

A visit to Grandma's

KEY CONCEPT: Recount



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KEY WORDS:

Visit, journey, expedition, arrived, boring, tedious, happy, eager, hungry, peckish, memory, recall, remember, recollect, adore, love, narrative, event, experience, chronology, sequence, order, time, emotion, storytelling, past, biography, diary, journal, memoir and perspective.

LEARNING INTENTION:

To be able to write a third person recount based on 'A visit to Grandma's'.

SUCCESS CRITERIA:

We can

- Read personal recounts and begin to recognise their structure, e.g., order, sequence of events and use of prepositions like 'before', 'next' and 'after'.
- Write a first person recount linked to 'A visit to Grandma's'.
- Use the language of the text we have read as a model for our own writing, maintaining consistency in tense and person.
- Apply greater detail about the narrator's feelings and emotions within our writing.

STRATEGY USED:

Fortune Line

1. Identify The Concept:

Some of the key areas to investigate within and around the concept of 'recount' are the following:

- Creative thinking
- Communication
- Empathy
- Enquiry
- Evaluation
- Information processing
- Managing and describing feelings

It would be valuable if your students are already able to listen attentively to recounts and are able to recall some details, including the correct ordering of events, ask relevant questions and are confident to speak about their own experiences.

Some interesting examples of recounts to share in advance would be:

- *Diary of A Wombat* – Jackie French
- *Diary of A Fly* – Doreen Cronin
- *The Diary of A Young Girl* – Anne Frank
- *Diary of A Wimpy Kid* – Jeff Kinney
- *The Last Polar Bears* – Harry Horse

It would be valuable to remind your students of the following key features of recount writing:

- Recounts normally start by setting the scene, e.g., 'what?', 'where?', 'when?' and 'how?'
- This is followed by a series of key events in chronological order.
- They are written in past tense and with an active voice.
- They use connectives related to time (temporal connectives or prepositions) e.g., first, after, then, now, next, meanwhile, and connectives related to cause, e.g., because, since, and to contrast, e.g., however, although.
- Their focus is on specific people or events.
- They use the first person (I, we) in autobiography or the third person otherwise.
- The final paragraph should summarise and bring the reader back to the subject.

2. Challenge Students' Understanding of the Concept:

Here are some examples of cognitive conflict we expect your students to experience:

Opinion	Conflicting opinion
A recount shares information with others about an event that has happened.	My diary is a recount only meant for me.
To be able to write a good recount you need a good memory of what happened.	I can write a recount using information other people have given me about what happened.
A recount communicates the specific facts of an event.	Different people will recount the same event differently.
A good recount is detailed.	Too much detail will make it boring to read or listen to.

Questions for challenge

- What is a memory?
- Why do you think it is important to remember?
- What is a false memory?
- What memory could you recall in detail? E.g., recount of brushing your teeth or steps to a recipe.
- Do you need a good memory to learn new things?
- What is the difference between long-term and short-term memory?
- Why can we sometimes retrieve a memory that we thought was lost?
- Can you improve your memory skills?
- What does it mean to recount something?
- What is the purpose of a recount?
- What might the difference be between memory and recount?
- What does writing in first person mean?
- If you were writing in first person about your first day at school, what might you say?
- Can you give me examples of pronouns that you might use when writing in first person?
- What does the 'past' mean?
- Why are recounts written in the past tense?
- Can you give me some examples of verbs that change when we write them in the past tense?
- Which are the most important types of words to use when writing a recount?
- Why is chronology important when writing a recount?
- What are time (temporal) connectives or prepositions and why are they useful?

3. Construct Understanding:

Activity 1: Fortune Line

The Fortune Line is accompanied with a set of cards, each with a key event shown on it. Your students' task is to identify where on the Fortune Line each event should be placed.

Start by sharing the **text**, 'A visit to Grandma's' on page 45, encouraging your students to identify the key features of the text:

- How does it begin?
- What tense is used?
- What is the importance of chronology, added details and the use of temporal connectives, such as: first, before, after, straightaway, later on, etc.?

Divide your students into small groups. Give them an enlarged photocopy of the Fortune Line or this can be replicated on large sheets of paper by your students. Provide them with the set of statement cards and a copy of the original recount text 'A visit to Grandma's' if necessary.

The **Activity 1 orange cards** present the key information in more manageable chunks for your students to organize and evaluate against both axes on the graph.

The **Activity 1 blue cards** provide more challenge for your children and have more ambiguous information to sort as well as more information in general to factor into the recount.

Your students should:

- Analyse the two axes presented on the graph and recognise the significance of one axis relating to the emotions/feelings of the character and the other, relating to the chronology of the event.
- Sort through the information cards and familiarise themselves with them.
- Place the statements one at a time on the graph to show where they think they best fit according to the emotions felt at that point in the recount. Compare and test them against other statements as they do so.

Useful questions might be:

- Why do you think that this is a happier statement than that one?
- How do you think you would be feeling at that point based on the stage of the journey you are at?
- How does the order in which the events happen affect the degree to which the statements are happy or sad ones?
- What are your reasons for thinking this is a happy/sad moment?
- What does it mean if you place the statement exactly in the centre of the vertical axis?

It is helpful for your students to annotate their ideas on the graph as they position the statements in the places they feel they should be.

This can include adding adjectives and adverbs to explain how the narrator is feeling at that point and notes to enhance the construction of the final recount with descriptive detail.

Once all the cards have been placed on the graph, your students should develop their narrative recount of the information. They should use the Fortune Line as their notes and plan for producing the final piece of recount writing.

Adaptation

For younger students you could use the orange set of cards only and the text can be read out for them where necessary.

Extension

For more challenge, the blue cards should be used and your students could be given blank cards to add in their own information to be considered and mapped on the graph.

To extend the activity further, you could get your students to plot another line on the same graph to represent the perspective of Kelly or Grandma. This would draw attention to different perspectives of the same events.

4. Consider The Learning Journey:

At the end of the activity it is usual to encourage the students to review their learning journey and the thinking process they have engaged in throughout the session.

Each group can present their findings and reasoning to the class and individuals can read out and share their final recount pieces. It will be interesting to compare and contrast the varying interpretations of the same information from group to group.

- What do they all share/have the same?
- Which parts are most different?
- What are the reasons for these differences and similarities?
- Do they all fulfill the success criteria, even if they do so in quite different ways?

It is also good to review your students' new learning around the genre of 'recount'.

- What do they now know that they didn't know before?
- What do they understand about recounts?
- What can the students now do within their writing that they couldn't before?
- What skills have the students used throughout the lesson?
- Where and when could they use the skills again?
- What new questions do they have?

Ideas for transfer

Your students can work in pairs or small groups to plan a story or recount through role play or drama. They should discuss word choices and decide on the ideas they think are best and be able to explain why.

Explore new narrative accounts with students: diary entries, newspaper columns etc. Encourage them to write an alternative ending and take it in turns to tell their own altered story/recount. Your students should share their ideas and evaluate their effectiveness.

