

This latest novel by David Hill grips the reader in suspense as events on Mount Taranaki culminate in the mother of all eruptions. Readers will find it difficult to gaze at the mountain again without wondering just when 'it' could happen.

The primary purpose for reading this novel is enjoyment which can be enhanced when readers share their responses. An overdose of activities will kill the interest and motivation to read. The suggestions offered in these notes for during and after reading are intended to be springboards for further learning; a selection which teachers may or may not choose to use.

Teaching Approaches

Teachers' enthusiasm is crucial and will promote interest and focus for the story. It is essential therefore that teachers read the text prior to the introduction and conference sessions.

Effective teaching approaches to use could be Reading To students or the Shared Novel approach. This involves a group of students reading the novel independently and meeting as a group with the teacher at agreed points for conferencing. The following notes make suggestions for the Shared Novel approach but these could be utilised by teachers reading to their students.

Shared Novel Approach (Reading with)

In a shared novel approach, the teacher introduces the novel, sets purposes for reading and facilitates discussion at particular points by conferencing with a group of students. Each student has a copy of the text which they read independently between conferencing sessions. If this approach is used flexibly the needs of particular students can be met. A less able reader can be partnered with a more competent reader as a reading buddy, using shared reading techniques to provide support.

The shared novel approach encourages and involves:

- reading for meaning, pleasure and information
- silent, independent reading
- development of comprehension before, during and after reading
- conferences at set places which provide opportunities for discussion, problem solving, questioning and goal setting
- support from the group, teacher or reading buddy
- students to make personal responses to the text
- links to the class reading programme using other resources
- students in further reading

The suggestions which follow cover the stages of Before Reading, During Reading and After Reading.



Synopsis

Chapters 1-4

The scene is set. We learn some of the history, the Maori legends, features and geography of Mount Taranaki. We meet Corey and his Dad, Warwick Lockyer, a DOC officer, his colleague Riki and Corey's Mum, Tess, a lawyer. There is a sense of anticipation about a possible eruption when minor earthquakes start occurring.

Chapters 5-6

The threat of an eruption from Mt "Tara-slacky" grows more real. Corey meets Alex, the stepdaughter of his Dad's volcanologist mate, Dean. Another earthquake on the mountain causes panic among the sightseers at the carpark.



Chapters 7-11

Monitoring on the mountain is stepped up and Alex has to stay on at Corey's house. Corey's Dad and Alex's stepdad are on the news. While Corey's Dad is busy liaising with the Regional Council and other "People In Power" to check the right alert warnings are in place, there is building tension over whether or not the mountain will blow. Corey also has a bit on his mind – what with Alex and the mountain, which he is quite sure will erupt.

Another tension becomes apparent – Corey's Mum would like his Dad to be a "manager", but his Dad is less interested. Corey keeps having a hard time socially at school and looks forward to seeing Alex in the holidays.

Chapter 11 concludes with Alex's arrival and the start of an earthquake on the mountain.

Chapters 12-13

The quake sends the alert to level 2 for the second time. The mountain starts emitting steam, then ash and smoke.



Chapters 14-17

The smoke plume all but disappears although quakes are still occurring high inside the mountain.

Corey is allowed to go up the mountain at the weekend with his Dad, Riki and Dean to check instruments measuring what is happening inside the mountain and earthquake activity. They discover a major eruption is much closer than they had thought.

The tension builds again. Dean and Corey's Dad have to attend emergency meetings. Corey talks to Alex on the phone. The army is called in, the media go mad. Riki worries that some of "the old people" won't want to leave their land to evacuate. Evacuation plans are put in place. Some people leave. There is a run on supermarket supplies of tinned food and bottled water.

The mountain seems to quieten down, but Corey is not so sure. Corey's Dad is under pressure and gets snappy.

The mountain seems to be playing games, active some times, quiet the next. Alex arrives for the holidays.

