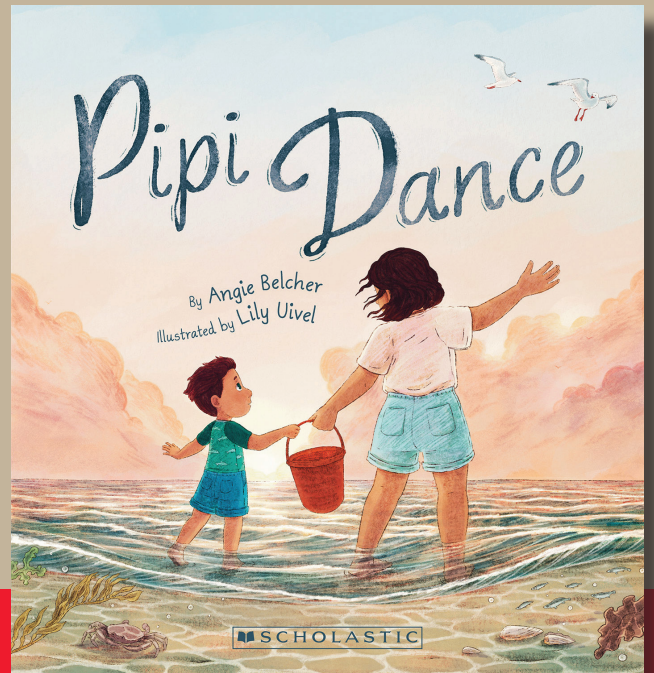


Pipi Dance

By Angie Belcher

Illustrated by Lily Uivel



• Reading • Writing • Māori • Science • Art

Synopsis

Mumma and Bubs walk from their seaside home to the ocean. Bubs asks his mother if he can help find the shellfish to gather. She takes him by the hand and leads him into the ocean, where she explains that he needs to plant his feet firmly into the sand. While Bubs is protesting about getting wet, Mum sings the happy pipi dance song: “*Shuffle to the left, then shuffle to the right. Twist your hips from side to side, with all your might,*” then she leans forward and gathers three smooth, glistening pipi. Bubs gives it a go and is excited to feel pipi against his feet. However, when he reaches down to collect the pipi, a crab nips at his finger. He shakes it off and bravely does the pipi dance again. Together they fill the bucket with shellfish until they have enough for tea. Back at the bach, they cover the pipi with water and leave them overnight. Next day, Koro and Nan help to cook the pipi over a fire on the beach, ready for eating. The story concludes with friends arriving and Bubs preparing to share his newfound knowledge.

About the Author

Angie Belcher is both a writer and a teacher. Her love of outdoor adventure, including diving, caving, hiking, provide Angie with exciting writing prospects and have become the catalyst for many children’s books. Most of her books written for educational publishers can be found in New Zealand schools, but her favourite stories originate from her home at Māketu in the Bay of Plenty. Angie’s book *The Girls in the Kapa Haka* won the Gaelyn Gordon Award for a Much-loved Book.

About the Illustrator

Lily Uivel has always loved to draw more than anything else, and would spend all of her spare time sketching and studying illustration. After receiving her Bachelor’s degree in Fine Art, she worked for years as a props maker and designer, most recently in London. Returning to New Zealand when Covid arrived, Lily decided to give illustration a go and has since illustrated more than ten books. She lives in Wellington, with her partner and dog.

Writing and Illustration Style

Pipi Dance is a charming story that would appeal to those in the 3–7 age group. This wonderful rhyming picture book all began when the author was explaining to someone in a writing workshop that all you have to do when you're struggling to think of a story idea is to look around you and listen. At that moment, Angie Belcher looked out and saw people collecting pipi – shuffling to the left and shuffling to the right. Soon after, the beginnings of *Pipi Dance* were born! The story is set at the seashore and the main characters are Mumma and Bubs, who are gathering kai for a picnic dinner. Young readers can easily follow along with the simple-to-read text that is written in present tense. They can also join in with the repetitive pipi dance text that appears four times throughout the story and is set in larger type on a curve. The book's themes are family time and gathering kai moana.

The illustrator's digital artwork has a beautiful warm and lively watercolour wash effect. Throughout, there are familiar coastal scenes that will remind you of many days spent at the beach swimming or collecting kai from the sea. The illustrations use a rich and wonderful palette of colours, where the ocean colour is not a traditional sea-blue. On many of the pages, the illustrator has featured the family's pet dog having its own adventures, such as running after seagulls and sticks. There's a sprinkling of features in the pictures that give the book its authentic New Zealand flavour, such as toetoe, flax bushes, baches and wind-swept grasses growing on sand dunes. The type is set in Ammys Handwriting 18/30 pt. The book is also retold in a separate te reo Māori edition (*Te Pikari Pipi*).

