

Sangita's Singing

by Libby Hathorn

illustrated by Bandana Tulachan



Teaching Notes

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for

Sangita's Singing

by

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with illustrations by Bandana Tulachan

These lesson notes are based on Reading to Learn pedagogy with reference to the new NSW English Syllabus K-6 2012, as well as the NSW DEC Literacy Continuum. The purpose of the teaching notes is to provide guidelines with some strategies for teachers to use and to build on. The notes are aimed at Stage 2 with reference to Stage 2 outcomes. They could of course be adapted for Stage 3.

Preparation before Reading 1. Background Knowledge

Purpose of the text

Sangita's Singing tells the story of a child's journey. In doing so it reveals how important learning to read is to the people in Nepal who live in small remote villages; and who may have to leave everything they know and love to have the opportunity to learn. It is also the story of facing a new world, including bullying and the strength of friendship and love which triumph. Sangita, who knows and sings many mountain songs, is chosen to go to Kathmandu to learn to read and to be educated. Life in the big city is confusing to a country child and is at first lonely. She loses the ability to sing. But in the school Sangita overcomes the bullying, and faces her loss of self esteem finally regaining her confidence and best of all is able to sing again, this time a city song. She returns proudly to her village where her family, especially her grandmother, celebrates the fact that she is the first member of the family to learn to read!

The story should intrigue students and will help students to compare and contrast their lives to that of Sangita, and realise there are many differences but also many similarities.

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Thinking Imaginatively, Creatively and Interpretively EN2-10

A student: thinks imaginatively, creatively and interpretively about information, ideas and texts when responding to and composing texts

- respond to texts by identifying and discussing aspects of texts that relate to their own experience.
- justify interpretations of a text, including responses to characters, information and ideas

Literacy continuum

- *Builds understanding about the meaning of a text by identifying and discussing text organisation and features, e.g. cohesive links.*
- *Responds to and interprets texts by integrating sources of information in texts.*

Speaking and Listening 1 EN2 - 1A

A student: communicates in a range of informal and formal contexts by adopting a range of roles in group, classroom, school and community contexts

- use information to support and elaborate on a point of view.

Literacy Continuum

- *Contributes relevant ideas to discussions, asks questions and re-phrases to clarify meaning.*
- *Listens attentively, makes appropriate responses to what others say and constructively builds on the ideas of others.*
- *Uses group discussion protocols, e.g. turn taking*

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As a class explore the following:

On a map of Nepal, locate the important features including the Capital- Kathmandu, Mt Everest, Nepal's Asian neighbours. Compare size and geography to that of Australia – suggested website - <http://www.ifitweremyhome.com/compare/AU/NP>

Also make note of data given on the site to build context.

Some things to find out:

- Why do many tourists, especially backpackers go to Nepal?
- Research life and education of people in rural Nepal. Why do some children need to go to Kathmandu for schooling?

- Why do people sometimes sit on the tops of buses to get a ride and why do they sometimes take animals with them on the bus?
- Why do Sangita and her sister need to collect water each day?
- <http://kids.nationalgeographic.com.au/kids/places/find/nepal/>
- <http://nepalfreed.org/nepallife.html>
- Images on ppt for teachers to select from.

See Think Wonder Activity

This can be done individually or in groups of three to four. The first time you use *See Think Wonder*, it may need to be modelled in a whole class situation.

Choose one of the images from the background knowledge explorations and discuss the following three questions:

1. What do you see?
2. What does it make you think?
3. What do you wonder?

Collate the responses on the board, asking one by one, students or groups, to say one thing they have observed. After six or so replies, ask if anybody has something different to add. Responses at first maybe lacking in deeper thinking. If this is the case, model the ways of seeing, thinking and wondering by adding some of your responses to the collation.

Preparation before Reading 2. Text structure

The teacher gives the students a summary of the story before reading the whole text. It should include the main stages of the text. In this case it is a narrative. So the story has an Orientation, Complication and Resolution.

Here is a sample of a summary.