Chapters 18-19

The mountain gets more active again. Schools decide not to open for the last day of term. Dean and Corey's Dad decide to go up the mountain to make more checks. Alex and Corey are allowed to go up as far as the 4km gate inside the National Park. There are army roadblocks along the way.

Corey and Alex are dropped off at the gate, 2km below the Visitors' Centre. They are given instructions in case anything happens. The men drive off and Corey and Alex notice the silence.

Suddenly the mountain begins erupting. All hell seems to break loose as they watch the collapse of a mountain. They see geographical features disappear, there are lava bombs, they become aware that they are experiencing the shock wave from the eruption.

Riki appears in a 4WD and shouts at Corey to let him through so he can rescue Dean and Corey's Dad.



Chapters 20-21

Riki, Corey and Alex have a hair-raising trip to the Visitors' Centre as the eruption continues. They find the area devastated. The day has become dark and the children notice their eyes and throats are burning and their ears ringing.

They search the carpark for the men and discover both have been injured. Corey's Dad can't walk. The eruption continues and a landslide blocks their way out by road.

Alex has an idea to send an SOS message via a piece of measuring equipment. The ground is still lurching under them.

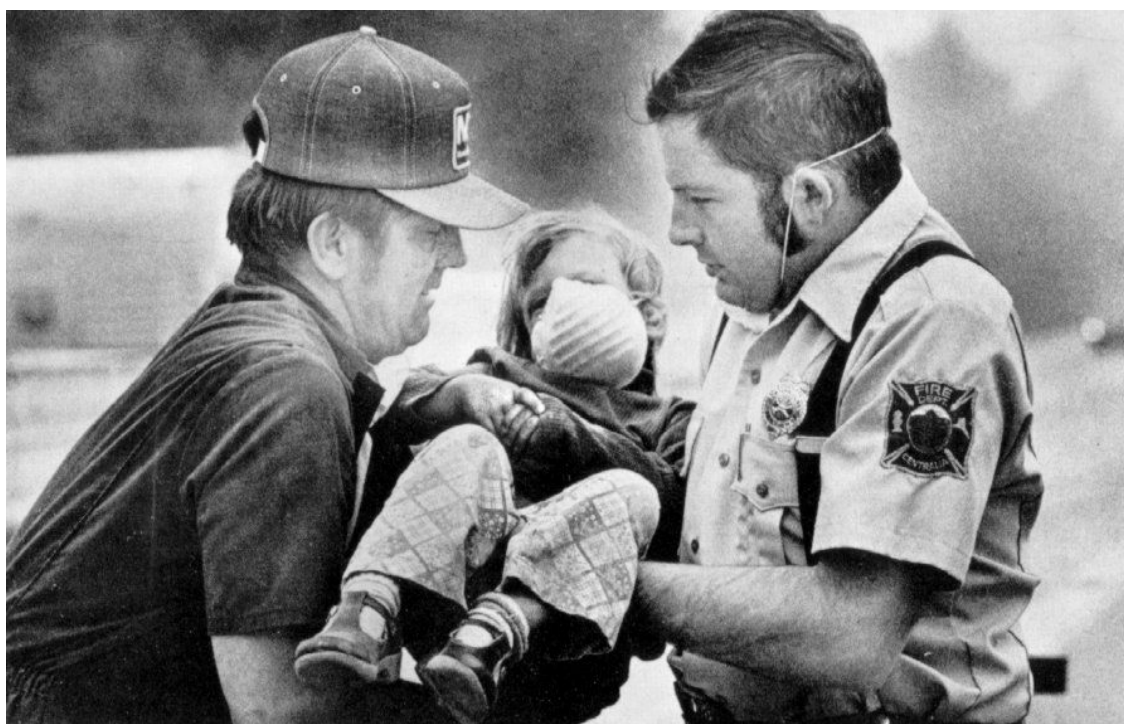
The five have to make their way painstakingly down the mountain via the bush. Alex and Corey clear a path as Riki carries Corey's Dad. They are exhausted after 30 minutes, but then they hear what sounds like a car horn. Riki puts down Corey's Dad and runs on ahead to the sound.

