

Adjectives Overview

Adjectives are words that describe, evaluate or define the meaning of a noun. Groups of words that describe the noun are also known as adjectivals or adjectival phrases.

When there is more than one adjective before a noun, there is a conventional order that has the general moving to the specific for example: *The big red steam train* rather than *The red big steam train*.

Effective adjectives build imagery in writing and play an important part in descriptive devices:

The **lonely** city was lit by **stone grey** streetlights dotted randomly along the **icy** gutters.

Students should be able to choose and identify effective adjectives which add detail to the characters, mood, setting and imagery in what they read and write. They develop these skills by learning about adjectives and learning to use adjectives in contextual activities. The main types of adjectives are:

Type of adjective	Examples	Ways they can be explained
factual	colour (red, mottled blue) size (huge, large) shape (bulbous, thin) age (old, new) abstract and or technical (critical, nutritious, contagious, technical)	words that describe
quantity	five, many, a few, some, first, another	words that tell how many or how much
classifying	animal doctor, French bread, passenger bus, Australian history, Aboriginal art	words that tell us what type
opinion (including judgements)	nice, naughty, nasty, wonderful, marvellous, boring	words that tell us opinions

Adjectives can be also be used to compare. These are known as comparatives (e.g. *quicker*) or superlatives (e.g. *the quickest*).

Adjectives can be used to demonstrate. Demonstrative adjectives (*this, that, these, those*) come before nouns (*This problem is too big*). If these words occur by themselves, they are pronouns (*This is my coat* – pronoun).

Type of adjective	Examples	Ways they can be explained
demonstrative adjectives	these, that, those, this, these (used before the noun not on their own)	words that demonstrate or direct
comparative adjectives	quicker/quickest, happier/happiest	words that indicate intensity

Skill Focus: Developing ideas through language choices

STAGES 2–3: Supporting ESL Students

Strategy

Using a matrix to build ideas about characters and settings

Activities to support the strategy

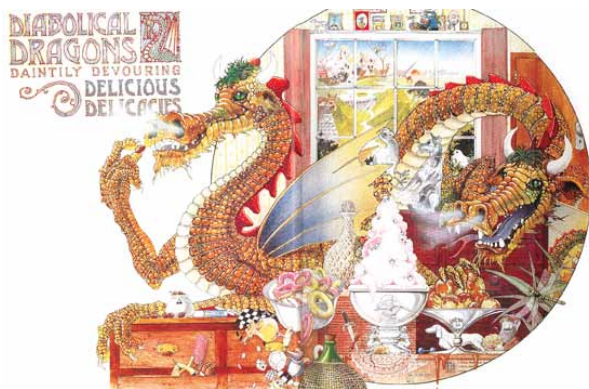
Guided

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Using character development strategies from Writing strategies, Criterion 4, ideas, students brainstorm various complication scenarios involving a dragon as the main character. They draw on their prior knowledge about this mythical creature during the brainstorming activity.

Use the proforma matrix as a guide. This can be used as an OHT, a worksheet or as the matrix for recording on butcher’s paper or the whiteboard.

Friendly Dragons	Evil Dragons
Actions	Actions
What do they do?	What do they do?
Thoughts and feelings	Thoughts and feelings
What do they think?	What do they think?



(Source: *Animalia* by Graeme Base)

K–6 Outcomes

- RS2.8: Discusses the text structure and grammatical features of a range of text types
- RS3.6: Identifies adjectival clauses and adverbial phrases
- WS2.10: Identifies adjectives and how these add to the meaning of the text
- WS3.10: Uses a variety of adjectives

ESL Scales

- 3.1.1.11: Uses simple phrases to express basic comparisons
- 3.1.1.12: Selects suitable descriptive words to enhance effectiveness of writing
- 4.3.8: Employs a small range of vocabulary to describe shades of meaning
- 4.10.6: Creates mood and feeling by use of appropriate words
- 5.10.6: Uses fitting detail in description

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 3

The Box

Today you are going to write a narrative or story. The idea for your story is "The Box". What is inside the box? How did it get there? Is it magical? Perhaps it is not. The box might reveal a message or something that was hidden. What happens in your story if the box is opened? Think about:

- the characters and where they are
- the complication or problem to be solved
- how the story will end.

Remember to:

- plan your story before you start
- write in sentences
- pay attention to the words you choose, your spelling and punctuation and paragraphs
- check and edit your writing when you have finished.



Language conventions

- Year 3 Q: 28 and 34
- Year 5 Q: 38 and 44
- Year 7 Q: 35
- Year 9 Q: 45

Provide this proforma as a sample.

Friendly Dragons	Evil Dragons
<p>Actions</p> <p>What do they do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – help people – cause no harm – don't attack humans – don't destroy property – afraid of dragon-slaying knights – wants to have friends and be friendly 	<p>Actions</p> <p>What do they do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – kidnap princesses – cause lots of harm – attack humans – destroy human property – seek to vanquish dragon-slaying knights – live alone, have rebel friends
<p>Thoughts and feelings</p> <p>What do they think or feel?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – afraid – frightened – shy – friendly – brave – 'Why can't people understand that not all dragons are bad?' – 'Why are people so frightened of me?' – 'I want to live in peace with everyone.' 	<p>Thoughts and feelings</p> <p>What do they think or feel?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – fearless – bold – unfriendly – invincible – powerful – 'I will vanquish all dragon-slaying knights.' – 'Those puny humans are no match for my fire-breathing power.' – 'I want to destroy all who stand in my way.'

Item Descriptor

The creation, selection and crafting of ideas for a narrative

Statements of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to:

- introduce characters and provide a brief description of setting
- include brief descriptions of familiar characters, places and things.

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Using the matrix students create a sentence about a dragon.

For example:

The enormous green dragon reared its scaly body before blowing out red hot steam through its moonlike nostrils.

As a class, the students then deconstruct the sentence.

Ask students probing questions about the position of the types of words and draw conclusions about where words can be placed to build texts.

Article adjectives noun verb pronoun adjective noun
 The enormous green dragon reared its scaly body

verb group adjectives noun
 before blowing out red hot steam through

pronoun adjective noun
 its moonlike nostrils.

For some students sentences can be constructed at a more detailed level. For example:

Article adjectives noun adverb verb possessive pronoun adjective noun
 The enormous green dragon slowly reared its scaly body

verb group adjectives noun
 before blowing out red hot steam

adverbial clause

relative verb possessive adjective noun
 pronoun pronoun

which escaped through its moonlike nostrils.

As students analyse the text language, they create a fact file about the grammar, for example:

- Adjectives describe nouns, personal and possessive pronouns.
- Every clause has a verb. The verb is central to the clause. Verbs sometimes need helpers to make them finite.
- Nouns and pronouns can be subjects or objects in sentences.
- Adverbs add to the verb.

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Students choose an imaginary character they have written about. They develop a character building matrix using categories such as verbs, adverbs and adjectives to build their sentences.

Students use the character-building matrix to edit their narrative. The drafts are shared in a writers' circle.

Skill Focus: Using effective adjectives to build intensity of ideas

STAGE 4

Strategies

Deconstructing texts using a matrix

Adjectival clauses play an important role when building sentences. The sentences are built around the noun. They include words that:

- classify
- quantify
- judge
- elaborate or emphasise
- compare.

Activities to support the strategy

Guided

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Ask students questions about the topic to identify their prior knowledge.

Also ask questions which explore their understanding of adjectives and their purpose in texts.

Prepare the provided text as an OHT and make a copy for each student.

Students read the text independently.

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Students identify:

- adjectives that emphasise and elaborate, such as:

bleached white snow

lonely city

firm, slippery faces of the waterways

- adjectives that compare:

walk a little quicker

- verbs that create personification

the air breathed uncertainty and three white coats smiled on the wall

KLA Outcomes

English 4.4.13: Students use the metalanguage of subject English to describe, discuss and differentiate texts and their language forms, features and structures

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 3



The Box

Today you are going to write a narrative or story. The task for your story is "The Box". What is inside the box? How old is it? Is it valuable? Perhaps it is alive!

The box might reveal a message or something that was hidden.

What happens in your story if the box is opened?

Think about:

- the characters and where they are
- the complication or problem to be solved
- how the story will end.

Remember to:

- plan your story before you start
- write a beginning
- pay attention to the words you choose, your spelling and punctuation and paragraphs
- check and edit your writing when you have finished.

Item Descriptor

The development of sophisticated creation, selection and crafting of language for a narrative

Statements of Learning for English

When students write texts they have the opportunity to develop a storyline of sequenced events involving complications and resolutions with relevant details.

- modifying adverbs

accompanied by white **unusually** heavy plastic sacks

Students discuss the creation of imagery through the use of the language choices.

Students rewrite the passage to:

- remove the adjectives
- remove the adverbs
- replace the effective verbs with simple verbs.

Discuss the effect this has on the writing. Discuss whether there are other choices that could enhance the writing.

The Meeting

The bleached white snow was thick and absorbed Moscow. The lonely city was faintly lit by grey streetlights dotted randomly along the icy gutters. People with thick clothes and fur collars had buried their hands into their pockets as they scurried the streets trying to beat night home. The temperature had dropped to below zero degrees Celsius. Russia was like this almost every winter, reluctantly accepting the cold element as it took over the country. Ponds had no ripples skimming their surface. Only cracks of white were scattered along the firm, slippery faces of the waterways. Buildings were almost forgotten and businesses were released from the owners' grasps for the day.

Meanwhile the west-end of town encircled Sarov Delichi. He set off down a small alleyway where a cat flashed a disturbing glance as it searched through a tipped over rubbish bin. The boundaries between the houses among the alleyways were marked by small and low crosswire fences. The backyards here were small and crammed up. Cheap deckchairs, which were constantly rusting, were strewn across the alleyways like unwanted sale items. A silent fog loomed and searched its way around the bending side-streets and clogged up the pathways with a supernatural look. Finally through the fear of white, the waiting building met Sarov. He entered through the back door. It let off a squeak as it allowed him to enter. Darkness swallowed the room only allowing the light from a single lamp to escape.

Sarov began to walk a little quicker toward the occupants who surrounded the table. A slight chilly breeze tripped Sarov's confidence sending shivers down his spine. Three white coats smiled on the wall and dripped the melting snow from their backs. The air breathed uncertainty as he sat in the chair and the meeting began.

By Aden Bates (Year 6)



Apostrophes Overview

Apostrophes are used for only two purposes: to indicate contraction or ownership.

Contraction Apostrophe

A contraction apostrophe is used to show that a letter or letters have been left out when two or more words are joined together to make a shortened form (contracted).

Contracted form	Expanded form
He's training for the grand final.	He is training for the grand final.
Weren't you at the party?	Were not you at the party?
I'm going to play near the grass.	I am going to play near the grass.

Possessive Apostrophe

The other use of apostrophes is to show ownership or association. They are followed or preceded by the letter 's'.

This is the family's dog. (singular – one family)
These are the families' dogs. (plural – many families)
I can see the boy's team. (singular – one boy)
I can see the boys' team. (plural – many boys)

Apostrophes are often incorrectly used. The most common mistakes are:

- used for plurals
- it's and its
- you're and your
- with shortened forms – CD's (incorrect) rather than CDs
- with decades – 1870's (incorrect) rather than 1870s.

Skill Focus: Identifying and using correct punctuation

STAGES 2–4

Strategies

Viewing and analysing the use of contractions in reading and writing assists students by:

- demonstrating the correct use of contractions
- identifying the correct use of contractions
- identifying where they should not be used

Including possessive and abbreviation contractions as part of contextual spelling lists

Activities to support the strategy

The teacher asks the students what they know about abbreviations and acronyms by asking probing questions, such as:

What is the purpose of a contraction when it abbreviates the name of a person, place or organization?

Who can give some examples of abbreviations or acronyms? Get students to list as many examples as possible, eg. Mr, Dr, Sat., NSW, ACT, CBD, Mrs, P.S.

In what sort of texts would you find these sorts of abbreviations/acronyms?

How do they benefit the writer or reader?

The following website allows access to a number of educational games that will test and reinforce student knowledge of contractions and abbreviations.

<http://www.netrover.com/~jjrose/spell/editindex.htm>

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Guided

The teacher asks students what they know about contractions by asking probing questions, such as:

What is the purpose of contraction apostrophes?

What benefit do contractions have for the writer or reader?

What effect does incorrect use of contractions have on the text?

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

The following sign uses an apostrophe for ownership. The example can be copied and enlarged onto A3 on OHT or downloaded to a PowerPoint for discussion.

K–6 Outcomes

- WS2.10: Students use apostrophes for contractions
- WS3.10 Students use correct punctuation

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 4



Language Conventions

Year 3 Q: 16

Year 5 Q: 50

Year 7 Q: 47

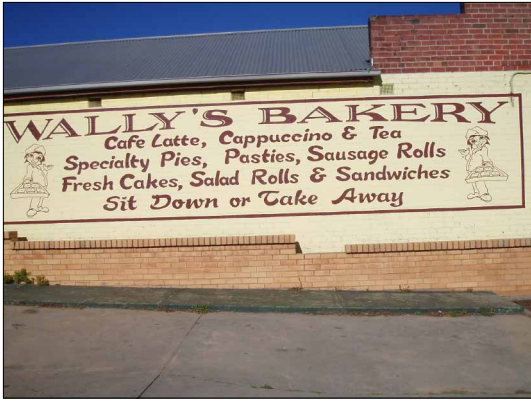
Year 9 Q: 38 and 39

Item Descriptor

Students identify the variety of uses for the apostrophe

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to clarify meaning.



Ask students where they can see the use of the apostrophe and what purpose it plays in the word. Correct non-use of the apostrophe is also discussed.

word	purpose of the apostrophe
Wally's	ownership
pies	plural 's' – correct non-use of the apostrophe
rolls	plural 's' – correct non-use of the apostrophe
cakes	plural 's' – correct non-use of the apostrophe
sandwiches	plural 'es' – correct non-use of the apostrophe

Also discuss the use of the comma in lists and the difference in the position of the comma and contraction.

The following sign shows an incorrect use of the apostrophe for plurals.

The teacher asks students:

Where can you see the use of an apostrophe?

Can you explain whether the use is incorrect or correct?

Discuss alternative uses or non-use of the apostrophe.



The apostrophe is incorrectly used. The apostrophe is showing ownership where the word is only a plural.

Alternative answers may read:

Cuckoo's Clocks (belonging to or made by cuckoo)

Cuckoos' Clock (belonging to or made by cuckoos)

Cuckoo Clocks (describing the clocks)

Independent

Develop a set of word matching cards. Provide opportunities for students to play memory and concentration games with these cards to reinforce the use of the apostrophe of contraction.

we're

we are

you've

you have

it's

it is

you'd

you would

you'd

you had

they're

they are

Applied Comprehension – Modality Overview

To understand and interpret relationships and ideas in texts that are not stated or found in the words requires greater background knowledge on the part of the reader. Readers need to infer or deduce the meaning from what they know and the messages in the text.

Applied comprehension requires readers to:

- combine ideas
- draw conclusions
- interpret and evaluate information
- identify tone and voice.

A higher and more complex level of applied comprehension involves critical analysis which requires readers to:

- be critical
- form opinions
- identify authors' points of view and attitudes
- identify and consider the authority of texts and their messages
- infer motives of characters and themes.

Critical analysis can be introduced in very early reading and is part of using logic to understand the messages, themes and underlying plot of stories (Carnine, Silbert and Kameenui, 1997). The use of Edward De Bono's 'Six Thinking Hats' strategy is one effective way of developing critical thinking skills.

Skill Focus: Identification of the language features that are used by writers to construct persuasive texts (modality)

STAGES 3–4

Strategy

Structuring a letter to persuade

In PDHPE, students are required to write persuasive texts to argue a case, debate an issue or advocate a point of view. In PDHPE, persuasive texts can communicate key messages about being active and appreciate the contribution that participation in physical activity makes to the development of interpersonal skills.

Activities to support the strategy

Ask the students to write a letter to the principal expressing concern about the lack of physical activity in the playground. Develop a proposal to address the situation and outline reasons for the proposal using language that will persuade the principal to support the proposal.

Remind the students that the aim of the letter is to persuade and convince an audience that the position that you are advocating is reasonable, logical and the best course of action to follow. Explain that there are two types of language that can be used in a persuasive text:

- *Analytical* text appeals to the ‘mind’ of the reader. This type of text is logical, factual and relies on evidence rather than emotions.
- *Hortatory* text is directed to the emotions of the reader, appealing to their *heart and soul*.

An effective letter balances the two, where the reader is ‘moved’ by what they read, while being led to believe that what is being asked is reasonable.

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Starting the letter

Ensure that the letter starts with a salutation appropriate for a formal letter.

Dear Mr or Ms ... or Dear Sir/Madam

1. Introduction: Attention step

This step needs to state who you are as the writer (establish your credentials), introduce the topic of your letter and give some indication of what is to follow. Some techniques that can be used include quoting statistics or research, visualisation, a quote, a story.

Imagine meeting the students that are in my Year 8 class in fifteen years’ time at a school reunion.

What are you likely to see?

Visualise them based on:

- *their current level of physical activity*
- *current interests and subjects they excel in*

I think you will see people that are(research). I would like to do

K–6 Outcomes

- RS 3.6 Students interpret word meaning
- RS 3.8 Students identify the structure and features of persuasive texts.

KLA Outcome

- PDPHE 4.8: A student describes how to access health information, products and services.

Item & Stimulus

Reading
Year 3 Q: 27
Year 5 Q: 15

Item Descriptor

Students identify points of agreement in arguments by inferring the writer’s point of view and connecting ideas implied in texts.

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to clarify meaning.

something to make sure this does not happen and I am asking for your help.

2. Needs step

This step outlines what the problem is and why something needs to be done about it (at least three arguments to support your position, including both analytical and hortatory texts) and why the situation has occurred.

During lunch and recess there is very little physical activity in the playground, especially by girls.

From what I have learnt in PDHPE, we need to be active
After surveying many of our students, particularly the girls, I have found that (analytical text). *This I believe has occurred for a number of reasons* *I think this is a good chance to do something really positive for the students at our school* (hortatory text).

3. Satisfaction step

This step tells the audience what they should do to satisfy the need or solve the problem. In this step, propose a plan or idea, and give some description of what it would look like, refer to previous experience in this area, what you have seen or heard being done or what is happening elsewhere.

I would like to propose that(outline plan or idea). *It would involve*(describe it). *I have spoken to teachers and students who have seen* (refer to previous experience).

4. Visualisation step

This step paints a positive picture or creates a visualisation in the minds of the reader as to what might happen if the call for action is followed or not followed.

Do we want a school of students where they don't value being active or do we want a school of students who look forward to being active? Would we like the community to see students playing sport and being active in the playground or would we rather see them sitting around chatting? (hortatory text)

5. Action step

This step asks the audience (i.e. the principal) to do something. They are being called to action (e.g. write a letter, vote with you, provide support to the proposal, assist with funding, or approach another organisation).

I am asking you to support this proposal by(describe the action you want to see).

6. Sign off

Conclude by using an appropriate sign off for a formal letter.

Yours sincerely

Student's name

Class

Source: *Boys and literacy – Teaching units*, pp. 230–23. Edited by Nola Alloway and Pam Gilbert, Curriculum Corporation (1997) Carlton Victoria.

Skill Focus: Identification of language features that are used to construct persuasive texts (modality)

STAGES 4–5

Strategy

Developing planning strategies using scaffolds

In PDHPE, students may be required to critically analyse or produce brochures about issues related to health and physical activity. Before designing brochures, it is important that students understand the purpose of the brochure and the intended audience. This will help them to determine the most appropriate structure, text organisation and language features.

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Students are provided with a variety of planning strategies to assist in structuring the text.

These include:

- brainstorming
- mind mapping
- listing–grouping–labelling
- developing branch diagrams or scaffolding.

The scaffolds are provided for students as they learn to use them in their planning. This strategy then becomes a skill that can be transferred to various activities.

Activities to support the strategy

Activity one

Planning the writing of persuasive texts

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Ask students:

How can we record our ideas and what can we use to help organise them?

How does planning benefit the result of our task?

What types of ways can we plan and what do we need to know before we begin planning?

Build understanding of what skills the students already know they can use and then explain why planning is an essential step before writing the text for a brochure.

Ask students:

What are brochures?

What is the purpose of brochures?

Where do we find brochures? How is this affected by the purpose and audience they are targeting?

K–6 Outcomes

- RS 3.6 Students interpret word meaning
- RS 3.8 Students identify the structure and features of persuasive texts

KLA Outcome

- PDHPE 5.8: A student critically analyses health information, products and services to promote health.

Item & Stimulus

Reading
Year 3 Q: 27
Year 5 Q: 6, 15
Year 7 Q: 6

Item Descriptor

Students identify features of persuasive texts.

Statements of Learning for English

When students interpret texts they have the opportunity to analyse how an issue is represented and discuss possible implications and impacts.

Students are asked to collect three different types of brochures such as:

- a travel brochure
- an advertising brochure
- an information brochure.

Alternatively, the teacher may provide a collection of a variety of laminated brochures.

Exploring higher-order thinking (QTF)

Students critically analyse the brochures and answer:

Who are the brochures targeting and how does this affect the content? (Audience)

What type of information is the brochure trying to show and why? (Purpose)

How does this affect the design and content?

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Provide students with the marking criteria for the task.

Ask students to develop a brochure that convinces and encourages people to live a healthy lifestyle.

Explain that the brochure should include a general description of a healthy lifestyle and focus on healthy eating, physical activity, rest and relaxation.

Developing scaffolds in planning

Review what has been learnt in class during the unit *Keeping healthy*.

List the words *what, why, how, when, where* and *who* on the board.

Working in small groups, ask the students to develop questions that make use of the words *what, why, how, when, where* and *who* and that will provide information about a healthy lifestyle. These questions will provide the structure for the brochure.

List key words under each question. Explain that these will assist in developing the text using the question.

Guide students to refer to the questions and key words during the development of text for the brochure.

Students read and discuss the presentations of brochures in terms of purpose, audience and content. This will be a reflection on the task marking criteria matrix.

Activity two

Using modality in persuasive texts.

Explain to students that writers use persuasive language when they intend to elicit a specific response from an audience. Modality is used to show the range of responses that can exist on a continuum relating to the degrees of probability, certainty or obligation of something. It affects the tone of the text and allows the writer to soften or strengthen the language to meet particular needs.

Demonstrate the use of a continuum for plotting modality and ask the students to develop their own, e.g. never, rarely, sometimes, usually, always, might do, could do, must do.

Explain to the class that high modality words bring certainty to a text. It makes the text appear more authoritative and can be effective in persuading the reader to adopt that particular point of view. Low modality provides more scope for negotiation and allows the writer to appear more objective. It can also be persuasive.

Compare sentences using words of different levels of modality to demonstrate how low modality can often be more persuasive than high modality.

Regular exercise *will* improve the health of your heart. (high modality)

Regular exercise *may* improve the health of your heart. (low modality)

You **must** exercise every day.

You **should** exercise every day.

Ask students how modality changes the strength of what has been written in the previous sentences.

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Ask students to construct sentences that use low modality words that aim to persuade the reader to lead a healthier lifestyle. Sentences could link to physical activity levels, eating habits or lifestyle behaviours. Change the modal words to high modality and ask students to read out the two sentences. Discuss the possible reactions of the reader to each text and identify which sentence would be more effective in persuading the reader to change their behaviour.

Ask students to review the brochure developed in Activity one to identify words that are high modality and low modality. For each of the words, discuss the reactions the audience may have and whether changing the modality will be more effective in persuading the reader to change their behaviour.

Students record on a matrix.

word	Level of modality					Effect on the reader (audience)
	1	2	3	4	5	

Applied Comprehension – Tone Overview

To understand and interpret relationships and ideas in texts that are not stated or found in the words requires greater background knowledge on the part of the reader. Readers need to infer or deduce the meaning from what they know and the messages in the text.

Applied comprehension requires readers to:

- combine ideas
- draw conclusions
- interpret and evaluate information
- identify tone and voice.

A higher and more complex level of applied comprehension involves critical analysis which requires readers to:

- be critical
- form opinions
- identify authors' points of view and attitudes
- identify and consider the authority of texts and their messages
- infer motives of characters and themes.

Critical analysis can be introduced in very early reading and is part of using logic to understand the messages, themes and underlying plots of stories (Carnine, Silbert and Kameenui, 1997). The use of Edward De Bono's 'Six Thinking Hats' is one effective way of developing critical thinking skills.

Skill Focus: Locates, connects and interprets ideas in complex texts

STAGES 4–5

Strategy one: reading a review

Context, audience, purpose

Discuss with students the importance of considering these elements when reading any new text:

- **Context:** the particular situation in which the text has been composed
- **Audience:** the person or people for whom the text is intended
- **Purpose:** the intention of the composer in producing this text

The acronym **CAP** is a useful way for students to remember these three elements. To 'cap' a text before, while or after you read it is a useful strategy because the meaning of a text, and how that meaning has been shaped by the composer, is very much a product of these three elements.


Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

The provision, discussion and use of the following scaffold can assist in the identification of the 'CAP' strategy.

Context	
Audience	
Purpose	

Activity to support the strategy

Provide a copy of text based on *Math and the Mona Lisa: the Art and Science of Leonardo da Vinci*, adapted from a book review of the same name, by Jeremy Chunn, which appeared in *Cosmos – the Science of Everything*, Issue 12, December/January 2007, used in the Year 9 NAPLAN Reading Test, 2008.



Math and the Mona Lisa:
The Art and Science of Leonardo da Vinci

by Robert Atkey
ISBN 0-04-001191-8
Collins
200 pages
A\$24.99
Reviewed by Jeremy Chunn

Leonardo da Vinci will be long remembered after every copy of *The Da Vinci Code* has faded to dust, not for a theme that Robert Atkey's elegant book has a wealth of opportunities about it. Blame it on the cover art, because what lies within is a devoted work where the relationship between science and art is investigated, and it's not until halfway through that da Vinci becomes the primary focus.

Atkey, a professor of physics, starts with the golden ratio 'phi', an irrational number derived from the Fibonacci sequence. Scarcely an inch long, in the pyramids, the Parthenon and in art from all ages. But is it used consciously or instinctively? Atkey can answer that question, but just to make matters worse, when he points to the golden ratio's ubiquity in nature, however, it is the perfect time to introduce da Vinci, who instructed others — scientists and artists — to learn from nature, not from each other.

It sees the famous Italian's capacity to observe, conduct experiments and collect data that made him the first scientist, the author claims. It sees also the curiosity and diligence that informed da Vinci's art; the curls in hair became a reference to the way water flows; a subject's gaze revealed his intimate knowledge of the human eye, having dissected so many of them.

Leonardo produced maybe 14,000 pages of notes, but we are left with less than a third of that amount. In his work he anticipated inventions that were realised hundreds of years later.

Atkey himself is a Renaissance man, appearing within the book are sketches by the author and his cousin with the inventor, including quotes from Milton or Galileo and Tom Wolfe on sculptor Frederick Hart.

The other cheek
Atkey uses old-fashioned scientific research, including why we generally turn the left cheek when being photographed by a hood. It turns out the right side of the brain, associated with emotions and which controls the left eye and cheek, tells us to turn to the right, and show the left. Right?

KLA Outcomes

English 4.7.1 Students locate, assess, select, synthesise and use information, ideas and arguments from texts

English 4.4.8 Students learn about ways in which specific language forms and features are used to shape meaning

English 5.4.5 Students identify purpose, audience and context of text through consideration of the language forms and features, and structures used in texts

Item & Stimulus

Reading
Year 7 Q: 25, 38, 39, 40
Year 9 Q: 4, 5, 9, 19, 32, 37

Item Descriptor

Students connect ideas in a book review.

Statements of Learning for English

When students interpret texts they have the opportunity to connect information and draw conclusions about the main idea, contention or viewpoint.

Consider the text. Ask students to guess the context, audience and purpose of this text before they read it, then confirm or modify these guesses after they have read it. With some prompting, they should be able to generate the following information about the text using the scaffold. An example of a student's response may be:

Context	Review is fairly recent – written after the publication of the bestseller, <i>The Da Vinci Code</i> . The recognisable layout and engaging style indicate that the review was published in a popular print medium – information in the Acknowledgements confirms that the review first appeared in a magazine, <i>Cosmos – the Science of Everything</i> .
Audience	Readers of <i>Cosmos</i> are people with an interest in science. This is confirmed by the use of some mathematical/scientific jargon, e.g. <i>the golden ratio 'phi', an irrational number derived from the Fibonacci sequence</i> .
Purpose	Like most reviewers, Jeremy Chunn's purpose in writing this text is to inform readers about a new book and present his personal opinions about it.

Exploring higher-order thinking (QTF)

To further investigate the purpose of the text, ask students to work in pairs, one identifying five facts and the other identifying five opinions presented in the review. Ask them to check each other's work before sharing with the rest of the class.

Working in groups, ask students to find and cut out about ten reviews from magazines and newspapers, and then answer the following questions:

- *In what sections of newspapers and magazines are you most likely to find reviews?*
- *Apart from books, what is being reviewed in the magazines and newspapers?*
- *Make a list of the common features of these reviews. Consider purpose, structure and language.*
- *What do you think is the most successful review? Justify your choice.*

Strategy two: reading a review

Exploring the uses of language

How we read and make meaning of a text depends largely on the writer's use of language. Good writers use language to not only engage their audiences but also to express their thoughts and feelings more effectively.

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Ask students to find examples of formal language, informal language, jargon and figurative or metaphorical language in the text and to comment on the effect of these uses of language on how meaning is made. The following table shows some ideas which might be generated by such an analysis:

Type of language	Example	Effect on how meaning is made
Formal language		
Informal language		
Jargon		
Figurative language		

Activity to support strategy two

Type of language	Example	Effect on how meaning is made
Formal language	<i>But is it used consciously or instinctively? ... the golden ratio's ubiquity in nature ...</i>	Helps to communicate complex ideas more precisely.
Informal language	<i>Blame it on the art cover ... Suddenly we see it everywhere ...</i>	Relaxed and friendly approach helps to engage the reader and makes challenging ideas/language more palatable.
Jargon	<i>... the golden ratio 'phi', an irrational number derived from the Fibonacci sequence.</i>	Reflects the content of the book, which is written by a physics professor, and appeals to the scientific interest of <i>Cosmos</i> readers.
Figurative language	<i>...Atalay's elegant book has a whiff of opportunism about it.</i>	Communicates ideas in more colourful and imaginative ways.

Exploring higher-order thinking (QTF)

Many reviews include a mix of formal and informal language. Discuss the advantages gained by mixing these language styles.

Consider Question 42, which asks students to explain what is implied by the words, a *whiff of opportunism*. A *whiff* is a smell, often unpleasant, and *opportunism* refers to the way in which the author of the book being reviewed seems to be taking advantage of the popularity of *The Da Vinci Code* to help promote his book, which he has titled *Math and the Mona Lisa: the Art and Science of Leonardo da Vinci*, even though da Vinci is not mentioned until half way through the book. The reviewer is using these words to gently criticise the author in a way that is both colourful and humorous. Clearly, the answer to the question is: trying to profit from the success of *The Da Vinci Code*.

Now consider Questions 43, 44, 45 and 46 in the light of this discussion. Once we have a sense of where a writer is going with the use of language, does this help us to gain a better understanding of *what* is being communicated?

Ask students to look more closely at the review they picked as the most successful in the activity above. Analyse the language used in this review. Does this help to explain why it was so successful?

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Tone

Tone refers to the qualities of a text that convey the composer's attitude towards the audience or the subject of the text.

Write this sentence on the board:

Don't speak to me in that tone of voice!

What does the word *tone* mean in this sentence? How can we convey tone through the way we speak?

Look at the following sentences. How many different ways can you say them to convey different tones, and therefore different meanings?

I think she wants to speak to you.

That's a great way to behave.

Don't speak to me in that way.

Does the meaning also depend to an extent on the context?

Note how tone is all about attitude!

Work towards this definition of tone:

Words that describe the tone of a text include *friendly, antagonistic, enthusiastic, angry, sympathetic, condescending, sarcastic, surprised* and *sad*. Discuss contexts in which a person might be likely to use these tones in speech or writing.

Discuss the difficulties of conveying tone in writing. How do writers get around these difficulties?

Consider the tone used by the writer of the review to convey his attitude towards the book, *Math and the Mona Lisa: the Art and Science of Leonardo da Vinci*. Notice how the tone varies from being critical on one point (*it's a shame that ... Atalay's ... book has a whiff of opportunism about it*) to being complimentary on other points (*elegant book, devoted work*). At other times, when the reviewer is simply presenting information about the text, the tone is neutral.

Consider Questions 47 and 48, which refer to the final comment in the review, under the heading 'The other cheek.' Ask students to read this paragraph. What is the overall tone? Clearly the writer is trying to be funny – he has decided to finish his review with a joke at Atalay's expense. He refers to a very confusing, minor point made by Atalay about the *right* side of the brain, the *left* side of the face and turning to the *right*, then finishes humorously by asking, *Right?* The answer to Question 48, *to share a joke with readers about the confusing information*, becomes clearer when we are aware of the tone which the writer is conveying throughout the paragraph.

Question 47 refers to some words at the beginning of this paragraph: *Atalay veers off to findings of sophisticated modern research*. Discuss the meaning of the word *sophisticated*. Now look at the statement in the context of the whole paragraph: *is the research really sophisticated?* Ask students to consider the tone conveyed through this word. Some might suggest that the reviewer is being *sarcastic*, but sarcasm is a term we usually reserve for comments made in speech and the term *ironic* might be a better description of the tone here. An awareness of the ironic tone of the word *sophisticated* in the final paragraph should help students to find

the correct answer to Question 47: that the reviewer is referring to a *difference of opinion between Atalay and the reviewer*.

Irony and sarcasm

Irony is a technique sometimes used by writers and speakers when they want to make a point. It involves using words which seem to be opposite in meaning to the meaning actually intended. The purpose of irony is often to be humorous or to emphasise a point in a way that will attract the interest of the audience.

Sarcasm is the use of brief and cutting, ironic comments, especially in speech. Note that irony can be sustained throughout a text. For example, in the eighteenth century, Jonathon Swift wrote a lengthy text called *A modest proposal* in which he seemed to be recommending that the children of Ireland should be fattened up to provide food for the tables of wealthy English lords and ladies – but really he was criticising the exploitative attitude of the rich people in England towards the poor people in Ireland. The sad thing is that some readers missed the irony and thought he was fair dinkum!

Re-read the other texts included in the Year 9 Reading Test.

Note how most factual texts use a neutral tone.

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Consider *Tourism in Antarctica*?

How would you describe the different tones conveyed by Voula and Thomas in their letters?

Ask students probing questions like:

How do the two writers use language to help them convey these tones?

Choose a book you have read or a film you have seen about which you have strong views. Write a review of this book or film. Ask another student to read your review and assess how effectively you have conveyed an appropriate tone in expressing your views.

Articles, Nouns and Pronouns Overview

Articles

Articles are used to identify whether the noun being used is a general or a specific reference. The use of an article is to link ideas and make the text cohesive.

If the reference is general then the article **a** or **an** is used.

For example: I saw **a** dog today.

The article **an** is used if the following general noun begins with a vowel.

I ate **an** egg today.

If the reference is specific and the writer is referring to a specific noun, then the article **the** is used, for example: I saw **the** dog today.

Nouns

Nouns are words that name people, places, things, ideas and states of being. There are different types of nouns:

- Common nouns (the vast majority) are the names of classes of things and begin with a lower-case letter e.g. boy, girl, name, verb, biography, computer.
- Proper nouns name specific people, places, things and acronyms and begin with a capital letter e.g. Cathy Freeman, Sydney Harbour, State Government, Dalmatian.
- Abstract nouns name concepts or things that cannot be seen e.g. democracy, hate, joy, honesty, hypothesis.
- Collective nouns name groups of things e.g. team, family, committee, flock, bunch.
- Mass nouns name things that you cannot count e.g. gold, milk, sunshine, furniture, traffic, information.

Noun Groups

A noun group is a group of words relating to, or building on, a noun. Noun groups usually consist of an article (the, a, an) plus one or more adjectives or adverbs and are an important language resource for building up descriptions.

*The dry, windswept, desert region has **an** extremely low level of rainfall.*

Noun groups can also have adjectival phrases or adjectival clauses embedded in them:

The regions with low rainfalls are uninhabited. ('with low rainfalls' is an adjectival phrase)

***The regions** which have higher rainfalls are inhabited. ('which have higher rainfalls' is an adjectival clause)*

Pronouns

A pronoun stands in place of a noun, noun group or name. Pronouns generally need to have a clear reference, referring to something that has been identified or named elsewhere in the text. Pronouns generally refer back to words mentioned earlier in the text; however sometimes a pronoun can be used and referenced to a word that is forward in the text. For example:

Lucy may seem shy but she loves making friends. (refers back)

*Although it was late, **the train** finally arrived. (refers forwards)*

Pronouns help to give cohesion to a text and prevent it from becoming repetitious. Pronouns are only effective if they are not ambiguous (that is, there is a clear line of reference) and if they are not used repetitively.

Different types of pronouns include:

- personal – I, we, he, she, you, it, they, me, us, her, him, them
- possessive – mine, ours, yours, hers, his, its, theirs
- reflexive – myself, ourselves, yourself, yourselves, herself, himself, themselves
- demonstrative – this, that, these, those
- indefinite – each, any, some, all, one, none, anybody, anything, nobody, nothing, somebody, something, everybody
- relative – who, whom, whose, which, that
- interrogative – who, which, what, whose, whom.

Relative Pronouns

Examples of the most common relative pronouns are whom, who, whose, that and which.

- *Who* and *whom* refer to people.
- *Which* is only used with things.
- *That* can be used with either people or things.
- *Whose* is the possessive form that can be used with either people or things.

This list of pronouns could be displayed on a poster (without using the technical names of the different pronoun types if you think these will confuse students). For students with visual impairment, poster text should be bold, black on white and an appropriate font size. Students using Braille should make their own Braille copy of the poster or alternatively paste a Braille copy of the words on the poster using Braille label (see [Learning Difficulties Overview](#)).

Pronoun Reference

Reference includes the way in which information is introduced, maintained and expanded in a text. The use of pronouns is the most common way of maintaining reference without the clumsiness of continual naming. Pronouns are not generally used continually, even if there is a clear line of reference to the noun or name, as strings of pronouns can make a text flat and uninteresting. Instead, good writers use different ways of identifying nouns in a text to maintain a clear 'chain of reference' while still keeping a text interesting.

For example:

I love reading The Wind in the Willows ... This wonderful story has ... Kenneth Grahame's tale will ...

This children's classic tells ... It is all about ... I recommend this book to ...

These pronouns become interrogative when they are used to start a question.

Skill Focus: Identifying and using correct articles for specific and non-specific nouns

STAGES 1–2

Strategy

Identifying articles that link with nouns when deconstructing written texts as cloze passages

Use the ‘think aloud’ strategy to assist students develop identification strategies. The ‘think aloud’ strategy is available from *Writing and Spelling Strategies*, page 33. <http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/schoolsweb/studentsupport/programs/lrngdifficulties/writespell.pdf>

Activities to support the strategy

Shared book experience – for example *The Bear’s Lunch* by Pamela Allen.

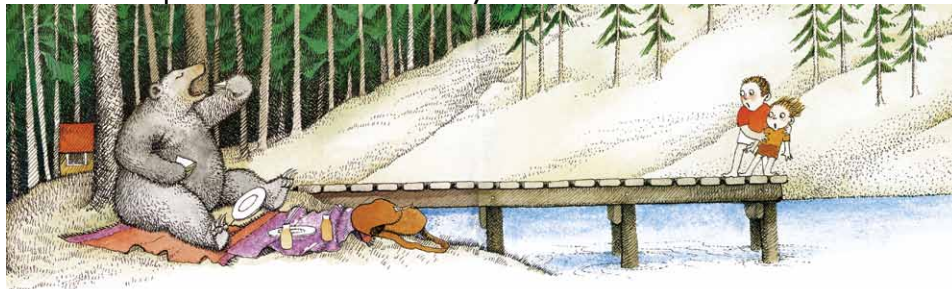
Enlarge the text from a picture book (or use a big book).

Cover over the nouns and pronouns with post-it notes.

Guided

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Use an excerpt from *The Bear’s Lunch* by Pamela Allen.



The bear was hungry — by now *very* hungry. He wanted his lunch. So he sat down on Oliver’s towel and gobbled up Oliver’s honey sandwich.

Then he gobbled up Wendy’s salad sandwich. ‘AARRRGH...’ growled the bear.

Cover the nouns and pronouns with post-it notes (see above). Discuss the event that is happening in the picture.

Discuss the names of the people and animals (the characters) in the scene.

List the nouns and pronouns on the board that could match each character.

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Students cooperatively identify the missing words from the cloze and classify them as nouns, pronouns, personal and possessive pronouns.

K–6 Outcomes

RS1.8: Students identify pronouns and understand that they are used instead of a noun, and understands the purpose of personal and possessive pronouns

RS2.8: Recognises cohesive links in texts such as referring words/ pronouns

Item & Stimulus

Language Conventions
Year 3 Q: 26, 32, 38 and 46
Year 5 Q: 27 and 37
Year 7 Q: 40
Year 9 Q: 47

Reading
Year 5 Q: 27

Item Descriptor

Recognition of grammatically correct, structurally sound and meaningful sentences

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to use pronouns and prepositional phrases.

Links

‘Think Aloud’ strategy

When identifying the nouns, tell the students that articles precede the nouns. Bring the students' attention to the articles such as: **a** picnic, **a** log, **a** frightened mouse, **the** frightened fish, **the** bear, and **the** frightened children.

