

# For the Teacher: The King's Pudding

Text features to note and sample activities

<p><b>Features of a play text</b></p>	<p>Ask, <i>What is a play? How is a play text different from a story text?</i> A play is a text that is spoken aloud by actors on the stage, on television or on radio.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It has a list of characters—the “cast”.</li> <li>• It is a narrative told in direct speech.</li> <li>• Each character’s turn to speak is indicated by the name before the words.</li> <li>• The characters speak in the present tense.</li> <li>• Direct speech is not enclosed in quotation marks.</li> <li>• It may include stage directions and suggestions for props, costumes and scenery. It may also be divided into acts and/or scenes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional features of this play</b></p>	<p><b>Setting</b> A palace throne room. <i>What do you think a palace would be like to visit? What would you expect to find in a palace?</i></p> <p><b>Characters</b> The main character is the King. The other characters are the Queen, Prince, Princess and the Court Jester. <i>What other stories do you know that have characters like these?</i></p> <p><b>Humour</b> Repetition of the action; visual humour; “trickery” of the most powerful character. <i>Why is it funny when the other characters trick the King?</i></p> <p><b>Visual literacy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional symbols associated with royalty (crowns, thrones, jester’s costume) are shown juxtaposed with modern details (guitar, TV, magazine).</li> <li>• Cartoon characters bear resemblances to modern celebrities.</li> <li>• Visual support is given for maths concepts.</li> <li>• The main action is foregrounded but there is visual interest in the background.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reading and responding</b></p>	<p><i>The King’s Pudding</i> can be used with groups of students at different reading levels. Multi-level shared reading groups provide the opportunity for more confident readers to support their less confident peers. Less confident readers will develop their confidence through repeated readings. By taking on different roles at different times, all students are motivated to read and re-read the text.</p> <p><b>Comprehension</b> Encourage students to use a range of comprehension strategies to respond to the text. Some questions that encourage them to <b>infer</b> and <b>make connections</b> include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Why do you think the King set the table for only one person? How do you think this made the other people feel?</i></li> <li>• <i>What kind of part is the Jester playing?</i></li> <li>• <i>How do you feel about the Jester at the end of the play?</i></li> </ul> <p>Students could <b>identify the main idea</b> in this play, <b>summarise</b> the story or <b>retell the story</b> in their own words. One alternative is to retell the story with different characters and a different object instead of the pudding (e.g., each character takes a share of a bag of gold pieces—each with an excuse).</p>
<p><b>Language/vocabulary exploration and development</b></p>	<p><b>Mathematical/quantitative language:</b> a quarter, half, three-quarters <b>Opposites:</b> hot/cold, sweet/sour <b>Vocabulary relating to eating:</b> munch, gobble, yum, crunch, gulp</p>
<p><b>Focus on sentences, words and letter-sound relationships</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite students to identify the sequence of sentences spoken by the King that shows how the pudding disappears, bit by bit.</li> <li>• Focus on the descriptive (adjectival) phrase “a big, sweet, roly-poly pudding with raisins in it”. Invite students to write their own descriptive phrases (e.g., “a tall, wide, red and gold throne with a crown on it”).</li> <li>• Have students make a word list with all the short <i>u</i> (<i>/u/</i>) words in the play (e.g., shudder, gulp, oven, comes). Compare the sounds made by the letter <i>u</i> in these words and in “pudding”.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Writing activities</b></p>	<p>Extend students’ reading and understanding of play texts by having them create their own scripts from known texts (readers’ theatre) or write their own plays. Some ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>You decide to make the biggest pudding in the world.</i></li> <li>• <i>The royal dog runs away with the King’s pudding.</i></li> <li>• <i>The King makes a special pudding to teach his greedy family a lesson.</i></li> </ul>