Soldiers from the army appear with a stretcher and they are rescued.

Chapter 22

Corey's Dad is in hospital. We learn more about the destruction and mayhem wrought around the province by the eruption. There are more evacuations and around the country, people open their homes to refugees from Taranaki.

Dean says the eruption period is not over. Alex is leaving. Corey's parents think it would be good if he goes and stays at her house for a while.



Before reading

Arouse student interest in the novel by :

- enthusiastically telling students about your personal response to the novel, “selling” the story
- asking students to think about, pair and share their own knowledge and experience of mountains and Mount Taranaki in particular
- reading the introductory section in italics at the beginning
- asking students if they have read any short stories or novels by David Hill or if they have met David Hill who is a writer living in New Plymouth in Taranaki
- reading the first chapter to the students.

Explain the shared novel approach mentioning:

- reading goals
- the buddy system to support reading and/or achieve reading goals
- conferences at the end of Chapters 6, 13 and 22
- conference dates will be set at each conference but the first could be a couple of days after reading has commenced.

Provide purposes for reading:

- The end of chapter one raises questions about what is going to happen. Ask students to look for further evidence as they read that all is not well on the mountain.
- Inform students that they will be compiling a timeline of significant events during conferences. Pupils will need to take notes or list page numbers as they read to provide evidence and share with the group.
- Ask students to compile a list, as they read, of the places on the mountain featured in the story. These can be plotted on a blank map (see appendix)

Ask students to read independently to the end of Chapter 6.

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat

See appendix for copies of calendar and map

During Reading

Conferences

- Give students the opportunity to ask their own questions and raise issues for discussion.
- Explore or clarify new vocabulary.
- Keep the pace lively.
- At the end of each conference ask students to predict what might happen next and set a purpose for their further reading.
- Read a chapter aloud to the group while they follow along.



Conference 1 - Points for Discussion

- Gather the information to develop a timeline of the significant events with pupils, using evidence in the text of passing of time. For ease of recording teachers could use a calendar page to record these at the conference.
- How does the writer let you know that everything is not well? e.g. the last sentence in chapter 4
- Relationships:
 - Corey / parents
 - Corey / peers
 - Corey / Alex
 - Mum / Dad
 - Dad / Riki / Dean
 - Alex / Dean
 - Riki / his Mum
- Ask the students to share their lists of places and in pairs do the mapping exercise
- Set the purposes for further reading:
 - Direct pupils to continue reading to the end of Chapter 13, gathering information for the timeline and plotting it on a calendar page.
 - Ask the students to note references / page numbers to other volcanoes while they are reading. In pairs after their reading they can list facts, using the graphic outline suggested below.

Facts about volcanoes

Mt St Helens	Mt Pele	Mars/Jupiter

See appendix for copy

Conference 2 - Points for Discussion

- Discuss the additions made to timelines.
- Using references from the book , plot the geographic features on the map provided.
- Discuss the references made in Chapter 9 pages 56/57, Chapter 11 page 64, to Mt St. Helens. Ask the students to note down further references to the volcanoes as they read the next chapters.
- Discuss examples of strong, descriptive writing:
 - Chapter 9 page 57; “The grey drizzle drizzled greyly through Friday.”
 - Chapter 10 page 60; “... clouds wrapped the world in silence.” “... between trees whose trunks were streaked black with moisture.”
 - Chapter 11 page 65 “...the slamming southerly wind.”
 - Chapter 12 page 69 “A jolt came, as if something deep inside the earth had finally broken free.”
 - Chapter 13 page 78; the paragraph beginning “The black column grew taller and broader.”
- Ask the students to consider their timelines and predict what the next events on the mountain might be.
- Continue sharing the mapping activity.
- Direct the students to read Chapters 14 - 22
 - Set the purposes for further reading:
 - Continue recording references to other volcanoes and continue recording timeline information.
 - Choose a piece of strong descriptive writing and record for a class display.
 - List the signs of increasing volcanic activity in chapters 17, 18 and 19 as you read.