Discuss the different uses of the articles *a*, *an*, and *the*.

Discuss and show examples of the use of the article 'an' before nouns that begin with a vowel.

Articles are used to connect ideas in texts and are a cohesive device. The difference for students to understand is that the indefinite article 'a' changes to 'an' before a vowel or before a silent 'h' because we hear the vowel as the first sound in the word – as in 'an hour'.

For example: *Oliver let out **an** enormous scream.*

Discuss the introduction of the noun before using a pronoun to introduce characters. (e.g. *The bear* before *it*)

Ask questions about who owns items in the pictures to develop students' understanding of personal pronouns.

The teacher lists the noun/pronoun/personal pronouns in a line in reference to the noun as the students respond.

These can be laminated and used as a stimulus.

For example:



The bear
it/its



Oliver
he/him/his



Wendy
she/her/hers

Modelled

Highlight the masculine, feminine and neuter pronouns from the list using the 'think aloud' strategy.

Then model sentences that use the pronouns as subjects and then as objects that are contextual to the students such as:

I was given a book. The book belongs to me.

I was given a pencil case. The pencil case belongs to me.

Model sentences that use personal pronouns using the same subject such as:

This is Cara's book. It belongs to her. It is hers.

Assist students to identify the objective form. Explain that the words *my*, *your*, *his*, *her*, *its*, *our*, *your* and *their* are possessive adjectives when used with a noun, because they are describing who owns or possesses the noun.

I was given a pencil case. The pencil case belongs to me. The pencil case is mine.

Guided

Write various pronouns on flashcards.

Create a matrix on the whiteboard with masculine, feminine and object headings.

Ask students to choose one card at a time and place it under the correct heading.

Modelled

Model how to write a sentence using a reflexive pronoun. For example: He washed himself.

Use arrows and explain that a reflexive pronoun is used when:

- a pronoun refers back to the subject of the verb
- when the action of the verb is performed on the subject

Then add two singular and two plural reflexive pronouns to the table and guide students to complete.

Pronoun as subject	Pronoun as object	Possessive pronoun	Reflexive pronoun
I	me	mine	myself
you	you	yours	yourself
he	him	his	himself
she	her	hers	herself
it	it	its	itself
we	us	ours	ourselves
you	you	yours	yourselves
they	them	theirs	themselves

Developing pronoun reference chain understanding

Modelled

Use an excerpt (or similar) on an OHT (as shown below). Show how the text is tied together cohesively using pronoun references.

Explain and show with arrows the personal pronouns reference using the example below.

Lulu likes drawing. She attends drawing classes once a week with her brother. Her pictures are colourful and creative.	Pronoun reference chain: Lulu–She–her–Her
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Discuss how to identify a noun or noun group. Use the personal pronoun chart to discuss pronoun/noun links e.g. usually 'she' refers to females; 'its' refers to objects.

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Enlarge student writing samples to A3.

In cooperative groups, students identify, highlight and then track the nouns and pronoun referencing. Ask students probing questions as they complete the activity to encourage them to verbalise the concepts using metalanguage.

Skill Focus: Identifying and using pronouns and specific and non-specific articles as part of a lesson on nouns

STAGES 2–3

Strategy

Identifying a noun in context

Use the 'think aloud' strategy, to assist students develop identification strategies

Activity to support the strategy

Modelled

Using an excerpt on OHT, demonstrate how to determine which words are the nouns in sentences and which are the pronouns that relate to the nouns.

Guided

Exploring deep knowledge and metalanguage (QTF)

Discuss any words and concepts the text contains that could be unfamiliar to students.

Write the words *common* and *proper* on the whiteboard and discuss the difference between the two meanings.

Explain that a noun is a naming word.

Explain the difference between a common and a proper noun.

In addition to the way we punctuate the nouns, specific proper nouns add to the detail of the text.

Ask students to:

- imagine a picture of a bird
- write three words to describe the bird on a piece of paper
- search the class to find a student with the same three descriptions
- discuss the results.

Now show students the photo of the *Gang Gang Cockatoo*.



Ask and discuss:

How does naming the type of bird create stronger imagery?

K–6 Outcomes

- | RS3.8: Identifies the correct pronoun
- | Identifies the article preceding a noun
- | WS2.10: Produces texts clearly, effectively and accurately, using sentence structure, grammatical features and punctuation conventions

Item & Stimulus

Language Conventions
Year 3 Q: 39
Year 5 Q: 43
Year 7 Q: 36, 40 and 42

Item Descriptor

Recognition of grammatically correct, structurally sound and meaningful sentences

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts.

Links

'Think Aloud' strategy

Now show the photo of the Blue Wrens.



Discuss how the two birds are in the same species but appear different.

Ask and discuss:

What could we add to the proper noun to create stronger imagery?

(Answer: Gender as the male bird has a colourful head whereas the female bird has a brown head with red markings).

Students brainstorm a number of common nouns and these are listed on the board to begin a matrix.

Students then change the common nouns to proper nouns.

common nouns	proper nouns
boy	Aden, Danny, Sam
girl	Chloe, Lila, Natalie
dog	Dalmatian, Terrier, Poodle
bird	Rainbow Lorikeet, Magpie, Kookaburra, Blue Wren

When using nouns in writing, articles precede the nouns. Bring the students' attention to the articles *a*, *the* and *an*.

a bird – the Gang Gang Cockatoo

a boy – the boy

a bird – an Albatross

Discuss the different uses of the articles *a*, *the* and *an*.

Discuss and show examples of the use of the article 'an' before nouns that begin with a vowel.

Exploring higher-order thinking (QTF)

Discuss the use of specific nouns in writing and reading which add to the imagery of the text.

Ask as a shared book is read and proper nouns are identified, questions such as:

- *How does the use of the words Snowy Mountains add to the imagery rather than using the word hill?*
- *How does the word Ferrari add to the imagery instead of using the word car?*

- What if the proper noun was *CombiVan* or *Mastruck*?

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Students rewrite the passages using specific nouns.

Students are encouraged to describe the noun using at least one effective adjective.

Students share their constructions in a writers' circle.

Using the students' narrative writing, students highlight nouns and the referring pronouns:

Peter caught a White-Tailed spider. He kept it his bedroom. It bit him on the finger.

Students complete the matrix.

noun	Is it a proper noun?	Is it a common noun?	What article should I use before this noun?	What pronouns did I use to refer back to this noun?
Peter	yes	no	none	him, his, he
White-Tailed spider	yes	no	the, or, a	it

Skill Focus: Identifying and using relative pronouns

STAGE 3

Strategy

Using poetry to learn specific linguistic structures

Using multimodal texts to develop deeper understanding of concepts

Activity to support the strategy

Guided

Building deep knowledge and using metalanguage of relative pronouns (QTF)

Ask students:

What types of things can you eat that may make you feel sick?

What might happen if you eat something poisonous, or if you eat too much?

What is something that you might swallow by accident?

Does anyone know someone who has eaten something that made them sick?

As the students discuss, list the objects and items and the relative pronouns that the students use in their language as they describe the situations.

Teach the rhyme (which can also be taught as a song): *There was an old lady who swallowed a fly.*

Access the following websites for words to the rhyme.

<http://www.poppyfields.net/poppy/songs/oldwoman.html>

<http://www.the-old-sea-dog.net/kk1.html> (this includes a voice recording of the poem)

After learning the poem orally, introduce the students to the text as a shared reading experience.

Exploring metalanguage of relative pronouns (QTF)

32 Which of the following correctly completes the sentence?

The boy was camping next to us said hello.

who what which why

27 Which of the following correctly completes the sentence?

Bella knew her mother would be pleased.

but that what which

K-6 Outcomes

WS2.6: Recognises cohesive links in texts

RS3.8: Identifies relative pronouns

WS3.10: Uses knowledge of sentence structure, grammar and punctuation to edit own writing

KLA Outcomes

English 4.4.2: Creates and ensures medium, form and content through specific language conventions

Item & Stimulus

Language Conventions
Year 3 Q: 44
Year 5 Q: 34
Year 7 Q: 36 and 56
Year 9 Q: 32 and 36

Item Descriptor

Recognition of grammatically correct, structurally sound and meaningful sentences

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts to clarify meaning.

Links

<http://www.poppyfields.net/poppy/songs/oldwoman.html>

<http://www.the-old-sea-dog.net/kk1.html>

28 Which of the following correctly completes the sentence?

Andrew has [] he likes to call *a great talent!*

why when who what

Prepare these stimulus questions as an OHT or on A3 paper.

Model

Using the 'think aloud' strategy, model how to identify the correct word for each deletion.

Point out the relation of the deleted words to the nouns in the sentences.

Guided

Ask the students to verbalise how the teacher identified the correct word, retelling the strategies.

Ask the students to explain the relationship between the pronoun and the noun.

Involve students in guiding you how to choose the correct deletion in the last example.

Provide more examples to suit the needs of the students.

Exploring higher-order thinking (QTF)

Re-read the rhyme *There was an old lady who swallowed a fly.*

After reading, ask students:

Were there any words that were like the deletions from the examples we have just worked with?

How are the sentence structures similar?

Write a sentence from the rhyme and a sentence from the stimuli set on the board and deconstruct the sentence structure, drawing arrows to the relating nouns and pronouns.

Independent

Students complete a cloze of the poem with the relative pronouns deleted.

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

In pairs, students create new stanzas for the rhyme and create a class publication of their efforts.

This can be published as a blog site on the school website.

Skill Focus: Identifying and using relative pronouns

STAGE 4

Strategy

Deconstructing the specific linguistic structures in poetry

Looking at deconstructing stanzas of poems by:

- Discussing the language in terms of today's spoken and written forms
- Discussing grammatical features
- Tracking the linguistic references

Activity to support the strategy

Access http://etext.virginia.edu/stc/Coleridge/poems/Rime_Ancient_Mariner.html

Select specific stanzas to deconstruct.

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

While some students may be able to deconstruct the formal *old* English, the form can be changed to a modern day format or the teacher could carefully choose the stanzas for deconstruction.

The teacher needs to provide an oral summary of the story to place the stanza in context with the narrative.

Examples of relative pronouns in the poem for discussion

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner by Samuel Coleridge

The pang, the curse, with **which** they died,

Had never passed away:

I could not draw my eyes from theirs,

Nor turn them up to pray.

This Hermit good lives in that wood

Which slopes down to the sea.

How loudly his sweet voice he rears!

He loves to talk with mariners

That come from a far country.

He prays best, **who** loves best

All things both great and small;

For the dear God **who** loves us,

He made and loves all.

K-6 Outcomes

WS2.6: Recognises cohesive links in texts

RS3.8: Identifies relative pronouns

KLA Outcomes

English S4.4.2: Creates and ensures medium, form and content through specific language conventions

Item & Stimulus

Language Conventions
Year 7 Q: 56
Year 9 Q: 36 and 50

Item Descriptor

Recognition of grammatically correct, structurally sound and meaningful sentences

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to use correct tenses, and subject-verb and noun-pronoun agreement.

Links

http://etext.virginia.edu/stc/Coleridge/poems/Rime_Ancient_Mariner.html

<http://www.cityu.edu.hk/elc/quiz/relativ2.htm>

Exploring higher order thinking (QTF)

Using the selected stanzas from Samuel Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* identify similar linguistic stanzas from the text:

The Crime of the Agent Mariner by Pia Santaklaus

For example:

Her stormy eyes were like the gales
Which blow both hot and cold.
This tale of woe was writ to show
How low the agent man who could profit from such words?

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Provide a matrix on the whiteboard and discuss the metalanguage used in the charts on the website.

Relative Pronouns	Subject		Object		Object of preposition	
	Human	Non-human	Human	Non-human	Human	Non-human

<http://www.cityu.edu.hk/elc/quiz/relativ2.htm>

Independent

Students complete the online task.

Audience Overview

A narrative is a time-ordered text that is used to narrate events and to inform, entertain and emotionally move an audience.

To be effective, writers must understand what knowledge they share with the audience and what they do not. Achieving this understanding is made difficult by *the knowledge effect* (a tendency for individuals to assume that their own knowledge is shared by others).

Understanding how writers address and invoke the audience may simultaneously enhance children's growth as readers and writers. Despite arguments that young children don't have the sociocognitive capacity to imagine or anticipate readers' beliefs and expectations, findings show that first graders can demonstrate a sense of audience when writing for familiar readers, to get something they want, when prompted by their teacher to attend to audience needs while writing.

Wollman-Bonilla, J.E. (2001). *Can First-Grade Writers Demonstrate Audience Awareness?* *Reading Research Quarterly*, 36(2), 184–201. doi: 10.1598/RRQ.36.2.4

Engaging an audience requires the writer to select and uses devices that:

- lead a reader through the story
- engage a reader's interest or emotion
- directly appeal to a reader
- match or subvert the reader's expectations.

Professional Connections

Vygotsky (1978) argues that through interaction, with proficient guidance, children can develop advanced mental processes such as audience awareness and gradually internalise the ability to anticipate audience needs.

- Young children can learn audience awareness when objectives are placed in a genuine, meaningful context. When the purpose is realistic and specifically defines a familiar audience, they can keep that audience in mind while writing.
- The explicit teaching of writing provides teachers an opportunity to model how to think about audience, while at the same time allowing their students to interact or try their hand with the text.

McCarrier, A., Pinnell, G.S., & Fountas, I.C. (2000). *Interactive writing: How language & literacy come together, K-2*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Skill Focus: Orients and engages the reader

STAGES 2–3

Strategy

Setting the Context

Understanding the importance of the orientation and the affect it has on the audience

Specific focus: How do narrative opening sentences/paragraphs hook in the reader?

How do narratives begin?

Narrative orientations attempt to engage the reader by making connections, or associations, with the reader's expectations and thoughts. The reader may be familiar with the formulaic opening sentence, *Once upon a time*, and therefore they have expectations about the rest of the story. These expectations may include the presence of fairy tale characters, fairytale setting or good versus evil theme.

Orientations to narratives appeal to audiences on other levels. They create aural pictures of settings or characters; visual pictures of settings or characters; portray the emotions felt by a characters; demonstrate the interrelatedness of characters; or challenge the readers perceptions of themselves or of their environment.

Some examples of these are:

Aural: *Chug! Chug! Chug!*

Physical-Emotional/Character portrayal: *My knees trembled, my legs couldn't move and my heart wanted to explode ...*

Setting/Visual Image: *Age old trees, their boughs bent to the ground, wrestled to stay in the sun-baked, water-deprived earth.*

Character/Visual Image: *It was her wearied face, her dreadfully drawn face, her narrow lips, her vacant eyes, her scrawny body and such badly-coloured hair that ...*

Character interrelationships: *Matthew was my worst nightmare. The worry he had about his nose being too big (mine was bigger) made me want to ...*

Rhetoric/Challenging the reader's thinking:

So you think that is you in the mirror?

The black sky, the broken houses, the upturned roads: why was this happening now? They said we had at least three days.

Orientations can also combine any of the above to engage the reader. The following is a simple example of Setting/Visual Image combined with Rhetoric/ which has been made effective through the deliberate repetition of *and*,

Over the sea there is an island.

And on that island there is a jungle.

And in that jungle there is a hut.

KLA Outcome

WS: 2.9.4 Writes for a variety of purposes

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 1



Item Descriptor

Identifies audience of a text and adjusts writing accordingly

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to understand that stories have purposes to entertain or to inform an audience.

And in that hut there is a rickety rickety floor.

And under that rickety rickety floor there is a dark hole.

And in that dark hole there is ...

From *The Thingummy* by Danny Danziger.

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Learning focus: How do stories/narratives start?

One of the most difficult aspects of writing is keeping audience in mind. Developing lessons that support learning about audience is essential.

Collect a number of examples of books using these categories as a guide:

- Fairy tales, narrative picture books and chapter books
- Children's novels
- Teenage novels

Intellectual quality, significance and metacognitive experiences (QTF)

Use questioning to guide students to make generalisations about how front covers of books might give hints about the story inside, teasing out ideas relating to:

- possible characters and their attributes
- what the story/narrative might be about.

Highlight similarities and differences in the opening sentences/paragraphs of authentic texts (teacher selected or student nominated). Depending on the learning stage of students, the use of student nominated texts might need to be controlled. Reinforce the learning focus by frequently referring to examples of opening sentences, frequently questioning students, frequently clarifying student responses and supporting processes for recording student responses and examples.

What is an opening sentence?

What is the opening sentence/s?

How does the beginning (the first sentence/first few sentences or first paragraph) hook the audience into reading the story?

Did you want to read on to find out more about what was being written? If yes, why? If not, why?

Are there similar/different ways that stories/narratives start?

Guided

Grab a book student research:

This activity can work as a small group or whole class activity.

The activity can be modified to support different learning stages. The model can be used in Reciprocal Reading arrangements as well.

An assortment of books can be 'grabbed' by one student or only one book is grabbed by a group of students. These are given to the teacher who puts them in the 'grabbed pile' to be read to students but at the same time are available for the teacher's use as possible controlled examples at a later date.

Students answer the question: What is the opening sentence or paragraph of the book?

Record the answers in the following template.

Name of book	Author	Illustrator	Opening sentence

Data collection may continue over time.

Intellectual quality, significance and metacognitive experiences (QTF)

Use controlled teacher examples, student recorded examples (the result of research and data gathering) to investigate examples of opening sentences and paragraphs.

Hoop Activity

Equipment:

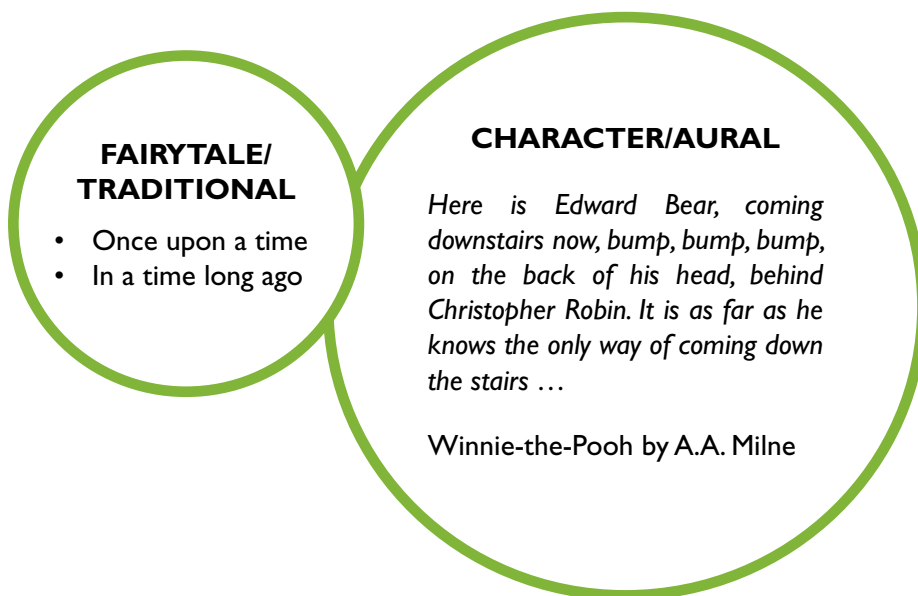
- recorded information
- hula hoops for floor work
- representation on paper for individual or pair work (depending on student developmental levels)

Cut up the examples from the table and sort them into hoops.

The number of hoops and example types should be controlled particularly for Stage 1 and beginning Stage 2 learners.



As the examples of similar story beginnings become classifiable they can begin to attract labels. Some examples may contain a mix of categories.



Independent

Differentiation Activity

In pairs, have students use this matrix to sort the different first sentences. Any other categories can be added in the blank sections at the bottom. Have students identify who the audience for the opening sentence might be.

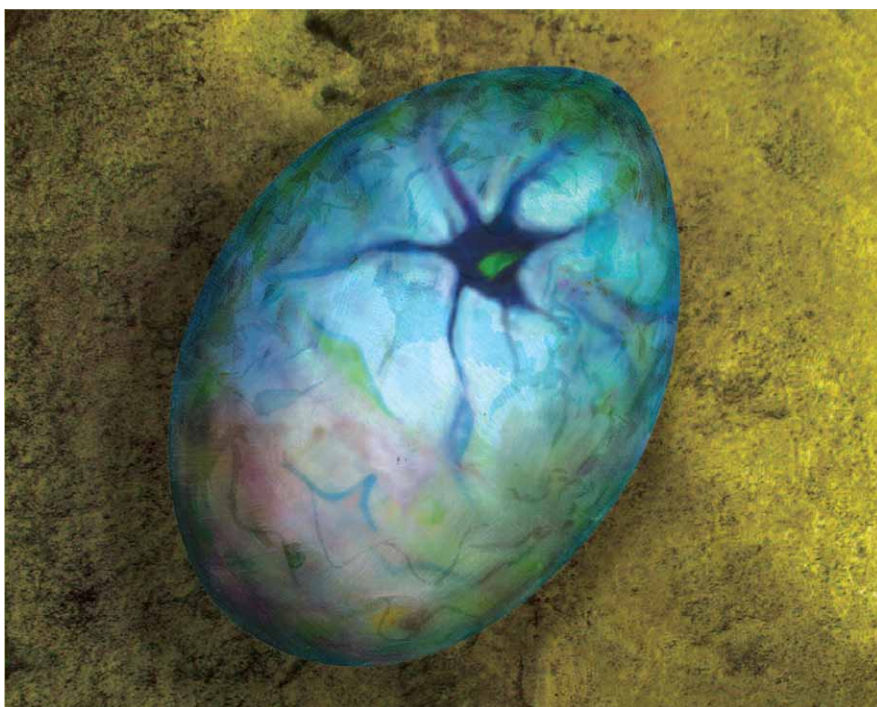
TYPE	SENTENCE	PREDICTED AUDIENCE	WERE WE RIGHT?
Traditional: ‘Once upon a time ...’			
Aural: ‘Chug! Chug! Chug!’			
Physical-Emotional/ Character portrayal: ‘My knees trembled, my legs couldn’t move and my heart wanted to explode ...’	<i>What a day, Dicey thought. What a summer, for that matter, but especially What a day.</i> Dicey’s Song by Cynthia Voight.		
Setting/Description: ‘Age old trees, their boughs bent to the ground, wrestled to stay in the sun-baked, water-deprived earth.’			
Character/ Description: ‘It was her wearied face -her drawn face: her narrow lips, her vacant eyes, her scrawny body, her badly-coloured hair that ...’			
Character interrelationships: ‘Matthew was my worst nightmare. The worry he had about his nose being too big (mine was bigger) made me want to ...’	<i>“Go on Andrew, have a go!” Ben was tired of playing by himself. ...</i> <i>“Can’t be bothered,” Andrew Hayford said.</i> Space Demons by Gillian Rubenstein		
Rhetoric/Challenging the reader’s thinking: “So you think that is you in the mirror ...”			

Have a class discussion, after the text has been read as a class or by individuals, about whether the prediction of the audience based on the first sentence and cover was correct.

Guided

Jointly construct and record examples of opening sentences for these stimulus prompts.

The original openings are provided as examples and could be discussed with students first if needed.



When I found the egg it was rocking and making strange noises.

As I squatted down for a closer look a little dark hole appeared, with cracks running in all directions.

The egg was hatching!

Whatever was coming out of it was finding it hard. It wriggled and pushed and suddenly the egg split in half and out came the oddest little creature I had ever seen.



Walking into Grandfather's shed was like stepping back in time.

It contained old furniture and books that were yellow with age.

*I loved exploring in the shed, as every time I did I found something different.
Last Sunday I discovered an ancient box.*

It was carved on the front and sides with unusual markings.

Slowly I undid the clasp and opened it.

My grandmother often used to tell me about a mysterious pair of boots that would one day be mine. She said unexpected things happened whenever anyone wore them.

So now I could hardly believe that they were finally mine. Slowly I pulled the boots on ...



These examples may be presented in a variety of ways to support the purpose of the activities and depending on the cognitive appropriate level of students. For example:

- a class book of opening sentences
- a slide show of opening sentences
- a matrix of opening sentences
- a performance of orientations (digitally recorded on video).

Independent

Provide students with stimulus prompts (for example book covers or other images) for independent work.

Ask students to write an engaging opening sentence or orientation to a narrative, based on the prompt.

Discuss the results as a class.

Character and Setting Overview

Characterisation and setting are usual components of effective narrative writing, although different types of stories may only focus on one aspect. Some stories may be character driven (e.g. *Pippi Longstocking* by Astrid Lindgren) and the setting may be very sketchy or undeveloped. Picture books may use the written text to develop character and the visuals become part of the story (visual literacy) adding to the imagery and developing the sense of the setting (e.g. *The Crime of the Agent Mariner* by Pia Santaklaus).

The effective elaboration of character in narratives involves the explanation and elaboration of both their internal elements such as temperament, motives and attitudes, as well as the external elements of appearance and characteristics.

Other stories, which attempt to build atmosphere and suspense, may focus on setting the scene (e.g. the Wild West genre). Many stories have a balance of both components (e.g. *The River Sai* by Rebecca Edwards).

Skill Focus: Developing characters in narratives

STAGES 1–2

Strategy

Identifying characters, their links to the story and both their physical and emotional connections in the story

Activities to support the strategy

Guided

Exploring substantive communication and deep knowledge (QTF)

Read a picture book with students.

During and after reading, students discuss the characters. The teacher writes their descriptions on the board.

Discuss their physical appearance, their personalities, the way they acted and the problems they encountered, caused or helped to solve in the narrative. Use open ended questions to develop a deeper discussion of the text, for example:

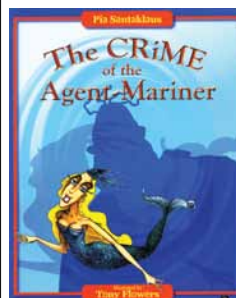
What makes you feel the character acted that way? (motives)

What characters did you like or dislike? (engaging with text)

Why? Why not?

Exploring metalanguage for character building (QTF)

Students list the elements that were used in the picture book to describe and build the character. Provide blown up pictures of the characters and write a labelled profile as the characters are described as in the example shown.



K–6 Outcomes

- WS1.9: Writes elementary texts and elementary descriptions of familiar people and things
- WS2.9: Writes fuller descriptions of people, places and things
- RS2.5 Infers the nature of character

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 4



Reading

- Year 3 Q: 30 and 35
- Year 5 Q: 20, 22 and 23
- Year 7 Q: 7, 8 and 9

Item Descriptor

The development of characterisation and a sense of time, place and atmosphere

Statement of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to:

- introduce characters and provide a brief description of setting
- include brief descriptions of familiar characters, places and things

Other links

- www.lego.com
- www.flowersink.com.au

Compare the illustrations of other characters by focusing on:

- the descriptive language
- the visual representation of the characters
- how the physical representation supports their personality (such as sneaky, cheeky, sad, shy).

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Students can describe and illustrate a character from a shared book experience using the framework discussed in the guided component of the lesson. This can involve labelling and writing a description of the character's physical appearance and their personality.

Use this proforma (or similar) on A3 paper for the students to complete their task.

Who were the main characters in the story?			
Name	Name	Name	Name
Draw and label the character	Draw and label the character	Draw and label the character	Draw and label the character
What did they do in the story?			
How did they feel?			

--	--	--	--

Understanding characters and conflicts in narratives

Who were the main characters in the story?			
Name	Name	Name	Name
What does the character look like?	What does the character look like?	What does the character look like?	What does the character look like?
How does the character behave? (personality and reactions to events)	How does the character behave? (personality and reactions to events)	How does the character behave? (personality and reactions to events)	How does the character behave? (personality and reactions to events)

What problems or conflicts did they encounter?	What problems or conflicts did they encounter?	What problems or conflicts did they encounter?	What problems or conflicts did they encounter?
--	--	--	--

Guided

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

The teacher takes small groups to guide them through the following website:

www.lego.com

This website allows students to create a character suited to a chosen setting and develop events that include problems and resolutions. This will require students to work in pairs. Talking through the activities aims to develop students' descriptive oral language.

The proforma *Understanding characters and conflicts in narratives* is useful to guide their description building.

Pairs of students have an allocated time to develop their characters on the website. Students can print their characters from the website and

- write a description of them
- describe the setting they chose for them to 'live in'.

Skill Focus: Evaluating character introductions

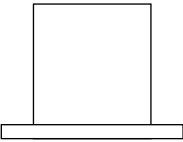
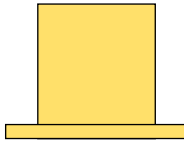
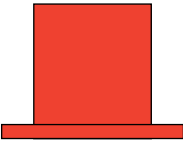

STAGE 2

Strategy

Using a modification of De Bono's *thinking hats*, analyse how a character is introduced.

Activities to support the strategy

Guided

Character introduction Using all the information, describe the character	What do we learn about the character?	How do we feel about the character?	What don't we learn about the character?
	Good aspects	Emotions	Bad aspects
			
WHITE HAT	YELLOW HAT	RED HAT	BLACK HAT
<i>It was scaly, rough and unbelievably long! It had 10 arms. It was almost lizard-like other than the fact it had butterfly wings the colour of the ocean with a splash of turquoise.</i>			
<i>Careful is my middle name. I like to think things through. I'm always cautious. However, I think of a few times when I've surprised myself and I haven't been careful at all.</i>			
<i>Out came a little man, hiding in a nearby bush. He was tiny – only knee-high! 'Arrh' Jack yelled wide-eyed. His little beard frizzed up.</i>			

K-6 Outcomes

WS1.9: Writes elementary texts and elementary descriptions of familiar people and things

WS2.9: Writes fuller descriptions of people, places and things

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 4



Item Descriptor

The development of characterisation and a sense of time, place and atmosphere

Statements of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to:

- introduce characters and provide a brief description of setting.
- include brief descriptions of familiar characters, places and things.

Higher-order thinking (QTF)

Discuss – What information was needed to create a stronger picture of the characters in each example?

How did the information or lack of information in the description affect the character image?

Skill Focus: Developing characters in narratives

STAGE 2

Strategy

Creating character profiles as a class to develop a deeper knowledge about the characters

Activities to support the strategy

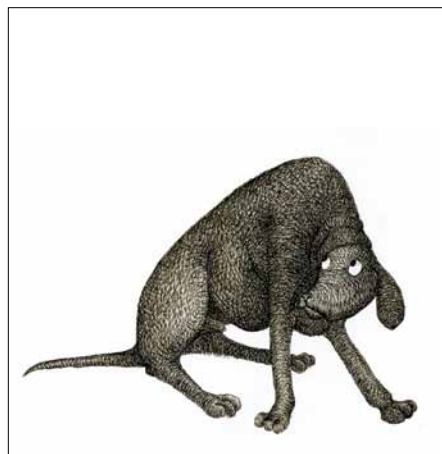
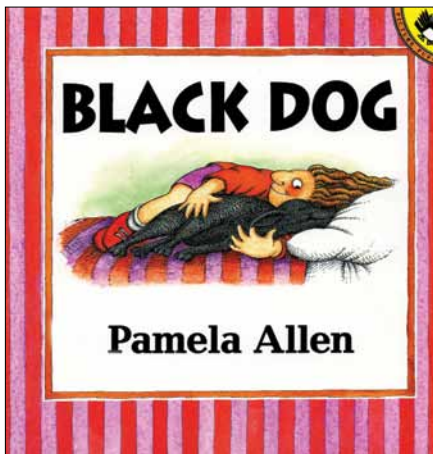
Modelled

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

The teacher describes the illustrations on the book cover using language such as:

'I can see how the illustrator has used line to create the fur of the dog and the shapes of the trees.'

'The words say he is feeling sad and the mouth of the dog is going downwards looking sad.'



Guided

Shared book experience: *Black Dog* by Pamela Allen explores character in terms of personality and physical appearance.

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Discuss what students know about dogs in terms of:

- behaviour
- appearance
- personality.

Enlarge several pictures of the dog from the picture book and discuss the mood represented in the pictures. Draw students' attention to line, colour and shape.

Read the picture book with students, connecting the visual pictures to the meaning in the words.

Also discuss the feelings of the girl in relation to the dog and how the illustrator shows these feelings compared with how the writer tells the feelings in the words.

K-6 Outcome

WS2.9: Writes fuller descriptions of people, places and things

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 4



Item Descriptor

The development of characterisation and a sense of time, place and atmosphere

Statements of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to:

- introduce characters and provide a brief description of setting.
- include brief descriptions of familiar characters, places and things.

Exploring higher-order thinking (QTF)

Ask students to carefully observe the visual emotions of the characters and their feelings from different perspectives using Edward De Bono's red thinking hat.

The open ended questions would focus on:

- feelings
- hunches
- emotions
- intuition.

In the picture book *My Cat Maisie* by Pamela Allen, this would mean asking questions such as:

How do you think the boy is feeling?

How do you think the cat is feeling?

How would you feel if you were in the position of the boy/the cat?

What is your hunch about what will happen to the boy/the cat in the narrative?

Discuss the characters and record the students' descriptions using the metalanguage in the matrix.

Character		
What does the character look like? Illustrate and label (appearance)	How does the character act? (personality)	What does the character do? (behaviour)

Independent

Exploring deep understanding using a framework as a guide (QTF)

Students illustrate their own pet and write a description using the matrix framework as a guide.



The following text is a published piece. This was the third draft of the student's work.

Planning Sheet

Published Piece

<p><i>What does he look like?</i></p> <p>Buddy Buddy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">thick, soft, silky black fur and white patcheslike velvetlong pointy snout ^{muzzle} pointed endlong pointy tongue to matchlong skinny legs stringy long-limbed lankylong thin tail leansharp teeth chews things with them <p><i>What is his personality like?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">excitablenervouslovingbusy <p><i>What does he do?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">jumps up on youlicks mechews nibbles bites at my ear - everythinggobbles down raw chickenbarks a lot - loud scarysneaks outdigs holes jumps fences sniffs everyone	<p>This is my dog Buddy. He has short black and white patchy fur. His fur is so soft that it feels like velvet when you run your hands across his back. He has a pointy muzzle and a pointed end that stops with a wet, black nose. Buddy's tongue is long, soft and wet. It is the same shape as his muzzle and curls around when it touches his sharp teeth.</p> <p>Buddy is an excitable dog and jumps up on you when you say hello. He is very nervous too and has a loud scary bark. He loves a pat and is very loving. He pats you back by licking you and nibbling on your ear. That is gross! Buddy sneaks out because he loves to explore. He will dig holes, jump fences, chew holes in wire just to get out. Now onto chewing. He is a busy dog and chews his toys, washing on the line, trampoline mats, chairs, shoes and anything yukky. I love my dog Buddy.</p>
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Skill Focus: Developing characterisation and representation of personalities in characters

STAGE 2 Supporting ESL Students

Strategy

Comparing character types in different narratives using a character profile

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Teacher reads *Teacher-Eater* by Paul Jennings to class, which portrays different dragon characters.



Teacher asks:

What animals do the dragons remind you of?

How do the words and illustrations influence the way we see the character?

Other picture books which could be used:

Herb, the Vegetarian Dragon by Jules Bass

Emily and the Dragon by Lyn Lee

The Paperbag Princess by Robert Munsch

Teacher and students discuss and record a character profile.

The profile includes:

- actions
- thoughts
- feelings.

ESL Scales

3.11.12: Selects suitable descriptive words to enhance effectiveness of writing

4.3.8: Employs a small range of vocabulary to describe shades of meaning

4.10.6: Creates mood and feeling by use of appropriate words

5.10.6: Uses fitting detail in description

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 4

Item Descriptor

The development of characterisation and a sense of time, place and atmosphere

Statements of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to:

- introduce characters and provide a brief description of setting.
- include brief descriptions of familiar characters, places and things.

Character: Dragon

Size	Colour	Attributes	Personality
large	emerald green	scaly	fire-breathing
enormous	golden	sharp	monstrous
huge	ruby red	revolting	troublesome
gigantic	charcoal grey	rotting	vicious
massive	coal black	mouldy	defiant
colossal		shiny	vile
		horrifying	freakish
		stinking	dreadful
			wicked
			revolting

Guided



Students brainstorm other characters that they may expect to see in a story with dragons (character relationships).

Use pictures of a variety of characters to assist description.

Students brainstorm where these characters would live (setting).

Students brainstorm what dragons would do (actions).

Students orally construct phrases describing dragons using the attribute table above. For example:

- The enormous, emerald green, vicious dragon ...
- The gigantic, coal black, fire-breathing dragon ...

Students then complete a group of sentences by using the profile table.

Complete the following sentences using the profile table.

- _____ kidnapped the princess.
- _____ flew to the castle.
- _____ attacked the village.
- _____ let out an ear-piercing roar.
- _____ the top of the trees.

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Students write a descriptive passage describing their dragon using the character profile for support.

Students write a paragraph detailing a dragon's actions and its corresponding thoughts and feelings.

Exploring student engagement (QTF)

Arrange groups of students.

Provide a list of the specialised roles of each person in the group such as:

- recorder
- using thesaurus to find other describing words
- reporter
- resources (collecting, handing in).

In pairs or groups, students use the table to complete sentences about the dragon to build:

- feeling and emotions of the character (emotional thought)
- thoughts of the character (rational thought).

Complete the following sentences adding how the dragon felt, what it did and what it thought.

- The friendly dragon felt _____ as it fled from _____.
- It thought, _____.
- The wicked dragon felt _____ as it destroyed _____.
- It thought, _____.
- The evil dragon felt _____ as it _____.
- It thought, _____.
- The harmless dragon felt _____ as it rescued _____.
- It thought, _____.

Skill Focus: Identifying characters in narratives

STAGE 3–4

Strategy

Identifying characters and both their physical and emotional connections in the story

Activities to support the strategy

Independent

Exploring higher-order thinking (QTF)

After reading either a class novel from a novel study, or a novel of their choice, students are asked to analyse the characters in the text in terms of:

- most impact on the story
- most impact to them personally.

Title of the text:

Purpose of the text:

Describe the main character of the story:

(Include motives, physical and emotional traits)

What is the age of the character?

What is the setting of the story?

What descriptions in the setting set the mood and link it to the main character?

Is the main character introduced in the setting?

What influence did the character have on other characters/events and the resolution?

Describe the relationship of the character to the event or problem.

What reactions did he have to characters and events in the narrative?

What were the values and beliefs of the character? Were they openly explained or hidden from the reader?

How relevant is the theme

- to you personally?
- to your age group?
- to your community?

K–6 Outcomes

- RS3.7 Infers the motivation of a character
- WS3.9: Writes more involved literary texts

KLA Outcome

- English 4.6.10: Writes detailed descriptions
- English 4.7.9: Students learn to make predictions, inter and interpret texts.
- English 4.2.9: Students learn about processes of representation

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 4



Reading

Year 5 Q: 34 and 35

Year 7 Q: 12, 24, 26, 27, 28,
29 and 42

Year 9 Q: 8, 10, 11, 12, 13
and 38

Item Descriptor

The development of characterisation and a sense of time, place and atmosphere

Statements of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to:

- introduce characters and provide a brief description of setting.
- include brief descriptions of familiar characters, places and things.

When students interpret texts they have the opportunity to infer characters' qualities, motives and actions.

Skill Focus: Building vocabulary to develop setting

STAGES: 3–4 Supporting ESL Students

Strategy

Deconstructing visual text to build descriptive language

Using the following categories to deconstruct images:

- parts of the picture
- colours
- shapes
- textures and materials
- sounds
- smell
- 'looks like'

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

- Discuss a variety of pictures of a haunted house. Discuss the components in the setting.
- Discuss any cartoons (film and comic) that use the haunted house as a setting.
- Discuss what is common in all the settings.
- Develop a word bank of descriptive phrases emphasising those that evoke atmosphere using the categories above to guide the students.

For example:

- cracked creaky stairs
- light as brilliant as lightning flashing
- broken ancient clock that hung at the highest point of the haunted house
- dark mossy tombstones leant to the right like an old grandpa
- twisted turrets and tall towers
- spiral staircase
- dilapidated walls
- rafters
- columns
- pillars
- covered in dust
- spider webs – swayed or hung or draped or dangled
- crumbling mortar
- weather-beaten shingles
- twisted chimneys
- tangle of trees
- sun's nervous fingers
- ivy covered columns
- low brooding porch
- ghostly mist curled eerily from a rusty grate
- a room that had never been seen by the world
- stained glass windows
- cobwebbed arches
- silent shadow
- forbidding front door yawned open
- secluded corner
- a narrow window stood ajar
- huge iron padlock
- winter, bare and lifeless

ESL Scales

- 3.1.1.12: Select suitable descriptive words to enhance effectiveness in writing
- 5.10.6: Uses fitting detail in descriptions and stories
- 5.1.1.14: Uses a range of adjectival expressions for descriptive purposes

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 4

The Box

Today you are going to write a narrative or story.

The idea for your story is "The Box".

What is inside the box? How did it get there? Is it valuable? Perhaps it is a clue.

The box might contain a message or something that was hidden.

What happens in your story if the box is opened?

Think about:

- the characters and where they are
- the complication or problem to be solved
- how the story will end.

Remember to:

- plan your story before you start
- write in correct form
- pay attention to the words you choose, their spelling and punctuation, and paragraphing
- check and edit your writing when you have finished.