This is a story about a young girl, Sangita who lives in a remote village in the mountains of Nepal. Every day when she fetches water with her little sister Indira, she sings songs of the mountains. Indira believes she sings the sun up. In her village the families are poor and often the children have to help with the work to grow food, so they don't always learn to read at the village school.

Sangita is chosen to leave her village and family and go to a city school in Kathmandu, where most importantly she will learn to read in both English and her own Nepali language. In

Kathmandu she lives in a hostel where everything, including the beds and the toilets, are different to what she is used to. Though some are friendly, a bully soon finds her.

Sangita is very lonely and misses her family very much. But the worst problem that faces her at the hostel is the bully Yamu who picks on her. Yamu even puts a mouse in her bed! The problem gets worse and Sangita is so sad she can't sing anymore, not even in the school concert. Even the teacher is disappointed in her as she is doing so well in class and he's discovered her beautiful voice.

How sad Sangita is! But then she finds the bully Yamu crying and discovers she can comfort the girl who is upset over having to leave the school. She sings one of her grandmother's mountain songs to comfort Yamu. Sangita at last finds strength and acceptance. She knows she can sing again and though she will remember the mountain songs all her days, now she will also sing her own song of Kathmandu which she has come to love.

Overcoming her sadness and loneliness, Sangita learns how to read. When she goes home the family is very proud of her, and when her Grandmother gets out the precious English book she has kept for Sangita to read, they all get a big surprise when they learn what the book is really about.

Teacher reads whole text.

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Reading and Viewing 2 EN2- 8B

A student: Identifies and compares different kinds of texts when reading and viewing and shows an understanding of purpose, understanding and subject matter.

- Identify organisational patterns and language features of texts
- Discuss how language is used to describe the settings in texts

Literacy Continuum

- *Interprets texts by recognising and discussing the difference between literal and inferred meaning in relation to information, characteristics, events.*
- *Builds understanding about the meaning of a text by actively seeking information from different parts of a text.*
- *Interprets text by inferring connections, causes and consequences during reading.*
- *Responds to and analyses texts by discussing the ways language structures and features shape meaning.*

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Labelling Stages and Phases of the Text

Teacher selects a passage of the text that has rich language patterns, appropriate sentence structures, vocabulary and language features that will serve as teaching focuses appropriate for the stage. Students are given the passage, set out in a table with a blank left hand margin, as attached.

Chapter 2 is part of the Orientation, giving more information about the setting and of the reactions of first Sangita and then the members of her family to her leaving home to travel to Kathmandu.

Notice how Sangita's first reaction is about the wider environment, followed by reaction 2 which narrows in detail – the village, the houses, then all the people, even the detail of every baby's face.

Give the students a copy of the passage and guide them to label the Stage and then the Phases, or what is going on in each paragraph. The student copy is blank in the left hand margin.

In stories the common phases are:

- **setting** - presenting people, activities, places, times
- **description** - describing people, places, things
- **episode** - sequence of events that is expected
- **problem** - unexpected event creating tension
- **solution** - unexpected event releasing tension
- **reaction** - participants feelings about problems, descriptions
- **comment** - narrator's comments on people, activities
- **reflection** - participants' thoughts about meanings of events

(See D. Rose, Reading to Learn Course Notes: *Book 2 Selecting and Analysing Texts*)

Note * Remember to cut the labels from the student's copy.

| Stages/ phases | Sangita's Singing – Chapter 2 – leaving the village |
|---------------------|---|
| Orientation | |
| setting | Sangita felt sad to leave the mountains and the waterfall. |
| reaction 1 | |
| reaction 2 | It seemed strange to leave the village where she knew the small shrines and every mud brick house hung with corn and bright red chillies; where she knew every face and the name of every baby. |
| reflection 1 | She loved to see the big bus crammed with people and their goods and sometimes even their goats. She loved watching some of the passengers climbing on the roof as the bus lurched off. |
| reflection 2 | |
| comment (by author) | This morning, she'd be <i>in</i> that bus herself, bumping along mountain roads that led to the big city of Kathmandu. |

Activity for R2L trained teachers

Detailed Reading 1 and 2 – attached in file. The two sections of the above text can be delivered in one or two lessons, depending on your students and your time.