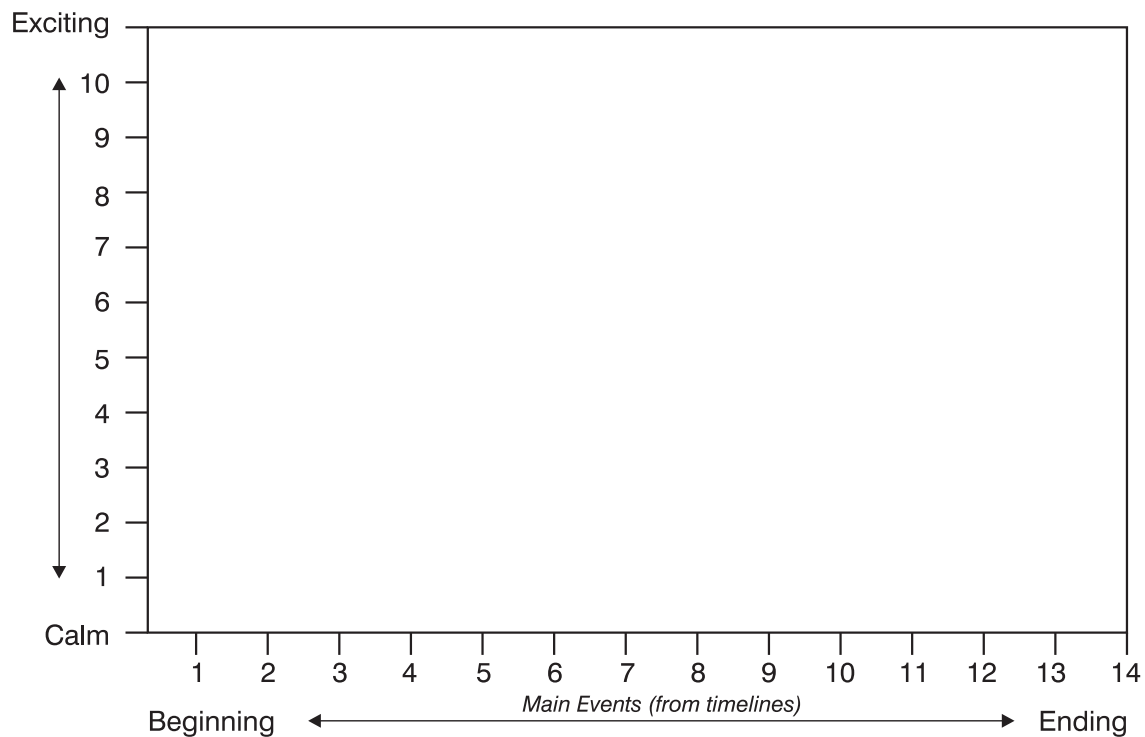
Conference 3 - Points for Discussion

- As a group, share personal responses to the final chapters of the book. Ask the students what they would like to do as a result of reading this book. Suggestions could include tramping on Mt Taranaki, making and/or viewing artworks, learning about scientific measuring equipment.
- In small groups, share the pupils examples of strong descriptive writing.
- Review additions to the timeline - use this to discuss the build up to the eruption. Discuss using visual symbols to convey meaning.
- Discuss positive or useful products from volcanic activity e.g. potash, pumice, Chapter 18 pg 104.
- As a group list the increasing volcanic activity noted down when pupils were reading chapters 18, 19.

Follow-up Activity

- In pairs, some students could collate their timelines using visual symbols to represent events where appropriate, e.g. a plume of smoke. Discuss whether a pattern developed in the build-up to the eruption.
- Others could transfer information from the timeline on to a plot profile.
- Share the completed mapping activity and compare the map with the map provided at the beginning of these notes.