Item Descriptor

The development of characterisation and a sense of time, place and atmosphere

Statements of Learning for English

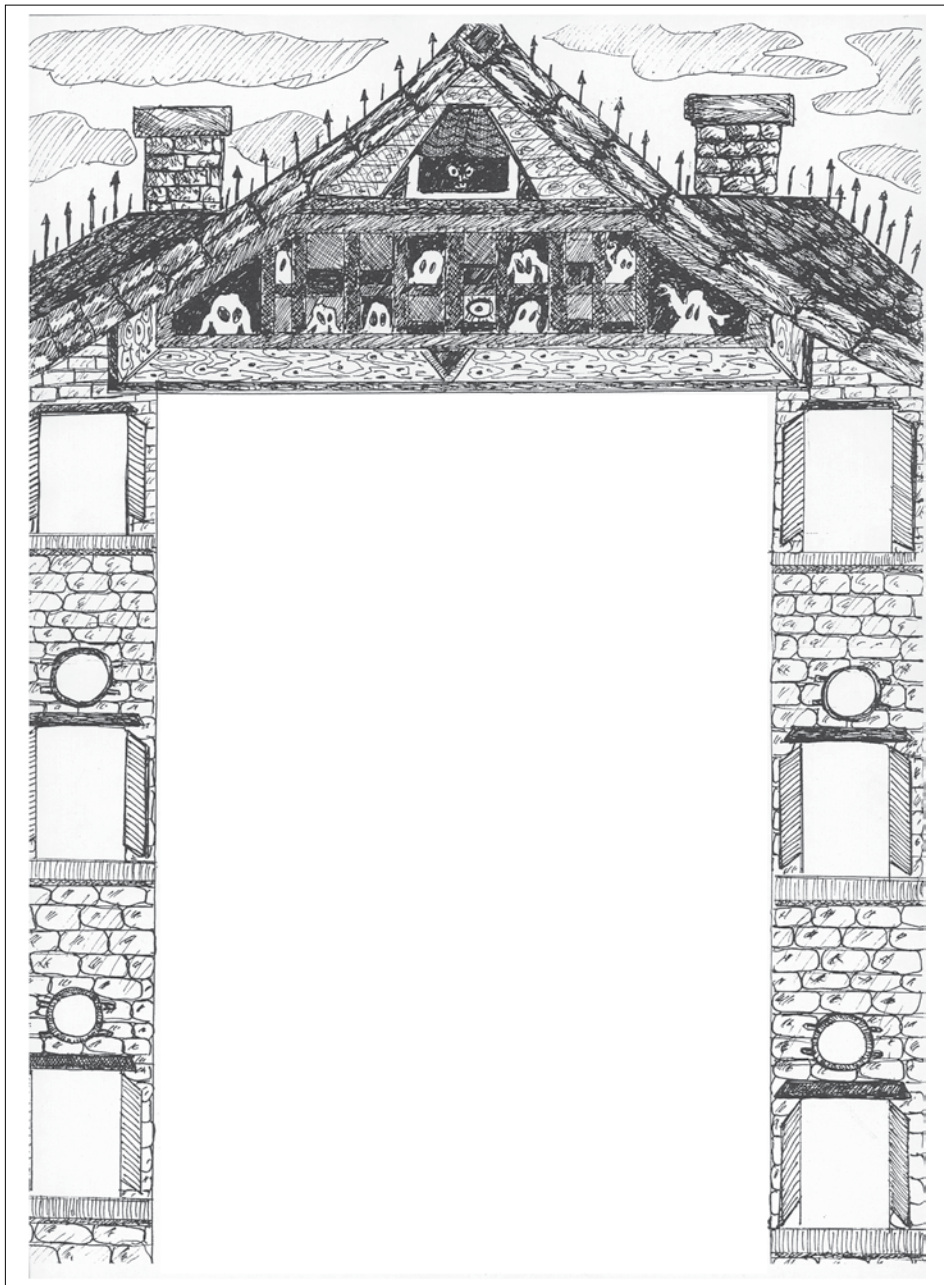
When students write stories they have the opportunity to:

- introduce characters and provide a brief description of setting.
- include brief descriptions of familiar characters, places and things.

- bare wooden floor
- dim interior
- intricately detailed

Guided

Teacher supplies A3 size picture of a haunted house. Students are given descriptive phrases on cardboard and together they label it.



Using the attribute table below, students in pairs or groups orally construct phrases describing the features of a haunted house.

Size	Texture	Colour	Attributes	Objects
large	rough	coal black	ancient	windows
palatial	weather-beaten	ghostly grey	forbidding	walls
megalithic	dusty	brown-stained	deadly silent	doors
enormous	crumbling	blood red	twisted	roof
tiny	bare		ghostly	porch
compact	cobwebbed		eerie	tower
poky	mossy			staircase
				turrets
				padlock
				arches

Complete the following sentence cloze using the attribute table.

6. The _____, _____, _____ doors were opened wide.
7. The _____, _____, _____ walls looked ominous.
8. Bats perched high on the _____, _____, _____ roof.
9. The wind blew the curtains from the _____, _____, _____ windows.
10. The door was tightly locked by a _____, _____, _____ padlock.

Story script from 2008 NAPLAN.

WRITING 20224890

FOUND - the story of the Tristan Stone.

I always liked the way Hamperton Cemetery looked in autumn - the golden groves of glorified soldiers, loved ones and lost ones, and the flowers leaning gracefully against the headstones. They were jewels in a sea of gold. The Quartz Tree, as it was called, grew high on the hill at the centre of the cemetery. It twisted and swayed mysteriously at the slightest breeze; it was my favourite place to just 'hang out' high in those shaded branches of the Quartz Tree.

But as I stood, staring at the men with their shovels, at my weeping relatives and the deep, dark tunnel leading to my gleaming coffin, I detected the ground I walked on.

It all started one sunny summer afternoon, as my friends and I navigated around the maze of tombstones, searching for a clear path to the Quartz Tree. I saw my great-grandfather's tombstone, under the shade of a gum tree. Someone had replaced the flowers and had rearranged the marble slabs around the perimeter. I swung my bag from my shoulders, grateful the weight of my school books had been removed.

"What are you doing?" shouted Nate as he ran up to join me as I walked towards the grave. The flowers under my great-grandfather's name were sitting on a stone.

It was black and shiny, but as I went to pick it up, a shiver ran down my spine.

"Wow, that's beautiful," exclaimed Elaine.

"Yeah," I replied.

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

WRITING 20224890

It was smooth and cold. Suddenly it burst into flames in my hand. I screamed and dropped it but it did not fall. Instead it flew to my chest and burnt me inside. I felt like I was on fire. Heat and pain spread to my toes, to my fingertips.

Then it was gone. I heard men falling and hitting the ground, yet when I opened my eyes, it was still the dry, dry summer it had been minutes before. My friends were staring at the ground, at my feet.

"Hey guys, what's wrong?" I asked but they did not respond.

"Guys?" They continued to stare. I looked down at what they were staring at and screamed. My body looked fine, but my eyes were large and scared. I bent down and felt the stone from the ground. On one of its smooth sides, "Tristan Stone" was carved elaborately.

The stone weighs my pocket down, even now, as they fill in my grave. Its cold black surface mocks my emotions, and my fear of the future.

I wonder whether my mother heard the dull thump as the stone hit my coffin, or if she turned around, some boy hoping I was alive, standing there behind her. Her face was filled with pain.

I wish that stone had never been found.

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

Read the text through with students. On the second read, students highlight the language that is used to describe the setting.

WRITING	20224890	WRITING	20224890
<p>FOUND - the story of the Tristan Stone</p> <p>I always liked the way Hamperton Cemetery looked in autumn - the golden graves of glorified soldiers, loved ones and lost ones, and the flowers leaning gracefully against the headstones. They were jewels in a sea of gold. The Quails Tree, as it was called, grew high on the hill at the centre of the cemetery. It flourished and swayed mysteriously at the night's breeze; it was my favourite place to just hang out, high in those shaded branches of the Quails Tree.</p> <p>But as I stood, staring at the men with their shovels, at my weeping relatives and the deep dark tunnel leading to my gleaming coffin, I delisted the ground I walked on.</p> <p>It all started one sunny summer afternoon, as my friends and I navigated around the maze of tombstones, searching for a clear path to the Quails Tree. I saw my great-grandfather's tombstone, under the shade of a gum tree. Someone had replaced the flowers, and had rearranged the marble stones around the perimeter, leaving my bag from my shoulder, grateful the weight of my school books had been removed. "What are you doing?" shouted Nate as he ran up to join me as I walked towards the grave. The flower under my great-grandfather's name was sitting on a stone. It was black and shiny, but as I went to pick it up, a shiver ran down my spine.</p> <p>"Woah, that's beautiful," exclaimed Elaine.</p> <p>"Yeah," I replied.</p> <p>PLEASE DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA</p>	<p>It was smooth and cold. Suddenly, it burst into flames in my hand. I screamed and dropped it but it did not fall. Instead it flew to my chest and burnt me inside. I felt like I was on fire. Heat and pain spread to my toes, to my fingertips.</p> <p>Then it was gone. I heard rain falling and hitting the ground, yet when I opened my eyes, it was still the dry, dry summer. I had been minutes before. My friends were staring at the ground, at my feet.</p> <p>"Hey guys, what's wrong?" I asked, but they did not respond.</p> <p>"Guys?" They continued to stare. I looked down at what they were staring at and screamed. My body looked fine, but my eyes were large and stared. I bent down and rubbed the stone from the ground. On one of its smooth sides, "Tristan Stone" was carved elaborately.</p> <p>The stone weighs my pocket down, even now, as they fill in my grave. Its cold black surface masks my emotions, and my fear of the future.</p> <p>I wonder whether my mother heard the dull thump as the stone hit my coffin, or if she turned around, some boy hoping I was alive, standing there behind her. Her face was filled with pain.</p> <p>I wish that stone had never been found.</p> <p>PLEASE DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA</p>		

Discuss what categories:

- the writer has used to describe the setting
- he or she could have added to build the setting.

As a group, develop sentences to extend the description of the cemetery setting.

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Students complete a narrative orientation (opening) which requires them to describe a haunted house or another mysterious setting. Students may use word banks to enable them to create effective descriptions of the setting. Provide the students with a variety of story openers.

For example:

William stopped and stared at the address he was given. He looked up and his eyes focused on the house he was supposed to visit. It ...

There it stood like a monster reaching out. The creaking wood sounded like the house was screaming at me. I ...

Skill Focus: Identifying characters in narratives

STAGE 4

Strategy

Identifying characters' physical and emotional connections by developing character profiles and mapping character relationships

Activities to support the strategy

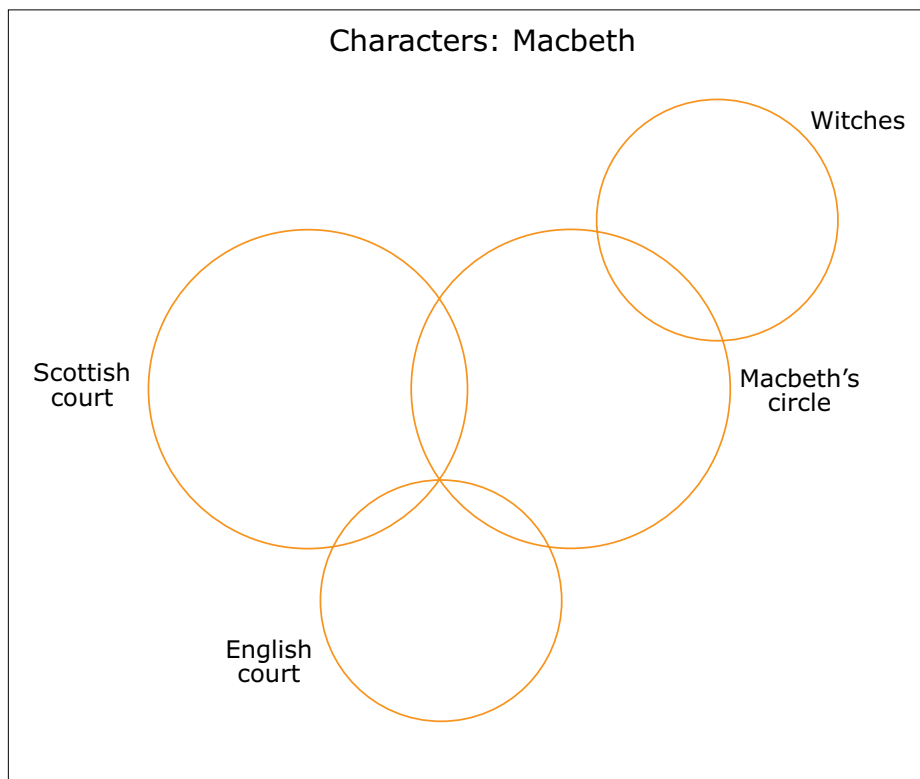
Access the website <http://www.bellshakespeare.com.au/education2008/14resources/14resources.html> and identify stimulus that will support what you want students to learn.

Further information is available in the teacher's kit on character relationships in the play you choose.

Guided

Discuss character list and identify relationships with the students.

Show students a model of a concept map so that they understand how the information is to be organised.



Exploring problematic knowledge (QTF)

Encourage problem solving strategies by asking questions such as:

- How could we record these relationships?
- What form of mapping would be most effective?
- What issues with recording do you think we will have and how could we overcome these issues?

KLA Outcome

English 4.6.10: Writes detailed descriptions

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 4



Item Descriptor

The development of characterisation and a sense of time, place and atmosphere.

Statements of Learning for English

When students write texts they develop characterisation through descriptions, actions and dialogue.

Other Links

<http://www.bellshakespeare.com.au/education2008/14resources/14resources.html>

<http://classes.aces.uiuc.edu/ACES100/Mind/c-m3.html>

Independent

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Students create a concept map to record the character relationships.

Students work in pairs or small groups and evaluate each other's analysis in terms of:

- how their maps were similar/different
- ways to change and improve the map next time
- ways that worked that you would use again.

Students scan the text and identify the main characters such as Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, the Witches, Banquo, King Duncan, Macduff, Lady Macduff and Malcolm.

Students choose two opposing character types and describe the characters in terms of:

- actions
- personality
- motives.

They use a matrix set up to record their ideas:

Character one		
Actions	Personality	Motives
Character two		
Actions	Personality	Motives

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Students then choose a modern day character or celebrity that fits the profile of Shakespeare's characters, and present their results and explanation to the class.

Skill focus: building settings in narratives

STAGE 4

Strategy

Using film to build description

Describing the setting builds:

- mood and tension
- context for the events to follow

Providing time to research the setting of narratives widens students' real world knowledge to use as a basis for their descriptions

Activities to support the strategy

Guided

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Go to www.australianscreen.com.au

On this site teachers can access the following two silent film clips. The omission of sound for this activity is intentional as it focuses the students on what they can see not hear.

1. *A sea of ice caps* <http://australianscreen.com.au/titles/home-blizzard/clip1/>
2. *Gale Force Winds* (Mawson's 1911 expedition). <http://australianscreen.com.au/titles/home-blizzard/clip2/>

In both films the following activity is carried out:

The film clip is viewed twice. After the first viewing, students identify the components in the scene.

Using the following categories assists students to deconstruct the film:

- parts of the picture
- colours
- shapes
- textures and materials
- feels like
- mood

The use of effective literary devices (vocabulary criteria 5) will assist in creating similes, metaphors and vocabulary to describe the setting.

Deconstructing Film Clip no. 1

Students can be broken into groups to describe one or all of the categories and then report back to the whole class.

For example:

Parts of the picture: water, icebergs, deck of ship, mast, ropes

Colours: (the film is black and white so they have to be imagined) white, ice blue, black

KLA Outcome

English 4.6.10: Writes detailed descriptions

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 4



Item Descriptor

The development of characterisation and a sense of time, place and atmosphere

Statements of Learning for English

When students write these texts, they use ideas, details and events that are relevant to the storyline dialogue.

Other Links

<http://www.australianscreen.com.au>

Shapes: cloud like ice, wavy ocean, stick-like ropes and the contrast of the curves of the ocean to the straight lines of the ship

Textures and materials: water is frozen, liquid, gas

Feels like: cold, icy, air sticks to your lungs with every breath

Mood: loneliness, isolation, sparseness, rawness of nature

Deconstructing Film Clip no. 2

View the film clip then discuss the types of themes that would suit the setting. Discussing Mawson's expeditions in relation to other Australian expeditions and recent current events would assist in making the activity contextual.

Independent

Students choose one of the clips to write an opening landscape setting for a narrative.

Cohesion Overview

Good writing encompasses the delivery of meaning and information and clearly expresses internal thoughts, feelings, ideas and memories.

As part of linking ideas and techniques, students need to be aware of and demonstrate a capacity to use various cohesive devices to control and maintain relationships throughout the text. Cohesion in texts includes the use of connectives and conjunctions and more sophisticated texts effectively use a variety of referring words, substitutions, word associations and text connectives to improve the flow of the writing.

Although cohesion has many elements, for the purpose of this document only connectives and conjunctions are addressed in the activities.

Conjunctions and connectives are cohesive devices that operate within and between sentences. Different types of conjunctions are used to express different types of relationships between ideas.

For example:

Temporal Conjunctions (time – when)
As, after, as soon as, at first, at once, before, finally, just, meanwhile, next, now, now that, since, then (this can be overused) until, when, whenever, while
Causal Conjunctions (reason – why)
Although, as a result, because, by, consequently, despite, due to, for that reason, in case, in order, in this way, otherwise, since, so, so as to, so that, therefore, though, thus, to that end, unless, until, yet
Connectives adding information (joining alike – more of the same)
and (can be overused), also, as well as, besides, in addition, including, moreover, similarly
Connectives that contrast (separating – categorising differences)
Alternatively, but (can be overused), except, however, in contrast, if not ... then, instead of, on the other hand, or, whereas
Other connective devices
Prepositional phrases used at the beginning of sentences also connect ideas in time and place. <i>From the top of the hill ... , At the end of the day ... , In the heart of the forest ...</i>

Connectives:

- Clarify – *in other words*
- Show cause and effect – *so, therefore, as a result*
- Indicate time – *afterwards, later, soon, each morning, in the end*
- Sequence ideas – *firstly, to begin, at this point*
- Add information – *moreover*
- Indicate condition and concession – *in that case, however, despite this*

Aspects of Grammar is a NSW DET publication which can give you more information about connectives and conjunctions. It is available at: http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/learning/7_12assessments/naplan/index.php under the 'Related Documents' heading on the right-hand side of the screen.

Skill Focus: Using joining words to connect ideas

STAGE I

Strategies

Joint construction of sentences

Constructing sentences using a variety of joining words, sentences and conjunctions enlarged on flashcards

Activities to support the activity

Guided

Exploring metalanguage and building deep knowledge (QTF)

Revisit skills that have been practised in previous lessons by asking students about the elements of a sentence.

What types of words need to be in a simple sentence so that it makes sense?

What types of words can make sentences longer?

What type of words can we use to connect ideas in sentences?

Invite students to construct simple sentences and scribe them on the board.

Have students volunteer to underline the noun, the verb and where appropriate the subject in the sample sentences.

Write a number of compound sentences. Show students where two independent ideas (clauses) are joined together. Highlight the conjunction that joins the ideas (clauses) together.

For example:

First main clause second main clause

Jill opened the map and studied it carefully.

First main clause second main clause

Ben went home and then he went out to play.

Explain that conjunctions are joining words that connect ideas together. Sometimes the ideas can be separate (like the examples above) while others need each other to make sense.

To revise the types of conjunctions as preparation for the lesson the following website can be a helpful resource.

<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/conjunctions.htm#yet>

Write several sentences that use connectives or conjunctions.

Cut the sentences into separate words.

The conjunctions and connectives are either written in a different colour or written on a different coloured piece of cardboard.

K-6 Outcome

RSI.8: Identifies conjunctions and understands they join clauses

WSI.9: Combines ideas in writing

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 6



Language Conventions

Year 3 Q:25

Item Descriptor

The accuracy and range of cohesive devices used including connectives, conjunctions and word associations

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to use dependent and independent clauses to extend and elaborate ideas and information.

Other links

<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/conjunctions.htm#yet>

For example:

Cameron is a brilliant dancer **and** Eliza is a great singer.

It was cold outside **so** I put on my jumper.

I am trying out for the soccer team **but** Jake decided not to.

I must eat all my dinner **or** I will not be able to go out to play.

I love running as fast as I can **and then** feeling how fast my heart is beating.

Frogs need to keep their skin moist **so** they can breathe.

Because it was so cold, I needed to put on my scarf and beanie.

Because it was raining, the boy opened the rainwater tank.

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Give a small group of students these conjunctions written on yellow card:

and

so

but

because

As well as these give students two clauses on a current topic written on blue cardboard.

the boy opened the rainwater tank

it was raining

Students read the clauses together. (blue cardboard)

Ask the students to take turns joining the two clauses, using the conjunction cards.

Allow students to discuss alternatives, reading their attempts and conferring with each other to determine whether the sentence makes sense.

For example:

it was raining

so

the boy opened the rainwater tank

.

because

it was raining

the boy opened the rainwater tank

.

Ask students to tell you their reasons and help them to express what they have done. In this example, the reason is: The word *so* or *because* joins the two clauses by connecting the action with the reason why the boy is opening the rainwater tank.

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

In pre-determined groups (multi levelled, guided reading groups, specialist groups) students construct a number of sentences from their guided reading books or a class story using a variety of joining words.

Skill Focus: Using temporal connectives and pronouns

STAGE 2 Supporting ESL Students

Strategy

Providing grids as scaffolds for students to identify types of connectives and how ideas can be connected in reading and writing

Challenges for ESL students

- Temporal connectives
- Connectives
- Noun/pronoun agreement
- Varying noun and pronoun references in texts

The scaffold (matrix) can be used as a support as:

- an OHT
- an A3 sized proforma for small groups
- a white board resource
- an individual worksheet in the follow up component of the lesson

Using metalanguage support assists students to draw on a number of conjunctions and connectives.

<p>Temporal Conjunctions (time – when) As, after, as soon as, at first, at once, before, finally, just, meanwhile, next, now, now that, since, then (this can be overused) until, when, whenever, while</p>
<p>Causal Conjunctions (reason – why) Although, as a result, because, by, consequently, despite, due to, for that reason, in case, in order, in this way, otherwise, since, so, so as to, so that, therefore, though, thus, to that end, unless, until, yet</p>
<p>Connectives adding information (joining alike – more of the same) and (can be overused), also, as well as, besides, in addition, including, moreover, similarly</p>
<p>Connectives that contrast (separating – categorising differences) Alternatively, but (can be overused), except, however, in contrast, if not ... then, instead of, on the other hand, or, whereas</p>
<p>Other connective devices Prepositional phrases used at the beginning of sentences also connect ideas in time and place. <i>From the top of the hill ... , At the end of the day ... , In the heart of the forest ...</i></p>

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Choose sentences that are relevant to the students' interests or the topic being studied.

Example:

The gorilla swung frantically from the trees.

The hunter was shooting at it wildly.

K–6 Outcomes

RS2.6: Identifies relationships in written sentences signalled by conjunctions

RS2.8: Recognises cohesive links in a text

WS2.10: Combines clauses using a variety of conjunctions

ESL Scales

4:1:1: Writes a variety of texts demonstrating some cohesion and coherence

5:1:3: Uses some cohesive phrases that link ideas expressed in preceding sentences and paragraphs

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 6



Language Conventions

Year 3 Q: 30, 36, 43

Year 5 Q: 31

Reading

Year 3 Q: 21

Year 5 Q: 9

Item Descriptor

The accuracy and range of cohesive devices used including connectives, conjunctions and word associations

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to use dependent and independent clauses to extend and elaborate ideas and information.

Teacher demonstrates possible ways of connecting the sentence.

Teacher thinks aloud as they use strategies to choose the correct connective.

I want to connect these ideas in time order so I can use words from the matrix like when and while. I'll try them and see which one makes sense.

Example one:

The gorilla swung frantically from the trees **when** the hunter was shooting at it wildly.

The gorilla swung frantically from the trees **while** the hunter was shooting at it wildly.

I like the connective while better as it best conveys the meaning I am trying to get across to the reader.

How else can I use the connective while to join the ideas together?

While the gorilla was swinging frantically from the trees, the hunter was shooting at it wildly.

Modelled (Controlled)

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Students brainstorm examples of connectives and places examples on the grid into the categories:

Time, Place, Manner, Cause, Adding, Contrasting

Time	Place	Manner	Cause	Adding	Contrasting
(when)	(where)	(how)	(why)	(joining alike)	(comparing)
after	where	as if	although	and	alternatively
as soon as	wherever	by	as a result	also	but
at first		like	because	as well as	except for
at once		likewise	by	besides	however
before			consequently	in addition	in contrast
finally			despite	including	if not ... then
meanwhile			in case	moreover	instead of
next			in order that	similarly	on the other hand
now			in that case		or
now that			in this way		whereas
since			otherwise		
then			since		
until			so		
when			so as to		
while			so that		
			therefore		
			though		
			thus		
			to that end		
			unless		
			yet		

Teacher provides written examples of sentences that can be linked by using a connective.

Teacher should practise one type of connective at a time, to develop a deeper understanding of the connective before moving on to another type.

As a class, students identify the connectives in the following text from the 2008 NAPLAN reading assessment Year 3.

The story of Opo

Opononi, New Zealand, was a quiet little town by the sea. Most of the men worked as fishermen. In the summer of 1955, they noticed that a strange sea animal was following their boats. At first the men thought it must be a shark. But the animal came closer and closer to the boats. Before long everyone could see it was a dolphin. One of the fishermen named her Opo – after the town.

At first Opo was shy, as many wild dolphins are. But she was curious, too. Every day she swam closer to the boats. Finally one of the fishermen reached out as far as he could with his oar. He scratched Opo with it.

She reared back in the water. But the oar must have felt good, for soon Opo came closer than ever before. Then she rolled over. The men had to laugh. Opo was plainly saying, "Scratch my belly this time."

A scientist came to look at Opo. He said Opo was a young dolphin who had probably lost her mother. That was why she was swimming alone. Opo might have been an orphan, but she soon found a new family. The whole town of Opononi adopted the friendly dolphin.

This example shows the temporal (time) connectives.

Opononi, New Zealand was a quiet little town by the sea. Most of the men worked as fishermen. **In the summer of 1955**, they noticed that a strange sea animal was following their boats. **At first** the men thought it must be a shark. But the animal came closer and closer to the boats. **Before long** everyone could see it was a dolphin. One of the fishermen named her Opo – after the town.

At first Opo was shy, as many wild dolphins are. But she was curious too. **Everyday** she swam closer to the boats. **Finally** one of the fishermen reached out as far as he could with his oar.

This activity could be repeated using other types of connectives.

Guided

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Students are given word cards of connectives and classify them according to the categories on the grid.

Discuss the conjunctions before students classify them, asking questions such as:

What makes the conjunctions similar/different?

What conjunctions do we use more often? Why?

Which conjunctions do you know/not know?

Display the grid on sheets of A3 for each group of students.

In pairs or small groups, students complete a cloze activity which requires them to add temporal connectives to a text. Students may refer to the chart of possible temporal connectives.

_____, my best friend Barry was knocking on the door. We had already discussed meeting at my house _____ before going surfing. I picked up my surfboard _____ we ran into the water. We swam out _____ we tried to catch a big wave. _____ it came, the one we were waiting for. I fell over _____ I tripped on a shell near the shore.

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Students are given a short narrative text with the connectives removed. Students are required to rewrite the narrative adding effective connectives.

Teacher chooses and copies most effective student examples. Students independently mark the connectives used and discuss their effectiveness.

Skill Focus: Using temporal connectives and conjunctions

STAGES 3–4

Strategy

Providing grids as scaffolds to sort and identify connectives

Playing cooperative games to practise skills and metalanguage

Activities to support the strategy

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Provide students with a short text containing a variety of conjunctions such as the sample below:

There are 4400 living species of amphibians. Frogs, toads, newts and salamanders are all amphibians. Although many live mainly on land, most spend at least some of their lives in water.

The largest amphibian is the Chinese giant salamander and it is 1.8metres long.

... Gradually the tail shortens until the young frog is able to begin to breathe with its head above the water.

There are 4400 living species of amphibians. Frogs, toads, newts and salamanders are all amphibians. Although many live mainly on land, most spend at least some of their lives in water.

The largest amphibian is the Chinese giant salamander and it is 1.8metres long.

... Gradually the tail shortens until the young frog is able to begin to breathe with its head above the water.

Guide students as they deconstruct the text and

- identify and highlight the conjunctions and explain how the conjunctions link ideas in the text
- identify and discuss where they appear in the sentences (such as in the beginning, middle and end of sentences).

Activity one

Organise students into small groups and give them a series of single sentences using different types of texts which use **conjunctions showing time order**.

K–6 Outcomes

RS3.8: Recognises cohesive links in a text

WS3.10: Combines clauses using a variety of conjunctions

KLA Outcome

Science S4.4.16: Accesses information from identified secondary sources

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 6



Item Descriptor

The accuracy and range of cohesive devices used including connectives, conjunctions and word associations

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to use dependent and independent clauses to extend and elaborate ideas and information.

For example:

- group one – narrative
- group two – procedure
- group three – recount
- group four – instructions

Provide each group with a set of picture cards showing a series of events related to the type of text stimulus. Students sequence the events using the picture card then write a caption saying what is happening or match and sequence sentences that are provided for them.

Explain to students that ideas can be joined or connected using joining words.

Regroup students into whole class and brainstorm a number of connectives.

Write the following categories on the board:

Time, Place, Manner, Cause, Adding and Contrasting

As students provide examples of joining words, record them under the appropriate categories on the board.

Create sets of flashcards for different examples of connectives using the following list:

- Time: after, before, when, just as, while, as long as, since, until, every time
- Manner: as, by, through, with, as if, as though, like
- Cause: because, since, as, therefore, consequently, yet, as a result of, so as
- Condition: although, unless, if, otherwise, still, despite
- Concession: although, though, even though, even if
- Contrasting: as, as if, as though, so ... that, on the other hand
- Sequential: firstly (secondly, thirdly etc), finally, then, when, next, here, now, lastly, meanwhile

After students' suggestions have been exhausted provide further examples of connectives to build the word bank. Give the words to students and together decide what category they belong under.

Modelled

Model how to connect the sentences from one group into a cohesive text (using some examples from the group work) such as using temporal conjunctions 'when, before, while, after, since and until.'

Independent

Activity one

Ask students to return to their groups and use the conjunction word bank to join sentences together.

Activity two

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Ask students to give examples of joining words and the types of joining words that can be used to connect ideas in sentences.

The teacher asks the students to clarify the role of joining words in sentences.

Discuss joining words that are relative to other events (connectives) by asking probing questions, for example:

What words can you see that connect ideas together in the passage?

How do they separate the clauses?

What effect does this have on reading and understanding the ideas in the text?

Ask students:

What problems would it cause if we didn't use joining words to connect 3 or 4 different ideas in one sentence?

Direct students to record clauses of their school day on cards and put them in order.

Example cards:

	we have roll call	We do Maths		I play	
When	after	before	so	when	until
school begins	the bell rings.	we go to lunch.	We will be alert.	I have eaten	lunch time ends

Activity three

Conjunction bingo gives students practice reading and saying conjunctions. In small groups, each student is given a laminated bingo card with five sentences on it. Each sentence is missing a conjunction. The game leader for each group pulls conjunctions out of a bag one at a time. If the conjunction that is called out fits into a gap in a sentence on their card, students write it into the appropriate sentence. The first student to have all five sentences complete calls out 'Bingo'.

Modelled

Explain to students that, when a sentence gives a reason for an event or action, a **causal conjunction** such as *because* is used. When a sentence explains the result of an action or an event, a conjunction such as *so*, *therefore*, *as a result* or *consequently* is used.

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Ask students to orally complete sentence beginnings, for example:

It was raining so ...

I tripped over because ...

Because it was nearly lunchtime we ...

The dam was nearly empty so ...

Students must decide if the relationship is cause or effect and combine sentences with the appropriate conjunction. For example:

The sheep's wool was very long so the farmer sheared the sheep.

Because the sheep's wool was very long, the farmer sheared it.

The teacher writes a series of conjunction-related tasks/statements on a series of cards.

Cards may include the following:

A conjunction indicating how often	whenever
A conjunction indicating reason	because
A conjunction that expresses time	before
A conjunction that you use to compare things	like
A conjunction indicating place	where

Students randomly pick a card from the series.

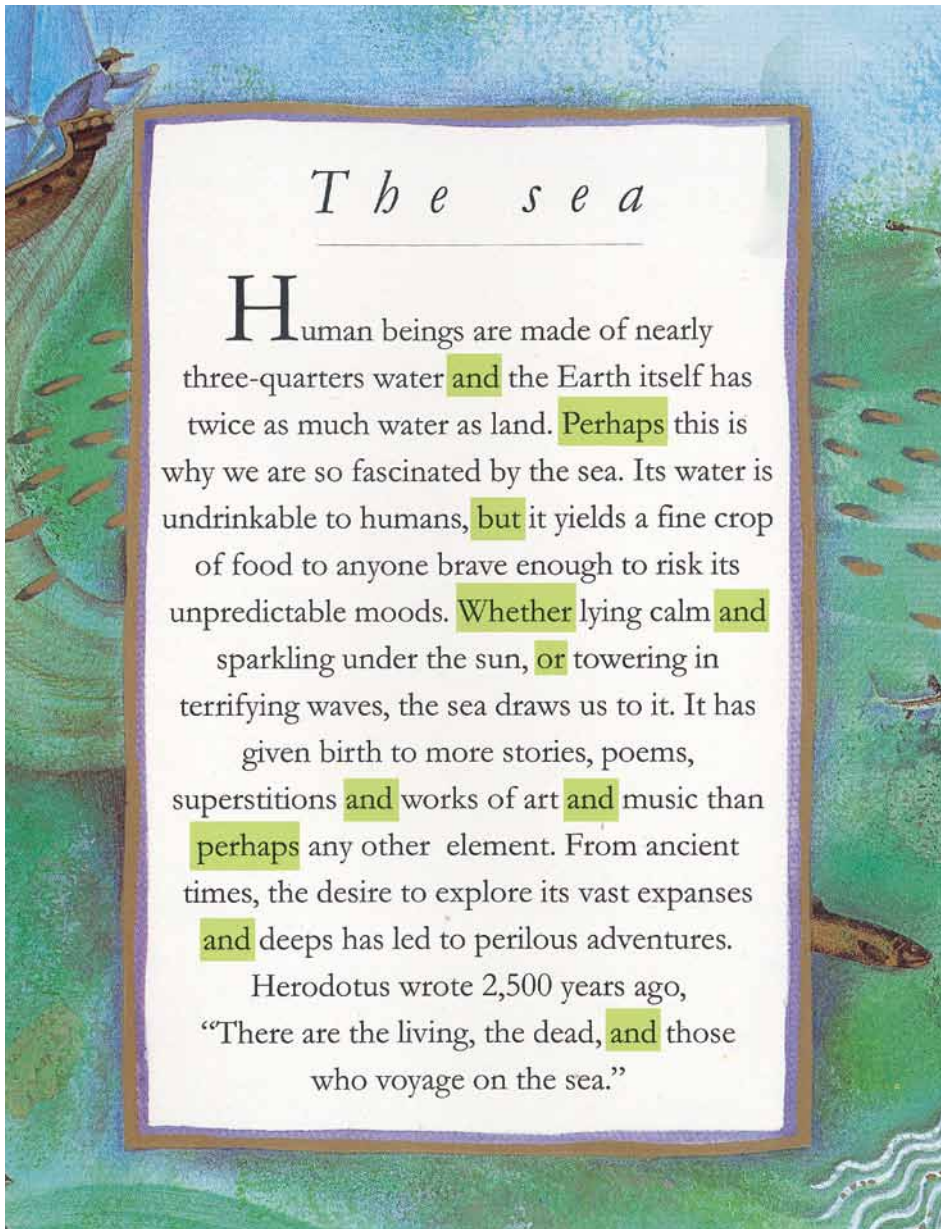
They read the card and then write an appropriate conjunction linked to that category.

They may pass if they cannot think of a word. When a student has five words, check their answers.

The conjunctions are used as a resource to be displayed in books or on the wall in the classroom.

Independent

Students deconstruct (analyse) a passage in a text identifying connectives and conjunctions such as those shown in the following example



The sea

Human beings are made of nearly three-quarters water and the Earth itself has twice as much water as land. Perhaps this is why we are so fascinated by the sea. Its water is undrinkable to humans, but it yields a fine crop of food to anyone brave enough to risk its unpredictable moods. Whether lying calm and sparkling under the sun, or towering in terrifying waves, the sea draws us to it. It has given birth to more stories, poems, superstitions and works of art and music than perhaps any other element. From ancient times, the desire to explore its vast expanses and deeps has led to perilous adventures.

Herodotus wrote 2,500 years ago,
“There are the living, the dead, and those
who voyage on the sea.”

Skill Focus: Developing facility with different types of clause relationships

STAGE 4

Strategy

Modelling strategies by thinking aloud the steps when deconstructing texts assists students to understand the skill involved for tasks.

Some students with language learning difficulty may not understand some clause relationships. Students benefit from a planned program that is explicit and systematic with a high level of opportunities for practice. This means that there needs to be explicit modelling by thinking aloud the steps in the strategy and using the metalanguage to work through the strategy.

Students are involved in deconstructing controlled passages to unpack how the words work in the sentence. Beyond the introduction of definitions, students need to be provided with problem solving activities to identify these concepts in contextual learning activities.

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Identifying students' prior knowledge will guide the teacher to the proximal learning zone for the following explicit deconstructions.

Identify some conjunctions and ask questions such as:

Why are these words needed when we read and write texts?

What types of texts have you read them in?

Point out that the conjunction may be the first word in the sentence, or the main clause may come first with the conjunction introducing the second clause. See sentence structure for more information on clauses.

The teacher models the correct structure.

Guided

Developing metalanguage (QTF)

Activity one

The students consolidate their understanding of conjunctions of time.

The teacher writes sentences on the board such as:

Bring the water to the boil. Pour boiling water into a cup.

Go to sports training. Get dressed.

You are extremely thirsty. Have a drink.

Tairne plays the drums. He sings the song.

KLA Outcomes

English 4.2.1: Identifies relationships between words in a text

English 4.4.9: Uses a variety of conjunctions and connectives to connect groups of words and clauses

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 6



Item Descriptor

The accuracy and range of cohesive devices used including connectives, conjunctions and word associations

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to use dependent and independent clauses to extend and elaborate ideas and information.

You play soccer for two hours. Put on sunscreen.

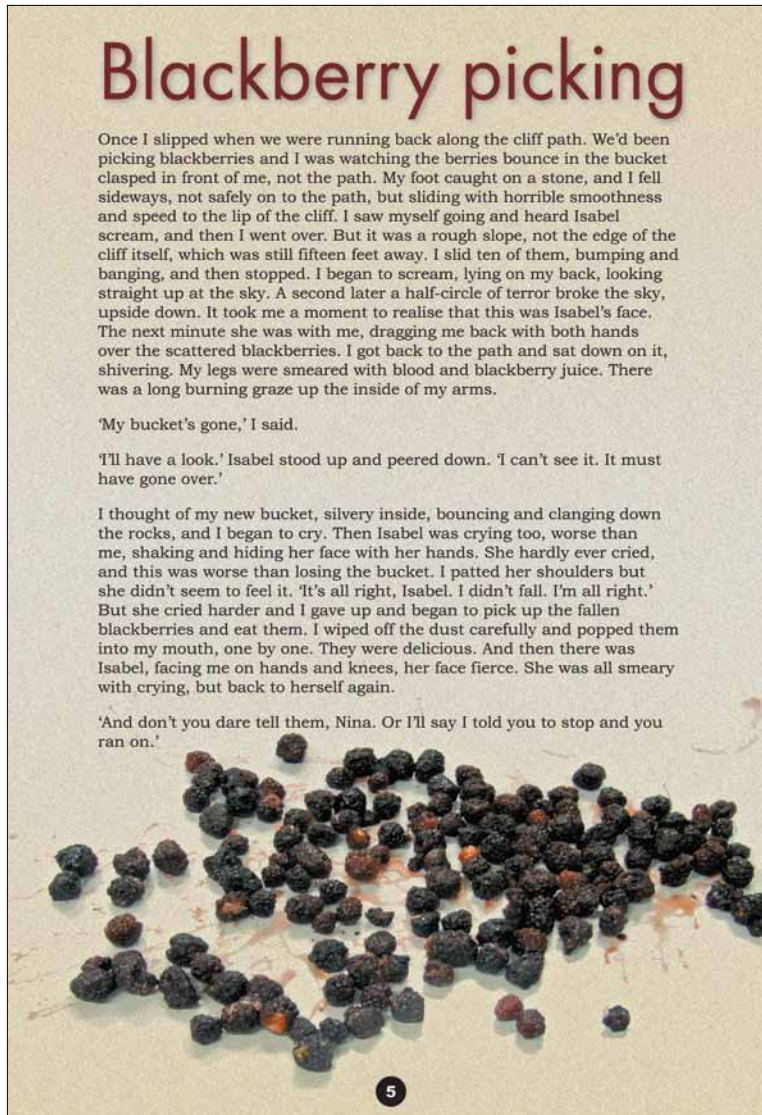
The teacher asks students for alternative ways of combining these sentences using a time conjunction.

The teacher points out that some words may need to be changed when the order of clauses is changed.

Give them the opportunity to try variations, read, say and write them.

Download the following example onto an OHT and ask students to identify the time conjunctions.

