newtown community from these noticeboards?
- What kind of information do the notices provide?
- What can you tell about the people who made them? What clues tell you this?
- How do the notices move the plot along?

Now look at the committee minutes.

- What is the purpose of committee minutes?
- What kind of information do these ones record?
- How do the minutes change and develop?
- What does the festival planning say about the school and the community?
- How does the author convey the different characters of the people writing the committee minutes? (Jonah, Chilli, Dreadflock) Who do you think wrote the first lot of committee minutes? Why?
- How do the minutes help move the story/stories along?

Discuss other ways the author has developed the plot.

- What are the main ideas in this book? (Community cooperation towards a common goal. Friendships of different kinds – peer, cross-generational. The variety of people, relationships, and negotiations within a community. Learning to adjust to a new environment)
- How has the author developed the friendship and community relationship themes? (The emails between Steve and Monty. Dreadflock’s evolving communications with Jonah and Rishi. The romance between Constable Piripi and Anahera Ropata. Constable Piripi’s exchanges with Goatman and Pete. Anahera’s communications with Briony’s mum. The library notices and messages to Pete.)
- Which communications or stories are most effective at giving us key information about what’s happening with the festival? (The committee minutes. The emails between Constable Piripi, his brother Hemi, and the Wiri Crew manager, Carol. Anahera’s email to the Senior Syndicate. The evolving maps of the festival layout. Anahera’s To Do list. The #Tumeke posts.)
- Which communications and features are most effective at showing the variety of people and activities within the community? (The noticeboards. The festival committee minutes. Dreadflock’s diary and blog. Secondary communications – Gimple Gut, Goatman & Galaxy Man threads, etc.)
- How does the author show Dreadflock’s character and develop the theme of her becoming accustomed to a new environment? (Dreadflock’s diary and blog. Her relationships and communications with Eagle Glasses, Rishi and Jonah. Her book lists.)

Activity: extending a story

Students may enjoy creating an exchange between characters who haven’t connected. For example, review the notices on pages 24–25 (or any other noticeboard) to discuss possibilities:

- Imagine that Gimple Gut (page 34) finds a way to contact the person who wrote the ‘Plants have feelings too’ notice.
- How could they communicate? (email, text, over a milkshake)
- How would this choice affect the way their relationship develops?

Alternatively, students could work on a bigger story based on the notices and exchanges about the Lord of the Rings and Beatles Support group. Ensure they consider how their new text will extend and deepen the book’s themes.

Activity: innovating to make a poster

Provide students with an opportunity to discuss the characteristics of their own school or community. Invite them to work in small groups to plan a real or imaginary festival to showcase it. Encourage them to consider ideas from #Tumeke!, such as the roles that food, schools, services, churches, businesses, and music have in creating a community. They can then design a poster using Steve’s advice.

Language features

1. Teaching objective: recognise and understand the features and structures of a complex text

Explain that the choice of elements used in a text and the way they are put together can have a big impact on engaging the reader to achieve the writer's purpose. With the students, make a list of the digital platforms or modes used in the text. Note that some have fictitious names (Bandwave, Slurp).

- How useful are these modes as a form of communication? Why do you think that? (Think about how many people you can communicate with at the same time. Are you using voice or typed text? Can you include photos, music, drawings?)
- What are the conventions of each mode? (photographs only, very little punctuation or capital letters, an emphasis on the visuals)
- Which modes are best for chatting with your friends? Which are good for more formal communication?

2. Teaching objective: recognise and understand the language features of different modes

Direct the students to review some of the exchanges in *#Tumeke!* more closely.

- Look at page 115. How do you know who's who?
- What conventions are they using?
- On pages 8 and 129, Gary responds to messages with emoji. Why do you think he uses them? What does this tell us about Gary?
- On page 124, Jonah uses Kaomoji (Japanese emoji). What do you know about these? How do you read them? What can you infer about Jonah from this?
- Which modes are best when there are more than two people in the conversation? An example is the way Jonah, Dreadflock, and Rishi 'talk' to each other on page 48. What are the conventions with this mode?
- Compare the Instagram posts made by Cardboy (page 12), Gimple Gut (page 90), and Decibel Riot Squad (page 125). How well does this mode work for them? How does the ability to post an image change things?

Activity: exploring the language features of different modes

Prompt the students to use different modes in their own writing to strengthen meaning.

- Find places in your own stories where characters could use text messages to communicate. Try writing a few exchanges.
- How can you show a character's personality through both the mode they use and the way they use (or mis-use) it?
- What other ways could you include the use of digital modes in your writing or presenting of information at school?

Encourage students to use what they've seen in *#Tumeke!* in their own writing and to experiment with a variety of examples.

Activity: survey the use of digital modes

Students could carry out a survey at school to determine which digital modes are most popular. Ask the students to present their findings to the class and lead a discussion about the relative usefulness as well as the security and safety of different modes.

Alternatively, students could explore the ways their parents and grandparents communicated before the use of digital modes. Students could look at letters or postcards from their grandparents' time then develop a short story using an exchange of postcards or letters. What conventions did they use? How are they different from the ways we communicate today?

3. Teaching objective: understand the way language features are used for a purpose

Dreadflock is a prolific writer in *#Tumeke!* Use some of her text to initiate a discussion about the differences between personal and public communication. Her writing also provides good opportunities to explore writing conventions with the students.

- Compare examples of Dreadflock's writing in her diary (pages 6–7, 26–27), her digital messages (pages 9, 11, 18–19), the minutes she takes (pages 64–65), her comments in chatrooms (page 130), and her blog (pages 134, 138).
- How do these different modes affect her writing style?
- What can you say about her voice in these examples?
- What do Dreadflock's different writing styles tell you about her?
- Why do you think she changes from a diary to a blog?

4. Teaching objective: identify and evaluate the purposes for which a writer selects different language features

Within *#Tumeke!* there are some fine examples of erratic spelling, most notably from Monty.

- Why do you think Michael Petherick used spelling mistakes?
- Do the misspelled words affect how you interpret the messages?
- When do you commonly see misspelled words? Which forms of communication require good spelling?
- Are there forms of communication that don't require perfect spelling? Why?

5. Teaching objective: recognise and understand the language features of informational texts

Examples of student-made informational texts in *#Tumeke!* provide opportunities for exploring the features of this text type. Using the seaweed poster (pages 70–71) and the homework sheet about Te Tiriti o Waitangi (pages 58–59), ask students to identify and evaluate the features of each:

- How is the information presented?
- What features help make the information clear to readers?
- Why do you think one uses a lot more words than the other?
- What is the overall impact of each text? Does each provide an equal amount of information? How would you define information? Do the fun parts of the seaweed poster give information? (seaweed Hairy Maclary, etc.)
- What do you notice about the voice and the style of each writer? How authoritative is each one?
- Would these be good models for your own informational writing?
- Look for other items in the text that have an informational purpose (for example, the how-to items, the minutes, the advertisements). What language features do they have in common?
- Which grab your attention? Why?

Activity: innovating on a text to write a notice

Pairs or groups of students may create a notice for a school or community noticeboard. It can be genuine or made-up, serious, useful, or funny. Encourage them to discuss and plan the notice carefully to ensure it conveys their intended message and vibe. Alternatively, students can create a complete noticeboard with a variety of notices and objects.

Activity: presenting poetry

Invite students to find and copy a selection of the poems and raps in *#Tumeke!* Students can suggest ways to help the poems reach a wider audience. Ideas could include:

- making audio recordings of themselves reading the poems, then sharing the tracks on an audio-sharing platform (or at assembly!).
- working up a performance piece based on Rishi's ninja rhymes and adding some of their own rhymes. Consider using dance, music, or beatbox accompaniment. Perform the work and film it to share with others.

Structures

1. Teaching objective: understand the impact of structure within a story

Ask the students to reread pages 91 and 94–102, thinking about how Pete’s story-within-a-story is told.

- What’s happening here? How has the author structured the information about Pete?
- What does each piece of information tell us about Pete?
- What do we learn about the different writers?
- What can you infer about the values of this community, as revealed by the reactions to Pete’s death?

Activity: writing instructional text

There are many different instructional texts in *#Tumeke!* Use these as models for students to explore in their own writing. Examples include: How to draw a moa (pages 50–51), the Newtown 4-step fist bump (page 85), Steve’s poster tips (page 117), How to write a blog (pages 126–127), the poem ‘How to get away with it’ (page 131), and Exploring Newtown (page 138).

- Using a model from the text, plan and write instructions for an activity you’d like to teach others, for example, how to boil an egg, how to do a tricky skateboard move, how to draw a cat . . .
- When you’ve the steps listed, ask a partner to make sure they make sense, are in the right order, and nothing has been left out. Could illustrations or diagrams make the instructions clearer?

2. Teaching objective: understanding sentence structures

With the students, explore examples of different sentence structures used in a range of communications. Include very brief text messages (sometimes a single word or image), the sentences in the emails from Steve to Monty, and the different styles used by the writers of the committee minutes.

- What do you notice about the kinds of sentence structures used by different writers?
- How does the platform or context change the way people write?
- In text messages, writers often strip away all but the most significant words to get their message across. Which words or structures convey the most meaning in a sentence?
- What is lost when less-important words are removed? Is the meaning still clear? If so, why do we use more words when we’re writing formally?

Activity: exploring sentence structures

Invite students to find two or three examples of writing that use very different sentence structures, for example a text message exchange, a formal email, a notice.

- Rewrite each example in a different way using more or fewer words to convey the same message.
- Compare the ways that different kinds of words are needed to make the meaning clearer, more interesting, or more friendly.