Plot Profile



After Reading

Allow students the opportunity to choose when selecting any further activities they might pursue as a response to reading this novel. The activities may include links to other curriculum areas besides English, like The Arts, Science, Technology, Health and Physical Education, Social Studies and Mathematics. Here are some suggestions:

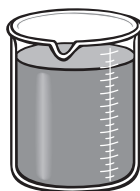
- Record scientific and technological terms and construct a glossary e.g. seismometer pg.19; magma pg. 20; composite volcano pg. 22 radar, GPS systems pg. 84; solar batteries pg.90

- Using the internet and/or the library, research other volcanic eruptions - one in New Zealand and one in another country Use the Taranaki Eruption Primary School Resource Kit to research more about volcanic hazards and volcanic alert levels



- Invite an expert to answer questions

- Conduct a science experiment to create a model of a volcano. Use the information referring to the balloon and Mt Pele on page 98-99, *The Sleeper Wakes*, and page 8 of the Taranaki Eruption Resource Kit as background formation.



- Combine both visual and verbal elements to portray the eruption for a display

- Organise a tramping trip on Mt Taranaki to view tarns and points of interest from the book - the visitors centre etc.



- Find out about place names like The Lizard, Fantham's Peak, Humphries Castle and others

- Find and read the references to cultural feelings and Maori legends

in *The Sleeper Wakes*. Select and locate two legends about Mt Taranaki to read and share with the group. References can be found in:

Chapter 1 pg.8, **Chapter 2** pg.15,
Chapter 3 pg.21, **Chapter 9** pg.58,
Chapter 12 pg.72, **Chapter 14** g.84
Chapter 16 pg.96, **Chapter 21** g.120

- Make a flow chart using the information gathered on the building of volcanic activity during conference 3.

- Create a cartoon strip of events within a chapter

- Involve students in drama / role play/ dance. Chapters 19-20 could provide students with ideas.



- Write or video a news report or an interview with a spectator or an expert. Consider news reports contained in the book and whether they are good examples. See Chapter 8 pg 50,51 and identify the questions asked by the interviewer .

- Use examples from the book to discuss the safety aspects - how people might/should react when an eruption threatens or during an eruption. Refer to material in the Taranaki Eruption Resource Kit to discuss the advice given by Civil Defence.

- Compose and perform a rap for a



civil defence warning

- Design an eruption proof shelter
- Design an instrument to measure earth movement
- Involve the group in problem solving activities e.g. Mount Taranaki is erupting. You are leaving your home to go and stay with relatives in Hawkes Bay - you may not be able to return home. You are allowed to take ten things with you. What would you take? Rank them in order of importance.

Construct graphs showing the choice of the ten most frequently chosen objects taken when leaving home