From *Blackberry Picking*, NAPLAN, reading 2008



Blackberry picking

Once I slipped when we were running back along the cliff path. We'd been picking blackberries and I was watching the berries bounce in the bucket clasped in front of me, not the path. My foot caught on a stone, and I fell sideways, not safely on to the path, but sliding with horrible smoothness and speed to the lip of the cliff. I saw myself going and heard Isabel scream, and then I went over. But it was a rough slope, not the edge of the cliff itself, which was still fifteen feet away. I slid ten of them, bumping and banging, and then stopped. I began to scream, lying on my back, looking straight up at the sky. A second later a half-circle of terror broke the sky, upside down. It took me a moment to realise that this was Isabel's face. The next minute she was with me, dragging me back with both hands over the scattered blackberries. I got back to the path and sat down on it, shivering. My legs were smeared with blood and blackberry juice. There was a long burning graze up the inside of my arms.

'My bucket's gone,' I said.

'I'll have a look.' Isabel stood up and peered down. 'I can't see it. It must have gone over.'

I thought of my new bucket, silvery inside, bouncing and clanging down the rocks, and I began to cry. Then Isabel was crying too, worse than me, shaking and hiding her face with her hands. She hardly ever cried, and this was worse than losing the bucket. I patted her shoulders but she didn't seem to feel it. 'It's all right, Isabel. I didn't fall. I'm all right.' But she cried harder and I gave up and began to pick up the fallen blackberries and eat them. I wiped off the dust carefully and popped them into my mouth, one by one. They were delicious. And then there was Isabel, facing me on hands and knees, her face fierce. She was all smeary with crying, but back to herself again.

'And don't you dare tell them, Nina. Or I'll say I told you to stop and you ran on.'

5

Activity two

The students consolidate their understanding of conjunctions using place.

Examples: *where, wherever*

Students identify all conjunctions then highlight the conjunctions showing 'place'.

From *The double life of a slippery axolotl*, NAPLAN, reading, 2008

Excerpt: *Well the lakes in Mexico where axolotls are found surrounded by barren, dry country which is an unsuitable environment for amphibians like salamanders to live in.*

Activity three

The students consolidate their understanding of conjunctions using manner.

Examples: *as, as though, as if, like.*

The clauses of manner are likely to be a little more difficult for some students.

Excerpt: *Well the lakes in Mexico where axolotls are found surrounded by barren, dry country which is an unsuitable environment for amphibians like salamanders to live in.*

Independent

Provide examples from studied texts where students can deconstruct passages and unpack the words used to connect information.

It is important for students to identify:

- the purpose of the text
- the intent of the author
- the targeted audience.

Conjunctions

Task one: Join the two sentences using a different causal conjunction for each example.

It was very hot. Jenny turned the air conditioning on.

She wanted to get her driver's licence. She did the driving test.

He got out of the pool. He was getting cold.

The class was behaving very well. The teacher played a quiz game.

She wanted to see clearly. Her father sat her on his shoulders.

Task two: Complete these sentences.

Water in a black container heats up fast, because ...

She kept on running, in order to ...

She drank water instead of buying a drink, since ...

Mum kept making pancakes, so that ...

The mother put the baby to bed, as ...

Task three: Add a main clause to these sentences.

In order for the cricketer to make 100 runs, his batting partner ...

Since a tall person is easily seen, Bob ...

As you have been so patient, I will ...

Because cockroaches are attracted to food, we should ...

So that everyone gets to eat their favourite food, we should ...

Examples: *if, unless, in case*

Condition conjunctions are likely to prove difficult for students with language learning difficulty. Check whether the following examples are understood.

Excerpt: *If an axolotl is taken out of the water it will probably die. But if its lake or pond slowly dries up it may metamorphose into a salamander.*

From *The double life of a slippery axolotl*, NAPLAN, reading 2008

Modelled

Model the first one or two cause conjunctions on interactive whiteboard or overhead transparency, then ask students to complete one or two examples in pairs and the rest of the examples individually.

The teacher points out that some words may need to be changed when the order of clauses is changed.

Guided

Guide students through the first few examples in the worksheet provided below before providing time for them to complete independently.

Analyse students' responses as a class and encourage them to justify their decisions.

Task one: Underline the clause that starts with the condition conjunction.

If seeds are not planted correctly, the plant will not be able to grow properly.

A reef is called a barrier reef if it parallels the coast.

Take a fleece in case it's windy and cold on top of the mountain.

You cannot get into the performance unless you have a ticket.

We can leave at noon if we have the car all packed.

The train leaves at 3.37 and arrives at 4.15, unless there is track work that day.

If it's sunny and warm tomorrow, we'll go to the beach.

If the sun is used to heat our water, we produce less greenhouse gas.

Some cities will run out of water unless everyone uses less water.

In case we find fossils in the rocks, take a backpack to carry them home.

Task two: Combine the two sentences using the connectives *if*, *unless*, *in case*. You will need to change some words.

There may be a storm while we are out. We should close the windows.

Take your swimmers. The river may be deep enough for swimming.

You can't drive a car. You do not have a licence.

You add up the cost of the things you bought. You will know how much you will have to pay.

The goal is not counted. One of the attacking team is offside.

I wouldn't miss watching you in the race. I was in hospital.

Task three: Complete these sentences.

Unless you clean your teeth daily, ...

If dogs are well-trained, ...

As there are lots of people waiting, ...

We will be late, unless ...

Grab an umbrella, in case ...

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

In small groups of five students make up a list of conjunctions and categorise them into:

Time, Place, Manner, Cause, Adding and Contrasting

Students then break up into specialist groups according to the categories above with identified roles (for example, recorder, speaker and leader).

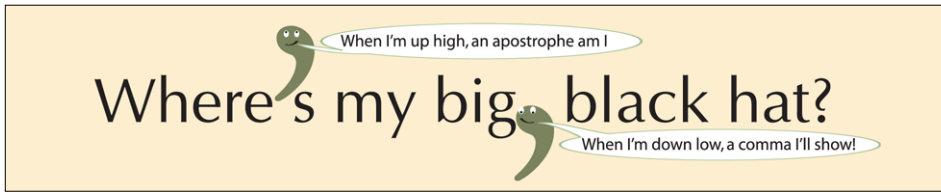
Specialised groups return to main groups to share the other types of conjunctions listed and used in sentences.

Students are provided with a controlled text that does not have any conjunctions.

Students independently edit the text, adding at least one of each type of conjunction.

Commas Overview

The shape of the comma is the same as that of an apostrophe. These punctuation marks need explicit, contextual discussion and practice in reading and writing across the curriculum.



Commas can be used:

- to separate clauses and phrases

When I want them to be soft and runny, they end up being really hard-boiled.

Recent surveys, some carried out by independent groups, indicate that most people would prefer more daylight saving time.

- to separate words in lists including adjectives, verbs and adverbs in sentences

The Death Adder was quick, brown and frightening.

- as a device to divide clauses and phrases in poetry

The old man burned his letters, the first and last he burned,

And he scratched his name from the Bible when the old wife's back was turned.

(Scots of the Riverina by Henry Lawson)

- as a marker before and/or after speech marks

'We need to start rehearsing,' said Ms Peters, 'so get your skates on.'

Skill Focus: Identifying and using punctuation marks

STAGES 1, 2 and 3

Strategy

Using barrier games and scaffolds to analyse texts. This strategy can be used to teach simple and complex punctuation.

Activities to support the strategy


Modelled

Exploring Metalanguage (QTF)

The teacher discusses the scaffold using the metalanguage used in the components. The method for tallying also needs to be discussed.

Punctuation Marks	Tally
How many commas in sentences can I find?	
How many commas in lists can I find?	
How many full stops can I find?	

The teacher writes a short passage on the board (or on an OHT) to deconstruct.

<p>I am hopeless at boiling eggs. If I want them to be soft and runny, they will end up really hard-boiled. If I want hard eggs, then they turn out all runny. The slippery, yellow centres run all over my plate. It is always a surprise when I eat my boiled eggs because they can be runny, hard, soft or overcooked.</p>	
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The teacher uses the short passage to demonstrate the skills needed to identify and record the simple punctuation marks. The teacher thinks the strategy aloud using metalanguage, for example:

I have found a comma, so I will mark it in the tally sheet.

Is it separating a clause or a list?

I can see it is separating two clauses because there is a verb in each clause, so I will tally this comma in the first row.

I can see a complete sentence because there is a full stop. I will tally the full stop in the third row.

I have tallied four commas so the next comma I tally, I will cross out the four marks to show I have found five commas.

I have found another comma.

I can see it is separating a list of adjectives so I will tally it in the 2 list row.

K-6 Outcomes

- WS1.10 Students use most common punctuation marks
- WS2.10 Students use correct punctuation
- WS3.10 Students use correct punctuation marks including commas, apostrophes and exclamation marks

Item & Stimulus

Language Conventions
 Year 3 Q: 40
 Year 5 Q: 39, 47 and 49
 Year 7 Q: 39 and 57
 Year 9 Q: 31 and 37

Item Descriptor

Identify the need for a comma to separate clauses and lists in sentences

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to use basic punctuation marks, including full stops, commas between items in a list, exclamation marks and question marks.

Guided

Exploring deep knowledge using higher-order thinking (QTF)

The teacher asks students to share what they know about commas by asking probing questions such as:

Where can we find commas?

How do we know where to put a comma in a sentence?

How does this make the text easier to understand?

What if we didn't use commas? How would this affect the writing?

What other punctuation marks do they look like?

How are these marks different in purpose?

Do you think we find more full stops in writing than commas?

A student draws a comma on the board and the teacher demonstrates how the same mark can be used to show an apostrophe. The teacher draws the students' attention to the comma rhyme that is provided in the strategy outline. Use a student's writing sample and prepare as an OHT. Remove all the full stops and commas. As a class, the students add in the commas and full stops.

Independent

Working in pairs (A and B) each student chooses a passage from a familiar text at their independent reading level which has examples of identified punctuation marks. For this example, there should be number of commas which separate lists and clauses in the text.

Each student writes out the passage, omitting the commas and full stops from the text. In turns, student A gives student B:

- the passage without the punctuation marks
- the scaffold sheet.

Student A reads the passage (with the punctuation marks) to student B. Student B inserts the punctuation into the passage. Student B tallies the number of commas and full stops he or she identifies.

Students then check their task against the passage in the text to evaluate their learning.

Alternatively, the teacher can create a number of passages from an independent reading level text and ask students to work in pairs to complete the task scaffold as outlined above.

Guided

Higher-order thinking (QTF)

The teacher asks the students for feedback about the results of their task and discusses the results using probing questions such as:

What were the easiest punctuation marks to identify?

Why were the commas more difficult to mark correctly?

What strategies can we use to help us identify where to put commas? (For example re-read, check for clauses)

Connects Ideas Overview

To understand and interpret relationships and ideas in texts that are not stated or found in the words requires greater background knowledge on the part of the reader. Readers need to infer or deduce the meaning from what they know and the messages in the text.

Applied comprehension requires readers to:

- combine ideas
- draw conclusions
- interpret and evaluate information
- identify tone and voice.

A higher and more complex level of applied comprehension involves critical analysis which requires readers to:

- be critical
- form opinions
- identify authors' points of view and attitudes
- identify and consider the authority of texts and their messages
- infer motives of characters and themes.

Critical analysis can be introduced in very early reading and is part of using logic to understand the messages, themes and underlying plot of stories (Carnine, Silbert and Kameenui, 1997). The use of Edward De Bono's 'Six Thinking Hats' strategy is one effective way of developing critical thinking skills.

Skill Focus: Locates information and connects ideas in a complex text

STAGES 4–5

Strategy

Comparing the structures of a number of texts to identify the:

- layout
- purpose
- order of information.

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Explain that a text on any topic could be written for many different purposes. Remind students that the purpose will determine the content, and the way the information is organised. An example may be necessary. The topic of a museum could be written about for many different purposes for example:

- an advertisement encouraging people to visit
- a researcher outlining aspects of the collection
- information about how to get around the museum, and facilities available
- relationships with other museums
- connections with universities
- donors to the museum.

The intention of the activity below is to show students how any number of articles could be written about a topic, and use these ideas as a point of comparison to clarify the purpose of the article they are reading.

Guided

Water warning in Angkor ruins



Leigh Dayton
Science writer

TWO enormous masonry structures discovered near Cambodia's fabled Angkor Wat provide rock-hard evidence that the once powerful Khmer kingdom vanished because of over-building, environmental damage and climate change.

One of the new-found structures was a dam by 40m high. The other was a 10km by 40m outlet channel that, like the spillway, was part of the elaborate water system that served the sprawling ancient agricultural city of Angkor.

"These two structures demonstrate very high levels of hydraulic engineering," said Sydney University archaeologist Roland Fletcher, director of the Greater Angkor Project (GAP), a five-year collaboration between the university, French researchers and the Cambodian agency managing the Angkor site.

"The Khmer engineers used their expertise in masonry construction to build flow structures that managed water flows for the entire city. There are considerable implications for our understanding of our own water management systems."

Angkor is the largest human city from the pre-industrial world. It existed from the 9th to the 15th centuries.

Using satellite images, aerial photographs and field surveys, the GAP team estimated that the low-density city covered about 1000 sq km, spreading outwards from the central complex of Angkor Wat.

The intricate network of channels and reservoirs sustained a population of about 750,000.

Then, about 500 years ago, the Khmer capital was abandoned. This has baffled modern scholars. Theories ranged from invasions and droughts of the competing regions to major geological shifts.

But Professor Fletcher's group suspects the city died when it could no longer support the rice-growing economy that fed it.

That happened because of Angkor's success. As it grew, more land was cleared for rice paddies, increasing soil erosion into the irrigation canals. Soil built up, blocking the water system and taking time and resources to keep it flowing.

The final kick came from an abrupt decrease in the monsoon rains that filled the great lake east of Angkor.

KLA Outcomes

- History 4.8: Locates, selects and organises relevant information from a number of sources, including ICT, to conduct basic historical research
- English 4.7.1 Students learn to ask perceptive and relevant questions, make logical predictions, draw analogies and challenge ideas and information in texts.

Item & Stimulus

Reading
Year 7 Q: 30
Year 9 Q: 14

Item Descriptor

Students locate information in a complex text.

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to clarify meaning.

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

After reading *Water warning in Angkor ruins* quickly brainstorm words from the passage with students and list ideas.

Ask students to select a word from the list and write a sentence to describe how this idea could be written about in the article.

For example, *engineers* might be a word from the brainstormed list, as it appears in the fourth paragraph in the article. A description of a possible article could be: *The article is about how Khmer engineers used many different techniques to build effective water systems.*

Another example could be *satellite images*, which appears in the fifth paragraph. A description of a possible article could be: *The article is about how satellite images have been used to show how water systems operated in Angkor.*

Independent

Ask students to record their ideas on large sheets of paper or record on the interactive white board so other students can easily read the ideas. Read through all ideas.

Re-read *Water warning in Angkor ruins* and ‘test’ each idea with the text by asking:

Is this idea the purpose of the text?

Guided

Continue with each example and use the ideas to define the real purpose of the Angkor text.

Ideas Overview

Main idea

The main idea of a text is what it is primarily focusing on, its topic or subject matter. Students can identify the main idea in a whole text or part of a text by asking 'What is this text mostly about?' The theme is often related to the main idea of a text because it is the underlying message or important concept the author wants to convey through the subject matter. Students can identify the theme by asking 'What messages/ideas are being communicated in this text?'

Ideas and themes in students' writing may include:

- Humanity – challenges, mystery, naivety, knowingness, aversion, rage
- Relationships, responsibilities, and seeking knowledge about self or others (e.g. matched and mismatched love, parent/child relationships, experiences such as manhood)
- Elements of popular culture or topical events and issues
- Heroic quests
- Good versus evil
- Truth versus deception
- Strength versus weakness (physical and psychological)
- Overcoming odds and extreme struggles

Skill Focus: Building description

STAGES 1–2

Strategy

Using categories to develop descriptions




Analysing objects and characters from familiar texts

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Provide categories for ideas about a character:

Appearance	
Feelings	
Personality	

Teacher models description of a character from a shared story using the categories in the table.

Guided

(The following descriptor list was referenced from Text types Intensive English: Working with Text types at Levels 2 and 3 to High school DET Multi Cultural Programs Unit 2007)

http://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/multicultural/resources/index.htm#ESL_education

Object description categories:

- number
- size
- shape
- colour
- name of object
- texture
- function
- material
- movement
- aesthetics

K–6 Outcomes

WS1.9: Writes elementary literary texts and elementary descriptions of familiar people and places

WS2.9: Writes fuller descriptions of people, places animals and things

WS3.1.3: Discusses how language choices engage the reader

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 3



Item Descriptor

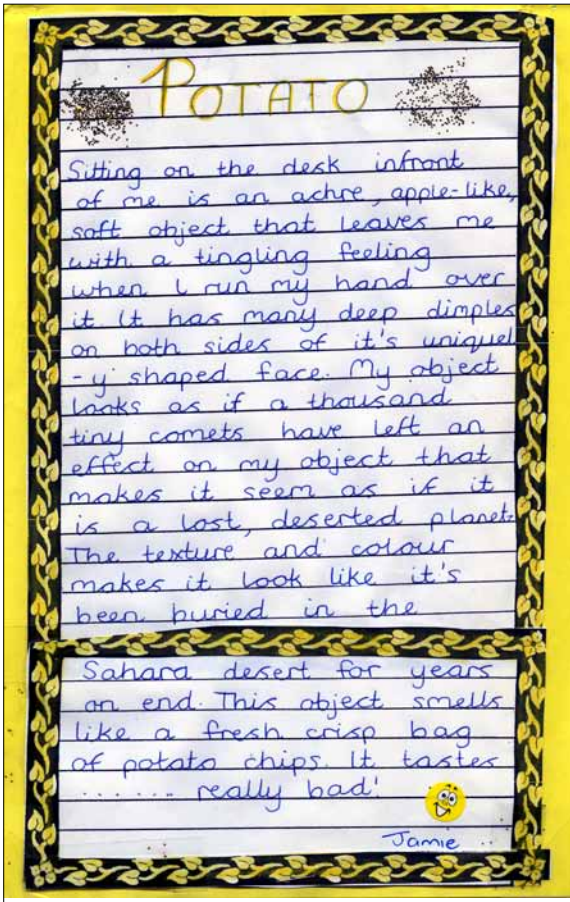
The creation, selection and crafting of ideas for a narrative

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to clarify meaning.

Provide three objects for the students to view. Using the list above, describe one of the items. The students write down the object that you are describing and record the descriptors that you have used.

Students analyse a passage on the description of a potato on an OHT, thinking about the inclusion of the elements that are described such as physical appearance, texture and smell.



Note: the sample includes mistakes

As a class joint construction, students use the categories provided (or similar) to describe an object such as a feather, a piece of fruit or an unusual unknown object such as a tool or computer part.

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Playing 'twenty questions'

As a finisher, students are asked to write at least two questions about a hidden object using the matrix as a guide.

Students write at least three questions asking about the object, using the correct punctuation such as:

What colour is it?

What material is it made out of?

What sound does it make?

What is its purpose?

Who would use the object?

Where could we find the object?

Students then put their questions in their pocket. In a circle on the floor, students take turns at asking their question to the ring master (the ring master is the only one who knows the object).

A student tallies the number of questions being asked. After twenty questions the class can guess what the object is hidden under the bag (briefcase, hat, box etc.).

Independent

Students illustrate a character or object from a chosen book. They label the character or object and then write a description.



Interpretive Comprehension – Connecting ideas:

Overview

Interpretive meaning is often hidden throughout a text. Answering questions in this area requires the use of inference, and an understanding of the relationships between events and characters or causes and consequences. Readers need to link related pieces of information to fully understand the text. Sometimes these relationships can be explicitly stated and information is often found near causal words such as *because*, *so* and *therefore*. In other cases, information may need to be linked from sentence to sentence, across paragraphs or chapters, and is often referred to as information that is given ‘between the lines’.

Connecting Literal Information

If no interpretation is required to locate the information, students are employing literal comprehension skills. Where students need to connect information that is directly stated in the text and there needs to be an understanding that particular information belongs together, this is classed as an interpretive question.

Identifying key words, skim reading and scanning will help students to locate and connect information efficiently.

Key words

Key words are the content words that carry the most meaning in a text. Students can underline or highlight the key words.

Skimming

Skimming is reading quickly through a text to get the gist or main idea. Students can skim read by looking at headings and sub-headings, pictures, diagrams, captions, any italicised or bold words, and the first and last paragraphs of the text.

Scanning

Scanning is reading to locate particular elements or specific details in a text, such as key concepts, names, dates or certain information in answer to a question. Students can scan by looking through the text to locate key words to find the specific information quickly.

Connecting ideas using text and image

Readers may need to interpret meaning and connect ideas using visual images in:

- diagrams
- maps
- illustrations, cartoons
- captions.

Skill Focus: Connecting ideas in texts

STAGES 2–3

Deconstructing vocabulary in texts to:

- expand on the background knowledge (exploring knowledge about the topic, the type of text, the structure the ideas will be organised into, and what information we are likely to find)
- explain inferences and identify linking words (connectives and conjunctions, pronoun reference)
- discuss word meaning and inference (linking words that have similar meanings to interpret ideas and build imagery)
- explain inferences based on the use of the word (word meanings can change depending on the type of text, the order it appears in the sentence and the context in which it is used).

Skimming and scanning texts prior to reading assists students to:

- identify the purpose and structure of the text
- identify where they may find relevant information and how it links together.

Use the following teaching sheet to assist students to skim and scan a text before reading.

Identifying types of texts: getting ready to read

We can skim and scan the text to get us ready for the information we are about to read. This helps us to identify the type of text we are going to read and where we will find information.

What to look for before reading a short text

Skimming and scanning

We can look at:

- the title
- any cartoons, photos or illustrations
- maps, diagrams or charts, mostly found in non fiction texts
- bold, italic, large or separated print for non fiction texts
- the first and last sentence
- the first and last paragraph

Think about what you already know about the topic.

What is the purpose of the text and how will this influence the way the words are written?

What to look for before reading a longer text

- the title
- illustrations, cover page
- table of contents, chapter titles, blurbs on the dust cover
- introduction or notes
- any brief summaries at the beginning of each chapter
- any vocabulary or key word lists

Think about what you already know about the topic and which key learning area you have been asked to read it for.

K–6 Outcomes

- RS2.5 Students interpret texts with attention to main ideas and supporting details
- RS2.6 Students can locate and interpret ideas in texts
- RS2.7 Students infer the purpose of the text
- RS3.6 Students use several strategies for locating information and connecting ideas
- RS3.7 Students identify the main purpose of a text

Item & Stimulus

Reading

Year 3 Q: 4, 7, 9, 17, 18, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28 and 32

Year 5 Q: 2, 4, 5, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 26, 28, 29, 31, 32 and 33

Year 7 Q: 2, 4, 5, 18, 19 and 36

Item Descriptor

Students connect and infer meaning from texts.

Statements of Learning for English

When students interpret texts they have the opportunity to relate their interpretations of texts to their own experiences and to link ideas by drawing on their knowledge of texts and language use.

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Use the teaching sheet below to assist students.

Getting ready to read

Before you begin to read, you can skim and scan the text to identify:

- What type of text you are reading – STRUCTURE OF THE TEXT
- Why you are reading the text – YOUR PURPOSE
- What you think the text will be about – DRAW ON YOUR BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE TOPIC

By identifying your PURPOSE and TYPE OF TEXT you will be able to:

- Know what type of reading you will need to use to get the information – such as skimming, scanning or close reading. Sometimes we can use one type of reading style and other times we may combine them to gain meaning from the text.
- Know the structure of the text, as this will help you to know the order or way the words will be organised, the type of grammar and the types of key words that you can expect to find.
- Know where you are most likely to find the information you need. For instance, if you are looking for the resolution in a narrative you are most likely to find it towards the end of the text but if you are looking for the place that the events occurred you are more likely to find it in the orientation in the beginning of the page (or paragraph) or at the beginning of the chapter for longer texts.

The following example of a text orientation using *The Iron Man* by Ted Hughes addresses the first chapter of the text.

Teachers can continue to work through the text in a similar manner before reading each chapter.

Model your summary by making comments like:

This story is called 'The Iron Man' and is written by Ted Hughes.

It is the story of a huge metal robot, taller than a house that crashes to Earth.

I think this story has a human issue. In this book the Iron Man might act like a human but be treated like a monster.

Guided

Provide a copy of the passage below.

Students highlight the key words.

Chapter 1: *The Coming of the Iron Man*

The Iron Man came to the top of the cliff.

How far had he walked? Nobody knows.

Where had he come from? Nobody knows.

How was he made? Nobody knows.

Taller than a house, the Iron Man stood at the top of the cliff, on the very brink, in the darkness.

The wind sang through his iron fingers. His great iron head, shaped like a dustbin, but as big as a bedroom, slowly turned to the right, slowly turned to the left. His iron ears turned, this way, that way. He was hearing the sea. His eyes like headlights glowed white, then red, then infrared, searching the sea. Never before had the Iron Man seen the sea.

He swayed in the strong wind that pressed against his back. He swayed forward, on the brink of the high cliff.

And his right foot, his enormous iron right foot, lifted – up, out, into space, and the Iron Man stepped forward, off the cliff, into nothingness.

CRRRAAAASSSSSH!

pp. 1–2

Discuss these pages with the students to help them understand how to interpret what is happening. An example of a deconstruction follows.

What you could say:

The first chapter in 'The Iron Man' begins with Ted Hughes giving a description of the main character, the Iron Man. Initially we find out that the Iron Man is taller than a house as he stands on the very brink of a cliff. The word brink means the very edge. You can see this clearly in the illustration, where he is as close as he can get to the edge of the cliff. We are immediately concerned that this incredibly tall character is in danger of falling. The author then builds a strong image of the Iron Man and the environment in which he has found himself. Ted Hughes tells us that the wind sang through his iron fingers. This lets us know that the wind is blowing strongly enough to make a whistling noise as it passes through the Iron Man's fingers. Next the author gives us a more detailed description of the Iron Man's head by using a simile that compares both its shape to a dustbin and its size to a bedroom. So we imagine his head to be shaped like one of our classroom wastepaper bins, but as big as a bedroom. We also find out about the Iron Man's ears and eyes. He turns his iron ears, this way, that way, hearing the sea for the first time. He uses his eyes, which are like headlights to search the sea. Ted Hughes tells us that the Iron Man's eyes changed colour from white to red, then infra-red. This would probably have been because the Iron Man couldn't see in the darkness with normal vision. He needed infra-red, a light that allows you see into darkness. The Iron Man seems to be a fairly clever and sophisticated robot. So, here is the Iron Man, who has never seen the sea before or stood on a cliff. He probably does not know what will happen if he steps forward. The author tells us that he swayed in the strong wind that pressed against his back. This means that the wind was coming from behind him. As a result of this strong wind and the Iron Man's lack of understanding about the danger he is in, standing of the brink of a high cliff, he steps out into nothingness and falls over the cliff. 'CRRRAAAASSSSSH!'

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Identify facts and link the ideas from the text.

What the text tells us	What we can assume What we learn
The Iron Man is taller than a house as he stands on the very brink of a cliff.	The word brink refers to the very edge. You can see this clearly in the illustration, where he is as close as he can get to the edge of the cliff. We are immediately concerned that this incredibly tall character is in danger of falling.
He uses his eyes, which are like headlamps and they change colour from white to red, then infra-red.	This would probably have been because the Iron Man couldn't see in the darkness with normal vision. He needed infra-red, a light that allows you see into darkness. The pronouns 'he' and 'his' are used so the Iron Man is male. The word 'man' is used so it means he is grown up – an adult robot.
He swayed in the strong wind (cause)	This means that the wind was coming from behind him. As a result of this strong wind and the Iron Man's lack of understanding about the danger he is in, standing of the brink of a high cliff, he steps out into nothingness. (effect)
The wind sang	The wind is strong and he is close to the edge. He might fall. He may break.

Continue through the text, providing a literate reading for the students, locating information, connecting information and making the inferences clear. One way to do this is to use the phrase:

We know this because ... or the author used these words because ... Then articulate how you made the inference or connected information.

Read the text

Read the entire chapter or as far as you have gone in your text orientation. With such a dense text, chapters may have to be treated in parts. As the teacher reads, the students will be connecting the text to the background knowledge provided and they will be making the inferences that were made explicit in the text orientation. Students follow on their copy of the text as it is being read to them.

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

It is important to build the knowledge students will need to understand the story. It shouldn't be assumed that students are familiar with the nouns in the story, such as *iron*, or what beaches look like. Key words need to be researched as part of the balanced reading program.

The following proforma can be used to identify key words and ideas in chapters for students to refer to. This can be developed collaboratively with the class as you read the book, or developed prior to student exposure so that it acts as a reference.

Students can cluster vocabulary and link ideas from the summary.

Chapter title tells me that the chapter may be about	Key words for the chapter	Related words or words that link the ideas	Inference or connection

Ask:

By looking at the text, scanning the title, cover, layout and words, what do you think the purpose of this text is?

How will this guide the way the information is written and set out?

What are we likely to find in the text?

The following is a breakdown of *The Iron Man* by Ted Hughes

Chapter title tells me that the chapter may be about	Key words for the chapter	Related words or words that link the ideas	Inference or connection
one	robots cliff	iron, metal, dustbin, robotic water, the sea, on the edge, brink	looks like a cylinder head He had never seen the sea, confusion, not aware of dangers, nothingness
two	machinery, metal objects	bulldozers, earthmovers, pushers, wire, metal, scrap metal,	
three	picnics, junkyards, earthquakes	food, people, outside, blankets, rubbish	
four	space Geography	stars, rockets. astronomer, telescopes, the sun Gulf of Carpentaria, Europe, Asia	The robot comes from space. His world is very different from Earth. maps or globe for locating Gulf of Carpentaria, Europe, Asia
five	engineers, airline, spheres, precious stones	iron girder, fuel, oil, ships	What happens to iron when heated – reference to treacle (p.56)

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Students bring in any toy robots they have from home.

What do we know about robots?

Who has brought in a toy robot for us to look at?

What do we notice that is the same with all the robots?

Who has seen movies about robots?

Write the vocabulary that the students volunteer and group the words into categories such as *looks like, actions, problems, origin*.

List the movies and the main characters from the movies that the students discuss.

View the clip:

<http://australianscreen.com.au/titles/beyond-tomorrow-episode-39/clip1/> which is about ASIMO

Exploring higher-order thinking (QTF)

Ask probing questions about the way ASIMO has advanced our ideas about robots, such as:

This film clip was an information report. How is this different from a narrative? How would this change where the information could be located in the text? If we were to read about a robot what types of ideas may we find? What problems?

Skill Focus: Inferring Meaning

STAGES 2–3

Making inferences about information implicit in the text

Preparing students to engage in learning

This task requires students to infer meanings drawn from information presented in different parts of the text and to draw on prior knowledge and understandings. Firstly, orientate students to the text, ensuring familiarity and understandings related to the contexts referred to and selected language choices of the author. The following strategy allows low-level readers to access complex texts.

Strategy One

Guided

Making inferences

Demonstrate the three levels of understanding to prepare students for completion of a three level reading guide activity: Literal, Inferential and Evaluative.

Draw three columns on the board to match the three levels above and exemplify each level with a sentence from, or related to, a known text (argument/exposition).

Why recycle?

Recycling protects the environment. If plastic bottles, cans, paper and glass are recycled they will not litter and pollute the environment.

Recycling saves energy. The energy needed to make new aluminium from recycled aluminium is only about 10% of that required to make aluminium from bauxite in the ground.

Identify three other examples together with the students and record the three levels of understanding that can be obtained from the text.

Author said (literal)	Author meant (inferential)	Author would agree (evaluative)
Recycling saves energy.	Rubbish is bad for the environment.	Recycling is a good thing.

Independent

Levels of understanding in reading

Ask students in pairs to identify literal and inferential information and make evaluative statements about another text using the same framework as above.

Choose literal sentences from a text and write them on sentence strips. Also write sentence strips about information that can be inferred from the text or that gives an opinion or relates the knowledge gained to another situation. Ask students in pairs to sort the sentence strips into three groups – literal, inferential or evaluative/applied.

Ask students to share, justify and discuss their decisions with their peers and the teacher.

K–6 Outcomes

RS2.5 Reads independently a wide range of texts on increasingly difficult topics and justifies own interpretation of ideas, information and events.

RS35 Reads independently an extensive range of texts with increasing content demands and responds to themes and issues.

Item & Stimulus

Reading
Year 3 Q: 22 and 35
Year 5 Q: 3, 10, 19, 22, 23 and 24
Year 7 Q: 3, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16 and 17

Item Descriptor

Students connect and infer meaning from texts.

Statements of Learning for English

When students interpret texts they have the opportunity to infer characters qualities, motives and actions. (p. 21)

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to clarify meaning. They know that figurative language expresses images of settings and characters. (p. 21)

Other links

[http://www.greece.k12.ny.us/instruction/ela/6-12/Reading/Reading Strategies/reading strategies index.htm](http://www.greece.k12.ny.us/instruction/ela/6-12/Reading/Reading%20Strategies/reading%20strategies%20index.htm)

Strategy Two

Modelled

Modelling how to infer information that is implied but not stated in a text

Select a written text that requires students to make inferences about possible meanings, for example

Bobs the Dingo on page 189 of *School Magazine, Blast Off*, July, 2002.

Devise a question that requires students to make inferences, eg Where did the girl take Bobs, the dingo pup? List students' responses using a Multiple Interpretation Grid (MIG) and encourage students to justify their decisions with evidence from the text or their own experience.

Bobs, the dingo pup, was still lying on the bank, exhausted, when the sun came up and a big girl with red hair bent over him.

"Well, well," she said. "You look as if you've been through a washing machine. Where have you come from? What am I going to do with you?"

As she bent down and picked him up Bobs bared his teeth; but he was too tired and frightened to bite anyone. The girl carried him to a big two-storey house on the edge of town. There, in a fenced-in yard, were a good many wire enclosures. In one there was a kangaroo with a bandaged leg. Dogs and cats looked out from other pens and there was a big aviary with squawking parrots and budgerigars.

Guided

Multiple Interpretation Grid (MIG)		
Information the author has told us	We think it could be ...	After talking about it, we think it most probably is ... because ... (justify your decision)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• big two-storey house• good many wire enclosures• fenced-in yard• big aviary• pens• kangaroo with a bandaged leg• dogs and cats• parrots and budgerigars	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• an animal hospital/vet• a rich person's house• a zoo• a pound• RSPCA• WIRES	

Independent

Using the Jigsaw grouping strategy, begin by organising students into groups of four. The goal for each group is to discuss possible inferences and then to decide on the most plausible. Encourage students to justify their choices by referring back to the text or their own experiences. Then combine two groups for sharing and further discussion. Finally, bring all students together as a class and ask students to share strategies they used to confirm their predictions. Record the final decision in the last box on the MIG. Finally, reread the text with the class and read on to validate predictions.

Skill Focus: Connecting ideas using text and images

STAGES 2–3

Strategy

Deconstructing text before reading to connect ideas shown in the layout.

Reminding students that factual texts often include headings and diagrams as organisers. The layout of a text helps the reader by making the text easily accessible.

Activities to support the strategy

Using a profile of a type of factual text that provides short and succinct facts, discuss how the diagram incorporates information.

Amphibians

There are 4400 living species of amphibians. Frogs, toads, newts and salamanders are all amphibians. Many live mainly on land, but most spend at least some of their lives in water.

The largest amphibian, the Chinese giant salamander, is 1.8m long.

Frogs and salamanders are able to breathe through their damp skins to a certain extent, both in the water and on the land, but toads rely largely on their lungs and cannot remain underwater for long. Toads and frogs are similar in many ways, although toads usually have rougher, drier skins and may waddle rather than hop as frogs do.

Some toads produce spawn in strings like necklaces, rather than the mass of eggs laid by frogs.

Most amphibians lay their eggs in water. Frogs' eggs are called spawn. The eggs are protected from predators by a thick layer of jelly. A tadpole develops inside each egg. When it hatches, it is able to swim using its long tail, and it breathes through gills. As a tadpole grows, first hind legs then forelegs begin to form. Lungs develop, and the young frog is able to begin to breathe with its head above water. Gradually, the tail shortens until the young frog resembles its adult parents.

Adult frogs often return to the pond in which they are hatched.

Frog spawn hatches into larvae called tadpoles after about a week.

At first tadpoles feed on algae and breathe through feathery gills.

By about 10 weeks the young frog has legs and lungs.

4

K–6 Outcomes

RS2.6 Students skim a text for overall messages using headings, sub-headings, layout and graphics

RS3.6 Students use several strategies for locating information and connecting ideas

Item & Stimulus

Reading

Year 3 Q: 23

Year 5 Q: 11, 28, 29, 30

Year 7 Q: 2, 19, 22, 36

Item Descriptor

Students connect and infer meaning from texts.

Statements of Learning for English

When students interpret texts they have the opportunity to relate their interpretations of texts to their own experiences and to link ideas by drawing on their knowledge of texts and language use.

Modelled

The teacher models how to use diagrams to assist understanding of texts by:

- highlighting key words in the text and matching them to information shown in the diagram using the same colour
- matching vocabulary that links ideas from the words in the diagram to the words in the text
- modelling how to skim read the text
- thinking aloud the strategies of how you decide on the purpose and meaning of the text.

Amphibians

There are 4400 living species of amphibians. Frogs, toads, newts and salamanders are all amphibians. Many live mainly on land, but most spend at least some of their lives in water.

The largest amphibian, the Chinese giant salamander, is 1.8m long.

Frogs and salamanders are able to breathe through their damp skins to a certain extent, both in the water and on the land, but toads rely largely on their lungs and cannot remain underwater for long. Toads and frogs are similar in many ways, although toads usually have rougher, drier skins and may waddle rather than hop as frogs do.

Some toads produce spawn in strings like necklaces, rather than the mass of eggs laid by frogs.

Most amphibians lay their eggs in water. Frogs' eggs are called spawn. The eggs are protected from predators by a thick layer of jelly. A tadpole develops inside each egg. When it hatches, it is able to swim using its long tail, and it breathes through gills. As a tadpole grows, first hind legs then forelegs begin to form. Lungs develop, and the young frog is able to begin to breathe with its head above water. Gradually, the tail shortens until the young frog resembles its adult parents.

Adult frogs often return to the pond in which they are hatched.

Frog spawn hatches into larvae called tadpoles after about a week.

At first tadpoles feed on algae and breathe through feathery gills.

By about 10 weeks the young frog has legs and lungs.

tail shrinks

toad's

frog's

4

Guided

Locate a variety of texts that use headings as organisers, e.g. internet profiles on famous people.

Enlarge the example *What is in tobacco smoke?* provided below as a stimulus for discussion.

Also refer to Skimming and Scanning, on page 153 of *Programming and Strategies Handbook in Follow-up to BST*, available at <http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/studentsupport/programs/lrngdifficulty.php>

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Help students develop the skill of skimming as an effective reading strategy by asking probing questions such as:

How will I be able to get an idea about the text in a few minutes?

What do I need to do to skim the text?

How is this different from scanning?

How do the illustrations add information to the text?

What is in tobacco smoke?

These are the main substances:

1. Nicotine

- Nicotine is the drug in tobacco.
- Nicotine acts on the brain 7.5 seconds after it is inhaled.
- Nicotine is absorbed and distributed to other body organs very quickly.

2. Tar

- One packet of cigarettes per day means a smoker inhales more than half a cup of tar per year.
- The benefits from smoking low tar cigarettes are limited.

3. Carbon Monoxide

- Carbon monoxide is odourless, colourless and a very toxic gas.
- It is found in car exhaust fumes and in smoke from fires.
- Carbon monoxide enters the blood more easily than oxygen.

Provide a copy of the text to each student.

Skim read the text by reading the main heading and sub-headings that are in bold. Cover the text under each heading and ask students to predict information that will most likely appear under each heading.

Check predictions by revealing and reading the text.

Independent

Access http://www.tobaccofacts.org/tob_truth/whatsinsmoke.html

Ask students to record what information they find from the illustrations in point form, and then write a summary of the facts in one or two complex sentences.

Enlarge the illustration or create an OHT to discuss the use of labels and illustrations, titles, sub-headings, bold and italics to connect ideas within the main text.

Guided

Exploring higher-order thinking (QTF)

Discuss:

What information did you find on the website?

What are the advantages to using illustrations with text?

What else is used with illustrations to assist you to locate information?



Skill Focus: Locating ideas

STAGE 3–4

Strategy

Deconstructing texts using text mapping assists students to comprehend information.

A text map is a way of summarising a text by sections to show what information is included in each section. It is a useful way to identify the main purpose of a text.

Using word webs assists students to connect ideas in texts

A word web graphically summarises related concepts.

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Ask small groups of students to summarise the main point of each paragraph in the 2008 Year 9 NAPLAN reading stimulus article called *Endemism*. For example:

Paragraph number	Main point
1	defines endemism and gives examples in Australia
2	describes why Australia has many unique species
3	describes how new species evolve through physical separation
4	defines isolating mechanisms
5	describes examples of endemism within a continent

Lead a discussion about how information in the text links together. For example, paragraphs 1 and 2 link because they both describe endemism in Australia; paragraphs 3 and 4 link as paragraph 3 describes endemism being caused by separation of species, and paragraph 4 describes the causes of separation. Paragraph 5 describes how endemism can occur over small or large spaces.

Demonstrate how to develop a word web, referring to the text map above, and the original article. An example of a word web for *Endemism* follows. The word web supports students to develop understanding of the text content, and how it links together. The arrows indicate links between ideas and information, and can represent cause and effect. An example of a diagram using word webbing follows.