Shared Learning and Discussion Points

Asking questions helps students to make sense of the characters and actions of a story and helps them to develop a deeper understanding of the text. Questions also help them to make connections to or remind them of their lives, past experiences or prior knowledge. Questions can be generated by the teacher or students and can be asked before, during or after reading. Use the questions below to promote discussion. Before reading the book, you could also have the students think up a question to something that they would like answered. For instance, it might relate to pipi or pipi gathering. Then have the students say if their question was answered by the end of the story. If not, their unanswered questions become good discussion points.

ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

Look at the front cover and read the blurb on the back cover.

- Why might Mumma and Bubs be carrying a bucket?
- What are pipi? Have you ever collected pipi at the beach? If yes, how did you gather them?
- Why do you think the author named the book *Pipi Dance*?
- Look at the boy's expression on the front cover. Why might he be looking up at Mumma?
- Read the bigger text on the back cover. Why did the author write these words?

COMPREHENSION:

- Look at the illustration on pages 2–3. What word could describe the small beach house? Have you stayed in a bach by the beach? What was it like? How has the illustrator featured the beach theme with the characters' clothing? (pp.2–3)
- What do you think Bubs is asking Mumma if he could help with? (pp.4–5)
- What is the meaning of the word 'Āe'? (p.5)
- What is the meaning of the word 'kai'? What do you notice about the words 'kai' and 'try'? This is a rhyming book. Look out for other rhyming words as you read along. (p.6)
- Have you heard the word 'whānau' before? What does it mean? (p.6)
- Why might Bubs not have helped gather pipi before now? (p.6)
- Why might cockles and pipi hide or burrow in the sand? If the students don't know the answer, explain to them that this helps stop them from drying out and protects them from hungry predators. (p.7)
- What is the difference between cockles and pipi? (p.7)
- Mum was showing Bubs how to find the hiding pipi. Is telling a person how to do something new a good way of teaching him or her, or is it better to show the person instead? Explain your answer. (p.8)
- The sea was rolling in. Why did Bubs need to plant his feet firmly into the sand? (pp.8–9)
- The author used the words 'smooth' and 'shiny' to describe the glistening wet pipi that Mumma found. These two words start with the same letter sound. What other words with the same letter could describe the pipi? (p.11)
- Have you ever done a similar happy pipi dance if you've gathered pipi before? Why did Mumma twist her hips? Look at the illustration on page 12 to see what's happening to Mumma's feet. (p.12)



- There is a crab and a pipi in the illustration on page 14. Do you think standing on a pipi and a crab would feel similar or different? How does Bubs know that he has stood on pipi? (p.14)
- The author described the pipi shells as sharp. The word 'sharp' is an adjective. An adjective describes a noun and helps make your writing more interesting. What other words could the author have used? Together, brainstorm other possible words. Use a thesaurus to help you if necessary. (p.14)
- Bubs reached down and picked up the pipi on page 15. When do you think would be a good time to gather pipi? Do you think high tide or low tide would be best? Explain your answer. (p.15)
- On page 16, the word 'OUCH' has been put in capital letters and a larger font size to give it emphasis. This word is an interjection and is used to express sudden pain. What other words mean the same thing (synonyms)? Use a thesaurus to help you. (p.16)
- There is an exclamation mark after the word 'OUCH'. An author adds an exclamation mark to convey a strong feeling, such as surprise or anger. Where else on this page could the author have ended a sentence with an exclamation mark? (p.16)
- Why did Bubs not want to cry? How did Mumma's expression tell you that she knew the crab would have hurt Bub's finger? (p.17)
- What word could the author have used instead of the word 'wriggle'? (p.18)
- Why did Bubs say that the pipi 'don't stand a chance'? (p.19)
- Why did the seagulls start circling above Mumma and Bubs? What does 'squawking with glee' mean? Why do you think seagulls are sometimes known as scavengers? What does that mean? What kinds of food have you seen seagulls eat at the beach or park? (p.20)
- What were the two reasons that Mumma and Bubs stopped collecting pipi? Why might they have both needed to carry the bucket? (p.22)
- Mumma and Bubs are collecting kai for a family dinner. Who might the two people on the veranda be? (p.23)
- What would the pipi be like to eat if you didn't leave them overnight in a bucket of water? Do you know if you should leave the pipi in fresh water or sea water overnight? If you don't know, how could you find out? (p.24)
- What clues has the illustrator given you to indicate that it is now the next day? (p.25)
- What do the words 'Koro' and 'moko' mean? Why did Koro have his hand up in front of Bubs? (p.25)
- A fire on the beach can be dangerous. What safety rules do you think Koro would follow once the pipi were cooked? Answer: Pour water on the ashes, embers and burnt wood to make sure the fire is completely out. (p.25)
- Have you heard the word 'puku' before? What part of the body is it? (p.26)
- What made the pipi open their shells? If pipi don't open when they're cooked, what should you do? Answer: Throw away any unopened pipi. (p.26)
- What did Bubs do to keep himself amused while the pipi were cooking? Have you made things out of toetoe before? If so, what did you make with the feathery plumes and long stalks? (p.26)
- How do we know that the family love gathering and eating pipi? (pp.28–29)
- Has your family gathered kai together to share? What kai did you collect? Where did you get the kai from? (p.30)
- How might Bubs have felt when he shared the pipi dance and his new-found pipi-finding skill with his friend? (p.32)