A visit to Grandma's

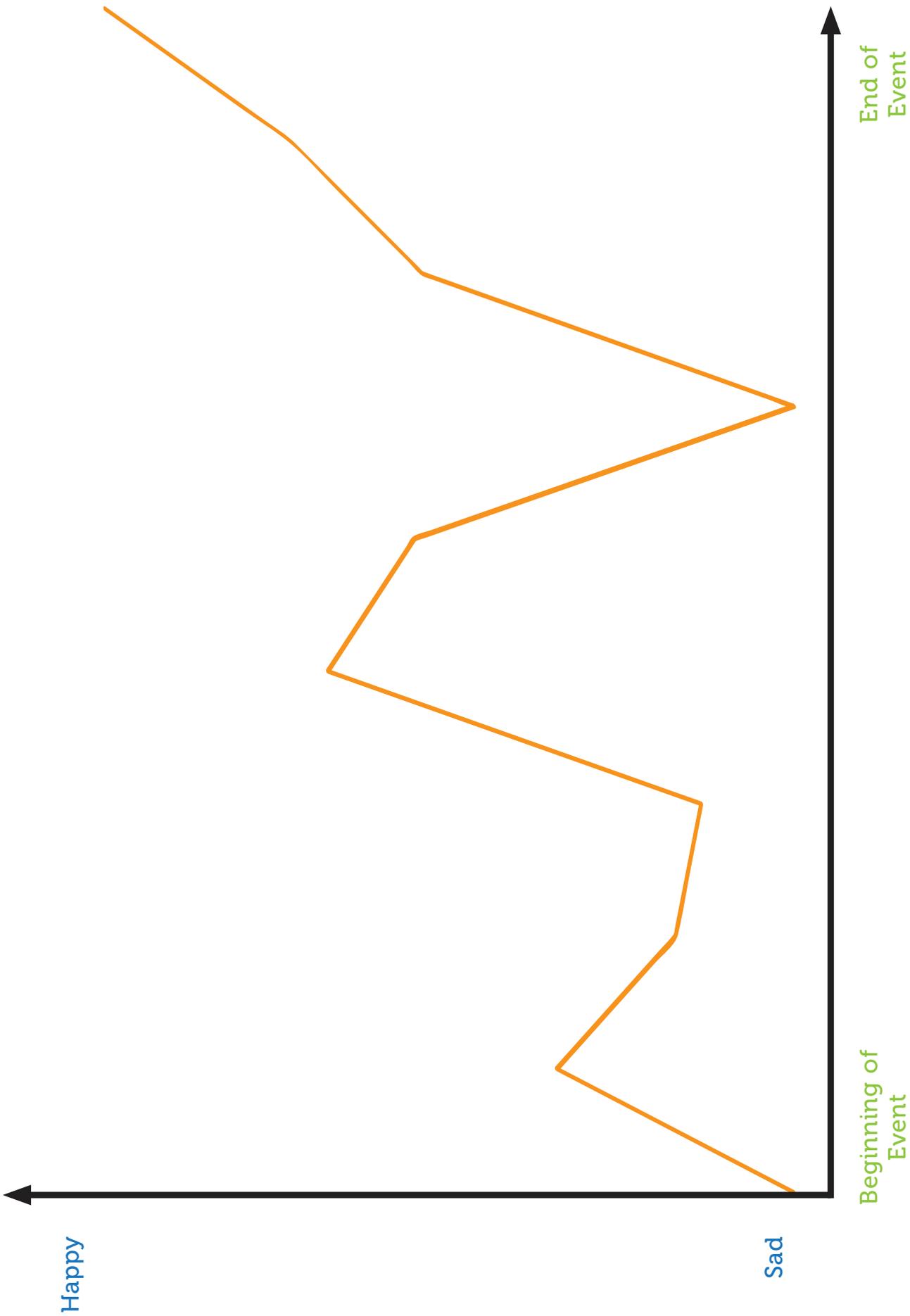
It was a cold and windy Saturday when my friend Kelly and I decided to visit my Grandma in York. We had been waiting at the bus station in the cold for twenty minutes when the bus finally came and we were so pleased to get into the warmth.

The journey was quite long, but Kelly and I ate some fruit and talked all the way. To stop us getting too bored we played a game where she tried to spot red cars and I tried to spot blue cars and the one who had spotted the most cars when we got to York was the winner. Kelly won because more red cars passed us than blue cars.

After we got off the bus we walked to my Grandma's house. It was raining in York. And I was tired I was so excited to get to see her again, because she had always spoiled me, with hugs and yummy treats when I went to visit her.

We finally arrived at Grandma's house five minutes later and she had cheese sandwiches and a glass of milk ready for us. We were so pleased because the journey had made us hungry. We ate the sandwiches and drank the milk, then I gave Grandma a great big hug and told her how much I loved her.

It had been a long journey and I was tired but it was worth it to see Grandma again.



Kelly and I stood
in the cold bus
station.

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Kelly and I ate
some fruit.

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We walked to
Grandma's
house.

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I gave Gran a
big hug.

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The bus finally
came.

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Kelly and I played
a game.

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We arrived at
Grandma's house.

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It was a long
journey.

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Kelly won the
game.

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We ate
sandwiches and
drank milk.

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It was a cold and windy Saturday.

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We waited 20 minutes.

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It was a long journey.

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We tried not to get too bored.

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Kelly spotted blue cars.

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We walked to Grandma's house.

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I met my friend Kelly.

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The bus finally came.

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Kelly and I ate some fruit.

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Kelly and I played a game.

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Kelly won the game.

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It was raining in York.

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Kelly and I stood in the chilly bus station.

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We climbed onboard the warm bus.

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We talked all the way.

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I spotted red cars.

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We got off the bus.

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I was so excited to see Grandma again.

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**We arrived at
Grandma's house.**

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**I told Grandma
how much I loved
her.**

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**We ate cheese
sandwiches and
drank milk.**

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**It had been a
long journey.**

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**Grandma and I
hugged tightly.**

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**It was all worth it
to see Grandma
again.**

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