K–6 Outcome

RS3.6 Students use several strategies for finding information in texts

KLA Outcome

Science 4.10 Students identify factors affecting the survival of organisms in an ecosystem

Item & Stimulus

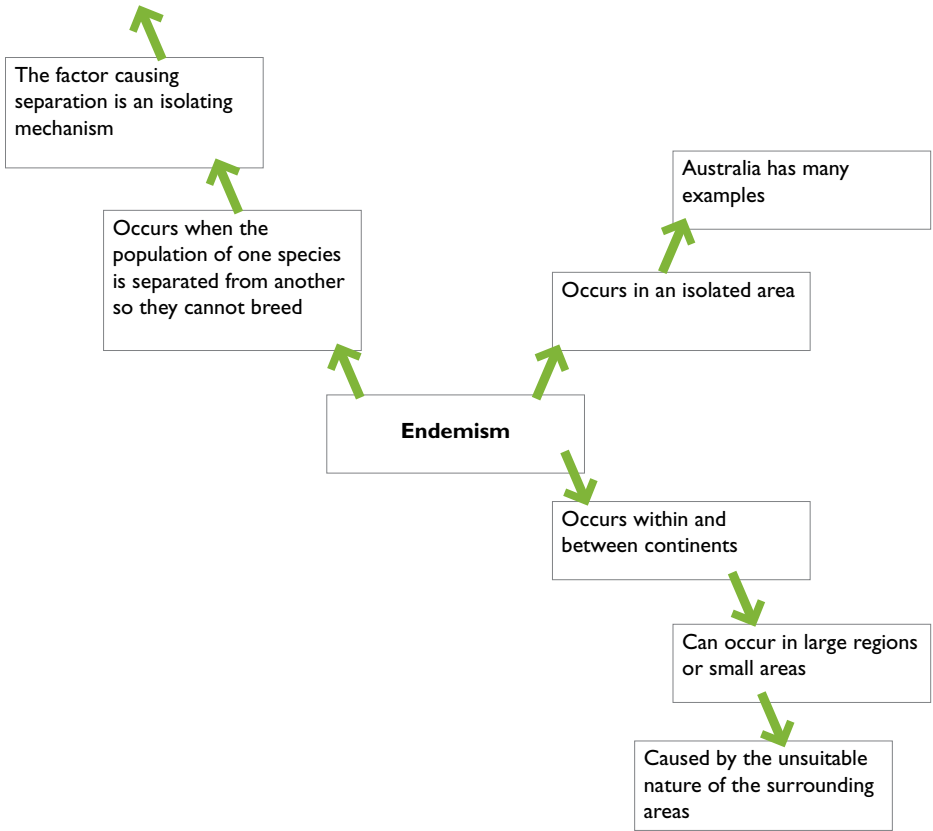
Reading
Year 7 Q: 19, 20, 21 and 22

Item Descriptor

Students connect ideas in a variety of texts.

Statements of Learning for English

When students use texts they have the opportunity to identify and evaluate the evidence of information to support main ideas and connect information.



Skill Focus: Students can analyse, interpret and use images

STAGE 4

Strategy

Using flow charts to analyse images

Diagrams are often used in science to depict processes. Once the process is understood, a diagram can provide a useful summary. However, a diagram can be very confusing if the process has not been understood. Using a scaffold to assist students to analyse images is an effective tool to aid comprehension.

Diagram name	
Diagram feature, e.g. arrow	Purpose of feature, e.g. to show development of time

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Provide a wide variety of visual texts for students to view and identify the elements included in each example.

Record a list of features, e.g. title, images, captions, labels, key, arrows etc. Consider the purposes of the diagrams, which could include showing a process (movements of Earth producing the seasons); showing data (graphs); showing main features (labelled diagram, photograph) etc. Discuss how the purpose determines the most effective type of diagram.

Select one visual text to work through with students to consider features included and the purpose of each feature. Possible responses to the image from *Endemism* in the 2008 Year 9 NAPLAN Reading Test are included below.

- Italicised text provides information about the content of the diagram, and also details about how to 'read' some colours and shapes on the diagram.
- Labels to 'name' each map.
- Three maps showing changes to the same area.
- Arrow with labels indicating time periods, to show development over time.
- Key indicating meaning of colours used on map.

KLA Outcomes

Science 4.16a extracts information from column graphs, histograms, divided bar and sector graphs, line graphs, composite graphs, flow diagrams, other texts and visual resources

Science 5.8.3 the theory of evolution and natural selection

English 4.1.17 Students learn about features of texts that can be represented in graphical form to enable deeper understanding of meaning

English 4.2.15: Students learn about the process of representation including the use of symbols and images

Item & Stimulus

Reading
Year 7 Q: 31, 32, 34
Year 9 Q: 1, 3, 15, 16, 17, 31

Item Descriptor

Students connect ideas in texts and diagrams.

Statements of Learning for English

When students analyse texts they have the opportunity to analyse how an issue is presented and discuss implications and possible impacts.

After identifying the features and their purpose, discuss what information is provided in the diagram, e.g. showing how different species evolve from one species into two different species.

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Distribute diagrams to pairs or small groups of students and ask them to develop a list of features from their diagram, together with the purpose of the feature. The table below supports students to organise their information.

Consider options to provide support as needed for students to complete the task, including the teacher working with students; students grouped to include an ability range; groups completing only the features column of the table below and completing the purpose column with teacher support; completing the purpose column for students and asking them to identify the feature which achieves the purpose.

Diagram name: <i>Endemism</i>	
Diagram feature	Purpose of feature
<i>arrow</i>	<i>to show the development of time</i>
<i>illustration</i>	<i>to show the continent</i>
<i>colour</i>	<i>to show the range of species</i>
<i>titles</i>	<i>to label the maps</i>
<i>numbers</i>	<i>to show time</i>

Skill Focus: Locating information from a number of places in a text

STAGES 4–5

Strategy

Using a *dictagloss* is a technique that assists students to use language in order to learn. The steps in using a dictagloss are outlined below.

- A short text is read to students at normal speed, while they listen.
- The text is read again and the students take note of key words and phrases.
- Working in small groups, students pool their notes and attempt to reconstruct a version of the text from their shared notes and understandings. The student version should contain the main ideas of the text.
- Some of the versions which the groups constructed are discussed and students are asked to adjust their own text in the light of the discussion.
- Students are told that it is not necessary to come up with a word-perfect copy of the script. Rather the understanding of the passage is the key to this activity.

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

When locating historical information in any source, key points may be located throughout a text (written or other mode). In order to put together the full story or picture, readers may need to collect information about a topic all through a text.

Students will be completing a modified *dictagloss* activity to listen for information about one aspect of a topic. It may be necessary to outline the process and practise with an easy example before beginning the focus text.

Guided

Read through *Water warning in Angkor ruins* while students listen.

Explain that masonry structures are constructions made of stone. Read through the text again, and ask students to take notes **ONLY** about details of the two masonry structures. Explain that there will be details about other things in the text that they do not need to record.

Students work in small groups and pool their notes to create approximately six dot points that outline key information about the two masonry structures.

Discuss some versions created by students, ensuring that coverage of key information is included. Students may need to adjust their own versions as discussion occurs.

Discuss how the activity allows students to focus on key information, according to need.

KLA Outcome

History 4.8 Students locate, select and organise relevant information from a number of sources, including ICT, to conduct basic historical research.

Item Descriptor

Students connect ideas in texts.

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to clarify meaning.

Skill Focus: Connecting information from a number of places in a text

STAGES 3–4

Strategies

Diagramming is a technique which presents a way of responding to text; it can be used to support students' understanding of complex connections and ideas. It can be useful to record information on timelines, or use flow charts to show the sequence of events.

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Often historical information includes explanations about why things occurred or a sequence of events that led to a major event.

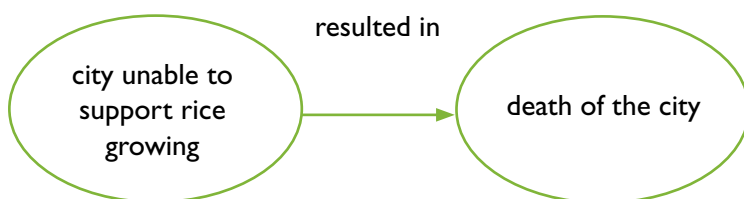
A flow chart can be a useful way to represent the connections between events and an outcome.

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Display the final three paragraphs from *Water warning in Angkor ruins* or provide copies for student reference. Tell students these final paragraphs describe Professor Fletcher's theory about the sequence of events that led to the downfall of Angkor Wat, which had been a highly successful city for six centuries.

Read the first paragraph (*But Professor Fletcher's group ...*) and demonstrate how to record as a simple flow chart:



The following two paragraphs explain these events in more detail: That happened because ...

Continue demonstrating how to complete the more detailed sequence of events, encouraging students to contribute to the flow chart.



KLA Outcome

History 4.8 Students locate, select and organise relevant information from a number of sources, including ICT, to conduct basic historical research.

Item & Stimulus

Reading
Year 3 Q: 17, 21, 24
Year 5 Q: 9, 12

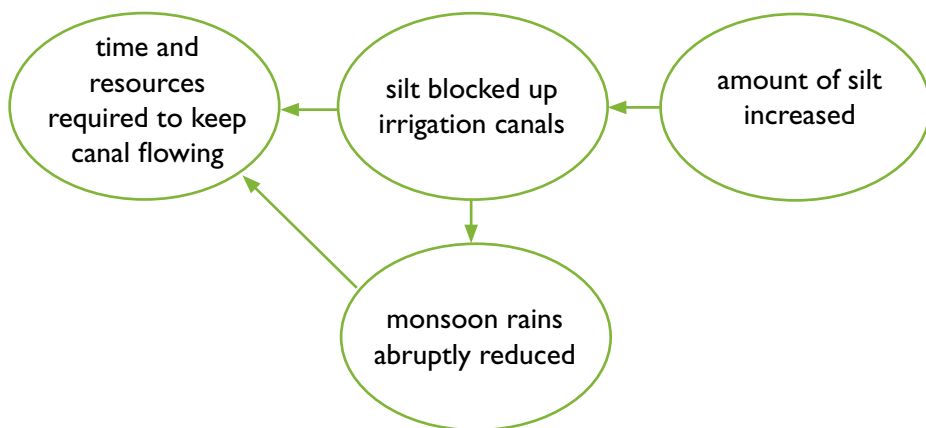
Item Descriptor

Students connect ideas linked by cause and effect

Statement of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to clarify meaning.

The flow chart clearly demonstrates the sequence of events Professor Fletcher proposes as the reason why the Kymer kingdom failed.



Skill Focus: Identifying relevant information in a text and connecting information with title

STAGES 4–5

Strategy

Deconstructing components of titles in texts assists students to predict the ‘angle’ on topics.

Activity to support the strategy

Modelled

The title of a text often provides information about an author’s intention and thinking about a topic. It can also provide an ‘angle’ on the topic, or a way of introducing the topic to interest readers.

Guided

Water warning in Angkor ruins provides information about a current research project in Cambodia. The title indicates there is something to learn – *water warning* – from what is being discovered in the Angkor ruins. Read the text while students follow, clarifying unfamiliar words or concepts as you read.

Ask students to read through the text with a partner, highlighting any section that gives information about water warnings. Suggested sections could be:

- ... *Khmer kingdom vanished because of over-building, environmental damage and climate change ...*
- ... *There are considerable implications for our understanding of our own water management systems ...*
- *But Professor Fletcher’s group ... filled the great lake east of Angkor.*

Considering these highlighted sections, discuss what could be the warnings to be heeded from this civilisation. Possible responses could be:

- avoiding rapid expansion
- building infrastructure to cope with projected population growth
- developing effective water management systems to keep water flowing

KLA Outcome

History 4.8 Students locate, select and organise relevant information from a number of sources, including ICT, to conduct basic historical research.

Item Descriptor

Students identify main idea in texts.

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to clarify meaning.

Interpretive Comprehension – Vocabulary

Overview

Interpretive meaning is often hidden throughout the text and requires the use of inference and understanding the relationship between events and characters or causes and consequences. Readers need to link like information to fully understand the text. Sometimes these relationships can be stated and are often found near causal words such as *because*, *so* and *therefore*. Information may need to be linked from sentence to sentence, across paragraphs or chapters, and is often referred to as information that is given ‘between the lines’.

Connecting Literal Information

To answer more complex questions, students may need to connect literal ideas in sentences by searching for information in text, illustrations or graphs. If no interpretation is required to locate the information, students are employing literal comprehension skills. Where students need to connect information that is directly stated in the text and there needs to be an understanding that particular information belongs together, this is classed as an interpretive question.

Identifying key words, skim reading and scanning will help students to locate and connect information efficiently.

Key words

Key words are the content words that carry the most meaning in a text. Students can underline or highlight the key words.

Skimming

Skimming is reading quickly through a text to get the gist or main idea. Students can skim read by looking at headings and sub-headings, pictures, diagrams, captions, any italicised or bold words, and the first and last paragraphs of the text.

Scanning

Scanning is reading to locate particular elements or specific details in a text, such as key concepts, names, dates or certain information in answer to a question. Students can scan by looking through the text to locate key words to find the specific information quickly.

Vocabulary – Interpretive

Interpreting information often requires readers to understand the vocabulary in the text. They may need to link words that have similar meaning or ideas, understand words that link ideas and synthesise ideas using word meanings to assist analysis of texts. Information may need to be linked from sentence to sentence or across paragraphs and is often referred to as information that is given ‘between the lines’.

Skill Focus: Students use self-checking to ensure understanding of word meaning of texts

STAGE 2

Strategy

Developing word meaning using a checklist helps students become aware of when they do and do not understand the meaning of words. This is an important self-monitoring habit, which directly affects comprehension. Creating word meaning checklists is an instructional technique teachers can use not only to help students' understanding of specific terms, but more importantly to teach an essential strategy to students, that of monitoring that they are making sense of what they read.

A word meaning checklist proforma like the example below provides a way students can list words from a text then choose their present level of understanding of each word. The word lists can be:

- prepared by the teacher before the text is read
- developed by the student as the text is read for the first time

An example of a word meaning checklist:

Do I know what the word means?				
Topic: _____			Student: _____	
Word	I know the meaning of the word.	I have heard or read the word before but I am not sure what it means.	I do not know what the word means.	The word means ...

K-6 Outcome
 RS 2.6 Students draw on experiences to work out the meaning of words

Item & Stimulus
 Reading
 Year 3 Q: 22
 Year 5 Q: 3, 10, 29

Item Descriptor
 Students draw on experience or context to work out the meaning of unknown words/word meaning in an information report.

Statements of Learning for English
 Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to clarify meaning.

Do I know what the word means?

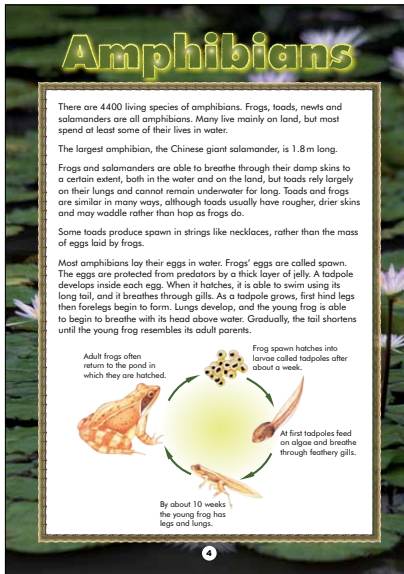
Topic: _____		Student: _____		
Word	I know the meaning of the word.	I have heard or read the word before but I am not sure what it means.	I do not know what the word means.	The word means ...
amphibians			✓	
frogs	✓			
toads	✓			
newts		✓		
salamander			✓	
lungs	✓			
similar			✓	

An example of an extension word list:

amphibians
frogs
toads
newts
salamander
lungs
similar
rougher
waddle
spawn
necklaces
mass
eggs
jelly
tadpole
hind legs
forelegs
shortens
resembles
hatched
algae
larvae
feathery
gills

Modelled

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)



1. The teacher tells the students that the activity word meaning checklist helps them to check whether they understand key words they are reading.
2. Enlarge a copy of the matrix onto A3. Enlarge a copy of the stimulus *Amphibians* for analysis and provide each students with a copy of the passage.
3. Read the first sentence of the chosen text to the class and model by thinking aloud, allowing students to see how good readers check word understanding.

For example, *There are 4400 living species of amphibians.*

The teacher says:

I've heard of the word *amphibians* but I don't think I could tell you what it means, so I don't think I could tick the first column. The second column means I think I know but I'm not sure so I'll use this column.

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Ask students to think about their understanding of this word and to put their tick under the heading that is best for them.

Guided

Ask a student to read the second sentence of the chosen text, and invite students to find any words that may not be well understood.

Encourage students to feel it's OK not to know a word already and to accept that everyone's answers will not be the same.

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Students complete the list. Students read the text independently and write a paragraph recording the main ideas from the text.

Guided

Exploring higher-order thinking (QTF)

Ask students probing questions about the task such as:

How does checking word meaning help us to understand what we read?

What strategies can we use to help us find out what words mean?

What effect did knowing what the words mean have when we had to write about the text we had read?

Skill Focus: Students interpret complex vocabulary

STAGES 2–3

Strategy

Using morphemic analysis is an instructional technique teachers can use not only to help students' understanding of specific terms, but more importantly, to teach students to actively look for word parts to work out word meanings.

Morphemes are the smallest units of language that contain meaning. The word *bat* makes sense in itself, but the addition of *s* makes *bats* either a plural noun, (*bats have been at the mulberry tree*) or a present tense verb with a singular subject (*he bats left-handed*). In the word *unhelpful*, the prefix *un* changes the meaning of helpful to its opposite. In a phrase like *environmental damage*, students may have an idea of what *environment* means, and could work out that *environmental* means to do with the environment, so that the phrase would mean *damage that comes from the environment, like flood or drought or erosion over time*.

Awareness of morphemes contributes to spelling as well as to vocabulary. It is easier to remember the spelling of *government* if students relate it to *govern*.

The major morphemes are affixes:

Prefixes often change the meaning of the base word (lock/unlock)

Suffixes often change the grammar of the base word (environment/environmental)

See more on morphemes in the context of spelling in [Programming and Strategies Handbook \(Secondary\)](#), pages 50–51; and [Programming and Strategies Handbook \(Years 3 and 5\)](#), pages 112–114.

Compound words

Help students to:

- see the words inside words
- use the parts to work out the meaning.

For example: *arm/chair; back/track; counter/balance; out/smart; wire/tap; work/man/like*

For a long list see: <http://www.rickwalton.com/curricul/compound.htm>

Root words and etymology

Help students to:

- identify root words commonly used in the Key Learning Areas for example: tele; phono; photo; digit; aero; bio; geo; mono; hydro; bi; tri; cent; ology.

See more on etymology in the context of spelling in [Programming and Strategies Handbook \(Secondary\)](#), pages 52–53; and [Programming and Strategies Handbook \(Years 3 and 5\)](#), pages 115–116.

Using proformas to help establish the skill of deconstructing complex vocabulary can be used when introducing a variety of texts.

K–6 Outcomes

RS 2.5 Students find information for specific purposes in factual texts

RS 3.6 Students interpret word meaning

Item & Stimulus

Reading
Year 5 Q: 3
Year 7 Q: 3

Item Descriptor

Students interpret the meaning of words in context to assist comprehension.

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to clarify meaning.

Links

<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/studentsupport/programs/lrngdifficulty.php>

<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/schoolsweb/studentsupport/programs/lrngdifficulties/pshandbook.pdf>

<http://www.rickwalton.com/curricul/compound.htm>

Modelled

The teacher uses the 'think aloud' strategy to model how to use morphemic analysis to work out the meaning of a word.

The teacher uses statements like:

This word is personalised. I know that if something is personal, it belongs to me. So personalised must be something that is made to suit the individual.

Guided

Following teacher modelling, treat another word, preferably a parallel one, using contributions from students, for example, a parallel word might be *expectation*.

Provide different examples of the morphemic element (a prefix that changes the meaning of the word, for example), and get students to think of and look for other examples.

Move on to paired work, until the students are confident with the process.

Teach morphemic analysis as a strategy for students to use and practise it in many contexts.

Ask students:

How can you use morphemes to help you work out the meaning of a word?

Practise the word by using it, saying it, spelling it.

Exploring deep knowledge and higher-order thinking (QTF)

Teacher asks probing questions like:

What is morphemic analysis and how can it help us to work out what words mean?

How would the process be helpful to use in other texts?

The teacher reminds students that morphemes are the smallest part of a word that carries meaning, giving at least two examples (prefix and suffix)

- *Unlock* has two morphemes. The base word *lock* and the prefix *un* which changes the meaning of *lock* into its opposite, like *undo* or *unhappy*.
- *Ended* has two morphemes. The base word *end*, and the suffix *ed* which indicates past tense.

Other examples are *blended* or *raided*.

- *Gladly* the root word is *glad*, and the suffix *ly* turns *glad* into an adverb, which could be used in a sentence like *He gladly took the fish to his grandmother*.

The teacher models by thinking aloud.

For example,

Word: *supposedly*

I can see this word in the second paragraph of the text. I want to work out what *supposedly* means so I can understand what it means in context.

I can think about how it makes sense in the story.

Why are these supposedly wonderful friends left alone to pine?

I can see there is the root word *suppose* in there. I already know what *suppose* means; I *suppose* you will help me do this means I think, but I'm not sure, that you will help me.

Supposedly also has two other morphemes; the *d* and the *ly*. I know that the *d*, or an *ed*, makes this word past tense. And I know that the *ly* makes words into adverbs.

So *supposedly* in *supposedly wonderful friends* means we think, but we are not sure, that the friends are wonderful, and we actually doubt that the owners are treating their dogs like friends.

Guided

The teacher assists students to complete the scaffold using key complex vocabulary from the passage as shown in the following example.

Using morphemic analysis to work out what words mean				
Text: <i>Pet dogs – what do you think?</i>				
Student: _____				
Word	Parts of the word and their meaning			Meaning
street-poopers				
barkers				
bounders				
dreadful				
freeze-dried				
personalised				
trustworthy				
house-bound				

Independent

Students work in pairs to complete the remaining words in the list.

Students work in collaborative groups to compare their answers.

Word analysis is carried out as part of analysing texts in all KLAs using the scaffold provided.

Interpretive Comprehension – Main Idea

Overview

Interpretive meaning is often hidden throughout the text and requires the use of inference and understanding the relationship between events and characters or causes and consequences. Readers need to link like information to fully understand the text. Sometimes these relationships can be stated and are often found near causal words such as *because*, *so* and *therefore*. Information may need to be linked from sentence to sentence, across paragraphs or chapters, and is often referred to as information that is given ‘between the lines’.

Connecting Literal Information

If no interpretation is required to locate the information, students are employing literal comprehension skills. Where students need to connect information that is directly stated in the text and there needs to be an understanding that particular information belongs together, this is classed as an interpretive question.

Identifying key words, skim reading and scanning will help students to locate and connect information efficiently.

Key words

Key words are the content words that carry the most meaning in a text. Students can underline or highlight the key words.

Skimming

Skimming is reading quickly through a text to get the gist or main idea. Students can skim read by looking at headings and sub-headings, pictures, diagrams, captions, any italicised or bold words, and the first and last paragraphs of the text.

Scanning

Scanning is reading to locate particular elements or specific details in a text, such as key concepts, names, dates or certain information in answer to a question. Students can scan by looking through the text to locate key words to find the specific information quickly.

Main Idea – Interpretive

Identifying the main idea requires readers to:

- connect information
- understand cohesive devices in texts which link ideas
- understand vocabulary and complex word usage
- infer and summarise facts and events to find overall ideas.

Information may need to be linked from sentence to sentence, across paragraphs or chapters, and is often referred to as information that is given ‘between the lines’.

Skill Focus: Identifying the main idea

STAGES 2–4

Strategy

How to identify the main idea in a text

Students begin by learning the definition of main idea and then apply this definition to identify the main idea in sentences and short texts. It can be used with students in Years 1 and 2 or with older students who have difficulty identifying the main idea. The ability to identify the main idea in a text is critical for students to gain meaning when reading.

It is important to explicitly teach students the concept of main idea. When teaching the main idea, select short texts on a familiar topic. Students read or have the passage read to them.

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Begin the lesson by stating the purpose.

Today we are going to learn how to identify the main idea.

The main idea tells about all the parts of the text in just a few words. What is the main idea? (Pause for a student response. 'It tells about all the parts of a text in just a few words.')

Write down the definition on a poster and keep as a permanent prompt for students to use to remind them of how to locate the main idea of a text.

Continue with the definition and tell the students that:

Every text has a main idea and details.

Details tell about the parts of the text.

What are the details? (Pause for a student response. They tell about the parts of the text.)

Main Idea
<p><i>The main idea tells about all the parts of a text in just a few words.</i></p> <p><i>Every text has a main idea and details.</i></p> <p><i>Details tell about the parts of the text.</i></p>

Next, apply the definition to several examples. Begin with a short text of approximately three sentences. Tell the students that together you are going to read these sentences and pick out the details and the main idea.

K–6 Outcomes

- RS 2.5 Students infer the main idea in a variety of texts
- RS 3.6 Uses several strategies for finding information in texts
- RS 2.6 Students read a text for overall message
- RS 3.5 Students read an extensive range of texts with increasing content demands and respond to themes and issues

KLA Outcomes

- English 4.1.5 Students interpret information, infer, connect and identify main ideas
- English 4.7.1 Infers main ideas in texts

Item & Stimulus

Reading
Year 3 Q: 6, 29
Year 5 Q: 1, 26
Year 7 Q: 1, 13, 19, 41
Year 9 Q: 30

Item Descriptor

Identifies the main idea of a paragraph in an information report

Identifies the main idea in a simple information report

Statements of Learning for English

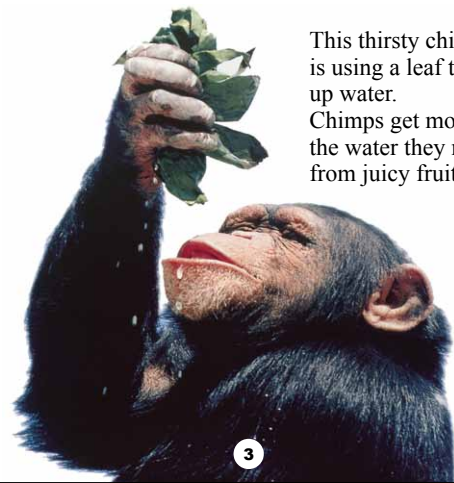
Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to clarify meaning.

Write the sample sentences based on the text 'Chimpanzees'.

Chimpanzees

Chimpanzees have learned how to use tools.

This chimp is hooking termites out of the ground with a stick. Termites are insects that chimps love to eat.



This thirsty chimpanzee is using a leaf to scoop up water. Chimps get most of the water they need from juicy fruit.

This chimp is hooking termites out of the ground with a stick.

This thirsty chimpanzee is using a leaf to scoop up water.

Chimpanzees have learned how to use tools.

Read the text to the students and ask clarifying questions to check students are listening and understand all the vocabulary used. Then go through the following process to pick out the details and identify the main idea.

Remind students of the definition of details.

Details tell about the parts of the text.

Read this first sentence with me. This chimp is hooking termites out of the ground with a stick.

This chimp is hooking termites out of the ground with a stick only tells part of the text. Is this a detail? 'Why? Pause for student response.

Let's read the next sentence. This thirsty chimpanzee is using a leaf to scoop up water.

Does 'This thirsty chimpanzee is using a leaf to scoop up water' tell part of the text?
Pause for student response.

Is it a detail? Pause for student response. (Yes.)

Let's read the last sentence. Chimpanzees have learned how to use tools.

'Chimpanzees have learned how to use tools' tells about all the parts of the text in a few words. So, it is the main idea. It tells us that chimpanzees can use sticks and leaves as tools to get food and water.

Repeat the procedure with other passages.

Sample sentences from the text 'Amphibians'.

Amphibians

There are 4400 living species of amphibians. Frogs, toads, newts and salamanders are all amphibians. Many live mainly on land, but most spend at least some of their lives in water.

The largest amphibian, the Chinese giant salamander, is 1.8m long.

Frogs and salamanders are able to breathe through their damp skins to a certain extent, both in the water and on the land, but toads rely largely on their lungs and cannot remain underwater for long. Toads and frogs are similar in many ways, although toads usually have rougher, drier skins and may waddle rather than hop as frogs do.

Some toads produce spawn in strings like necklaces, rather than the mass of eggs laid by frogs.

Most amphibians lay their eggs in water. Frogs' eggs are called spawn. The eggs are protected from predators by a thick layer of jelly. A tadpole develops inside each egg. When it hatches, it is able to swim using its long tail, and it breathes through gills. As a tadpole grows, first hind legs then forelegs begin to form. Lungs develop, and the young frog is able to begin to breathe with its head above water. Gradually, the tail shortens until the young frog resembles its adult parents.

Adult frogs often return to the pond in which they are hatched.

Frog spawn hatches into larvae called tadpoles after about a week.

At first tadpoles feed on algae and breathe through feathery gills.

By about 10 weeks the young frog has legs and lungs.

4

There are 4400 living species of amphibians.

Frogs, toads, newts and salamanders are all amphibians.

Many live mainly on land, but most spend at least some of their lives in water.

Guided

Go through this procedure using a number of different texts and gradually fade teacher support until students are able to accurately and independently identify the main idea. To build mastery in identifying the main idea students need to be involved in daily guided practice on short texts.

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Provide students with short texts that they can read or have read to them. For students who have difficulty decoding a text it could be provided on tape or accessed via the computer using any text reading software (for example, Read and Write Gold or Wynn Wizard) currently used by a student to support their reading. Both methods would allow the student to re-read the text when needed.

Variations

When teaching the main idea a range of student needs can be accommodated by:

- using a variety of texts from pictures to two paragraphs
- limiting the number of choices used in the multiple choice response format
Begin with a choice of two answers and gradually increase the number of choices up to a maximum of four, as students become more skilled.

Variation 1

As students become skilled at identifying the main idea in one short paragraph introduce texts with two short paragraphs.

Variation 2

Provide students with short texts with multiple choice questions and ask them to identify the main idea of the text. Ask them to tell why the other choices were incorrect. For example, were they only details or were they not discussed in the text. The use of a multiple choice response format provides students with practice using the answering format of NAPLAN.

Variation 3

This strategy to identify the main idea can be used with students from kindergarten onwards using pictures rather than text. Students select the main idea from a choice of two short sentences. The number of choices can be increased when students become more skilled. When giving a definition of main idea with narrative, use the word *story* instead of *text*.

Skill Focus: Identifying main idea

STAGE 4

Strategies

Creating a mind map by:

- Skimming texts
- Reading titles and subtitles and saying what they mean
- Noting any graphics (photographs, diagrams, tables) and thinking how they may relate to the text
- Reading the entire introductory paragraph
- Reading and highlighting/underlining the first sentence (topic sentence) of each subsequent paragraph
- Reading the entire concluding paragraph
- Stating the main idea or the 'gist' of the whole text

Note taking

Note taking is a skill which requires extensive explicit teaching. It involves extracting and recording the main ideas in a text in an organised and systematic way. Its purpose could be to assist understanding, to identify key concepts, to plan spoken or written responses, to assist recall of information or to express ideas clearly and succinctly.

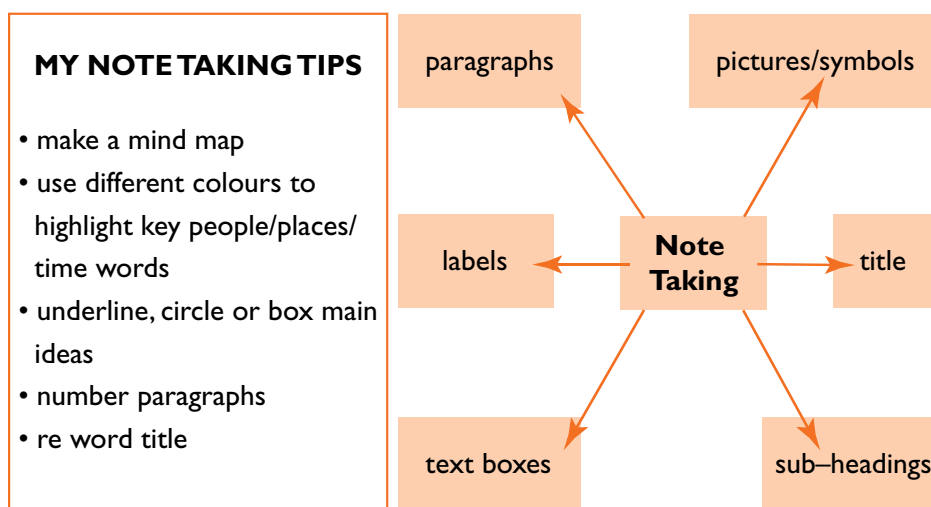
Use the following strategies to develop note taking skills.

Ensure students are clear about the purpose of the note taking.

Pose key questions in order to focus students on the topic area. Students can then move to identifying focus questions themselves.

Demonstrate skimming and scanning techniques and ask students to highlight or circle key words.

Provide a structure or scaffold to assist the students with their note taking. Use the scaffold to model the process of extracting information and recording ideas in clear and succinct language rather than a haphazard way.



KLA Outcomes

English 4.7.9 Students learn to make predictions, infer and interpret texts.

English 4.7.7 Students learn to summarise, define, gather evidence, deduce, argue and debate.

English 4.1.5 Students learn to interpret, question and challenge information and ideas in texts through close study.

Item & Stimulus

Reading

Year 7 Q: 35, 46

Year 9 Q: 18, 20, 35, 39, 40, 41

Item Descriptor

Connects ideas to infer meaning in a variety of texts

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to clarify meaning.

As students become more proficient with note taking, assist them to become more independent by getting them to plan scaffolds for note taking.

Activity to support the strategy

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Provide students with a copy of the text 'A court case in ancient China' from the Year 9 NAPLAN 2008 Reading.

A court case in ancient China


Chinese folk culture has many stories about a hero from ancient times called Yu. Early in his career Yu distinguished himself as a judge.

Two noblemen dressed in robes glittering with gold were kneeling before Judge Yu. Each waved a piece of paper, covered with small writing and with large red seals¹ impressed on it. Their prince had left each of them half of a large estate — land, houses and valuables — as specified on the papers they were presenting. Each claimed that the division was unjust, and that the other had received more than his proper share.

Judge Yu looked at the men, showing the whites of his eyes. He angrily shook his head, making the glittering ornaments on his cap dance in the light of the lamps. There was an atmosphere of tension.

Judge Yu rose. He grabbed the documents from the hands of the two plaintiffs, then handed to each the other's paper. He raised his hands signifying that the case had been decided. The two noblemen stared perplexedly² at the documents in their hands.

¹ stamps on a document showing it is genuine
² with confusion



3

A mind map is a way of recording ideas and facts in draft as students read. This can then be modified after reading, and on a second read of the passage.

Students create a mind map using the text by:

- reading each paragraph and underlining the topic sentence using a coloured pen
- highlighting the key characters in a different colour
- highlighting key events in a third colour
- circling any words that infer to mood or themes.

Students repeat this process for each paragraph using the same method. After

the text has been scanned and skimmed for main ideas using the three different colours, students:

- Count and identify the key events. These become the number of boxes in the mind map.
- Identify the links between each event. These become labelled on an arrow connecting the boxes.

The centre box identifies the title, the type of text (in this case a folk tale), underlying themes and ideas, and ideas that can be inferred by the illustration.

Independent

Students create a mind map so they can identify key ideas and show the connection between them using a mind map.

A court case in ancient China


Chinese folk culture has many stories about a hero from ancient times called Yu. Early in his career Yu distinguished himself as a judge.

Two noblemen dressed in robes glittering with gold were kneeling before Judge Yu. Each waved a piece of paper, covered with small writing and with large red seals¹ impressed on it. Their prince had left each of them half of a large estate — land, houses and valuables as specified on the papers they were presenting. Each claimed that the division was unjust, and that the other had received more than his proper share.

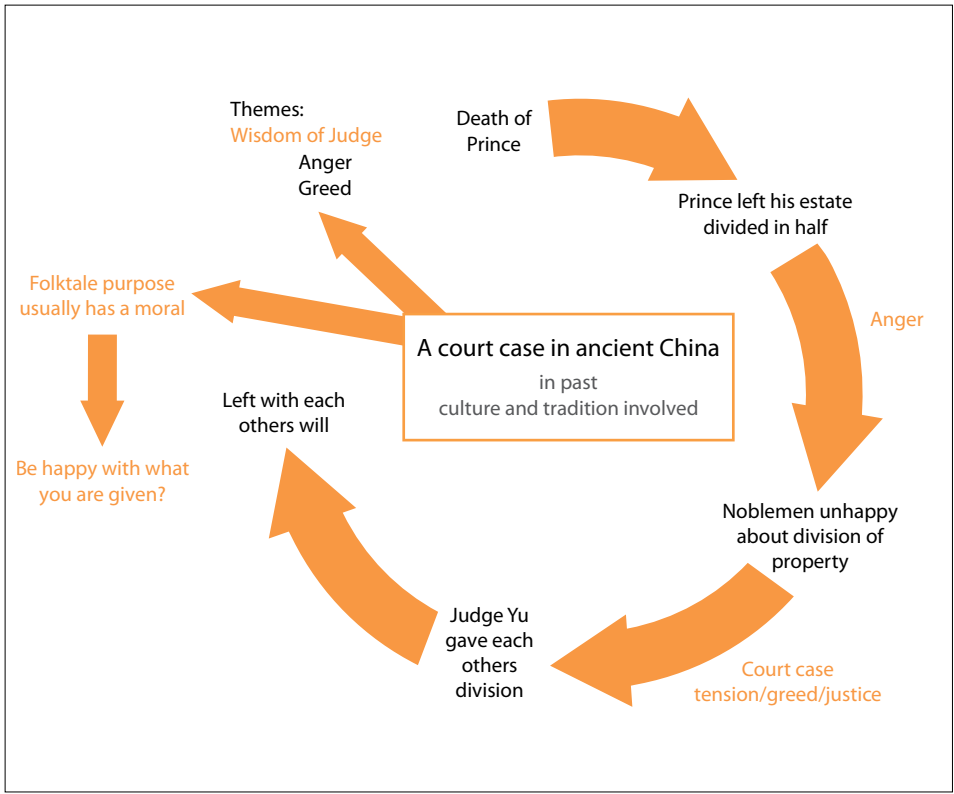
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3



Introduction to Reading Literacy Strategies

Reading involves:

- decoding words and understanding the alphabetic code
- understanding vocabulary
- linking known knowledge with the knowledge in texts
- rechecking meaning and analysing information as it is being read and after it has been read
- categorising, building, changing, redefining and sharing knowledge
- gaining meaning from, responding to and making inferences from words and images in a variety of contexts
- transferring knowledge to new contexts and subjects
- understanding authors' viewpoints, purpose and intended audience
- critically analysing messages and information in a variety of literacy modes (visual literacy, multimodal texts) for a variety of purposes.

Understanding and gaining a meaningful message from texts, including multimodal and multi literacies, involves an interrelationship between reading, writing, listening and viewing (Brock, 1998; Turbill, 2000). As students attain skills in seeing patterns in words it is essential that they continue to develop their ability to engage in, react to, understand and comprehend both the explicit and implicit messages within the texts they read.

Specific skills in how to approach the written word need to be explicitly taught and contextually practised to:

- facilitate a higher degree of understanding
- develop close links between the meanings readers gain and the author's intentions.

This language knowledge is taught in conjunction with other knowledge and skills in balanced programs in all areas at:

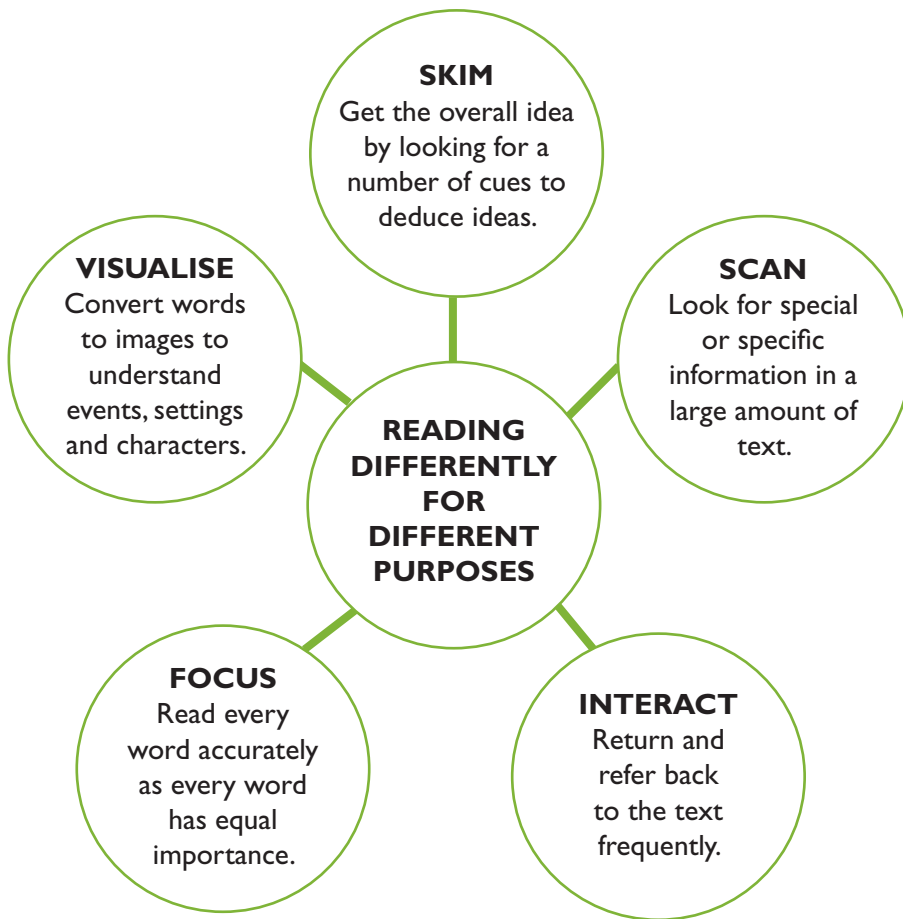
- word and sentence level which specifically deals with functional grammar, spelling and punctuation
- whole text level which focuses on text function, purpose, structure, ideas and textual grammar.

