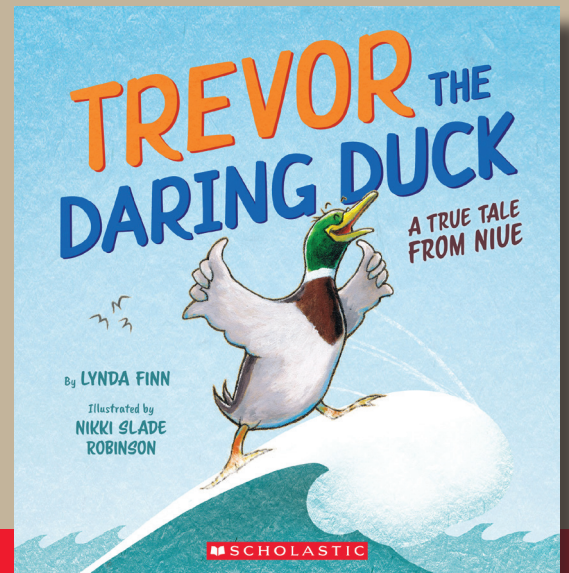


Trevor the Daring Duck

A True Tale from Niue

By Lynda Finn

Illustrated by Nikki Slade Robinson



• Reading • Writing • Science • Social Studies • Art

Synopsis

Trevor the mallard is a curious duck, living in Aotearoa. One day, while exploring rock pools, he is washed out to sea in a big storm. Loving the adventure, Trevor journeys on and finds himself on a tropical island where he falls asleep, exhausted. Upon waking, he is greeted with “Fakaalofa atu.” Trevor has landed on the island of Niue, and a bird, Veka, explains that there are no other ducks on the whole island. Trevor is soon adopted by the local children, with the fire department even creating a special puddle for him to dabble and swim in. He makes news around the world as ‘Trevor the Lonely Duck’ and enjoys his celebrity status for the rest of his days.

About the Author

Over the past 50 years, **Lynda Finn** has authored a number of stories, articles and books including *Largely Happy: Changing your mind about your body* and *Healthy Kids, Happy Kids: Better health for bigger kids in New Zealand*.

She is passionate about children from all cultures having books in their own language so they can learn about their heritage. This, and her grand-daughter Mila, were the inspirations for *Trevor the Daring Duck*.

About the Illustrator

Nikki Slade Robinson is a graduate of Wellington Polytechnic’s Diploma of Visual Communication Design (Illustration) course, Nikki has illustrated more than 70 children’s books, such as *Sharing with Wolf*, as well as having written & illustrated her own, including the Munkle Arvur stories and the award-winning *Little Kiwi’s Matariki*. Nikki lives in Opotiki with her husband and their two daughters.

Writing and Illustration Style

Trevor the Daring Duck is a 32-page paperback picture book inspired by a true animal tale from Niue. The author brings to life the adventures of one plucky duck and showcases how the lovely people of Niue embrace a special feathered friend from Aotearoa New Zealand. The author also cleverly introduces the readers to a sprinkling of easy-to-understand Niuean words. The book will appeal to children in the 3–7 age group. The text is written in the third person past tense, with dialogue between the characters in present tense. The book's themes include friendship, kindness, teamwork and perseverance.

The illustrator created her bright, bold illustrations with acrylic paints, brown paper, handmade paper, ink, graphite, and digital collage. Her work captures Niuean island life beautifully, while the many expressive facial and body gestures of the daring Trevor throughout the book help to transform him into a charming, charismatic main character. The type is set in Duper 21/28 pt, with important parts of the story being set in larger type, on a curve and in different colours.

Shared Learning and Discussion Points

Read the story aloud, and have students read alongside you or follow along as you read. Use the questions below to help guide the students and promote more in-depth discussion. Asking questions encourages students to stop and think about a story's characters, events, problems and possible solutions. Questions often start with *Who*, *When*, *What* and *Where*. However, those that start with *Why* and *How* help the students to think more deeply and critically about a topic.

ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

Look at the front cover and read the blurb on the back cover. Then turn to the title page.

- Why do you think Trevor is a daring duck?
- Where do you think Trevor is heading? Use the text on the front cover to help you.
- Have you ever seen a duck surfing on a wave at sea? Why do you think that is?
- Why might Trevor's curiosity get him in trouble?
- Has curiosity ever landed you in trouble? How or why?

COMPREHENSION:

- Look at the map on page 2 and point out the seven different countries featured on it. Explain to the students that it's a long way from Aotearoa New Zealand to Niue. There are more than 2,800 km of ocean between the two countries. Read the caption under the map to the students. How might the two homes be different? (p.2)
- Trevor is a mallard duck. Have you seen mallard ducks before? Where did you see them? (p.3)
- How does a very curious duck behave? Turn to pages 4–5 to compare your responses. (p.3)
- Look at the pictures on pages 4–5 before you read the words. What do they tell you about Trevor? Point out the question marks at the end of the three sentences. Explain how a question mark indicates that the sentence is a question. Why do curious people ask lots of questions? (pp.4–5)
- Trevor likes to explore the rock pools near his home. Mallard ducks like freshwater wetlands, ponds, lakes, rivers, streams, and even flooded fields. However, they have been known to feed at the water's edge of a beach shoreline sometimes. How do you think the fish and crabs feel about seeing Trevor look under the water? (p.6)
- Why do you think the gannets call Trevor 'brother'? (p.7)
- How do the gannets know that a storm is coming and yet Trevor doesn't? (p.7)
- Cover the illustration on pages 8–9, leaving the first paragraph on page 8 visible. What do you imagine when you read the text? Now reveal the illustration. Is it similar or different to what you pictured in your mind? How do you think Trevor is feeling now compared with how he was behaving on the front cover? (pp.8–9)
- How do you know that Trevor is enjoying his adventure now? What clues in the text and illustration tell you that? How might a less adventurous duck have reacted to being swept out to sea and blown off course? (p.10)
- As Trevor rides on the giant wave, he cries out "Yippee! I'm going on an adventure." What other words of excitement could he have cried out? (p.10)
- Why do you think the gulls and gannets want to take care of Trevor and guide him on his journey? (p.11)
- The author says that Trevor travelled a very, very long way. She explains that flying and floating helps him get to Niue. Why is flying and floating a few thousand kilometres a remarkable feat for a mallard duck? (p.12)
- What words does the author use to convey that Trevor is safe and sound in Niue? (p.12)



- Why might falling asleep under a coconut tree be a little unsafe? (p.13)
- Read the second sentence on page 14. What do you think the first two words mean from the context of the sentence?
- Trevor is in a strange land and sees a strange-looking bird in front of him when he wakes up. How might he be feeling now? Have you ever found yourself in a situation where you have felt out of place or as if you have been transported to a different world? How did you feel? (p.14)
- Have you ever seen a bird like Veka? If so, whereabouts did you see it? How do you know Veka is friendly? (p.15)
- Since Trevor is a curious bird, what may he be thinking when he sees the mangoes, bananas, and avocados for the first time? Why do these grow so well in Niue? (p.16)
- The author uses alliteration (words that start with the same letter sound) to describe the **r**osy **r**ipe mangoes and the **g**lossy **g**reen avocados. What other alliterative words could she have used? (p.16)
- Veka has befriended Trevor, who is a bird that Veka has never seen before. What does this tell you about Veka's personality? Do you think Veka is curious like Trevor? Why or why not? (p.17)
- Trevor feels proud to be the only duck on Niue. What are you proud about in your life? Why are you proud of that? (p.18)
- How does having a friend help Trevor in his new-found situation? (p.18)
- Remind the students that Niue is an island in the Pacific Ocean. Explain to them that there are no freshwater streams, ponds, rivers or lakes there and that the only way to get fresh water is from rainwater or from under the ground. How do the people of Niue help Trevor? (p.20)
- Trevor has fresh water to swim in and drink, as well as bugs and worms to eat. Do you think Trevor would miss anything from Aotearoa New Zealand? Explain your answer. (p.21)
- The author says that Trevor dabbles and swims about happily. A dabbling duck is a type of duck that feeds mostly along the surface of the water or by tipping forwards and grazing on underwater plants. Why does Trevor need lots of water to do this? (p.21)
- Trevor enjoys the attention he gets from the people of Niue. Soon he gets even more attention. Newspapers all around the world get hold of the story of Trevor, the lonely duck. Why do you think people from countries far away from Niue enjoy reading about the daring duck? What does the author mean by 'in a flap'? (p.23)
- Can you be the only one of your kind and not be lonely? Why or why not? (p.24)
- The rooster has fine, colourful feathers like Trevor's. How does looking for similarities rather than differences help you make and keep friends? (p.24)
- Enjoy the Niuean words on page 25. What does the word 'Fakaue' mean? (p.25)
- The author uses alliteration to describe the **s**lithery **s**lugs, **s**peedy **s**piders, **w**iggly **w**orms, and **b**usy **b**eetles. What alliterative words could she have used to describe the berries and seeds? (p.26)
- What does 'taha, ua, tolu' mean? How does that compare to the same words in te reo Māori? How could you learn other Niuean words? (p.27)
- How does kindness help keep Trevor alive and well on Niue? Was Trevor a wild duck or a tame duck by the end of the story? Explain your answer. (pp.28–29)
- How could you have solved Trevor's problem of being the only duck living on the beautiful island of Niue? (p.32)