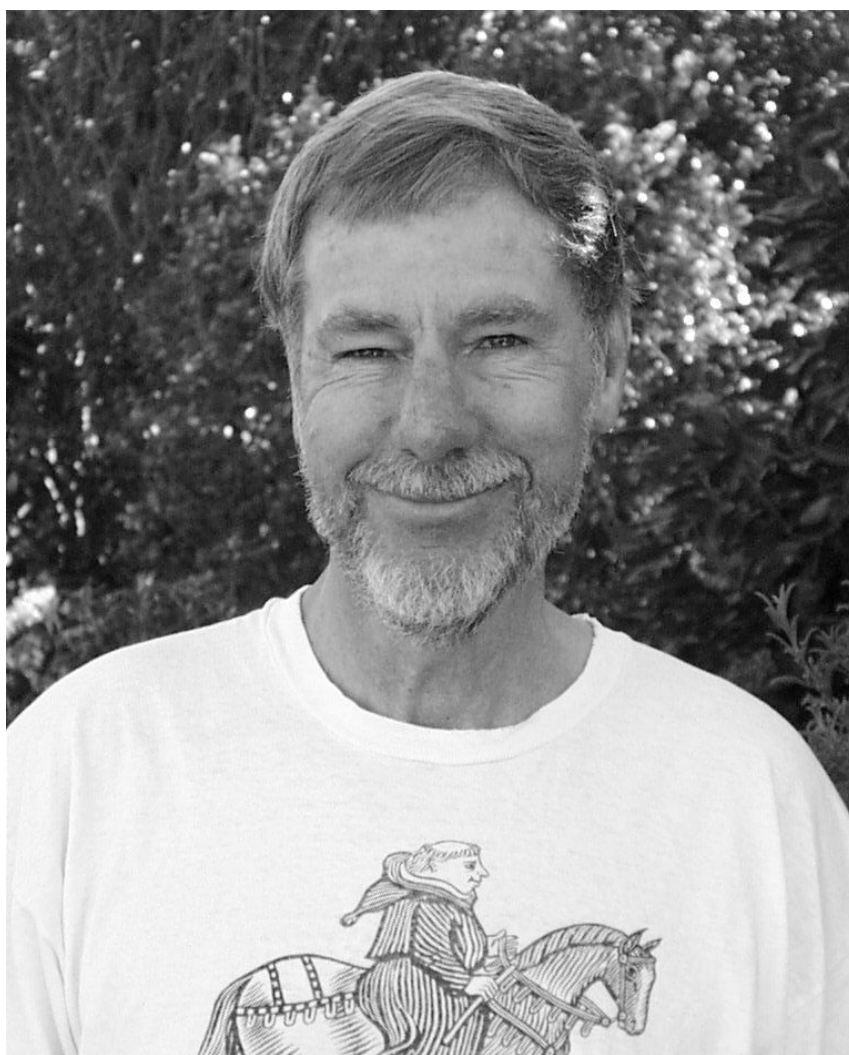


Conduct a statistical investigation about people's knowledge of procedures for an evacuation

About the Author

Formerly a teacher, award winning author David Hill is now a full-time writer who lives and writes in New Plymouth.

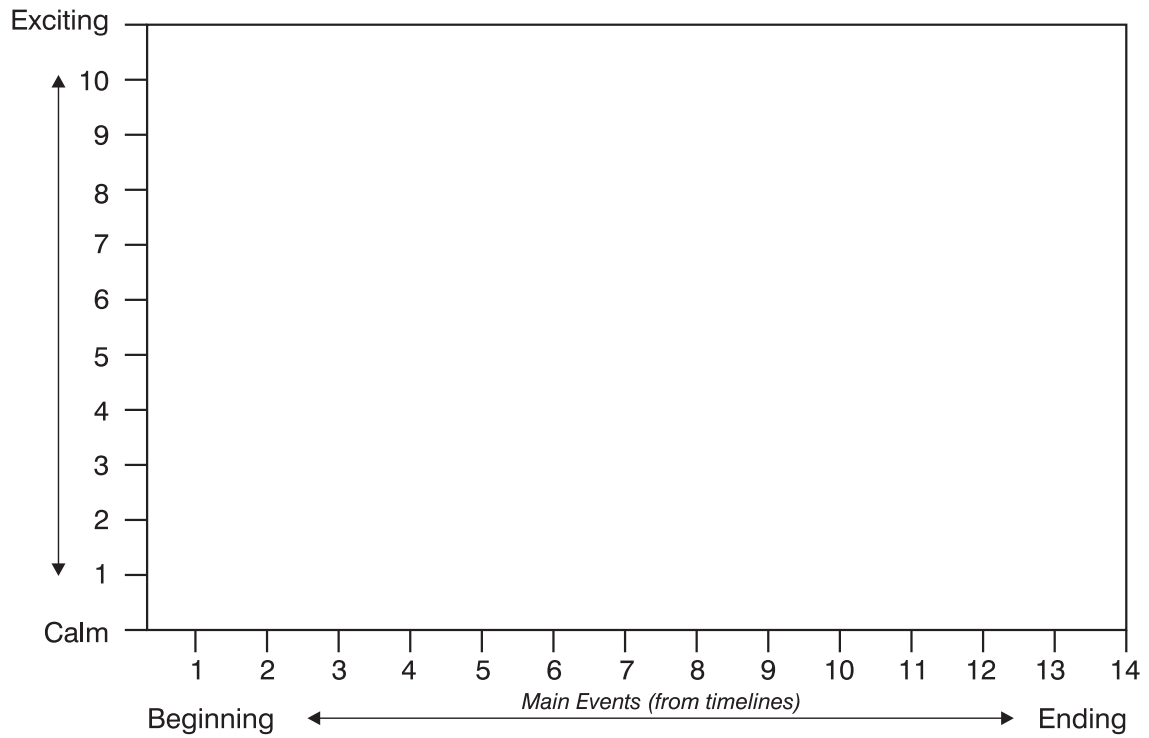
Many of his stories, plays and articles are published in the School Journals and included in these is an interview where David Hill discusses his work (3.1.98). His novels have been published in eight countries and include See Ya, Simon; Take It Easy; The Winning Touch; Impact; Cold Comfort; Just Looking; Thanks; and Fat, Four Eyed and Useless.