Activity for students of teachers not familiar with details of Reading to Learn.

(in place of Detailed Reading)

Students work with a partner to fill in the following table.

| Sangita's Singing – Chapter 2 | |
|---|--|
| Two things Sangita was sad to leave | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • |
| Four things Sangita felt strange about leaving | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • |
| Three things about the bus that Sangita often enjoyed watching | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • |
| What does the author tell us that will be different on this day? | |
| In reaction 2, which thinking verb is repeated? Which word that describes the things she knew is repeated 3 times? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • |

Comprehension

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Reading and Viewing 1 – Outcome EN2 – 4A

A student: uses an increasing range of skills, strategies and knowledge to fluently read, view and comprehend a range on increasingly challenging topics in different media and technologies.

- Use metalanguage to describe the effects of ideas, text structures and language features of literary texts.

Literacy continuum

- *Builds understanding about the meaning of a text by actively seeking information from different parts of a text.*
- *Responds to and interprets texts by discussing the differences between literal and inferred meanings.*
- *Responds to and interprets texts by integrating sources of information in texts.*

Grammar, Punctuation and Vocabulary – EN2 - 9B

A student: Uses effective and accurate sentence structure, grammatical features, punctuation conventions and vocabulary relevant to the type of text when responding to and composing texts.

- Understands that choice of vocabulary impacts on the effectiveness of texts
- Understand that paragraphs are a key organisational feature in written texts

Literacy continuum

- *Uses simple content specific vocabulary in appropriate ways when creating texts.*
- *Demonstrates understanding that words can have different meanings in different contexts.*

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Guided Lesson Showing Students the Different Reading Behaviours Required.

Give each student a copy of the questions and ask them to discuss with a partner before writing their answers on their sheet.

Literal (here) Underline the answers on your sheet. Decide what the answer is by talking to your partner and write the answer on your sheet.

1. What are two things Sangita is sad about leaving?
2. Where was Sangita going to be 'This morning'?

Inferred (hidden). Circle all the words that give you the information needed to answer the following questions.

If it is 'in your head' as background knowledge, indicate this by drawing a smiley face, 😊 on the side of the page and circling it.

3. *crammed* in this story means a.) studied hard for a test
b.) force a lot of food in your mouth while on a bus
c.) things and/or people squashed into a container or space
4. What did the homes have hanging on their outside walls?

Interpretive (head or heart) With your partner think of two possible answers for question 5.

5. Why do you think the people hung plants like corn on their walls?
6. What do you think is the effect of the author Libby Hathorn repeating the thinking/feeling verbs '*she loved*' and '*she knew*' in these paragraphs?

Sentence Making / Cut up Sentences

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Grammar, Punctuation and Vocabulary EN2 – 9B

A student: uses effective and accurate sentence structure, grammatical features, punctuation conventions and vocabulary relevant to the type of text when responding to and composing texts.

- Understand that effective organisation of ideas in imaginative texts enhances meaning
- Understands how to elaborate on ideas
- Experiments with punctuation

Literacy continuum

- *Structures texts using paragraphs composed of logically grouped sentences that deal with a particular aspect of a topic.*
- *Uses sentence and simple punctuation correctly.*

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Teachers write selected sentence/sentences on strips, one set each for small group of 3-4 students.

Students in the group take turns to cut the sentence at the points directed by the teacher.

Students identify the words to cut and the teacher elaborates on their meaning, taking the understanding to a higher level.

Words are always put back into the sentence. This requires checking for meaning and structure. When cutting is complete the words are then jumbled and the group works together to rearrange them.

The students can also construct new sentences by re-ordering clauses/words, joining sentences or breaking them into simple sentences.

Punctuation can be cut off separately from the words and rearranged. Extra blank cards may be needed to add capitals or lower case letters and extra words to maintain meaning.

This sentence is one of Sangita's reactions just before she leaves the village. Point out that it is a sentence that lists four of the things that she knew very well in her village and would miss. Libby Hathorn emphasises how familiar Sangita was with her village, by repeating the words '*where she knew*' and '*every*'. The semi colon is used to separate the first and second '*where she knew*' clause. (Refer to the glossary in New English K- 6 Syllabus, p 146.)

Discuss the meanings of wordings as students make the cuts.

It /seemed strange/ to leave/ the village/ where she knew/ the small shrines/ and /every mud brick house/ hung with corn/ and bright red chillies;/ /where she knew/ every face/ and the name/ of every baby. /

Grammar teaching opportunities from the passage include:

Variety of sentence structure and the punctuation that is required.

quality noun

Noun groups – small shrines

The next example is an extended noun group with a pointer (every) which is repeated for emphasis, adjectives which describe the qualities of the houses, and then the noun “house” is followed by a qualifier in the form of a clause, which adds more information about every house. This structure highlights that descriptions are not just about adjectives.

pointer two qualities noun qualifier after the noun – more information

– every mud brick house [hung with corn and bright red chillies]

pointer noun

every face –

focus part pointer noun

(the name of) every baby

Spelling

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Spelling EN2-5A

A student: uses a range of strategies, including knowledge of letter-sound correspondence and common letter patterns, to spell familiar and some unfamiliar words

- understand how to use strategies for spelling words, including spelling rules, knowledge of morphemic word families, spelling generalisations, and letter combinations including double letters (ACELA 1485, ACELA1779)

Literacy continuum

- *Uses a variety of spelling strategies to spell high frequency words correctly.*
- *Uses morphemic, visual, phonic knowledge and knowledge of prefixes and suffixes to spell and edit words.*

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Select words from the short passage. Words should include content words and some sight words. The list should include, where possible, words from the four sources of spelling knowledge, i.e. visual, phonetic, morphemic and etymological.

Some possibilities are:

mount/ain – two syllables

vill/age – two syllables – keep the double letters together and spell them as ‘double l’

shr/ines – onset and rime

dri/ed – past tense of dry - change ‘y’ to i and add ed

chillies – singular is chilli – add es (as opposed to chilly, homophone)

water/ fall – compound word

cramm/ed – past tense of cram – double the last letter to add suffix when second last letter is short vowel

pass/en/ger/s – multi syllables

climb/ing – silent ‘b’

lurch/ed - ur as in church saying ‘er’, past tense of lurch

Kath/man/du – visual as th is pronounced ‘t’

she/’d – contraction of she would, apostrophe indicating the ‘woul’ has been left out

knew - a homophone – same sound, different spelling and meaning, new, knew

Firstly ensure all students can recognise the words out of the context of the text, using flash cards.

A game of concentration here works well, but only with four or five chosen words, or it takes too long. Have two copies of each word muddled up and turned wrong side up. First student turns one card up and reads it, then a second card and reads it. Class also reads the words remembering where they are. If they don’t match, turn them back over. Make sure all the class has time to see the words and where they are positioned. If it is a pair of words turned over, leave them facing the class and chose the next student to have a go.

Using small white boards and whiteboard markers or water based crayons, teacher holds the whole word up and everybody reads it. The teacher then guides students to write the first chunk by modelling on board, then rub it off. Students do the same. Repeat. Teacher checks for letter formation and legibility as students are writing. Follow with next chunk, and so on. Write whole words. Write 5 times, etc always checking handwriting. Discuss any generalisations / rules.

Dictation Every Day

Invent a sentence using some of the words treated that day and used previously. Dictate only twice for students to remember. Each day chose a different sentence.

e.g. The bus was climbing up a mountain road on the way to Kathmandu.

When all the students have completed it, write it on the class board for students to self check and make any corrections. Teacher checks handwriting and punctuation, pointing out quietly any errors and getting students to correct. This is not a test, but drill and practice of remembering word patterns of the sentence, and letter patterns of the words.

Proof reading – whole class activity

Rewrite the sentence on the board with errors.

e.g. the buss woz climming up a montain on the wey to katmandoo

Ask different students to come and circle errors and other students to write corrections above.

Sentence writing

Write the passage that you have studied and read onto strips.

Cut the spelling words off. Arrange the passage on the board and have students read it. Then turn the spelling words over so they are not revealed to the class.

Have students read the passage, remembering which words are turned over. Students now write the whole passage from the framework that is left visible.

When everybody is finished, turn the words back over and get them to self check, making corrections where necessary.

Again, this is not a test but rather an activity to reinforce memory, both of meaning and spelling.

Joint Rewriting - small passage

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Writing and representing 2 EN2-7B

A student: Identifies and uses language forms and features in their own writing appropriate to a range of purposes, audiences and contexts

- develop and apply contextual knowledge
- identify and analyse the purpose and audience of imaginative texts
- understand how characters, actions and events in imaginative texts can engage the reader or viewer
- understand and apply knowledge of language forms and features

- understand how a range of language features can shape readers' and viewers' understanding of subject matter
- describe how audience and purpose impact on language forms and features in imaginative, informative and persuasive texts

Literacy Continuum

- *constructs well-sequenced imaginative texts using language appropriate to purpose and audience.*
- *structures texts using paragraphs composed of logically grouped sentences that deal with a particular aspect of a topic.*
- *draws ideas from personal experiences, other texts and research to create imaginative texts for different audiences.*
- *rereads and revises text to check and improve meaning, deleting unnecessary information or adding new information.*
- *creates meaningful sentences using a variety of sentence beginnings, including adverbial and adjectival clauses to create complex sentences.*
- *uses sentence and simple punctuation correctly.*

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In stories use the same text structure and language patterns, but change the content, i.e. the setting, the who, where, when, what is happening. Joint rewriting is used with the passage you have been working on to give students experience in creating quality writing using the structures and language devices of accomplished authors.

It is recommended that teachers create a sample of their own so they can easily step in when students experience difficulties.

Below is a sample of a joint rewrite which a group wrote while they were working in a school hall. It is important that students keep the context familiar so that they can describe in detail. Joint rewriting is done closely following the patterns of a small section of the model text.

The changes to context and setting they decided on were:

Who: Bruce

Where: the school hall

What was happening: Bruce was a naughty boy and was sent to the hall often for time out away from other students. He had negative feelings about the hall.

Bruce was excited about leaving the cement blocks and high ceilings. It would be wonderful to be leaving the hall where he knew the exit signs and every air conditioning vent hung with cobwebs and small insects; where he knew every yellow line of the basketball court and the small cracks in every floor tile.

He despised seeing the footy oval packed with his friends in their footy gear and sometimes even the girls playing. He despised watching the boys run onto the field as the whistle blew for start of play.

Today, he'd be in that team warming up as the cheers of the crowd rang out.

Joint Construction: whole text

Looking at the whole text, refer back to Orientation, (chapters 1-3) Complication (chapters 4-7) Resolution (chapters 8-9).

Together look at the phases. The class suggestions for the new story are listed on the board.

The story will be about someone leaving somewhere that is very familiar and moving to a new environment. Students often suggest the fantastic settings, e.g. other planets, jungles etc. It is essential they know in detail what it would be like and what they would miss. The new environment will throw up some unexpected problems. Remember we don't expect students to write books or novels, but to look at some of the structures and language features accomplished authors and use them as models.

Orientation

- Who your character is and what it was like at the old place; and what they did there before they moved?
- Include character's feeling and reactions.
- How did they travel to the new place?

Complication

- Describe what it was like at the new place and the things that happened there.
- Include at least two problems.
- How did the character feel and how did the character react to the problems?

Resolution

- How did your character solve their problems?
- What were their reactions?

Consider publishing your class's joint writing. Some schools publish class work in Newsletters, give each student in the class a copy in their homework book for home reading, and publish, with illustrations as class books.

Looking at Illustrations

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Reading and Viewing 2 EN2-8B

A student: identifies and compares different kinds of texts when reading and viewing and shows an understanding of purpose, audience and subject matter.

- Explore the effect of choices when framing an image, placement of elements in the image, and salience on composition
- Identify and interpret forms of visual information

Expressing themselves EN2- 11D

A student: responds to and composes a range of texts that express viewpoints of the world similar and different from their own.

- Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts

Literacy Continuum

- *Chooses a reading path appropriate to the text (visual)*
- *Responds to and interprets texts by integrating sources of information in texts*

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Illustrations on page 24-25



Discussion points:

Sangita is pictured four times on this double page. How do her feelings change and how can you tell? How has the illustrator shown how she feels?

Look at the top of the page. Sangita is thinking about home. What do you think she is missing and feeling sad about?

Think, Pair, Share

Students **think** individually, perhaps jot 3 things down. Then in **pairs** they compare their responses. They then form groups of 6-8, depending on the numbers, and share their answers. The group now writes the answers down and share with each group giving one answer at a time. (No repeats). You can extend this activity by deciding how you could group the answers e.g. family, toys, friend, food etc.

If you were not living with your family, what three things would go in your own thought bubble?

How has the illustrator shown that Harriet is very likely an Australian? Why do you think she has used these features?

Do you think Harriet's kindness is working in trying to make Sangita feel happier?

According to Callow in *The Shape of Text to Come*, p 82

'the top section of an illustration deals with more general or abstract ideas or concepts, often understood as the 'ideal', rather than the 'real' of everyday life.'

On this double page the top is definitely the ideal in Sangita's eyes.

Students could use this example to illustrate their everyday activity, whilst dreaming or thinking about their ideal. Compare their ideals to Sangita's.

Assessment Options

What you decide to assess will have been modelled and guided explicitly.

1. Independent Writing Assessment of Learning

Write a story about a character moving from one place to another. Give students the same scaffold you have used for Joint Construction.

Orientation

Who is your character and what it was like at the old familiar place and what they did there before they moved?

Include character's feeling and reactions.

How did they travel to the new place?

Complication

Describe what it was like at the new place and the things that happened there.

Include at least two problems.

How did the character feel and react to the problems?

Resolution

How did your character solve their problems?

What were their reactions?

Select several of the teaching focuses to include as essentials, e.g.

1. Follows structure of the scaffold above
2. Uses a variety of sentence types.
At least two simple sentences
At least two complex sentences
3. Uses repetition to emphasis a point
4. Uses a semicolon correctly in a list
5. Has at least one extended noun group with description before and after the noun

2. Comprehension

Give independent comprehension modelled on the guided lesson done previously. It is recommended you use some of the same questions with some based on the next few pages.

3. Sangita's Singing Editing - Assessment as Learning

Students in pairs compare their answers and discuss reasons for corrections, articulating their knowledge of generalisations/rules.

Editing Practice

There is one mistake on each line. Underline each one and write down the correction?
What is the mistake? e.g. sangita is proper noun – capital needed.

| | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| <u>sangita</u> felt sad to leave the mountain and the waterfall. | 1. <u>Sangita</u> needs capital |
| It seemed straing to leave the village where she | 2. |
| knew the small schrines and every mud brick | 3. |
| house hung with corn and bright red dried | |
| chillyes; where she new every face and the name | 4. |
| of every babby. | 5. |
| Sangita loved to see the big bus cramed with | 6. |
| people and there goods and sometimes even | 7. |
| their goats | |
| She loved watching some of the passangers | 8. |
| climing on to the roof as the bus lurched of. This | 9. |
| morning, shed been on the bus herself, bumping | 10. |
| along montain roads that led to the big city of | 11. |
| Katmandoo. | 12. |

Assessment as Learning

Students in small groups use a table or a Venn diagram to show what they have discovered about the similarities and differences in countries, cultures and people of Australia and Nepal from Sangita's story and research, sample :

| Australia | Both | Nepal |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Mountains are small compared to Nepal | | Highest mountains in world |
| Big country | | Small country |
| | Big cities | |
| | Small towns/ villages | |
| | bullies | |
| | Kind people | |
| | Learning is important | |
| Use lots of electricity | | Use hardly any electricity |

Groups add to a class collation of ideas, one item per group at a time while the other groups mark them off if they have the same idea. Teacher is constantly observing students' responses and levels of understanding of the concepts covered.

Discuss their responses to the whole story of *Sangita's Singing* e.g. enjoyment, discovering new things through story (or not) and why they feel the way they do.

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