The skills involved to use and understand this language knowledge are assessed in both the reading and writing components of the NAPLAN.

Using Knowledge to Understand Texts

There are many reasons and purposes for reading and many ways to read and gain meaning from texts. The purposes, reasons and types of texts vary and this affects the way readers seek and obtain information.

Readers may use one or combine different ways of reading as they read to seek and gain meaning from texts.



Reading beyond the surface level is a challenge for many students. The three-level guide devised by Herber (1978) and developed further by Morris and Stewart-Dore (1984) helps:

- students to think through the information in texts
- teachers to explicitly teach skills needed to obtain meaning from texts in a variety of contexts.

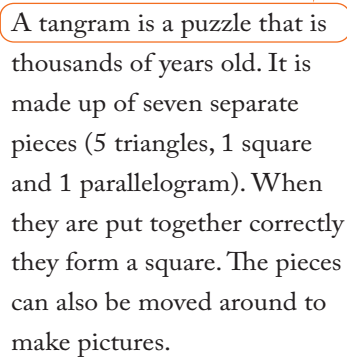
Literal Comprehension

This is understanding information that is stated in the text or is 'right there'. The reader is reading *on the lines*.

It is also sometimes known as *here* comprehension.

In a test students may be asked to:

- locate information directly in text OR visual images
- locate information in a title, caption, heading or e-text
- locate information in one sentence that is directly stated in the text.



A tangram is a puzzle that is thousands of years old. It is made up of seven separate pieces (5 triangles, 1 square and 1 parallelogram). When they are put together correctly they form a square. The pieces can also be moved around to make pictures.

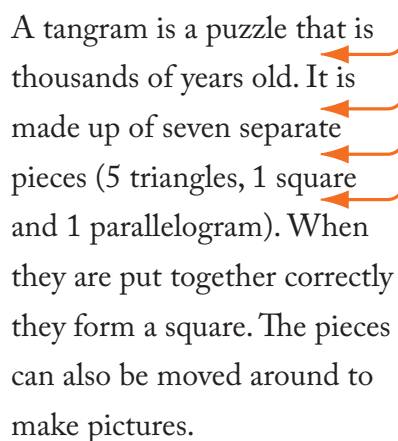
Interpretive Comprehension

This is understanding that requires students to reflect on literal information, make links between information, identify relationships or draw inferences from information given in texts. The reader is reading *between the lines*.

It is also sometimes known as *hidden* comprehension.

When reading, students may be asked to:

- sequence events from a text
- extract information from a visual cue e.g. map, key for a map, diagram, photo, illustration
- connect information in a text and a visual image e.g. a diagram or illustration, titles, captions and headings to complete the answer completely
- make connections between information in consecutive sentences
- make connections in a text by using pronoun referencing
- connect and link information from several sentences that can be directly located in the text
- connect information using different vocabulary to explain concepts and ideas.



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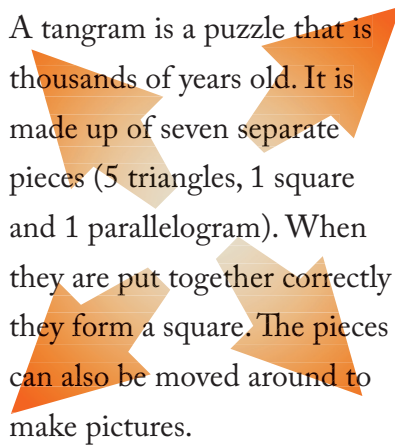
Applied Comprehension – Evaluative

This understanding requires readers to apply and evaluate knowledge from multiple texts, within different areas of one text, or use their background knowledge about topics. Readers are required to read *beyond the lines*.

It is also known as *head* comprehension.

When reading students may be asked to:

- connect information across sentences, paragraphs, chapters
- infer the meaning of information in texts
- deduce main ideas, themes and concepts in texts
- use a range of strategies e.g. context cues to identify the meaning of unknown words
- identify the purpose and meaning of metaphorical language devices e.g. similes
- identify similar vocabulary meanings to link and connect ideas.



A tangram is a puzzle that is thousands of years old. It is made up of seven separate pieces (5 triangles, 1 square and 1 parallelogram). When they are put together correctly they form a square. The pieces can also be moved around to make pictures.

Applied Comprehension – Critical

Critical analysis can be introduced in very early reading to understand the messages, themes and underlying plot of stories. It also assists students to deduce, create hypotheses and identify relationships that are not openly stated (Carnine, Silbert and Kameenui, 1997). This level of understanding texts increases in intensity, complexity and frequency in higher stages. It also requires students to move from one register to another across different subjects, learning areas and within different text types in one subject.

Developing critical understanding of factual texts often requires different language from that needed for critical analysis of narrative.

It involves the reader to read *deeper beyond the lines*.

It is also known as *head* comprehension.

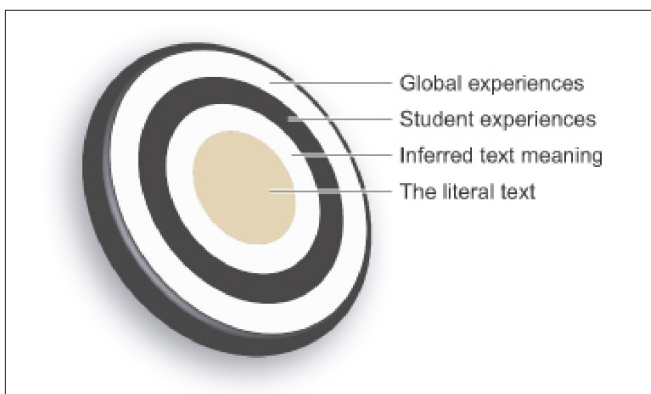
Students need to use background knowledge and personal opinion to analyse the whole text – its structure, the meaning and purpose, connecting ideas and opinions – in order to critically analyse texts.

A tangram is a puzzle that is thousands of years old. It is made up of seven separate pieces (5 triangles, 1 square and 1 parallelogram). When they are put together correctly they form a square. The pieces can also be moved around to make pictures.

When reading, students may be asked to:

- identify the intended purpose of a specific part of a text
- identify the author's point of view or the reader response expected by the author
- identify their point of view and either defend or debate it against the author's.
- infer reasons for the author's use of persuasive language
- demonstrate an understanding of themes in texts and make critical analysis of them
- connect and make value judgements between the themes and plots of various texts
- select alternative titles or manipulate plots for different contexts
- Demonstrate an understanding of the characters' motives
- Analyse the use and purpose of layout features and text conventions
- Analyse imagery to assist in deducing meaning
- Identify the authoritative source of information, ideas, points of view and purpose, and how these can affect the validity of the content and/or position of the writer
- Identify the facts that are chosen, left out and changed to form texts for example a scientific argument supporting an idea or belief systems.

Students' comprehension is affected by:



Language Conventions Overview

Control of spelling, grammar and punctuation is required by students in all curriculum areas for the development of clear and effective writing and reading. Explicit teaching of the features of language enables students to describe how language works, to make meaning as they read and to be able to use language to make meaning as they write.

Knowledge about the conventions of language therefore needs to be taught:

- explicitly
- contextually
- regularly

and be supported by practical implementation of students' knowledge and skills as they construct meaning.

Once students are conscious of how different linguistic structures are formed, they are in a better position to be able to manipulate these structures to create clear, well-structured, unambiguous sentences. And in their reading, they are better able to perceive meaningful chunks of language rather than to read each word as a discrete unit.

Derewianka 2002

Literal Comprehension Overview

Direct Locate

Literal comprehension is seen as the first level of comprehension. It is the simplest form of locating information in texts because the information is stated directly in the text. Questions assessing literal comprehension skills examine how well students can identify and understand information that is directly stated in a text.

According to Carnine, Silbert and Kameenui (1997), literal questioning can vary in difficulty depending on:

- the length of the text
- the order in which the questions are asked and how they match to the order of the text
- the use of pronouns, because the pronoun reference needs to be identified before finding the information in the text.

Connecting Literal Information

If no interpretation is required to locate or connect the information, students are employing literal comprehension skills. Using key words, skim reading and scanning will help students to locate information efficiently.

Key words

Key words are the content words that carry the most meaning in a text. Students can underline or highlight the key words.

Skimming

Skimming is reading quickly through a text to get the gist or main idea. Students can skim read by looking at headings and sub-headings, pictures, diagrams, captions, any italicised or bold words, and the first and last paragraphs of the text.

Scanning

Scanning is reading to locate particular elements or specific details in a text, such as key concepts, names, dates or certain information in answer to a question. Students can scan by looking through the text to locate key words to find the specific information quickly.

Skill Focus: Locating information directly stated in texts by identifying key words

STAGES 1–2

Strategy

Identifying that key words are the content words that carry the most meaning in a text.

The key words (and/or phrases) can connect information together to:

- answer questions
- summarise and sort information
- interpret and infer meaning.

This means that the strategy can be used to assist both literal and interpretive levels of comprehension.

Students underline or highlight the key words in texts to locate information.

Activities to Support the Strategy

Modelled

The teacher models how to locate information directly stated in texts using a chosen text from any subject area.

Texts can be deconstructed collaboratively in this way. Use an overhead or interactive whiteboard with a copy of the text to assist in whole class deconstructions. After key words have been highlighted, the teacher indicates the key words in the text while talking aloud through the strategies. Use a suitable text as an OHT transparency such as the excerpt from *Sporting Legends* by Karen Lau, Scholastic, 2003, p. 4, first paragraph.

In this example the clue word is **Rugby Union** and key words are **Ella brothers** and **love**.

Union:

Mark, Glen and Gary **Ella** are **brothers** who **all love** **Rugby Union**. They grew up in La Perouse, Sydney, in a family of twelve children. When they were kids, they played touch football, cricket and other sports every day after school.

Reading the passage to (or with) the students to gain the overall meaning of the passage is the first step. Then, talk to students about the importance of key words when locating information. The teacher asks (and/or writes) a literal question and then models the skill of locating key words within a question by underlining them. Remind students that literal information is information which is stated directly in the text and that identifying key words can assist them to find information.

Guiding students to locate key words in a question and then locating matching key words in the text will help them to match the information. This is part of the 3H strategy (Here, Hidden and Head).

K–6 Outcomes

- RS1.6 Locates information in a variety of texts
- RS2.6 Identifies repeated words or synonyms as ways in which topics are developed in information texts. Uses strategies to locate key words.

Item & Stimulus

Reading

Year 3 Q: 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 10, 13, 14, 19, 20, 31, 33 and 34

Year 5 Q: 7, 8 and 30

Item Descriptor

Locates information directly stated in a text

Statements of Learning for English

When students interpret texts they have the opportunity to identify key events, directly stated information and the order of events.

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Talk to the students about the importance of key words when locating information. Use the strategies on finding clue and key words later in this material to assist.

Read the text and work with the students to develop a question about the text. Record and identify key words from the question. Then search for them in the text.

The students need to highlight the clue word as well as the key words. In this example the clue word is **What** and the key words are **Ella brothers** and **love**.

Sample question: **What** do the **Ella brothers** all **love**?

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Give students a copy of the text or passage being studied.

Ask students to write literal questions (the answer is stated in the text) about the text.

Then have students swap their questions with another student. Ask students to answer their partner's questions following the process you have modelled. Supply these steps on the board for reference:

- underline the key words in the question
- locate and underline these words in the text
- circle the answer.

Once students are able to quickly locate directly stated information in simple texts, introduce more complex texts or texts with sub-headings or illustrations.

To make the task more relevant for students, set a simple research task on a current familiar topic or use a copy of a page from the internet about a topic that is familiar to the students. There are many activities to support the development of students' skills in locating directly stated information embedded in files available from the TaLe website. A DET log-on is needed to gain access to this website.

The following titles may provide a starting point:

- Space Rescue: Planet Ventura
- Space Rescue: Planet Thor
- Space Rescue: Planet Juno
- Celebrity Garbage: Cal Calvinio
- Celebrity Garbage: Tiffany Love
- Celebrity Garbage: Zac Bronski

Skill Focus: Connecting ideas by identifying clue words in questions

STAGES 1–2

Strategy

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Providing students with a scaffolded list of common clue words found in questions which assist students to identify:

- what questions are being asked
- what key words they can search for in texts to help them find the answer
- what information they will need to look for, collect and connect
- what information they will need to answer the question completely.

This list is provided to individual students as a support sheet or as a display in the classroom for reference.

Some words in questions clue words help us to know what to look for in the text to find the answers. This scaffold can be enlarged for a classroom resource.

Clue words	What to look for	Question and key words	How to start the answer
What	a name or names	What can Aden see?	Aden can see his dog.
Where	name or names of a place	Where is Aden's dog going?	Aden's dog is running up the driveway.
When	time	When did his dog run away?	Aden's dog ran away as soon as he opened the car door to let him out.
Why	a reason or several reasons	Why did the dog run?	The dog ran up the driveway, because he was excited to be home and see all his other owners.
Who	a name or names	Who were the other owners?	The other owners were Aden's mum and dad.
How	method or ways of solving or doing something	How did he get the dog to run back to him?	Aden called out the dog's name and said 'come' to get the dog to run back to him.
How many How much	number or amount or a unit of measure	How many times did the dog do this?	The dog ran every time it got out of the car.
Which?	noun or verb	Which was the best way to get the dog back?	The best way was to call the dogs name.
What happened	event or action	What did Aden do?	The dog came to Aden when he was called.

Other words that help students to know what to look for in texts are called key words. The key words are related to the topic of the text and these words can help readers locate the information so that they can answer the whole question.

K–6 Outcomes

- RS1.6 Students draw on an increasing range of skills and strategies when reading and comprehending texts
- RS2.6 Students locate and interpret ideas in texts
- RS1.7 Students describe the purpose of organisational stages in familiar texts.

Item & Stimulus

Reading,

Year 3 Q: 11, 12, 13, 15 and 16
Year 5 Q: 21

Item Descriptor

Students can connect ideas to answer questions in texts using clue words. Students connect ideas in texts.

Statements of Learning for English

When students interpret texts they have the opportunity to connect ideas and recognise main ideas by identifying who, what, when and why.

Key words can be underlined or highlighted in questions to help readers look for the same or similar words in the text. Key words can be also highlighted or underlined as students read. This helps them to locate the necessary information. The key words may be in or near pictures, graphics and tables.

Activities to Support the Strategy

Modelled

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

The teacher uses the table above, modelling questions and developing similar questions using a known text.

Guided

Using the worksheet provided below, the class works together to identify clue words in questions as well as:

- what the question would be looking for
- ways to begin the answer.

Clue words	What to look for	Question and key words	How to start the answer
What		What can Zach do?	Zach can...
Where		Where is Zach's soccer game this weekend?	Zach soccer game...
When		When did Zach play soccer?	
Why		Why did Zach play soccer?	
Who		Who did Zach play for?	
How		How did Zach get interested in the game?	
How Many How Much		How many years has Zach been playing?	
Which		Which game did his team play on the weekend?	
What Happened		What did Zach do?	

Using the questions in the table, the class re-construct an information report or a recount using the questions as a basis for the content.

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Using the accompanying worksheet, students match the clue words to the correct description by cutting and pasting the description next to the correct clue words.

Students draw pictures to help them remember the meaning of the clue words.

For example: a clock may represent the *when*, a house for *where*, a question mark

for *why*, a group of numbers for *how many* and so forth.

Where	A way of doing something
When	A name
Why	A time of an event
Who	A number or measurement
How many	A person
How much	A number or measurement
What	A place
How	A reason, an opinion
What happened	An action

Skill Focus: Locating information directly stated in texts by identifying key words

STAGE 3

Strategy

The 'think aloud' strategy

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

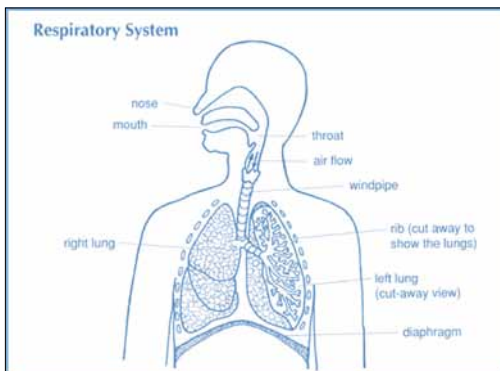
This strategy models thinking aloud as a task is worked through.

Teachers verbalise what they are thinking when they are modelling solving a problem or answering a question.

For example: *I know where my throat is (touch throat). The line from the throat on the picture leads to the label that says throat (show this on the diagram). When I find the word throat in the text, the labels around it will be about other parts of the body close to the throat.*

Activities to support the strategy

This lesson is the introduction to looking at the effects of smoking on the body. Provide students with a copy of the diagram and create an OHT to discuss with the class.



Guided

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Ask students what they know about breathing by asking probing questions such as:

What do I know about the topic?

What are the body parts involved in breathing? (List vocabulary on board as students brainstorm)

What happens when you breathe? (List verbs on board as students brainstorm)

Why do we have to breathe? (List cause and effect connectives such as *because, so, if, then* on board as students brainstorm)

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Predicting the text content

K-6 Outcome

RS3.6 Students locate literal information in an information text.

Item & Stimulus

Reading
Year 7 Q: 21

Item Descriptor

Locates information directly stated in a text

Statements of Learning for English

When students interpret texts they have the opportunity to identify key events, directly stated information and the order of events.

Looking at the image with the students, use the 'think aloud' strategy.

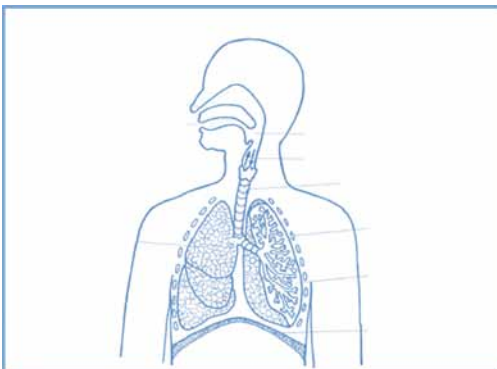
Say: 'I look at the *title*. It is about a system. The system must be to do with the body. If I look at the image, I can see what parts of the body it is going to explain.' Ask students to look at the title and model the 'think aloud' strategy to predict what the respiratory system is. Encourage them to justify their reasons verbally using statements like: 'From the diagram and labels I think the respiratory system is ...'

Students read the labels on the diagram and identify any of the body parts, previously suggested, which are labelled on the diagram of the respiratory system. Discuss with students whether any additional labelling could be used. Referring to the labels on the diagram, ask students to locate where the windpipe, lungs, ribcage and diaphragm are located on their own bodies.

To avoid overwhelming students, build up information on the diagram over time. Look at one lot of labels then gradually add more labels to the diagram in the next lesson. Revise technical vocabulary related to the respiratory system.

Independent

Students complete the diagram labels as worksheet.



Guided

Read the following passage with students. Students reread and highlight key words as they read.

When you breathe, you draw air down your windpipe into your lungs. Oxygen and carbon dioxide are exchanged in the lungs. Oxygen goes from your lungs into your blood and is carried to all the cells in your body. They need oxygen to stay alive. Carbon dioxide is removed from the bloodstream and is expelled into the air when we breathe out. Breathing is controlled by a muscle called the diaphragm that stretches under and across the ribcage. When the diaphragm moves down, we breathe in – this is called inhaling. When the diaphragm moves up, we breathe out – this is called exhaling.

These key words are then recorded onto the following proforma provided. The teacher can create a copy of the matrix on an OHT and complete with students.

Match the Word to its Description/Function	
Word	Description/Function

Students could also complete the matrix below by matching the key words from the passage with the appropriate description.

Match the Word to its Description/Function	
Word	Description/Function
Windpipe	breathing out
Diaphragm	tube through which air is drawn down into the lungs
Inhaling	a muscle which stretches under and across the ribcage
Blood	breathing organs where oxygen and carbon dioxide are exchanged
Lungs	this carries oxygen to all the cells in your body
Exhaling	breathing in

Skill Focus: Locating information directly stated in texts

STAGES 3–4

Strategy

Highlighting key words as students read

Discussing complex vocabulary before, during and after reading will assist students to understand the text and identify key words within the information they read.

Activities to Support the Strategy

Guided


A review of highlighting key and clue words as a guide is discussed with students.

Students highlight key facts from the text *Across the Pacific* and record them as dot points to develop summarising skills.

blue expanse = ocean
seafarers = travellers by the sea from other places.

Across the Pacific


Lapita



The Pacific Ocean covers **one-third** of the Earth's surface. Small islands are **sprinkled** across the enormous **blue expanse** and often isolated from each other by great areas of sea. The islands that make up **Polynesia** (meaning 'many islands') were settled by **seafarers** from places that are now called **Indonesia** and **Malaysia**. These people spread gradually across the Pacific **looking for new lands to settle**. Between **2000 BC** and **1000 AD**, they **navigated** incredible distances in **sturdy dugout canoes**, 'reading' changes in the **swell of the sea**, the **patterns of the stars** and the **easterly winds**. They brought with them a patterned **pottery called Lapita** (above left), which has become an **archaeological clue to their movements**. The settlers **adapted** to the different environments they found, from the **dry atolls** to the **lush and fertile volcanic islands**. They reached **Tonga** and **Samoa** by at least **1000 BC** and developed their own customs and a **society** that was **ruled by chiefs**. By about **1000 AD**, **Polynesians** had **reached Easter Island**, **New Zealand** and the **easterly islands** of **Hawaii**.



ocean

Did You Know?
Gigantic **stone statues** line the coast of **Easter Island**. The people **carved** these guardians of the island from soft **volcanic stone**, then **dragged them to platforms** on the cliff edges.



READING THE SEA AND THE SKY

The **Polynesians** were **expert navigators**. They found islands to settle in the vast Pacific Ocean by **reading the sea** and **watching for land-based birds** such as **frigates** (above right). They travelled to and from these islands **using maps they made from palm sticks** and **cowrie shells** (left). The sticks represented the **swells and currents of the sea**, while **cowrie shells** marked islands.

islands

swell

frigate

★ Also known as **BCE**
★ Also known as **CE**

4

K–6 Outcome

RS3.5 Students interpret a variety of literary and factual texts

KLA Outcome

English 4.7.1 Students locate information that is directly located in texts

Item & Stimulus

Reading

Year 7 Q: 30, 33, 34 and 37
Year 9 Q: 2, 3, 6, 14, 24, 31, 33 and 44

Item Descriptor

Students locate information that is directly located in texts.

Statements of Learning for English

When students interpret texts they have the opportunity to use various techniques to locate information.

Place the literal questions from the worksheet onto an OHT.

Across the Pacific

How much of the Earth's surface is covered by the Pacific Ocean?

What does the word *Polynesia* mean?

Who were the small islands settled by?

How did the seafarers travel incredible distances?

When did the settlers reach Tonga and Samoa?

How was the society ruled?

When did the Polynesians reach Easter Island, New Zealand and the easterly islands of Hawaii?

Where were the gigantic stone statues dragged to?

What land-based birds did the Polynesians use to help them navigate the Pacific Ocean?

What were their maps made out of?

What did the sticks on the maps represent?

What did the cowrie shells on the maps mark?

Discuss the order of the questions and the location of the information relating to each question in the text.

Modelled

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Read the first question from the OHT. *How much of the Earth's surface is covered by the Pacific Ocean?*

Talk aloud the strategies you use to find the clue and key words by making statements such as:

I can underline the words how much in the question as this will tell me I am looking for a number or amount. These words are giving me clues about what I need to look for.

*I can highlight the word **surface** because this is what I am looking for and I can highlight **Pacific Ocean** because this is the surface the amount of question is asking about. These words are key words that I can search for in the text to help me locate the information I need to answer the question.*

Independent

Students highlight the key words and underline the clue words in the questions that will assist them to know what to look for in the text. Students use the highlighted words in the passage to answer the questions.

Guided

After the students complete the answers, discuss their results with them and encourage them to verbalise how they located the information.

Prepositions Overview

Prepositions locate nouns, pronouns and noun groups in time, space or circumstance.

For example:

During (time) *the Roman era, an extensive network of roads was built.*

Records were kept **by** (circumstance) writing **on** (space or position) scrolls.

Prepositions link texts by relating one noun or pronoun to another in a sentence, and become part of noun groups which give more information in sentences.

Examples of common prepositions are:

above	between	out
across	by	past
after	during	since
around	for	soon
at	in	through
before	inside	without
below	into	
beside		

Skill Focus: Identifying and using prepositions

STAGES 1–3

Strategies

Using metalanguage in the classroom for:

- identifying prepositions in texts and discussing the meaning of the text
- writing captions to explain actions

Activities to support the strategy

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Read the story *Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins to the students.

Discuss with the students where Rosie went on her day and record their responses on the board.

She went **under** the fence.

Rosie went **in** the shed.

Rosie sat **on** her eggs.

Students play 'I spy' with the pictures in the text. Students think of an object and other students have to guess what it is using prepositional language such as:

I am thinking of an object that is near the water tank.

I am thinking of an animal next to Rosie.

Students and teacher discuss other places where Rosie might have walked.

She might have gone near the water tanks or around the back of the house.

Explain that these words are called prepositions and that they tell us how, where, when or why an action happens. Prepositions always come before nouns. Students draw a story map and write captions explaining where Rosie went during her day.

Students can use the recorded sentences on the board as a resource.

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Activity one – Play the game *Odd Man Out*

The teacher gives the students an instruction which they have to carry out before the sound of a whistle or bell. Students who have not completed the task are odd men out or the last to complete the task, and sit out until the next round. The last student remaining is the winner.

Instructions include a preposition such as:

Find a place next to a boy.

Sit under a table.

K–6 Outcomes

RS1.6: Students identify words that indicate where, why, when and how actions take place

RS2.6: Students identify words that indicate place, space, time and circumstance

WS3.10: Students use knowledge of sentence structure, grammar and punctuation to edit own writing

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 4



Language Conventions

Year 3 Q: 45

Year 5 Q: 35

Year 7 Q: 41 and 50

Year 9 Q: 48

Item Descriptor

Students identify the correct preposition in sentences.

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to use correct prepositional phrases.

Stand on a red square.

Put one hand on the wall at the back of the room.

Put one foot on the wall under the board.

Walk to your desk.

Activity two – Play the game *Hide and Seek*

The teacher creates:

- a list of nouns on flashcards from the text. These can be accompanied by an illustration of the noun, for example: *shed, fence* and *house*.
- a laminated illustration of the character Rosie that fits underneath the flashcards without being seen.

The flashcards are spread out on the floor and when the students put their heads down, thumbs up, the teacher hides the character under one of the flashcards.

Students take turns to guess where Rosie is hiding using language such as:

*Is Rosie hiding **under** the shed?*

No, she's not under the shed. Look I will show you.

(The student turns over the card that he or she has guessed.)

The student who correctly guesses where Rosie is hiding is able to hide her for the next turn.

Activity three

Students work in pairs to write about an imaginary journey. They need to include:

- places they visit
- ways they get to the places
- what they see and what they do.

They swap their recounts and narratives with another pair of students who highlight all the prepositions they can find in their text and all the nouns that the prepositions belong to.

Punctuation Overview

Punctuation is used to aid the smooth reading of texts. Writers use punctuation as a powerful tool in shaping meaning. An absence of punctuation, or misused punctuation, can lead to ambiguity or complete misunderstanding.

A note on quotation marks

Quotation marks or inverted commas identify words that are direct speech or spoken or written words belonging to people other than the writer. Quotation marks should not be used for indirect speech such as: She said that she would be late. There is an increasing trend for single quotation marks ('...') to be used in place of double ("...") although this is a matter of style. Double quotation marks are used for material quoted within single marks and vice versa if the material is quoted within double marks.

Skill Focus: Sentence Structure – Sentence definition

STAGES ESI–I

Strategy

Reconstructing sentences

Students rebuild sentences from cut up sentence strips

It is important to teach students what a sentence is so they can punctuate correctly and understand that punctuation helps us to read and make sense of what is written. By breaking up sentences into single words and punctuation marks, students can reconstruct them in modelled, guided and independent activities.

Explicitly teaching the metalanguage of sentences assists students to look for, be aware of and use punctuation markers in sentences.

Opportunities to put elements together to form a coherent whole in contextual and meaningful activities should be provided so that students can practise, verbalise and transfer skills to new situations.

Activities to support the strategy

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Teacher explores students' prior knowledge by discussing how to make a group of words make sense – or make a sentence using a combination of words that create a simple sentence. Gauging the students' prior knowledge guides the modelled component of the lesson to meet the needs of the students.

cat	The	.	the	ate	food
-----	-----	---	-----	-----	------

Asking the students for suggestions and allowing them to manipulate the words to try their hypothesis is encouraged. They also need to verbalise the skills for another student or for the teacher to carry out. For example, the student may say:

'You could put the word with the capital first and you need to put the full stop at the end.'
'You can put the naming word at the beginning of the sentence and the doing word after it.'
'No, that doesn't make sense because it does not tell you what the naming word is doing.'

Guided

Explore deep knowledge (QTF)

Ask students:

'What is a sentence?'

As students provide the facts, display the matching pre-prepared flashcards on the whiteboard.

This builds a class framework fact sheet.

K–6 Outcomes

- WESI.9: Writes a text using random marks and scribbles
- WESI.10: Begins to use capital letters at the beginning of sentences and full stops at the end of sentences
- WSI.10: Uses most common punctuation marks
- RSI.6: Identifies a sentence in printed texts

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 9



Language Conventions

Item Descriptor

The use of correct and appropriate punctuation to aid the reading of a text

Statements of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language use.

has to make sense

tells what happens

has at least one noun (a naming word)

has a verb (has something or someone doing this)

has a capital letter at the beginning

The end of the sentence can have a full stop .
OR
exclamation mark !
OR
question mark ?

Independent

Punctuation Hunt

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

During a shared 'big book' reading activity, the students listen for the full stops as the teacher reads (the text is not shown to the students). When students think they hear a pause that indicates a full stop (a complete idea) they put their hands on their head, clap their hands or tally on a piece of paper. They can then check their score as they read the book together.

Alternatively, volunteer students can tally a specific punctuation mark on the white board. The results can be discussed at the end of reading. This template could be used:

full stop.	Capital Letter	question mark ?	'speech marks'	comma ,	exclamation mark !

Developing problematic questions about the total tally of each section assists students to analyse the types of punctuation marks and their common use.

Skill Focus: Identifying and using direct speech

STAGE 2 Supporting ESL Students

Strategy

Reconstructing sentences from published texts

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Reconstructing language from texts that have been studied using the whole language approach enables an explicit look at how the language works after meaning and context has been explored. Also see accelerated literacy approach (Aboriginal Education Overview)

Activities to support the strategy

Focus Text

'Tashi and the Bandits' by Anna and Barbara Fienberg in *The big, big, big book of Tashi*.

These lessons are designed to complement an author study on Anna Fienberg. The implementation of prior modelled reading sessions, deconstruction and reconstruction of parts of the text is advised before using these activities. This ensures students have an understanding of the vocabulary used, the story line, the text structures, the targeted audience, characters and settings before deconstructing the language conventions.

Modelled (Controlled)

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Issue copies of the section of text on which the class will be focusing (worksheet and OHT provided).

Have this text on an overhead and highlight the following with students as the passage is read using different coloured markers:

- inverted commas
- saying verbs
- character who is talking

Ask students to record on their copies as you work together highlighting the targeted language conventions. Provide enough time for students to complete each component.

Explain that inverted commas are used in English to indicate what a character has said.

Note the symbols << and >> are used to show speech in French.

Ask students to share with the class how speech is notated in their first language or any other language they have learnt.

K-6 Outcomes

- WS2.10: Uses correct punctuation when publishing
- RS2.8: Uses correct punctuation marks

ESL Scale

- 4.7.10: Follows direct and indirect speech
- 4.11.12: Uses direct and indirect speech appropriately in context

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 9



Language Conventions

Year 5 Q: 32

Item Descriptor

The use of correct and appropriate punctuation to aid the reading of a text

Statements of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language use.

Tashi and the Bandits

‘Enough!’ shouted the Bandit Chief to his wife. ‘This boy is not like our son. He sings like a crow, he tangles your hair, he loses the rice, he scatters the horses, he warns our enemies – and now he has spoilt our dinner. This is too much.’ And he turned to Tashi.

‘You must go home to your village now, Tashi. You are a clumsy, useless boy with no more brain than the ducks you ruined.’

Tashi smiled inside, but put on a sorrowful face and turned to the Bandit Wife. ‘I’m sorry that I wasn’t like your son,’ he said, but she was already on her way down to the river to fetch some more water.

Tashi turned to go when a rough hand pulled him back.

‘You don’t deserve to go free, Duck Spoiler,’ snarled Me Too. ‘Say goodbye to this world and hello to the next because I’m going to make an end of you.’

But as he turned to pick up his deadly nose-hair plucker, Tashi shook himself free and tore off into the forest. He could hear the bandit crashing through the trees after him, but if he could just make it to the river, he thought he would have a chance.

He was almost there when he heard a splash. He looked up to see the Bandit Wife had slipped on a stone and had fallen into the water.

‘Help!’ she cried when she saw Tashi. ‘Help me, I can’t swim!’

pp. 50–55

verbs

inverted commas

character who is talking

Tashi and the Bandits

'Enough!' **shouted** the **Bandit Chief** to his wife. 'This boy is not like our son. He sings like a crow, he tangles your hair, he loses the rice, he scatters the horses, he warns our enemies – and now he has spoilt our dinner. This is too much.' And he turned to Tashi.

'You must go home to your village now, Tashi. You are a clumsy, useless boy with no more brain than the ducks you ruined.'

Tashi **smiled** inside, but put on a sorrowful face and turned to the **Bandit Wife**. 'I'm sorry that I wasn't like your son,' **he said**, but she was already on her way down to the river to fetch some more water.

Tashi turned to go when a rough hand pulled him back.

'You don't deserve to go free, Duck Spoiler,' **snarled** **Me Too**. 'Say goodbye to this world and hello to the next because I'm going to make an end of you.'

But as he turned to pick up his deadly nose-hair plucker, Tashi shook himself free and tore off into the forest. He could hear the bandit crashing through the trees after him, but if he could just make it to the river, he thought he would have a chance.

He was almost there when he heard a splash. He looked up to see the **Bandit Wife** had slipped on a stone and had fallen into the water.

'Help!' **she** **cried** when she saw Tashi. 'Help me, I can't swim!'

pp. 50–55

Prepare flashcards that have the words and punctuation markers from the sentence in italics. Prepare a sentence strip with a copy of the complete sentence. *'You don't deserve to go free,' snarled Me Too.*

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Twelve volunteer students participate in the next demonstration.

Give each student a flashcard. Some students will have a card with a word; others will have a punctuation mark.

Read out the focus sentence.

Instruct students who have words on their cards to arrange themselves into the correct sentence order.

Then ask the students who have punctuation on their cards to place themselves where they think they belong in the sentence.

Ask the rest of the class whether they think their peers are correct.

Peers can be selected to rearrange the students if desired.

The sentence (a copy of the same text cards pasted in sequence on a large strip of cardboard) is displayed and compared with the students' sentence construction.

Guided

Text sequencing activity

- Arrange students into pairs with designated roles. These roles are discussed before commencing the activity.
- Issue each pair with the Text Sequencing Worksheet (provided) on A3 size paper.
- Students cut text and arrange into sentences using the punctuation marks.
- Conference with students to check their work before they glue onto another sheet of A3 paper.
- Students illustrate characters and paste next to their direct speech.

shouted	Enough	.	'
'	!	the Bandit Chief	

,	'	,	.
he	I'm sorry that I wasn't like your son		said

You don't deserve to go free		'	,
.	snarled	'	Me Too

'	!	she	.
cried	'	Help	

Use an overhead or interactive white board where students identify parts of direct speech in controlled sentences by circling the direct speech marks.

For example:

You don't deserve to go free, Duck Spoiler, snarled Me Too.

Ask students to copy the sentence, using correct punctuation.

Skills Focus: Identifying and using direct and indirect speech

STAGES 3–4 Supporting ESL Students

Strategy

Building the foundation with lower-order thinking activities (introduce concept, respond and evaluate) followed by higher-order activities that require students to analyse texts and separate information into categories.

Activities to support the strategy

These activities are designed to complement an author study on Morris Gleitzman.

The implementation of prior modelled reading sessions, deconstruction and reconstruction of parts of the text is advised before using these lessons. This ensures students have an understanding of the vocabulary used, the story line, the text structures, the targeted audience, characters and settings.

Focus text: *Misery Guts* by Morris Gleitzman

FOCUS TEXT ONE

First period at school was science and Keith managed to have a quiet word with Mr Crouch the science teacher.

‘Sir,’ said Keith, ‘You know all those science magazines you read? What’s the latest research data on cheerful people who have to live with misery guts?’

Mr Crouch, who was reading a gardening magazine, looked at him suspiciously.

‘How do you mean?’

‘Well,’ said Keith, ‘if a person who’s still pretty cheerful has to live with people who aren’t cheerful any more, what’s the average amount of time it takes for the cheerful person to end up a misery guts too?’

Mr Crouch told him to go back to his seat and finish boiling his tap water.

p. 10

FOCUS TEXT TWO

Keith sighed. They looked like they’d sent in two box tops and four pounds ninety-nine and got back an inflatable dog poo.

‘I’m just trying to cheer you both up,’ he said.

‘Well it’s not working,’ said Dad.

p.8

K–6 Outcome

WS3.10: Uses correct punctuation

KLA Outcomes

English 4.4.2: Students learn to use coherence of medium, form and content through specific language use

English 4.6.12: Students learn about textual and visual conventions for composing dialogue

ESL Scales

4.7.10: Follows direct and indirect speech

5.7.6: Shows an understanding of the meaning of noun phrases following verbs of saying and thinking

6.11.6: Incorporates direct and indirect speech appropriately in a text

3.10: Uses correct punctuation

4.4.2: Students learn to use coherence of medium, form and content through specific language convention

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 9



Language Conventions

Year 5 Q: 32

Year 7 Q: 43, 46, 51 and 52

Year 9 Q: 40, 43 and 51

Guided

The teacher explains that the purpose of the activity is to help students to identify the difference between direct speech and indirect speech.

INDIRECT SPEECH	
LANGUAGE FEATURE	EXAMPLE FROM TEXT
Past tense verbs	
Third person <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • he • him • she • her • they • them 	
Type of saying verbs	

DIRECT SPEECH	
LANGUAGE FEATURE	EXAMPLE FROM TEXT
Present tense verbs	
Speech marks	
First person <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I • me 	
Second person <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you 	
Type of saying verbs	

Item Descriptor

The use of correct and appropriate punctuation to aid the reading of a text

Statements of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language use.

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Photocopy the focus text excerpts, enlarging them onto A3 paper.

Guide students to identify:

- The speech marks in direct speech
- The use of first person: '**I**m just trying to cheer you both up,' he said (text two).

In this example, third person would be used to show the speaker's involvement in indirect speech – He said that he was just trying to cheer them both up.

- The use of second person 'How do you mean?' (text one) to refer to the recipient of the speech. Translated to indirect speech, it may read – *Mr Crouch asked him what he meant.*
- The use of past tense in indirect speech. For example, 'Mr Crouch told him to go back to his seat and finish boiling his tap water' (text one).
- the use of present tense in direct speech 'Sir,' said Keith, 'you **know** all those science magazines you read ...' (text one)

Students colour-code the sentences according to whether the speech is direct or indirect. Students write the examples into the charts.

Guided

Sorting Activity

Create laminated text cards using resource and A3 sheets for sorting text cards.

SORTING ACTIVITY	
DIRECT SPEECH	INDIRECT SPEECH

TEXT CARDS

Mr Crouch stated, 'I have someone's test paper with no name on it.'	He explained, 'It is a birthday surprise for Dad.'
He said he was just trying to cheer them both up.	Keith declared, 'I like bright coloured paint.'
Dad exclaimed that this was what he did not understand.	Mr Crouch stated that he had someone's text paper with no name on it.
Keith declared that he liked bright coloured paint.	He said, 'I am just trying to cheer you both up.'
He explained it was a birthday surprise for Dad.	Dad exclaimed, 'This is what I don't understand.'

Arrange students into groups of three.

Issue students with the sorting proforma.

Students read the text to their group and then sort (categorise) into direct and indirect speech.

For example:

DIRECT SPEECH	INDIRECT SPEECH
Dad exclaimed, 'This is what I don't understand.'	He explained it was a birthday surprise for Dad.

Ask students to circle the first verb after the saying verb in the direct speech examples.

Ask

- *What happens to this verb when you convert direct speech to indirect speech?*
- *Why does the tense change?*

Skill Focus: Identifying and using the semicolon

STAGE 4

Strategy

Semicolons are a sophisticated punctuation device. When used correctly, they add greatly to the effectiveness of writing. If students learn to use them to replace the incorrect 'splice comma' in their writing, they would write much better sentences and improve the clarity and effectiveness of their writing.

