

The Christmas Cat

story by [Jacqui Halpin](#) | illustrated by [Douglas Holgate](#)

Prior to reading

[See, think, wonder](#) thinking routine, to explore the title and make predictions about 'The Christmas Cat'.

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

Connecting to the text

[EN2-11D](#)

Background reading: [Strategy explained: text-to-text, text-to-self, text-to-world](#)

- Text-to-text connections occur when we make connections between other texts in relation to the text we are reading.
- Text-to-self connections occur when we make connections between personal experiences and the text.
- Text-to-world connections occur when we relate the text with what we already know about the world.

Text-to-self: Have a class discussion on how do the ideas in this text relate to their own lives, ideas and experiences? Ask students to consider:

- What does this text remind you of?
- Can you relate to the characters in the text?
- Does anything in this text remind you of anything in your own life?
- I understand what I just read because in my own life ...
- I don't agree with what I just read because in my own life ...

Students complete this [double entry journal worksheet](#) or [connections document](#) to record connections during the reading.

Discuss as a class or use a worksheet from [Think, Pair, Share](#).

That's interesting

[EN2-7B](#)

Complete a [PMI chart](#) Encourage students to use their PMI chart to highlight three elements (in three different colours or use coloured post-it notes) within the narrative that are positive, negative and interesting:

1. **Plus/Positive:** Good/Positive experiences, themes, messages, events and happenings in the text.
2. **Minus/Negative:** Events in the text that are negative/bad experiences in the text, things that go wrong etc.
3. **Interesting:** Anything that appeals to the student; questions, feelings and emotions that arise, morals, messages and connections that resonate with the students.

Get creative

[EN2-10C](#)

Create a film strip of 'The Christmas Cat' using this [story board worksheet](#).

Adapt the film strip into a play or podcast using the [Audacity multi-track audio recorder and editor](#).

Animate 'The Christmas Cat' using [Vyond](#).

Write the next chapter using the final illustration as stimulus. Who else is home for Christmas?

Write a poem about a returned soldier from a child's point of view, titled 'Daddy's Home' or 'Mummy's Home'. Inspiration can be found at [Family Friend Poems](#)

Write a sensory poem about the war. A useful resource is [Five Senses in Poetry](#), which includes a number of sample poems.

Map it out

[EN2-1A](#)

Story map the main events of 'The Christmas Cat', with one of these [Story Map worksheets](#), or by using a [Story Arc](#).

Adapt your story map into a script for a play, and perform as a mime.

Reflecting

[EN2-12E](#)

I used to think ... But now I think ... This routine helps students to reflect on their thinking about a topic or issue and explore how and why that thinking has changed. It can be useful in consolidating new learning as students identify their new understandings, opinions, and beliefs.

Further reading

[English Textual Concepts](#)

Resources

[Introduction to the Story Arc YouTube clip](#)

[Thinking Routines](#)