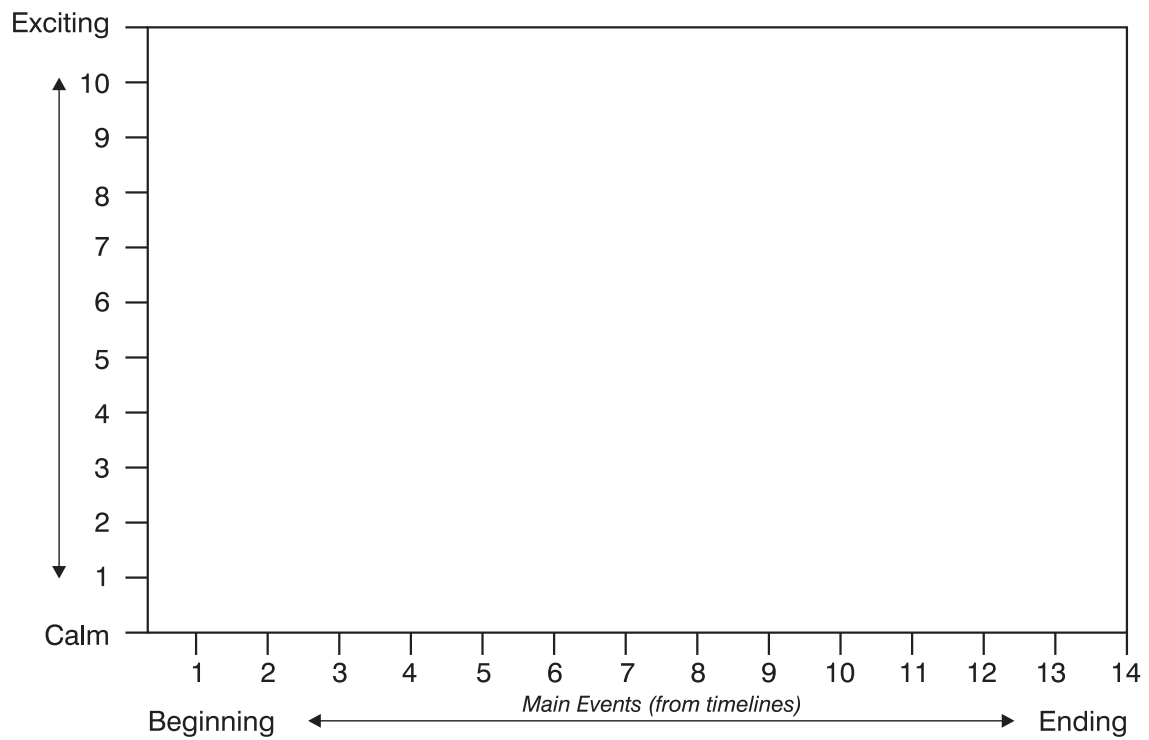
Acknowledgements

Teaching notes compiled by Sue Crichton with ideas contributed by Lynne Hepworth, Fiona Parkinson and Graeme Phillips

Plot Profile



Plot Profile



Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat

