Banding Together

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PM

For teachers' inspection ONLY

Banding Together

Level 28

Running Words 5012 **Text Type** Narrative (Imaginative)

Curriculum Areas Literacy; The Arts; Personal and Social Capability

Retelling to encourage critical thinking about the content

Ask each student to retell the story in his or her own words.

Record the retelling for further discussion and reflection.

Questions to reinforce meaning and stimulate discussion

Literal

1 Why were Joel and his family moving to a new home in the country?

2 Why didn't Joel tell the class about his love of music?

3 What was Nathan's reason for putting the notice on Joel's back?

Inferential

4 Why had the family argued for weeks about their departure to Wilchna?

5 Why did Joel have a sick, hollow feeling in his stomach when he thought about the new school?

6 Why did the class laugh at Nathan's interruptions when Joel was being introduced?

7 When the teacher reprimanded Nathan, why did he upend his palms?

8 Why did Nathan constantly target Joel throughout the school day?

Applied Knowledge

9 Why were the buildings and grounds at this school so run down?

10 How had the death of Nathan's mother affected him?

11 How did music affect both Joel and Nathan?

Vocabulary

Replace the verb 'furrowed' in this sentence:
Her brows were furrowed, but she nodded with a small smile.

Links with other PM Guided Reading Books and Cards

Level 27	Book	Narrative	*Beatbox Brothers*
Level 28	Book	Narrative	*Play On!*

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Chapter 1

Leaving Home

Joel stared down at the dusty roofs and houses from his window seat in the plane. It looked like a toy town. Surrounding the town was dry, desert land with a few short trees and winding roads like snakes.

"I hate it already," he murmured.

Toby, his seven-year-old brother, elbowed Joel out of the way for a closer look.

"Wow!" he said. "This is going to be great."

Joel slumped down in his seat. He wouldn't, couldn't share Toby's enthusiasm for their new home in the country.



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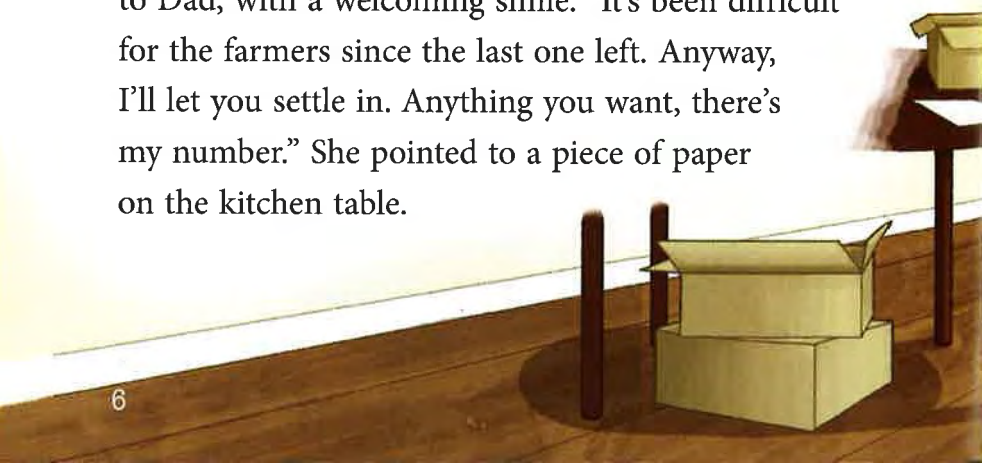
When the plane finally landed, a chatty lady called Mary met Joel, Toby and their mum and dad at the airport and drove them to their furnished, rented house. Mary was from the local real-estate agency.

"All the belongings you sent have been stacked around the back. So I'll make you a nice cup of tea while you have a look around the house," said Mary.

It was the last thing Joel wanted to do. He scuffed down the narrow hall, barely casting a glance either side. At least he had a bedroom to himself. Nothing would be worse than sharing with Toby, who'd just learned to whistle and spoke to an imaginary friend.

Mum gave a polite smile as she walked from one small room to another. "It's lovely!" she proclaimed, accepting a cup of tea from Mary. "I'm sure we'll be happy here."

"It'll be good to have a local vet again," Mary said to Dad, with a welcoming smile. "It's been difficult for the farmers since the last one left. Anyway, I'll let you settle in. Anything you want, there's my number." She pointed to a piece of paper on the kitchen table.



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Before heading out the back door, Mary turned to Joel. "So you'll be starting school on Monday, eh? Looking forward to it?" Before he could answer, Mary continued, "It'll be a bit different from your other school in the city, I suppose. Being a country school, we've got all ages, from prep to high school. And lots of kids come in on the school bus. They live out on sheep and cattle properties, so they're not all from the town. And my Chelsea's in your class." She smiled.

"I'm sure Joel will get used to it," said Joel's mum. "As will Toby. We'll be here for at least two years. Plenty of time."



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Inside, Joel was seething. How did his mum know that he'd get used to it? It was just like an adult to say that. He'd been with the same schoolmates at St Benedict's since he first started school. Then, at the start of year 5, his dad had accepted a new job at a veterinary clinic at Wilchna, way out in the country, at least 20 kilometres from the next town.

For weeks, there'd been arguments about the departure. Joel had never felt so angry. Why did they have to move?

"You're being mean," Toby had said one day, after Joel had stormed out of the kitchen at their old home, slamming the door as he left. "It'll be good fun in the country!"

"Little kids like you don't understand," Joel muttered.

"I'm not that little," Toby answered, puffing out his chest. "Anyway, we might get a horse to ride."

As if that meant anything.



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"You boys will be able to walk to school," said Dad that night, as he finished off some pie that Mary had baked and left for them to heat up. "That'll make a nice change from having to be driven, eh?"

"I suppose so," said Joel. His mum had always dropped him and Toby off and picked them up again after school, and in between times, she worked at home as a graphic artist.

"All that fresh air and exercise," added his mum.

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Why didn't they just stop? Joel was sick of hearing about all the supposedly good things that were going to happen at the new place. What about all the good things that he was going to miss out on back at his old school? Football competitions, chess club, swimming carnivals and guitar lessons. Not to mention hanging out with his best mates, Harry, Sam, Jordan and Emil. Or his teacher, Mr Adams, who was funny and made schoolwork interesting.

"You can talk to your friends online, Joel," said Mum, as if she'd read his mind. "More pie?"



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When Joel and his family move from their city home to a small country town for Dad's job, Joel isn't happy. Everything is unfamiliar, and Nathan, the school bully, is making his life miserable. Joel doesn't even feel like playing his guitar! Can he learn to love his music again and maybe even start to like his new home?



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