The semicolon marks the boundary between two separate sentences that are combined together as one. Generally the sentences are very closely related. Here are two examples of sentence sets punctuated differently.

The train was really crowded today. I have no idea why.

I remember her when she was a baby. Now she's a company director.

The train was really crowded today; I have no idea why.

I remember her when she was a baby; now she's a company director.

The version of these two sentences using a semicolon emphasises the closeness of the two statements and focuses the reader's attention on the second statement.

The semicolon can also mark the boundaries between a series of words or phrases in a complex list:

I have known her since she was a baby; she was always a hard worker; she graduated with honours; now she's a company director.

When we are rehearsing we must remember that there are many complex pieces to master, especially for the new players; the auditions are next week; and our performance must be of the highest standard.

The 'splice comma'

Students sometimes join two or more separate sentences with what is often called a 'splice comma'. These 'splice commas', **which are incorrect**, could be replaced by full stops, but in some cases a semicolon would be a much better option.

Incorrect use of a 'splice comma' to join two separate sentences:

My little brother is the only one in the family who hasn't started school yet, he has already turned five but is still too immature for school.

There are two ways to correct this sentence:

- Forming two separate sentences:

My little brother is the only one in the family who hasn't started school yet. He has already turned five but is still too immature for school.

- Joining the two sentences with a semicolon, which is a more sophisticated way of expressing the two ideas in the statements:

My little brother is the only one in the family who hasn't started school yet; he has already turned five but is still too immature for school.

K-6 Outcome

WS3.10: Students use knowledge of sentence structure, grammar and punctuation to edit own writing

KLA Outcomes

English 4.4.2: Students learn to ensure coherence of medium, form and content through specific language conventions and vocabulary

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 9



Language Conventions
Year 9 Q: 53

Item Descriptor

The use of correct and appropriate punctuation to aid the reading of a text

Statements of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language use.

Activities to support the strategy

Construction of sentences using semicolons

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

The following worksheet explicitly analyses the use of the semicolon as an effective punctuation mark.

Punctuate these sentences using semicolons and commas.

My head stopped hurting all pain had disappeared I felt relieved.

In a last desperate act I ran for the door and pushed it as hard as I could suddenly I was free.

Drying my eyes I looked out the window there in the distance I could see the soldiers speeding towards me.

I turned to leave the house for the last time I had spent many happy years there so I was reluctant to go.

The brown leather of the boots scratched at my hands as I tried to pull them off the boots no longer felt comfortable and warm.

Answers

My head stopped hurting; all pain had disappeared; I felt relieved.

In a last desperate act, I ran for the door and pushed it as hard as I could; suddenly I was free.

Drying my eyes, I looked out the window; there in the distance I could see the soldiers speeding towards me.

I turned to leave the house for the last time; I had spent many happy years there, so I was reluctant to go.

The brown leather of the boots scratched at my hands as I tried to pull them off; the boots no longer felt comfortable and warm.

Sentence Structure Overview

A sentence is a group of words that makes complete sense and has a least one clause. Sentences begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark. More complex sentences use sentence markers such as dashes, commas, semicolons and colons.

There are four functions for sentences:

1. Making statements (declaratives): *The girl shot a goal.*
2. Asking questions (interrogatives): *Did the girl shoot a goal?*
3. Commands (imperatives): *Shoot the goal!*
4. Voicing exclamations (exclamatives): *What a great goal!*

Most grammatical features within the sentence cluster around the noun and the verb. Words which build sentences describe the nouns (adjectivals) and the verb (adverbials).

High level writing includes good use of complex sentences. Students are able to enhance their writing using different types of sentences.

For more information on understanding sentence construction please view this PowerPoint presentation: [sentence_structure.ppt](#)

The following worksheet is used for exercises in the PowerPoint. Please have it printed before you begin.

Sentences worksheet

Activity 1

- The dog smelled disgusting. He was covered in mud and slime.
- The magician is very old. He knows many tricks.
- We landed with a bang. We fell out onto the ground. We were not hurt.

Activity 2

- Dark magic is all around us.
- Many princesses like to live in castles. Some princesses like to live in swamps.
- I had a suitcase full of weapons and I was incredibly strong.
- The king who was threatening me clicked his fingers at the guard.
- It was a very bad idea because the noise woke up the crocodile.
- Five minutes later I heard the noise again.
- I ran to the oval but I couldn't see them anywhere.
- While the others were sleeping I crept out and stole the diamond.
- After talking to him for a while I asked if he was my uncle.
- You must not go into that room because there is a monster in there that could kill you.
- Ducking for cover I found shelter under a rock.
- I entered the castle by crossing the drawbridge and was surprised by what the inside was like. It looked like a child's fantasy from a Disney animation.
- When they realised she was getting sicker, Jenny stopped to rest while Pete, who was a fast runner, went for help.
- The potion made me do strange things I did not understand.
- The tiger became vicious, slashing at the ropes.
- Caught in the trap, the tiger became vicious, slashing at the ropes with its claws and growling ferociously.
- I decided complaining wasn't the answer.

Skill Focus: Identifying a sentence

STAGE ES I

Strategy

Collaborative Cloze can be conducted as a small multi-ability group activity or done as a read aloud strategy with the whole class. Either way, the text is first read aloud ensuring readers have the necessary scaffolding to access meaning from the text.

By collaborating and discussing options to complete the text, all students benefit from participating irrespective of their reading level. Less confident readers may bring a lot of prior knowledge to the discussion, whereas more competent readers may provide the necessary scaffolding to process the text.

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Select a short narrative text – fiction or non fiction – that is suited to the interests, ages and context of the students in the class.

A class big book is an excellent resource. Alternatively, enlarge the chosen text on the photocopier to A3 paper so that all the students can view the text.

Text pages can also be transferred as an OHT or onto an interactive white board where words can be written on the screen.

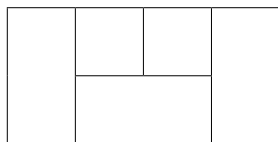
When preparing the cloze, the first sentence establishes a context so it is left untouched.

Cover over a word in every fifth sentence with post-it notes or coloured paper.

If the text has been enlarged, the omitted word can be redrawn with a line.

The lines match the size of the words so students use the size of words as a context clue.

If a particular word is required, the shape of the word could replace the line. For example, *jump* would look like



The teacher reads the first page of the text and models what to do when students come to the missing word:

I can read past the word

I can start at the beginning of the sentence

I think what will make sense

I cannot see the letters of the word so I cannot sound it out

I can look at the pictures to help me.

Guided

Ask the students if they think they know what the missing word is.

K–6 Outcome

WESI.9: Student engages in writing like behaviour

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 8



Item Descriptor

The production of grammatically correct, structurally sound and meaningful sentences

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language use to write sentences in appropriate grammatical order.

Other links

http://www.myread.org/guide_collaborative.htm

With every suggestion, read the sentence again with the substitution.

Check whether it makes sense.

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Ask open ended questions to prompt students to think about why the sentence does not make sense and what is missing.

How do we know where the sentence starts and finishes?

What types of words do we need in a sentence so that it makes sense?

What can I do when I come to a word I cannot read?

Re-read the picture book when the substitutions are complete.

Students provide full, correctly punctuated sentences about the narrative which the teacher scribes on the board.

For example:

There's a Sea in my Bedroom by Margaret Wild

Student responses

David was frightened of the sea.

David liked to collect shells.

There were lots of beautiful shells.

His father took him to the beach to look for shells.

Water came out of the shell.

David liked the water in his room.

David played in the water.

He laughed and laughed.

David said there was a sea in his bedroom but there was no sea at all.

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Students highlight to identify parts of the sentences on the board such as:

- the capital letters
- the beginning of the sentence
- the end of the sentence
- the full stops.

Students choose their favourite part of the narrative and illustrate it using a sentence to describe the event.

Students can use the sentence on the board as a model, have their sentences scribed for them or edited in a joint teacher–student conference.

The bed is soft.

Mum is not happy.

The men ran up the hill.

My cat is sick.

Skill Focus: Produces grammatically correct sentences

STAGES ESI–I

Strategy

Explicit teaching involves:

- Explaining the purpose of every task or lesson and its value to the students' learning.
- Explaining to students what is required in fulfilling the purpose of the lesson or activity.
- Modelling and demonstrating the skills, knowledge and understanding required to complete a lesson or activity.
- Making aspects at all levels of a task explicit.
- Giving students opportunities to practise skills and enhance understanding.

Deconstructing sentences

Explicitly teach students:

- that a simple sentence names something and tells more (see page 98 English K–6 Syllabus for additional definition information).
- that a written sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop.

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

The teacher says: *Today we are going to learn about sentences.*

A sentence gives us a complete idea and it makes sense.

A sentence names something and tells us more.

A sentence has a doing or thinking word in it.

The teacher writes one simple sentence on the board at a time so the students focus on just one sentence. For example: *Tim went to the park.*

The teacher points to the sentence and says *This is a sentence. It has a word that the sentence is about. It has a capital letter to tell me the sentence has begun and a full stop to tell me the sentence is finished.*

The teacher reads the sentence, pointing to each word as she reads it : *Tim went to the park.*

The teacher asks the students to read the sentence aloud as she points to each word and reads it with them.

The teacher then says: *This sentence names Tim.*

What does it name? (pause for a group response)

Allow students to respond (Tim).

I'm going to circle the word 'Tim'.

Repeat this with other simple sentences, one sentence at a time.

K–6 Outcomes

- WSI.10: Uses most common punctuation marks for example spaces between words, capital letters and full stops
- RSI.6: Uses knowledge of grammatical structure of language to understand texts

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 8



Item Descriptor

The production of grammatically correct, structurally sound and meaningful sentences

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language use to write sentences in appropriate grammatical order.

Guided

Write a new simple sentence on the board. Use simple, clear words to talk about it. For example, *Listen while I read this sentence. The dog is sad.* (Point to the words while reading).

What does it name?

Allow students to respond. (dog)

Praise the students for a correct answer and ask one child to circle the words 'the dog'.

Give specific feedback *Yes, this sentence names the dog.*

Next, write some additional sentences and repeat the format above.

Closely monitor the children who are having difficulty:

- reading the words
- identifying the components of the sentence
- responding to the instructions.

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Discuss with students what they know about dogs, guiding them towards categories that include behaviour, environment, purposes of dogs in different environments and physical appearance. Discuss experiences from students who have dogs as pets in terms of names, how they look after them and how they behave.

Share a picture book with the students, for example, *Black Dog* by Pamela Allen.

As the students retell the events from the narrative, the teacher records them in simple sentences on the white board such as:

Black dog played with Christina.

They played every day.

The wind blew.

They waited.

A bird came.

Students circle the naming words (the subject not the object of each sentence) in a guided activity.

Modelled

The teacher writes one simple sentence on the board. The teacher says the words as she writes them.

For example: *The girl is going to school.*

Let's read the sentence together.

Read the sentence with the class.

What does it name?

The students respond. (the girl)

The teacher continues by explaining aloud what she is doing.

I'm going to circle those words. (The teacher circles 'the girl'.)

This sentence tells us more about the girl. It says that she is going to school. I'm going to underline the words that tell more. (The teacher underlines the rest of the sentence.)

The girl is going to school.

Repeat this with other simple sentences, one sentence at a time.

Next, write some additional sentences and repeat the format above. Closely monitor the children who are having difficulty by watching their mouths. Give extra guided practice to relevant students in a small group.

Provide enough support so that the student succeeds in his or her attempts.

Next start some sentences and individual children complete them.

The dog ...

Praise and positive reinforcement as the children attempt and succeed in the guided activity is important.

Independent

Use the sample worksheet as a guide to develop relevant contextual sentences for students to deconstruct.

Model the first few sentences and then the students can complete the worksheet independently.

The teacher will need to carefully monitor the students to ensure they are answering the questions correctly.

The worksheet can be marked together as a way of feedback and cumulative student assessment.

Please refer to the following worksheet.

Name: _____

A simple sentence names something and tells more.

Circle the word that names something. Underline the part that tells us more.

Draw a picture to show what the sentence is about.

My dad likes to go fishing.	Kim can jump.	Tim sat on a rat.	Mum went to the shops.
The frog sat on the log.	This is my house.	Tom and Sam fed the pigs.	My dog can run fast.
Dad and Dan like to jog in the park.	The hen can run.	The baby is clapping.	The cat is going to the vet.

Create worksheets using simple sentences related to the students in the class in terms of:

- the topic they are working on in any KLA
- their guided reading book
- a recent real world experience the class has participated in such as an excursion, special event or ceremony

This keeps the sentences contextual and meaningful to the students.

Give extra guided practice to students who are challenged by this skill in a small group.

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Play the 'tell me more game'. Students who cannot read can still play the game if a peer or teacher reads the beginning of the sentence in the box that they land on.

TELL MORE GAMES

START →	The dog ...	Sam ...	My hat ...	The bee ...	The drink ...	My skin ...	The crab ...
FINISH ☆	A simple sentence names something and tells more. Need: 1 dice 1 counter for each player						The skunk ...
I like to ...	Rules: 1. Throw the dice 2. You can move the counter that many spaces only if you tell more for every space you move along. Read what the sentence names and tell more . 3. If you land on the ☆ you can make up your own simple sentence. 4. Make sure the sentence names something and tells more.						The ant ...
Mum likes to ...							My house ...
☆							The bug ...
School is ...							Mum ...
My friend ...	☆	The frog ...	Grandma ...	Fred ...	The pup ...	The sun ...	My cat ...

Name: _____

A simple sentence names something and tells more.

Circle the word or words that name something. Underline the part that tells us more.

Draw a picture to tell what the sentence is about.

The bed is soft.

Mum is not happy.

The men ran up the hill.

My cat is sick.

The pup likes milk.

The sand is hot.

Sam was sent home.

My hat fell in the mud.

Ken and Tim went camping.

The duck likes to swim.

The flag is red and black.

The crab got stuck in the net.

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Guided

Choose a new page in a book that only has sentences with simple punctuation. That is, that starts with a capital letter and ends in a full stop and does not contain questions, direct speech commas or more complex punctuation.

Ask students to read a sentence.

Ask *How can we tell if these words make a sentence?*

Modelled

Say *Today we are going to learn more about a sentence. We already know that a sentence ... (give a clue then pause for a group response) names something and tells more.*

Praise the students for saying 'names something and tells more'. *When someone writes a simple sentence, it starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop.*

Point to a sentence and say *This sentence starts with a capital letter (point to the capital letter) and ends with a full stop (point to the full stop). Let's read the sentence.* Repeat with 3 or more sentences.

Guided

Ask individual students to find one sentence. Point out the capital letter and the full stop.

Encourage students to say 'A simple sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop' while pointing.

Give specific feedback, for example, *Yes the sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop.*

Remember to prompt and praise. If a child points to something that is not a full stop, say *point to the full stop* (while pointing to the full stop on the page).

Independent

Young students may like to use a magnifying glass to find sentences, carefully looking for the capital letters and full stops.

Students can place an overhead transparency over a page in their guided reading book and circle the capital letter and full stop for each sentence.

Skill Focus: Produces grammatically correct sentences

STAGE 1

Strategy

Conceptual understanding can be taught by providing a definition of the concept followed by classifying sentences into ‘examples and non-examples’.

The teacher:

- identifies the concept
- provides a definition by clearly defining the attributes
- gives examples of the concept with all the defining attributes (i.e. examples of correct sentences)
- gives examples of the concept that have some of the defining attributes (i.e. examples of non-sentences)
- explains why the examples or non-examples define the concept
- tests or checks understanding with new examples and non-examples.

The students:

- sort or separate examples and non-examples
- apply the knowledge to new situations and examples.

Activities to Support the Strategy

Modelled

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Preparation: Divide the white board into two sections. One section titled ‘yes’ (sentence) – for examples of sentences. The other side of the white board is titled ‘No’ (not sentences) – for examples that are not sentences.

Prepare sentences that can be shown one at a time (e.g. on flashcards or on an interactive white board). These sentences should be contextual and relevant to the students.

Yes (sentences)	No (not sentences)
--------------------	-----------------------

The teacher says ‘Today we are going to learn about sentences. A simple sentence names something and tells more. It starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop. It must have a naming word and a doing word. It can have another naming word that is the object in the sentence.’

First, present ‘examples’ of written sentences one at a time. *This is a sentence.* (point to the sentence)

For example: Tim likes to swim in the pool.

My mum went to the beach.

K–6 Outcomes

WS1.10: Uses most common punctuation marks, for example, spaces between words, capital letters and full stops

RS1.6: Uses knowledge of grammatical structure of language to understand texts

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 8



Item Descriptor

The production of grammatically correct, structurally sound and meaningful sentences

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language use to write sentences in appropriate grammatical order.

The teacher places the sentence in the 'yes' section.

This procedure is repeated 6 times, using different sentences, one at a time.

Then read aloud 'non-examples' of sentences and place them in the 'no' column.

The teacher says *This is not a sentence* (emphasising the word not)

For example: my mum went to the beach (incorrect punctuation)

Likes to swim in the pool. (no subject)

My mum went to the pool. (correct)

The teacher places it in the 'no' (not a sentence) section. This procedure is repeated 4–6 times.

After 6 examples, and 4–6 non-examples, the teacher explains the concept by saying:

These are sentences. Each sentence names something and tells more. Each sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop. (The teacher points to the yes section on the white board.)

The teacher then says:

These are not sentences. (The teacher points to the sentences in the no section on the white board.)

The teacher explains why each sentence is not a correct sentence.

For example:

- no naming word/subject
- no capital letter
- no full stop
- no doing word.

Guided

Provide the following teaching framework chart:

A simple sentence

- names something (has a noun.)
- can have an object
- tells more
- must have a doing word
- starts with a capital letter
- ends with a full stop

The teacher holds up one sentence and asks *Is this a sentence or not a sentence?*

(pause for a group response).

The teacher asks for an individual response *How do we know?*

All attempts are encouraged. The 'prompt and pause' strategy is used.

After a correct response the child puts the sentence in the appropriate section ('Yes'/'No').

The teacher gives the students specific relevant feedback e.g, *Yes, this is a sentence. It names something and tells more. It starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop.*

Repeat the procedure with examples and non-examples presented in random order.

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Each student sorts out some new sentences with examples and non-examples mixed up.

The activity can be done individually, in pairs or small groups. Students can use guided reading groups to categorise sentences and non sentences from their reading texts.

The teacher monitors closely to ensure that all the students can sort examples and non-examples independently.

Students can also use this strategy to edit their daily writing or group edit students' writing.

Students can be supplied with a checklist (such as the one provided above) for their books or desk to assist their self checking skills. This aid is removed when the student feels they can use this skill without their framework support (reminder card).

Skill Focus: Identifying sentence types

STAGES 1–2

Strategy

Hot Seat

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Nominate four students for the hot seats. These four students randomly choose a chair to sit on, not knowing its label (exclamation, command, statement or question).

Students can also wear a headband with the label of the sentence type.

Distribute cards with sentence type labels according to each student's instructional need.

For example, give the question card to a student whose language focus is forming questions.

Choose a class member to nominate a topic. The students in the hot seat look at the label then give the type of response matching the label on the chair they are sitting on.

For example: the student's label is an exclamation about a topic.

The word they choose is – water.

They say the word in a sentence to match their label – Look out for the water!

Students have three seconds to answer. If they cannot answer in this time, they forfeit their hot seat and then nominate a replacement student.

Activities to support the strategy

Identifying sentence types

This activity helps students to distinguish between statements, commands, exclamations and questions.

Introduce students to the sentence types through role-playing.

Use content from a current topic to make up four sentences.

Ask four students to read a sentence each, using expression and relevant actions:

Preserving water is important for our survival. (*statement*)

Don't waste water. (*command*)

Is water important? (*question*)

What a fantastic way to recycle water! (*exclamation*)

Examine the grammatical structures of a command with the students e.g. subject-verb order, subject (you) that is understood (not stated).

Tell students that meaning is conveyed in speech not only through what we say

K–6 Outcomes

- WS1.14: Students can recognise a sentence
- WS2.10: Students use correct punctuation
- WS2.14: Identifies different types of sentences

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 8



Language conventions

Year 3 Q: 29 and 41

Year 5 Q: 30 and 46

Year 7 Q: 38

Item Descriptor

The production of grammatically correct, structurally sound and meaningful sentences

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language use to write sentences in appropriate grammatical order.

(spoken words), but also through facial expression, vocal intonation, tone and body movements. In writing, different writing markers are used.

These writing markers include:

- use of punctuation
- expressive speaking verbs.

Encourage the development of these understandings through talking and listening and writing in the literacy session.

Modelled

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Ask the students what they know about sentences by asking probing questions.

The teacher writes a simple 'secret sentence' on the board and the students have to work out what the sentence says.

The teacher then models the grammatical changes necessary to alter the statement into a command and a question.

The teacher then writes the sentences on the board using the punctuation markers.

The teacher then asks the students what was the same and different about the sentences.

Guided

Students work in pairs. One student reads their narrative to the other student. The second student devises a number of questions to ask about the narrative. The teacher supports the pairs as they work on developing questions around the texts.

The students answer the questions their buddy has asked.

Discuss with the class how the questions helped to build the information about their narratives.

Guided

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Write three topics that have been developed from the narratives on the white board.

For example:

1. dragons
2. lost
3. swimming in summer

Nominate four students for the hot seats. These four students randomly choose a chair to sit on, not knowing its label (exclamation, command, statement or question). Alternatively, distribute cards with sentence type labels according to each student's instructional need. For example, give the question card to a student whose language focus is forming questions.

Choose a class member to nominate a topic.

Each student in the hot seat, having looked at the label, must then give the type of response matching the label on the chair that the student is sitting on, e.g. an exclamation.

For example:

- an exclamation about dragons: I see a dragon!
- a question about dragons: Are you sure it is a dragon?
- a statement about dragons: It is a big dragon.
- a command about dragons: Catch that dragon!

Students have three seconds to answer or they lose their hot seat. They then nominate a replacement student.

Skill Focus: Developing ideas through language choices

STAGES 2–3 Supporting ESL Students

Strategy

Using a matrix to build sentences about characters and settings

Activities to support the strategy

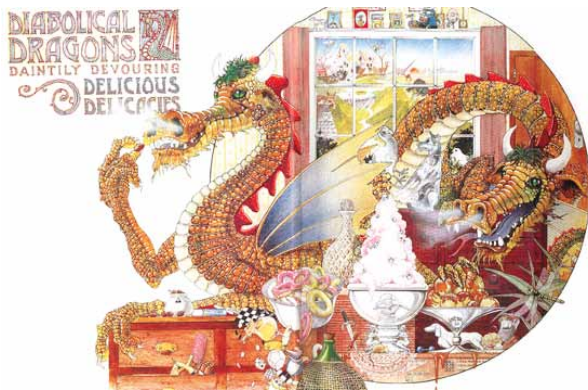
Guided

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Using character development strategies from Criterion 4, students brainstorm various scenarios involving a dragon as the main character.

Use the proforma matrix as a guide. This can be used as an OHT, a worksheet or as the matrix for recording on butcher’s paper or the white board.

Friendly Dragons	Evil Dragons
Actions	Actions
What do they do?	What do they do?
Thoughts and feelings	Thoughts and feelings
What do they think?	What do they think?



(Source: *Animalia* by Graeme Base)

An example is provided.

K–6 Outcomes

WS2.10: Identifies adjectives and how these add to the meaning of the text

WS3.6: Identifies adjectival clauses

WS3.10: Uses a variety of adjectives

ESL Scales

3.11.12: Selects suitable descriptive words to enhance effectiveness of writing

4.3.8: Employs a small range of vocabulary to describe shades of meaning

4.10.6: Creates mood and feeling by use of appropriate words

5.10.6: Uses fitting detail in description

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 3



Language Conventions
Year 3 Q: 28

Item Descriptor

The production of grammatically correct, structurally sound and meaningful sentences

Statements of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to:

- introduce characters and provide a brief description of setting
- include brief descriptions of familiar characters, places and things

Friendly Dragons	Evil Dragons
<p>Actions</p> <p>What do they do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – help people – cause no harm – don't attack humans – don't destroy property – afraid of dragon-slaying knights – wants to have friends and be friendly 	<p>Actions</p> <p>What do they do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – kidnap princesses – cause lots of harm – attack humans – destroy human property – seek to vanquish dragon-slaying knights – live alone, have rebel friends
<p>Thoughts and feelings</p> <p>What do they think or feel?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – afraid – frightened – shy – friendly – brave – 'Why can't people understand that not all dragons are bad?' – 'Why are people so frightened of me?' – 'I want to live in peace with everyone.' 	<p>Thoughts and feelings</p> <p>What do they think or feel?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – fearless – bold – unfriendly – invincible – powerful – 'I will vanquish all dragon-slaying knights.' – 'Those puny humans are no match for my fire-breathing power.' – 'I want to destroy all who stand in my way.'

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Using the matrix students create a sentence about a dragon.

For example:

The enormous green dragon reared its scaly body before blowing out red hot steam through its moonlike nostrils.

By the class as a whole, the sentence is then deconstructed in terms of its language use.

Ask students probing questions about the position of the words and the types of words, and draw conclusions about where words can be placed to build texts.

Article adjectives noun verb pronoun adjective noun

The enormous green dragon reared its scaly body

verb group adjectives noun
before blowing out red hot steam through

pronoun adjective noun
its moonlike nostrils.

For later stage three students sentences can be constructed at a more detailed level.

For example:

Article adjectives noun adverb verb possessive pronoun adjective noun
The enormous green dragon slowly reared its scaly body

verb group adjectives noun
before blowing out red hot steam

adverbial clause
relative verb possessive adjective noun
pronoun pronoun
which escapes through its moonlike nostrils.

As students analyse the text language, they create a fact file about the grammar, for example:

- *Adjectives describe nouns, personal and possessive pronouns
- * Every clause has a verb. The verb is central to the clause. Verbs sometimes need helpers to make them finite.
- * Nouns and pronouns can be subjects or objects in sentences.
- * Adverbs add to the verb.

Skill Focus: Building sentences

STAGES 2–3

Strategy

Sentence Makers

It is important to introduce the concept that a simple sentence usually has a subject, verb and object.

This will help students understand that a clause is a group of words that tell us about an action. It also gives the basic frame for building and reducing sentences. Sentence complexity can be developed by the use of vocabulary and content. This should be relevant to the context of the students.

Activities to support the strategy

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Use a holding strip and a handful of word cards to build a range of sentence structures.

Basic sentence making: use news sessions, exciting events, favourite books and word banks to stimulate word choice and encourage students to construct sentences.

The	car	broke down	this	morning	.
-----	-----	------------	------	---------	---

Sentence expansion

Extend existing sentences by inserting additional adjectives, adverbs, causal connections, phrases and clauses:

The	car	broke down	on	the	way	this	morning	.
-----	-----	------------	----	-----	-----	------	---------	---

The	car	broke down	on	the	way	this	morning	because
it	was	out	of	petrol	.			

Sentence reduction

Reduce a long sentence to its simplest form by removing one word at a time:

The	car	broke	down	.
-----	-----	-------	------	---

Sentence transformation

Have students transform existing sentences by taking turns to change one word at a time. A noun must be changed for a noun, a verb for a verb and so on:

Most	surfers	are	good	swimmers	.
Most	surfers	are	poor	swimmers	.
Most	surfers	are	poor	dancers	.

K–6 Outcomes

WS2.I4: Identifies different types of sentences

WS3.I4: Recognises the subject, object and verb of a clause

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 8



Item Descriptor

The production of grammatically correct, structurally sound and meaningful sentences

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language use to write sentences in appropriate grammatical order.

Skill Focus: Building sentences – phrases and clauses

STAGES 2–3

Strategy

Sorting clauses and sentences

Deconstructing and analysing the metalanguage of word order in sentences through IRE (initiate-respond-evaluate) modelling and guided activities to provide frameworks and practice of skills.

Once the structures and language have been practised students move to higher-order activities which involve classifying sentences into categories and manipulating sentences to demonstrate and verbalise their understanding of the concepts.

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Shared book experience:

Use a picture book that contains both simple and complex sentences.

For example: *Gorilla* by Anthony Browne

On the second read, model the clauses within sentences by pausing and using intonation when reading.

Choose a section of the text for deconstruction and either:

- write text on white board
- enlarge onto A3 paper
- produce page as an OHT

Explain that each clause has a verb.

Ask students to identify the verbs in the sentences.

Practise identifying the verbs in sentences using IRE (initiate-respond-evaluate) strategy.

The teacher says *Here is a sentence. This is the subject. This is the verb.* At this stage students are becoming familiar with action, saying, thinking and relating verbs.

K–6 Outcomes

WS2.1.4: Identifies different types of sentences

WS3.1.4: Recognises the subject, object and verb of a clause

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 8

The Box

Today you are going to write a sentence or story.

The box for your story is "The Box".

What is inside the box? How did it get there?

Be creative! You can't see what's inside!

The box might reveal a message or something that was hidden.

What happens in your story if the box is opened?

Think about:

- the characters and where they are
- the suspense or problem to be solved
- how the story will end.

Remember to:

- plan your story before you start
- write in sentences
- pay attention to the words you choose, your spelling and punctuation, and paragraphs
- check and edit your writing when you have finished.

Item Descriptor

The production of grammatically correct, structurally sound and meaningful sentences

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language use to write sentences in appropriate grammatical order.

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Write a series of clauses and phrases from the text onto cardboard strips. Include simple sentences without the punctuation, dependent clauses beginning with a conjunction and phrases beginning with a preposition.

phrases (not clauses)	clauses (but not sentences)	clauses that are sentences
but the next day	swinging through the trees towards the zoo	He was busy.
in the afternoon	When they arrived at the zoo	Hannah woke up.
at the weekend	but I'm hungry now	Hannah was frightened.
The night before her birthday	and saw a small parcel at the foot of her bed	They went straight to the primates.

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Direct students to sort the cardboard strips into two groups: 'clauses' and 'not clauses' and justify their decisions.

Then direct students to sort the pile of clauses into two groups: 'sentences' and 'not sentences' and justify their decisions.

In small groups, students can reconstruct the visuals from each page of the picture book, identifying the symbols and images important to them. The story can be re-told and presented as a *PowerPoint*. To view a sample *PowerPoint* click on the link below.

Skill Focus: Building sentences – phrases and clauses

STAGE 3

Strategy

Modelled sentence patterns act as a scaffold as students analyse short extracts by paying particular attention to the variety of ways authors construct sentences.

Find a short descriptive paragraph from a familiar literary text and use it to demonstrate to students how to use the author’s sentence patterns as a model to create a new text to suit a different context.

Provide paragraphs from selected narrative texts to students using the scaffold shown below.

Ask students:

How would this be helpful?

When would we need to know this?

Who might be the audience for the work we produce?

Give students paragraphs to innovate, first in pairs and later individually. This technique gives students the opportunity to successfully write high quality, sophisticated texts with a variety of sentence structures.

Activity to support the strategy

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

ORIGINAL an extract from <i>The Wind in the Willows</i> by Kenneth Grahame	INNOVATION new context: someone returning home after many years
Arriving within sight of his home, he rested his oars and surveyed the land cautiously. All seemed peaceful and deserted and quiet.	Parking in front of his childhood home, he leaned back and scanned the front yard hesitantly. Everything seemed run down and neglected and overgrown.
ORIGINAL An extract from <i>Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes</i> by Eleanor Coerr.	INNOVATION new context: two children eating breakfast before going to the Royal Easter Show
At breakfast Sadako noisily gulped down her soup and rice. Masahiro began to talk about girls who ate like hungry dragons. But Sadako didn’t hear his teasing. Her thoughts were dancing around the Peace Day of last year. She loved the crowds of people, the music and fireworks. Sadako could still taste the spun cotton candy.	Over the breakfast table Catherine loudly munched her bacon and eggs. James began to talk about girls who ate like horses eating hay. But Catherine tuned out his teasing. Her thoughts were skipping around the Royal Easter Show last year. She was thrilled by the rides, the animal parades and the fire-eaters. She could still taste the freshly made popcorn.

K–6 Outcomes

WS3.10: Uses knowledge of sentence structure, grammar and punctuation to edit own writing

WS3.13: Reflects, analyses and evaluates their own writing and that of others

WS3.14: Writes demonstrating variety and competence in complex sentence

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 8



Language Conventions

Year 7 Q: 53

Year 9 Q: 33

Item Descriptor

The production of grammatically correct, structurally sound and meaningful sentences

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language use to write sentences in appropriate grammatical order.

Place an excerpt from a text being studied in class on an OHT or interactive white board.

Ensure that the last sentence is covered.

The teacher reads and then discusses the type of sentences and language the author has used and the mood it sets with the students by asking probing questions.

The teacher draws the attention of the students to the covered last sentence. The teacher asks students to write the next sentence in the story.

When the students have finished their sentence they share them in a writers' circle.

The teacher then reveals the next sentence on the OHT and discusses how this compares/contrasts to their sentence and why the author made the choices he or she did in terms of:

- sentence length
- complexity
- choice of language
- theme (outcome).

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Ask students to write an alternative ending for a known text or a narrative written by a student in the class.

Skill Focus: Building sophistication of complex sentences – phrases and clauses

STAGE 4

Strategy

Identifying some trigger words for dependency in complex sentences

Identifying key words in complex sentences can assist students to understand the construction of these sentences.

Some trigger words for dependency in contextual topics and texts

Place	where, wherever
Time	after, before, when, while, as long, since, until, while, whenever, each time
Manner	the way that, by, through, as, as if, like, as though
Condition	as long as, in case of, unless, on condition that
Cause	because, since, in case, in order to, so as to, so that
Concession	although, even if, even though, whereas, despite, while

Activities to support the strategy

Guided

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Ask students:

What does the word dependency mean?

What would it mean then if one clause was dependent on another?

How would being able to identify these dependencies help us to gain meaning from texts?

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Provide a copy of the matrix above as a guide for students.

Provide a passage from the novel of study.

Students highlight the connectives that are acting as triggers for dependency in the passage as they read together.

Discuss:

- *what effect the variety has on the quality of the text.*
- *what type of connective is most common and why they think this is the case.*
- *how the type of text being written would affect the type of connectives being used.*

KLA Outcomes

English 4.4.2: Students learn to create and ensure coherence of medium, form and content through specific language conventions and vocabulary appropriate to particular subject matter or contexts.

English 4.4.8: Students learn about the ways in which specific language forms, features and structures of a text are used to shape meaning including sentence structures grammar and punctuation.

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 8



Language Conventions

Year 9 Q: 44 and 52

Item Descriptor

The production of grammatically correct, structurally sound and meaningful sentences

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to use different sentence and clause structures to expand ideas or foreground certain information.

Modelled

Make an overhead transparency of sentences. Use different colour overhead markers to indicate the breaks between the main clauses such as in the example below.

I stare out of the window of my farmhouse and the winds lash leaves against the glass and there is stomping rain on my tin roof. It is difficult to hear the evacuation procedures on the radio. The fierce lightning strikes and it wakes the darkness and I can see the floodwaters rising.

Work with the students to reconstruct the sentences to create complexity. An example of an edited script is below:

As I stare out the window of my farmhouse the winds lash leaves against the glass. The stomping rain on my tin roof makes it difficult to hear the evacuation procedures on the radio. As the fierce lightning strikes, it wakes the darkness so I can see the floodwaters rising.

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Give students some main clauses from the text being studied and ask them to add as many different types of dependent clauses as they can in a limited time.

Then discuss their choices and reasons for their choices.

Ask students to underline the verbs, draw arrows to the subject and circle the conjunctions in passages provided, then to rewrite the sentence, using different conjunctions and/or breaking the sentence into shorter sentences. If possible use examples from current subject content.

Skill Focus: Understanding complex sentences STAGE 5

This PowerPoint presentation: [sentence_structure.ppt](#) can be used as a lesson for stage 5 students to increase understanding of sentence structure.

KLA Outcomes

English 5.1.8: Students learn about the features of increasingly complex imaginative texts including the linguistic and structural features

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 8



The Box

Today you are going to write a narrative or story.
The idea for your story is 'The Box'.
What is inside the box? How did it get there?
Is it valuable? Perhaps it is not!
The box might reveal a message or something that will change.
What happens in your story if the box is opened?
Think about:

- the characters and what they do
- the complication or problem to be solved
- how the story will end.

Remember to:

- plan your story before you start
- write in paragraphs
- pay attention to the words you choose,
- plan spelling and punctuation, and using capital letters.
- Check and edit your writing when you finish writing.

Item Descriptor

The production of grammatically correct, structurally sound and meaningful sentences

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to use different sentence and clause structures to expand ideas or foreground certain information.

Similes, Metaphors and Alliteration Overview

Writers use a number of devices to build imagery in texts. Similes, metaphors and alliteration are three of these.

Examples of other language choices are:

- Attitudinal, technical, formal, colloquial and evaluative language appropriate to the genre and purpose
- Precise single words (nouns, verbs, adjectives) and/or word groups (adverbial and adjectival groups)
- Personification.

A simile states that one object is like another; a metaphor states that an object is another or substitutes one object for another.

For example:

As a simile: *The world is like a stage*

As a metaphor: *All the world is a stage*

All the world's a stage,

And all the men and women merely players;

They have their exits and their entrances;

(William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, II, vii)

Alliteration is the repetition of initial sounds in words that follow each other.

For example:

The sparrow sang a solitary song.

I can sense the sweet smell of success.

The ball is bigger and better than before.

Jolly Jack jumped for joy.

Skill Focus: Uses alliteration, similes and metaphors

STAGE 4

Strategy

Deconstructing imagery in texts

Highlight for students how successful writers craft descriptions using a variety of techniques. Imagery is an essential component of effective writing as it assists readers to imagine what is in the writer's mind. Imagery is most effective when intensity or polarisation of images is described.

Authors create mood and imagery by varying the levels of:

- excitement
- anticipation
- extreme feelings.

Explain to students that similes and metaphors are frequently used to expand noun groups. However, they are also an important device to intensify actions. Demonstrate some examples.

Ask students to change similes into metaphors in the context of their learning, for example:

As a simile	As a metaphor
The fox flickers through the forest like a tongue of fire.	The fox was a tongue of fire flickering through the forest.
The boy stretched his neck like a pipe to see what was happening over the fence.	The boy's neck was a pipe that stretched so he could see what was happening over the fence.

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Ask students to call out body parts. Write them on the board in a list.

Model for students how to create similes by first saying what something else is like:

- a neck like a pipe
- hair like rats' tails
- trees like feather dusters
- hail like jagged rocks
- lightning like a laser show
- thunder like a roaring beast

Then show students how to use the information in a different form:

KLA Outcomes

- Design and Technology 4.6.3: uses a range of technologies appropriately and safely in the development of quality design solutions
- English 4.6.11: Discusses how metaphor and alliteration enhance texts

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 5



Reading

Year 7 Q: 25, 43 and 45
Year 9 Q: 9

Item Descriptor

Developing a range of and precision in language choices

Statements of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language use.

- *rat's tail hair*
- *whips of lightning*
- *bubble wrap skin*
- *bruised flesh of the clouds*
- *black ribbon of the road*
- *the drum beat of thunder*

Guided

Access the site www.australianscreen.com.au

Show the film clips titled *Wading through the floods* and *The muddy aftermath*:
from <http://australianscreen.com.au/education/environment/disasters/>

Clip no. 2 Maitland Floods: Home movie 'Wading through the floods'

Clip no. 3 Maitland Floods: Home Movie 'The muddy aftermath'

After viewing each film clip, brainstorm the events in detail including components such as:

chairs

flooding water

furniture

debris

houses

river

telegraph wires

animals

boats

people

Students list action verbs for these objects and then compare each of these items to another object such as:

chairs – The chairs were floating like boats.

flooding water – The water was running like a herd of wildebeests.

debris – Debris was hanging from the telegraph wires like dirty socks on the clothes line.

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Brainstorm with students extreme events that could be described using similes.

Students discuss personal experiences of any of these events.

For example:

Volcanic eruption, cyclone, explosion, war, race car crash, collapsing building, sinking ship, crashing aeroplane, birth, death.

Explain that these events can be made more vivid to readers by using language that develops a picture in the reader's mind.

Using a topic that the students choose, construct a poem using similes.

When constructing, students need to think about: appearance, sound, smell and feelings.

THE STORM

Looks like a mud puddle in the sky

And smells like mouldy leather

It sounds like a giant's stomach rumbling

And feels like being turned inside out.

Following the explicit teaching of imagery in modelled and guided reading sessions, select a descriptive passage (see suggestions below). Present this to students as a cloze passage with the passages of imagery below.

For example:

Beyond our desolate farm I can see the horizon where a few dark clouds _____.

It never comes, and now our dam is a patch of dry cracked mud surrounded by brown land.