Activities

ACTIVITY 1: SHORT AND SNAPPY

On page 23, the illustrator draws four newspapers that announce to the world about Trevor the mallard duck in Niue. The headlines are designed to catch the readers' attention. Write four catchy newspaper headlines. Remember a headline needs to draw in your readers and make them want to find out more. Write the headlines in present tense and keep them short and snappy. Headlines often don't contain non-essential words, such as *a*, *an*, *to*, and so on. The headlines in the book are either four or six words long, but your headlines can be up to about eight words long. Work in pairs and share your work with the rest of the class.

ACTIVITY 2: A BUMPER MESSAGE

On page 21, the Rescue Fire Service tops up Trevor's puddle with fresh water from the fire truck. Imagine that the fire truck has a bumper sticker on its rear bumper. A bumper sticker has many purposes. It lets others know what you like, dislike and opinions might be. It can be a joke, an advertisement, or a fun saying. In fact, a bumper sticker can be just about anything! Design a bumper sticker about Trevor the mallard duck with words and a picture on it. You could even use symbols, such as a heart. It could say: *I Love Ducks*, *I Stop for Ducks Niue's Only Duck*, *Honk for Trevor*, and so on.

ACTIVITY 3: BIRDS ON SHOW

There are different kinds of birds in the book, such as gulls, gannets and chickens. Veka is a banded rail bird that lives in Niue and other places in the Pacific, including New Zealand and Australia. Create bird puppets and put on a puppet show. Make a pond out of cardboard painted blue. It could be a large rectangle with a wavy top edge that acts as a stand-up puppet stage. Create four bird puppets (Trevor and three other birds from the story) using ice cream sticks, light card, scissors, glue and coloured marker pens. Work in groups of four. Then write a short play (or a brief conversation) based on one of the scenes from the book. For example, the birds might be sharing corn and oats, watching Trevor swim in his puddle, or looking at the fire truck filling up Trevor's 'pond'. Rehearse your puppet show and present it to the rest of the class.

ACTIVITY 4: SANCTUARY SIGN

The Niue Duck Sanctuary sign appears on pages 20 and 32. The illustrator recreated the actual sign that was put up near Trevor's watery home. The original sign said that Trevor was 'The lonely only duck in Niue'. It also told people not to give Trevor bread or put food in the water because he needed the water to be clean for drinking. Imagine you needed to create a special Niue Duck Sanctuary sign to educate Trevor's visitors. Think of a title and subtitle for the sign. Write what food is good for Trevor. Use the book to help you.

ACTIVITY 5: THE ONE AND ONLY

Trevor was the only duck on Niue. He was a male mallard duck. He had a glossy, dark green head and neck, a yellow beak, a white neck ring, a brown chest, and a distinctive patch of blue on the wings. Pretend that the one and only duck on Niue is even more unique and that he is, in fact, the only bird in the world like it. Sometimes people paint rubber ducks with unique hand-painted designs. Look on the Internet for inspiration. The rubber ducks are often painted with spots, stripes, flowers, hearts, leopard spots, and so on. Using a black outline of a rubber duck or a mallard duck, design your very own one-of-a-kind duck on a large sheet of paper. Think about what designs will make your duck stand out. Choose a name that suits your unique duck, then display your one and only duck on a wall in the classroom.

Written by Janine Scott