Activities

ACTIVITY 1: OUR PIPI DANCE

The pipi dance text on page 12 describes what Mumma and Bubs did to help them gather kai from the moana. As a class, write different words for the pipi dance and then perform it together. If your school has a sandpit, you could bury in the sand some objects that could act as 'pipi', such as plastic building blocks, if you don't have any old shells. Then take turns doing the happy pipi dance from the book, as well as doing your alternative pipi dance, to try to uncover the 'pipi' with your feet and hands.

ACTIVITY 2: SHELL ART

Pipi and cockles bury themselves down in the sand. Imagine you are a pipi or a cockle and that you have come up to the surface of the sand for the first time. Draw what you saw. Firstly, make a pipi or a cockle using a paper plate. Fold the plate in half and cut it to shape. Look on the Internet for steps on how to make a paper plate shell if you need help. Paint or colour the outside of the shell to make it look real. Then open up the paper shell and draw inside a colourful scene that the pipi or cockle might have seen.

ACTIVITY 3: A BUCKET FULL

Mumma and Bubs gathered pipi until their bucket was nearly full. In New Zealand, there are rules about how many pipi and cockles people can gather. You are allowed to collect 150 pipi per person. In the Auckland and Coromandel regions, you can collect 50 cockles per person, but in other parts of New Zealand, the limit is 150. Create a fun infographic (a visual representation of information and data) showing the limits for the following in your local area: pipi, cockles, tuatua and kina. Firstly, draw a brightly coloured red bucket like the one in the story. Then write the name of the seafood and the catch limits per person per day onto the bucket drawing. If the students may have difficulty finding out the catch limits, do it together as a class activity. On the bucket infographics, ensure the information is large and easy to read at a glance.

ACTIVITY 4: A SEAGULL'S VIEW

On page 20, the illustrator has drawn a bird's-eye view of Mumma, Bubs and their dog. A bird's-eye view is an elevated view from high above, as if seen by a bird in flight. Draw a simple bird's-eye view map (a plan of an area that is drawn as if you are looking down from the sky). Pretend that you're the seagull on page 20 looking down on the beach and its surroundings. Feature on your simple map the different landmarks that appear in the story, such as the beach houses, sand dunes, beach, driftwood fireplace and picnic blanket and sun umbrella. Everyone's map will be slightly different.

ACTIVITY 5: THIS BOOK BELONGS TO...

The illustrator has created a lovely beach design on page 1. This book feature has been used for hundreds of years and is known as a bookplate. It was often a printed or decorative label that was pasted onto the inside front cover or front endpapers of a book. Its purpose was to show who the book belonged to. Design your own bookplate with a beach theme. Look on the Internet for inspiration of bookplate designs if necessary.

ACTIVITY 6: NAME THEM

Authors have the freedom to choose the events and characters (and their names) when they create a story. The boy in the story is referred to only as Bubs, which is not his real name. The small dog has been added into the illustrations to add interest. The dog chases seagulls, digs in the sand and plays with sticks, but doesn't feature in the written story at all and doesn't have a name. Have fun coming up with five possible names for Bubs and five possible names for his dog. Then share your names with a friend.

Written by Janine Scott