The cicadas have been shrilling, _____. This morning they are quiet. The silence _____. It spreads and suffocates everything, _____.

steals into corners, nooks and crannies

calling impatiently for rain

like a hot dry blanket

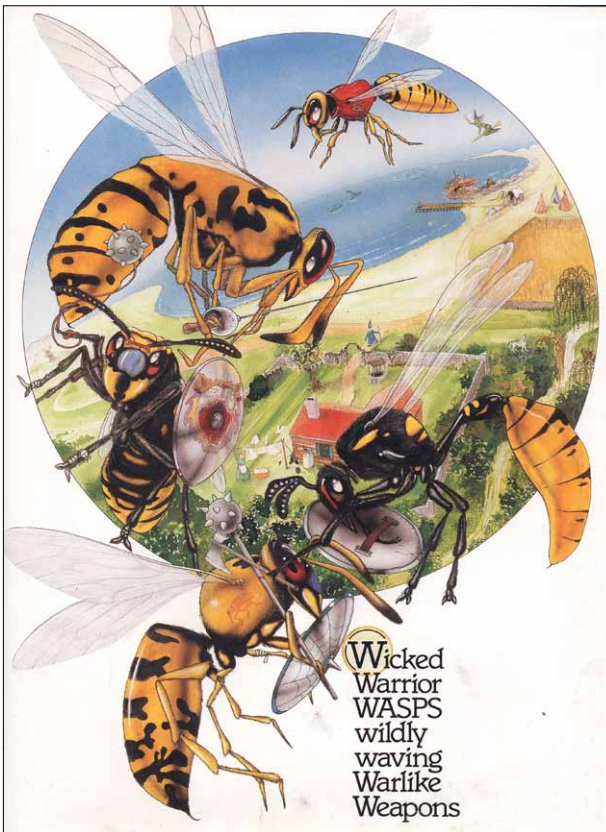
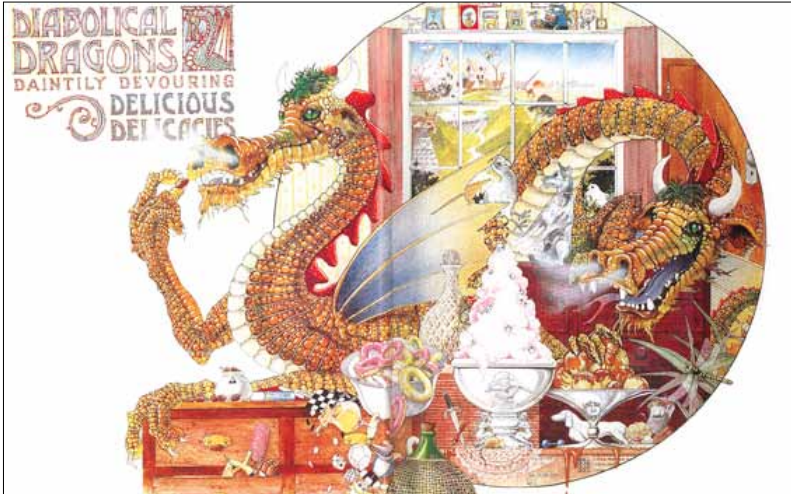
cruelly taunt us with promises of rain

Suggested texts rich in imagery suitable for deconstruction include:

- *The Twits* by Roald Dahl
- *Blueback* by Tim Winton
- *Storm Boy* by Colin Thiele

Guided

Deconstructing *Animalia* by Graeme Base to identify the use of alliteration.



Provide an A3 copy of the pages from *Animalia* by Graeme Base. Discuss the use of alliteration in the text and the use of effective adjectives and verbs to describe the visual images.

Students are randomly given a letter of the alphabet and asked to create a sentence about their school using the letter in alliteration. These examples can be used as stimulus.

The students capture their alliteration using photography. Using either *Movie Maker* or *PowerPoint*, the students collate their representations as a presentation.

Spelling Overview

For students to develop spelling skills and implement strategies, teachers need to teach spelling in an explicit, systematic, functional and contextual way. Students need to be taught the four forms of spelling knowledge: phonological, visual, morphemic and etymological knowledge.

1. **Phonological Knowledge:** phonological processing requires an understanding of phonemic awareness (involving being able to hear the sounds in words and manipulate them) and alphabetic awareness (knowledge of letter–sound correspondence). A combination of these two concepts is necessary to develop students' skills and enhance later reading and writing performance (Ball and Blachman, 1991)
2. **Visual Knowledge:** knowledge of the way words and letter combinations look
3. **Morphemic Knowledge:** knowledge of the meaning of words and how they take different spellings when they change form
4. **Etymological Knowledge:** knowledge of word origins

Further Curriculum Support:

www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/literacy/material/spelling/index.htm

Skill Focus: Understanding spoken words are made up of separate sounds

STAGES ESI–I

Strategy: marking sounds in words

Phonemic awareness

Competence in phonemic awareness involves understanding and demonstrating skills in:

- hearing individual sounds in spoken language
- manipulating individual sounds in spoken language.

(Continuum of critical aspects of early literacy development, 2008.

www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/literacy/assets/pdf/early_yrs_cont.pdf)

Modelling strategies and then guiding students through those strategies in controlled and then independent activities provides the opportunity for them to see, practise and consolidate skills. Further to this, activities which allow students opportunities to transfer and consolidate their new skills in a variety of contexts are essential. There are many strategies that support phonemic awareness however instruction should progress from 'shallow to deep' (Stanovich, 1993).

Because there is a reciprocal relationship between reading and phonemic awareness (Adams, 1990; Stanovich, 1985) phonemic awareness is taught in the context of teaching reading and writing.

Further information can be accessed through:

www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/literacy/assets/pdf/guide_phonaw.pdf

www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/literacy/material/spelling/index.htm

www.myread.org/guide_phonemic.htm

This strategy, developed by Elkonin (1975) and Ball and Blachman (1991), helps students to:

- blend sounds together to make words (put sounds together to say a whole word)
- segment sounds they hear in spoken language (saying a word sound by sound)
- use blending and segmenting as a skill in phonics.

Students can also count the number of sounds in words using:

- the *marking sounds in words* cards and counters to build and segment spoken words.

Hands and fingers can be used to count sounds in words. Students make a fist and every time they hear a new sound in a word they count it by putting a finger up.

These strategies can be carried out as a whole class or in small groups.

Prepare a laminated card using the proforma provided.

Provide one sheet per child and up to ten counters each.

K–6 Outcomes

WESI.11: Uses approximations and some conventional spelling

WSI.11: Writes words using blends, letter combinations, long vowel sounds, double consonants and double vowels

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 10



Language Conventions

Year 3 Q: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 19

Year 5 Q: 1, 4 and 15

Item Descriptor

The range and difficulty of correctly spelled words

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language use by developing sound, visual and meaning patterns to spell accurately high frequency, monosyllabic words and some words with two syllables with common spelling patterns.

Other links

www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/literacy/assets/pdf/guide_phonaw.pdf

www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/literacy/material/spelling/index.htm

www.myread.org/guide_phonemic.htm

www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/literacy/assets/pdf/early_yrs_cont.pdf

Say it and move it

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Explain the purpose of the strategy to students.

For example:

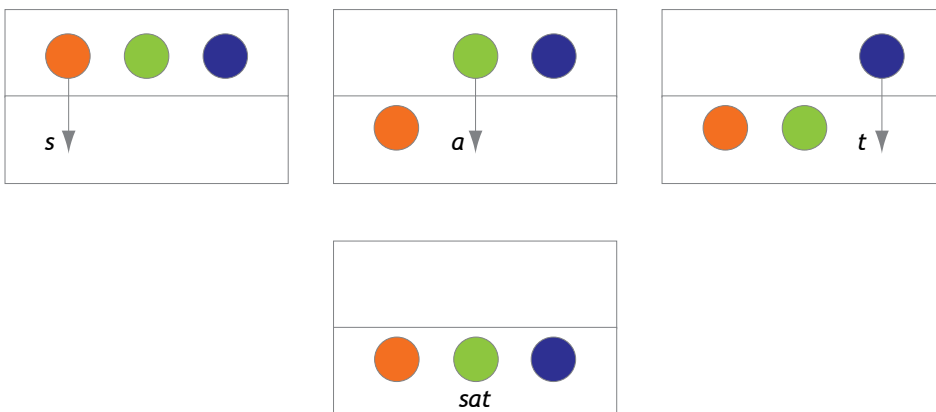
This skill will help you to hear the sounds in spoken language.

This skill will help you to be able to sound as words as you read the letters.

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Students place counters in the top section of their card as shown.

- The teacher says a word and the students repeat it, for example, *mat*.
- The students and teacher then say the word 'stretching it' or slowing it so that every sound can be heard, for example, *m-a-t*.
- The students repeat the process. As they say each sound they move a counter from the top section to the bottom section of their card.
- These words are said not written. This is important because as students' skills improve, you can use more complex words such as *much* which has 4 letters (m-u-c-h) but 3 sounds (m-u-ch).



(Ball and Blachman, Programming and Strategies Handbook, NSW DET, 1990)

Avoid acronyms or slang words to explain the strategy. Begin by using continuous sounds (for example m, s, f, r) rather than stop sounds (d, k, j, t) because they are easier to blend and segment.

Changing the sounds in a word:

- Example one: changing initial sound *sat*, *mat* and *fat*
- Example two: changing end sound *sat*, *sap*, *sam* and *sad*
- Example three: changing the medial sound *sat*, *sit* and *set*

Use high frequency words that students will use in their daily writing and use words that coordinate with the groups of sounds being introduced in explicit letter–sound relationships ‘a, m, s, t, i, and f’ (Carnine, Silbert and Kameenui, 1997).

These could include vowel-consonant words such as *if, am, is, to, in* and consonant-vowel–consonant words such as those listed above.

Activities to support the strategy

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

The activities below can be used as components of sessions when constructing and deconstructing words in:

- spelling lists
- high frequency word studies
- shared book deconstruction activities
- guided reading text deconstructions
- shared class and group writing constructions.

Guided

Activity one: playing the game ‘buzz’

Group students into small groups where there is a varied skill level. Lower performing students can work with a buddy or partner in the activity. A group leader is chosen.

Each student is given a ‘say it and move it’ card.

The teacher uses words that have been identified as high usage words in the students’ daily writing.

The teacher says a word, for example *man*.

The students repeat the word *man*.

Students segment the word as shown in the above strategy – *m-a-n* – and move the counter as they say each new sound.

When students have counted the sounds in the word, they put their hands on their heads.

The group leader calls out the word *buzz* once the entire group has put their hands on their heads.

The first group ready earns points for their team.

Points can be on as cline such that each group earns points for their efforts. For instance, the first group may earn 5 points, the second group 3 points and so on.

Activity two: rhyming word sit down

Understanding rhyme is connected to many daily language activities. During shared reading sessions with written and spoken texts students clap/click when they hear rhyming words.

Students walk around in a circle taking one step each time a rhyming word is said.

The students sit down when the teacher says a word that doesn’t rhyme.

The following lists are a sample of words to use.

sea	tea	me	free	key	no
now	cow	brow	broom	fin	bin

Further information can be accessed through:

www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/literacy/assets/pdf/guide_phonaw.pdf

Skill Focus: Understanding that spoken words are made up of separate sounds

STAGE 1

Strategies

Students will need to understand:

- the concept of same and different
- the concept of a letter/word/sound

Phonics

Phonemic awareness skills involve manipulating the sounds in spoken language whereas phonics is related to the visual representation of the sounds in print (alphabetic code). Phonemic awareness and phonics are different but interrelated and should be taught early in explicit and systematic ways that are integrated into a balanced reading program.

Competence in phonics involves understanding and demonstrating skills in:

- understanding the relationships between the sounds of spoken language and the written symbols (alphabetic code)
- using this information to read and spell words.

The teaching of phonics needs to include a range of methods that are suited to the purpose of the classroom context.

Further information about the teaching of phonics can be accessed at:

www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/literacy/assets/pdf/guide_phonics.pdf

Signalling

Signalling is a strategy that teachers can use to assist students as they segment and blend words.

Students begin to say a sound when the teacher touches underneath the letter and continues to say the sound until the teacher removes their finger (with an in-and-out motion). Students learn to 'hold' a continuous sound for 1–2 seconds as the teacher touches underneath the letter. Students cannot hold *stop* sounds, (such as *t*) as they can only be pronounced in a moment.

Signalling can be used to identify single sounds and syllables within more complex sounds.

Segmenting and blending words

Move it and say it cards and magnetic letters (or letter cards) which represent spoken sounds can be used to develop sound-letter relationship concept. *Direct Reading Instruction* Carnine, Silbert and Kameenui, 1997, p.75.

Cooperative cloze

Deconstructing text and using segmenting and blending skills to read and write words.

K–6 Outcome

WS1.11: Writes words using blends, letter combinations, long vowel sounds, double consonants and double vowels

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 10



Language Conventions

Year 3 Q: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 19

Year 5 Q: 1, 4 and 15

Item Descriptor

The range and difficulty of correctly spelled words

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language use by developing sound, visual and meaning patterns to spell accurately high frequency, monosyllabic words and some words with two syllables with common spelling patterns.

Other links

www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/literacy/assets/pdf/guide_phonics.pdf

Activities to support the strategy

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Create a cooperative cloze activity using words from texts being used in the classroom.

Delete words that are suitable for deconstruction.

Modelled

Write two of the words that have been deleted from the text on the whiteboard.

For example: *in* and *is*

Use the terms *letter* and *word* explicitly. You might say:

I can see that the first letter in both words is the same.

Both words have the same number of letters in them.

The last letter in each word is different.

I know the sounds that the letters make.

I am going to say the sounds that the letters make as I move my finger across the word.

Then use the signalling technique as you say the sound that represents the letters using the in and out motion with your finger, verbalising the blending.

i-n ... in

i-s ... is

Use the *say it* and *move it* card (see previous strategy) or draw the matrix on the whiteboard.

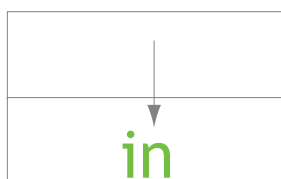
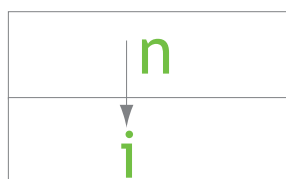
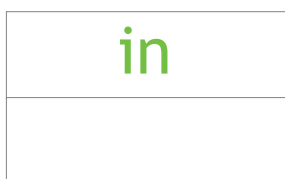
Place the magnetic letters (or letter cards) that spell the word in the top half.

As you touch the letter, say the sound *i* and move the letter into the bottom half of the matrix.

Repeat with the next letter *n*.

Then slide your finger under the word *in* as it sits in the bottom half of the matrix and blend out the sounds to say the complete word *i-n*.

Then repeat the word *in*.



Guided

Students repeat the steps with the word 'is'.

Practise this with other words that have been deleted from the chosen text.

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Ask students what they can do when they come to a word they cannot read.

Encourage verbalisation of skills by asking probing questions. The students may respond with:

I can look at the pictures.

I can think what will make sense.

I can sound out the words.

I can look at the beginning letter and say the sound that matches it.

I can look at the end letter and say the sound that matches the last letter.

I can read past the word to see what comes next.

I can start the sentence again and guess what will make sense.

Remind the students of the skill that they have just practised to help them sound out words, and that they can use this skill to help them read the words. Write the words that are missing from the story they are about to share.

For example: *Black Dog* by Pamela Allen

As a shared reading activity, complete the cooperative cloze using the chosen text.

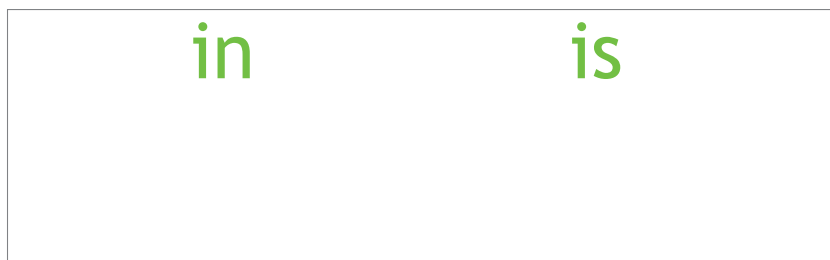
Deconstruct the pages by:

- Reading the sentence with the missing word. Do not say or substitute a word for the space.
- Asking the students for their suggestions and inserting their suggestions in the space (orally).



Black Dog ___ Christina lived together
___ a little house near ___ forest.
They were ___ friends.

- Ask students if the suggestion makes sense. If it does not, keep on with other suggestions. When a suggestion does make sense then write the answer on the board with another word that is visually similar such as the example below.



The teacher asks:

How can you choose which word is the correct one to write in the space?

The students answer:

They both have the same number of letters.

They both start with the letter 'i'.

The last letter is different.

After students choose the correct word, they make it with magnetic letters on the whiteboard. A volunteer student carries out the 'say it and move it' strategy using the magnetic letters.

The teacher offers feedback on the students' achievement by verbalising the skills they have used to complete the task.

The level of complexity of words chosen will be suited to the level of the students and the sound pattern that is being studied.

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Word deconstruction strategy is part of daily guided reading activities. This can be a part of guided and explicit deconstruction of the key words followed by students using the words in cloze activities.

The words targeted can support the four forms of spelling knowledge.

For example: *Shhh little mouse* by Pamela Allen.

phonological knowledge	visual knowledge	morphemic knowledge	etymological knowledge
<i>stuck, crack, quickly, black</i>	<i>the</i>	<i>come—coming</i> <i>start—starting</i> <i>stand—standing</i>	<i>no one</i> <i>nowhere</i> <i>nothing</i>

Guided

Exploring deep understanding and metalanguage (QTF)

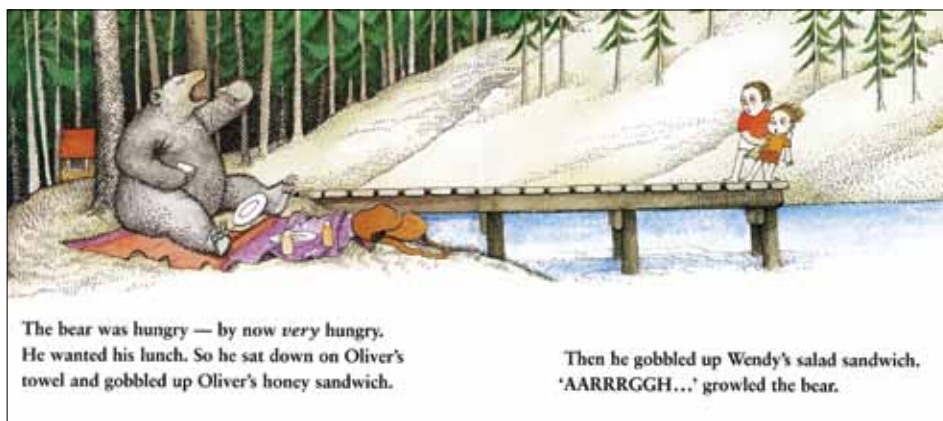
Provide students with texts that use language in a way that can explore blending in extreme situations.

The teacher can use the signalling method for the students to participate in being the voices of the characters as they blend the sounds to make spoken language in:

- The voice of the robber in *Gangelhoff* by Brian Murphy



- The voice of the bear in *The Bear's Lunch* by Pamela Allen



Students then sort the words into categories, such as verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs.

The list is read together after it is compiled.

Add words that will link ideas together or draw on connectives that are displayed in the room.

The created word list provides a resource of words that will be used in the following writing activity.

Modelled

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

The teacher models reading and clapping the syllables in the first few words.

The teacher highlights a known sound pattern in the letters and talks aloud as they complete the strategy.

For example, the word *'fierce'*

The teacher says:

I clapped the word and found one syllable.

I can see the rule that the 'e' makes the letter 'c' make the 's' sound.

Guided

The students work through the list, taking turns to clap the word and identify common sound patterns or spelling rules.

The students verbalise how they recognised a new syllable by saying statements such as:

When my chin drops as I am saying the word I can count a new syllable.

Each beat has a vowel.

Two vowels together count as one beat because they make one sound like 'oo' and 'ea'.

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Students use the list as a resource when they write a narrative about a dragon.

Students can add words to the list as they write which are interesting descriptive words.

Using the words in a game

Students create a board game using the words from the word list as part of the game.

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Discuss the elements of games that students have played by asking probing questions.

List the elements on the board as they are brainstormed.

The teacher asks:

What do you think the game should contain?

What background would be suitable?

What tools and resources will you need?

How will our word bank help us when we make our games?

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Students develop the criteria for the game together so that students are aware of the marking and the expectations.

Students work in cooperative groups with defined roles to develop the board game.

Students move to new groups to play other games.

Skill Focus: Identifying patterns and syllables in words

STAGE 3

Strategy

Scaffolding to develop morphemic knowledge

Exploring morphemic knowledge (the meaning of words and how they take different spellings when they change form)

Learning to spell many new words correctly by playing with prefixes (word segments added to the beginning of a word, e.g. un, mis, pre, de, re) and suffixes (word segments added to the end of a word, e.g. ment, tion, ly, able, ful, less)

Word lists are generated from the vocabulary within the topic students are working on.

Access *Teaching Spelling K–6 State Literacy Strategy*, NSW DET, pp. 55–56 for examples of words which could be used.

A proforma, such as the one below, is a useful matrix for deconstructing and exploring words.

Word	Syllables	Meaning (Which meaning is relevant to the text?)	Base word	Other words with similar meanings	Opposite (What prefix can I use?)	Change by adding a suffix (How does it change?)

K–6 Outcome

WS3.11: Students spell most common words accurately and use a range of strategies to spell unfamiliar words.

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 10



Language Conventions

Year 5 Q: 5, 7, 8, 10, 16, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 11 and 12

Year 7 Q: 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28 and 30

Year 9 Q: 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 27

Item Descriptor

The range and difficulty of correctly spelled words

Statement of Learning for English

Students know word origins and sound and visual patterns, syntax and semantics in a multi-strategy approach can be used to decode familiar and unfamiliar words.

Other links

<http://dictionary.reference.com>

<http://thesaurus.reference.com>

Activities to support the strategy

Guided

Key words from chapters can be discussed before reading, added to during reading and analysed after reading.

Use the same excerpt from texts to deconstruct topic words.

For example, *Round the Twist* by Paul Jennings

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Discuss the title of the chapter 'Danish pastry' and ask probing questions that encourage students to think:

What might the chapter be about?

What do you know about Danish pastry and what might be something 'quirky' that may happen with Danish pastries?

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Provide the text or the text excerpt. Provide an OHT of the excerpt.

Students read together and highlight key words on the second read.

Danish Pastry

You know what it's like. You stand on the end of the diving board and look down – and you're too scared to jump. The kids are jostling up the ladder behind you. You can't get back. 'What am I doing here?' you say to yourself. 'You idiot.'

You jump. Now it's too late. Nothing can get you back up. You hurtle down towards the water.

That's what I felt like when I said I was going to write the scripts for a television show based on my short stories.

That's what I felt like as I sat and waited for him to come. A man called Esben Storm. The director of most of the episodes and the person who was going to show me how to write scripts. I looked at his photo. There was a blob on his left ear. Was it an earring? Would I like him? Would he like me? What had I let myself in for? And what sort of name was Esben anyway? People in movies are a bit on the wild side, aren't they?

I waited and worried. A car door slammed. I looked out of the window. A man in a leather jacket was walking down the drive. This was it. I had jumped off the diving board. I couldn't go back now.

I spent the next two years working with Esben, writing and making the TV show Round The Twist.

Every script consultation day, Esben would lie back on my lounge and I would sit at the desk writing. We invented characters and places. We wrote new endings for stories.

Student responses may appear like the following example. Use the thesaurus and dictionary as authoritative sources.

<http://dictionary.reference.com>

<http://thesaurus.reference.com>

Word	Syllables	Meaning (Which meaning is relevant to the text?)	Base word	Other words with similar meanings	Opposite (What prefix can I use?)	Change by adding a suffix (How does it change?)
director	di/rect/or	(noun) a person who is responsible for people, projects and organisations	(verb) direct—to manage or give advice	supervisor, head, manager, leader, administrator, chief, boss		
endings	end/ings	close, final, termination	end		beginning unending	ending endings ended ends
consultation	con/sult/a/tion	...				

Exploring higher-order thinking (QTF)

While exploring the words provide opportunities for the students to summarise, clarify and evaluate information from a number of sources by asking questions such as:

How would the meaning of the word change if we changed the context?

What would be a context where the word would change meaning?

What other contexts or scenarios may we see this word used in?

How would the word change if we changed tense and voice?

Skill Focus: Identifying patterns and syllables in words

STAGE 4

More proficient spellers employ their knowledge of a variety of strategies to assist them in how to spell. They draw frequently on all four knowledge areas (phonological, visual, morphemic and etymological) to make informed decisions when attempting to spell unknown words. They spell common words accurately, apply spelling generalisations, have knowledge of word parts (prefixes, suffixes, compound words), apply spelling rules when required and draw on knowledge of word origins in order to spell accurately. They have a highly consolidated bank of words they are familiar with and can make spelling decisions based on their visual memory of how words look.

Strategy

Scaffolding

Exploring deep knowledge and metalanguage (QTF)

Scaffolding questions to:

- assist students to transfer and link prior knowledge to the new context
- build the body of technical knowledge by dividing up, renaming the words and exploring where they may 'fit' in context to various subject areas.

Exploring engagement through higher-order thinking (QTF)

Designing questions that encourage students to:

- make educated guesses by linking concepts and ideas
- collaborate evidence that has been researched and presented
- hypothesise about other forms of words and their usefulness in various contexts.

Nominalisation

Nominalisation is an important tool for building taxonomies of technical terms. In particular, it enables us to name processes or actions (verbs) as things (nouns). Nominalisation constructs technical knowledge and places objects and events into different relations with one another. When students understand how base words are nominalised, they can build knowledge of concepts and technical words.

For further information access:

www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/literacy/concepts/3writlangdev156.htm

For example:

Science and geography use nominalisation where:

processes are explained as verbs	become nouns (nominalised verbs)
to weather	weathering
to erode	erosion

K-6 Outcome

WS3.11: Students use knowledge of base words to construct new words

KLA Outcomes

English 4.4.2: Students use appropriate language conventions and vocabulary

English 4.4.6: Students learn to use Standard Australian English, its variations and different levels of usage appropriately

English 4.4.8: Students learn about the ways in which specific language forms and features and structures of texts are used to shape meaning including:

- spelling and vocabulary in written texts

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 10



Language Conventions

Year 5 Q: 23

Year 7 Q: 8, 25 and 29

Year 9 Q: 7, 14, 15, 29, 30, 9, 17, 18, 20, 26, 28

Item Descriptor

The range and difficulty of correctly spelled words

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts to use word origins, sound and visual patterns, syntax and semantics in a multi-strategy approach.

Deconstructing words in Year 9 Language conventions task

word in verb form	word in noun form (nominalised)
<p>achieve She was able to achieve her goal and save sufficient money for the trip.</p>	<p>achievement It was a great achievement when she had saved sufficient money for the trip.</p>
<p>imagine She could only imagine Africa being so exotic.</p>	<p>imagination Africa had seemed so exotic in her imagination.</p>
<p>perform The athletes were able to perform at their best level because they had trained regularly.</p>	<p>performance Many athletes have found that regular training can make a substantial difference to their level of performance.</p>
<p>announce The man announced a message over the radio.</p>	<p>announcement The announcement was made over the radio.</p>
<p>receive The winners received their trophies.</p>	<p>recipients The recipients waited to be handed their trophies.</p>
<p>govern Funding of various services is the responsibility of the people who govern the country.</p>	<p>government The government is responsible for funding various services.</p>

Strategy

Morphemic analysis is about analysing and manipulating the units that make up words. Morphemes are the smallest units of language that contain meaning. The word *bat* makes sense in itself, but the addition of *s* makes *bats* either a plural noun (*bats have been at the mulberry tree*) or a present tense verb with a singular subject (*he bats left-handed*). In a phrase like *environmental damage*, students may have an idea of what *environment* means, and could work out that *environmental* means to do with the environment, so that the phrase would mean *damage that comes from the environment*, like *flood or drought or erosion over time*.

Awareness of morphemes contributes to spelling as well as to vocabulary. It is easier to remember the spelling of *government* if students relate it to *govern*.

The major morphemes are affixes:

Prefixes often change the meaning of the base word (lock/unlock)

Suffixes often change the grammar of the base word (environment environmental)

See more on morphemes in the context of spelling in *Programming and Strategies Handbook (Secondary)* pp. 50–51, in *Programming and Strategies Handbook (Years 3 and 5)* pp. 112–114.

Root words and etymology

Knowing the meanings of root words commonly used in the Key Learning Area will help students access more words. Examples include *tele*, *phono*, *photo*, *digit*, *aero*, *mono*, *hydro*, *bi*, *tri*, *cent*, and *ology*.

Purpose

To help students become aware that they can work out word meanings by seeing that some words have meaningful parts and using the parts they know to work out the meanings.

Activities to support the strategy

Teachers draw attention to the morphemic elements in words when studying a text.

To help establish the skill and the habit of using it, a proforma such as the one provided can be used. But this strategy will apply in frequent, informal class use.

Choose any text being used in class that includes words that lend themselves to morphemic analysis.

Modelled

Use the ‘think aloud’ strategy to make explicit to students how you use morphemic analysis to work out the meaning of a word. For example, you might say

*This word is **construction**. I know that if I **construct** something, I make it. So **construction** must be a thing that is made.*

I can underline the part of the word that shows me the base word.

Guided

Following teacher modelling, treat another word, preferably a parallel one, using contributions from students. For example, a parallel word might be *expect*

(expectation).

Repeat this process, moving onto paired work, until the students are confident with the process.

Independent

Ask students to apply the process to other words in the text.

Ask students:

How can you use morphemes to help you work out the meaning of a word?

Provide different examples of the morphemic element (a prefix that changes the meaning of the word, for example), and get students to think of and look for other examples.

Practise by using the word, saying the word, spelling the word.

Texts where this instructional technique could be applied

Year 9

Science

Water warning in Angkor ruins from 2008 Year 9 NAPLAN Reading paper

Water warning in Angkor ruins



Dying water: Part of the spillway

Leigh Dayton
Science writer

TWO enormous masonry structures discovered near Cambodia's fabled Angkor Wat provide rock-hard evidence that the once-powerful Khmer kingdom vanished because of over-building, **environmental** damage and climate change.

One of the new-found structures was a 40 m by 80 m spillway. The other was a 100 m by 40 m outlet channel that, like the spillway, was part of the elaborate water system that served the sprawling ancient agricultural city of Angkor.

"These two structures demonstrate very high levels of hydraulic engineering," said Sydney University archaeologist Roland Fletcher, director of the Greater Angkor Project (GAP), a five-year **collaboration** between the university, French researchers and the Cambodian agency managing the Angkor site.

"The Khmer engineers used their expertise in masonry construction to build these structures that managed water flows for the entire city. There are considerable implications for our understanding of our own water **management** systems."

Angkor is the largest known city from the pre-industrial world. It existed from the 9th to the 15th centuries.

Using satellite images, aerial photographs and field surveys, the GAP team estimated that the low-density city covered about 1000 sq km, spreading outwards from the central complex of Angkor Wat.

The intricate network of channels and reservoirs sustained a population of about 750,000.

Then, about 500 years ago, the Khmer capital was abandoned. This has baffled modern scholars. Theories ranged from invasions and decline of the controlling religion to major **geological** shifts.

But Professor Fletcher's group suspects the city died when it could no longer support the rice-growing economy that fed it.

That happened because of Angkor's success. As it grew, more land was cleared for rice paddies, increasing soil erosion into the **irrigation** canals. Silt built up, choking the water system and taking time and resources to keep it flowing.

The final kick came from an abrupt decrease in the monsoon rains that filled the great lake east of Angkor.

9

Year 7

Science

Pet dogs – what do you think?

May 21

Dear Editor,

Dogs are working animals, not pets. They belong out on the farm, rounding up sheep and cattle. In the city they are just a smelly, noisy nuisance. They leave their mess all over the streets, and some of them never stop barking.

Where are their owners? Why are these supposedly wonderful friends left alone to pine and whine and dig up the garden, or to bark at anyone who dares to walk past 'their' house?

If we must have dogs in the city, they need to be trained properly. Aside from the street-poopers and the barkers, there are the chasers and the bounders. These dreadful creatures rush up and almost knock you flat before you have time to decide if they are greeting you or attacking you.

Farm dogs earn their keep, but these city slickers consume far more than their fair share of the world's resources. And of course, it's not just scraps. It's gourmet cuisine, individually tinned or freeze-dried, which the pampered darlings can eat at their leisure from personalised doggy bowls, before having a home-visit haircut and shampoo or retiring to their fur-lined baskets.

Sarah Williston



May 28

Dear Editor,

Yes, Sarah Williston (May 21), we do give dogs a good life, but they pay us back generously, with affection and intelligence and good humour.

Dogs are wonderful companions, loyal and trustworthy. They will play safely with the kids, or keep a house-bound person company all day long. Dogs are increasingly being used in nursing homes and hospitals as a welcoming and calming presence, and in some places, teachers even have a pet dog in the classroom.

It is true that training a dog takes considerable time and effort, but it is time well-spent. Taking responsibility for a canine pet builds character, as well as offering a lot of pleasure.

Sincerely,
John Bonavista



Text Structure Overview

The organisation of narrative features includes the components of orientation, complication and resolution into an appropriate and effective text structure.

Orientation	Complication	Temporary resolution	Reappearing complication	Resolution
The narrator:	The narrator:	The narrator:	The narrator:	The narrator:
<p>Creates a visual picture by describing events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> time place circumstance <p>Introduces characters by describing/evaluating characteristic features/significant attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> appearance nature likes and dislikes habits <p>Foreshadows a problem or complication that affects how the story is to progress. This may be indicated by an emotional reaction felt by a character.</p>	<p>Introduces the problem or complication which creates a disturbance concerning the setting, time or characters.</p> <p>Tension is possibly created. There is uncertainty about what might happen.</p>	<p>Provides a possible answer to the problem so far or relieves the tension being created.</p>	<p>Reveals the problem is not fully resolved or a new problem occurs that adds to the tension. <i>'Out of the frying pan into the fire.'</i></p>	<p>Solves the problem and may have learnt from the events and reflects on this learning.</p>

Transferred into a line graph, the way narrative plot is developed can create a different pace. Students can create line graphs as they identify the *pace* in the text structure.

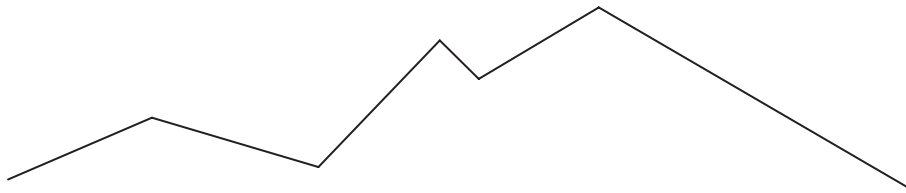
Pacing in narratives

There can also be a gradual escalation of events. This can be represented as a series of minor complications that the character must respond to.

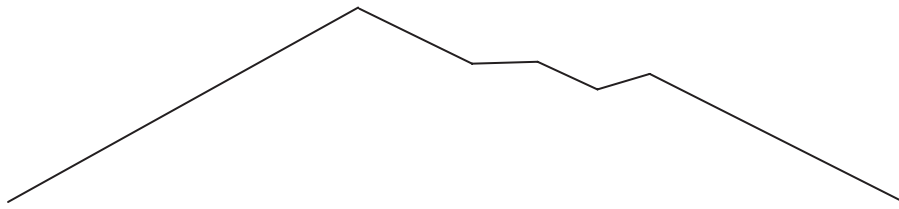
There may be a major complication in the narrative that is not resolved until the end, with a number of minor complications along the way, which may be resolved in part or whole as they arise or later in the story. These minor obstacles are usually related to the major complication and serve to sustain the interest and suspense, leading to the main crisis or climax.

At each changing point, complications (including twists, parallel plots, side stories and cliff hangers) can change the pace of the narrative.

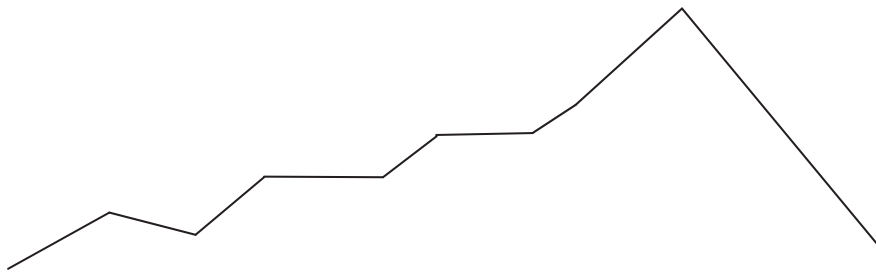
Slow development of plot with several complications that are not fully resolved until the end of the narrative



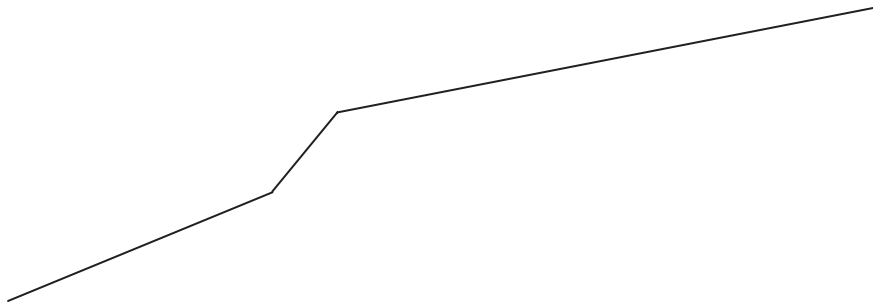
Rapid complication after short orientation followed by a slow resolution involving a number of steps leading to a gentle resolution



Slow building of plot followed by a quick resolution



An intense build up with a cliff hanger as the resolution



Developing a complication

To develop a complication, the character should be presented with some sort of experience or disruption that alters the usual pattern of events. This could be accomplished in a number of ways, for example:

- Putting the character in an awkward predicament – being in a different time period; being in a strange land; having unusual powers
- Creating a dilemma where a decision must be made – which leader to support; who to believe and follow
- devising a crisis that leads to heroic deeds – rescuing someone; defeating an enemy.

In developing a complication, it is important for students to focus on how characters feel when confronted with problems and obstacles. They should be encouraged to use words that express emotions and attitudes.

Sophisticated structures

Not all writing follows a linear, time ordered model. Sophisticated structures, sequences and plot devices can include:

- circular
- parallel
- foreshadowing and flashbacks
- side or back stories
- stories within stories
- epiphany.

Skill Focus: Identifying text structure

STAGES 1–2

Strategies

Assisting students to use self regulation skills while reading

Self regulation skills assist students to:

- know how to think through activities using modelled scaffolds
- be aware of, plan and implement comprehension strategies for different text purposes
- check whether they understand text and whether the messages they have interpreted make sense (Carnine, Silbert and Kameenui, 1997).

Mapping a narrative visually assists students to cluster ideas, identify structure and use words and illustrations to record information

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Shared reading experience – *Gorilla* by Anthony Browne

Highlight the usual construction of a narrative, referring to frameworks that are displayed in the classroom. That is: a narrative is usually constructed through a sequence of events that goes wrong in some way and causes a problem for the character/s. Sometimes writers introduce the complication quite early in the story and the focus is then on solving the problem.

Exploring deep knowledge and providing the metalanguage for deconstruction (QTF)

Use a well known narrative to model strategies for identifying events in texts.

Link to the way previous texts have been deconstructed as you record the summary on the board. This provides a framework for students to use when they deconstruct the new text.

Use the ‘think aloud’ strategy to model the process. Include self regulation statements such as:

On this page the characters are introduced. I can learn about where the story is being set, who is in the narrative and what the characters like to do. I have found the orientation of the narrative because I can see the place, the characters and what they are doing. I know to expect that events will follow. I am going to look for the first one. The picture shows the first event where Hannah and her dad are having breakfast at the same table. The next event is in the words and I can also see it in the matching picture. I have already found two events but not a complication yet. I need to keep reading the words and the pictures.

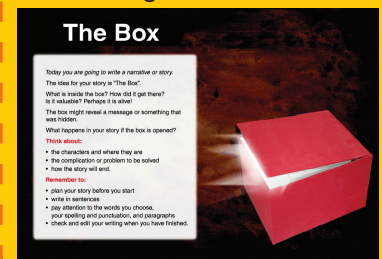
K–6 Outcomes

- WSI.9: Writes elementary texts
- WSI.14: Discusses functions of different stages of a text
- WS2.9: Writes a range of literary texts
- WS2.14: Recognises and discusses the organisational structure of a range of literary texts

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 2

The Box



Item Descriptor

The organisation of narrative features including orientation, complication and resolution into an appropriate and effective text structure

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to clarify meaning.

They use typical generic structure of imaginative texts (orientation, complication and resolution).

Guided

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Discuss with students what they know about narrative texts, drawing their attention to other sessions that have involved narrative deconstructions. For example:

When we looked at Gorilla by Anthony Browne we found the orientation introduced the main character Hannah. She was alone in her room. The words and pictures introduced the setting.

Shared reading experience

Read *Alexander's Outing* by Pamela Allen to the class.

After reading, plot the main events on a story sequence on the board. As you are plotting the sequence, use 'think aloud' strategies to explain how you identify and justify your decision about the main points.

Use language such as:

In the beginning, Alexander began his day by ... this is where the author develops his setting. Is it important? Do I need this? Let me check the pictures to see if it was in the orientation.

Exploring student understanding (QTF)

As the teacher models the deconstruction of the text he or she should:

- ask students for their advice in identifying the text structure
- ask students to identify ideas in the narrative using the text structure to guide them
- refer students back to the book as a source for checking ideas and locating information.

This assists students to:

- self regulate as they read and after they read
- select information essential to the plot
- practise reading behaviours such as re-reading to make sense, predicting what happened next, skimming and scanning the page.

The teacher asks students to identify where they think the complication is first introduced and then say how they identified the complication. Talk about the events that follow the complication and how the characters attempt to solve the problem to create the resolution.

Example story sequence: *Alexander's Outing* by Pamela Allen

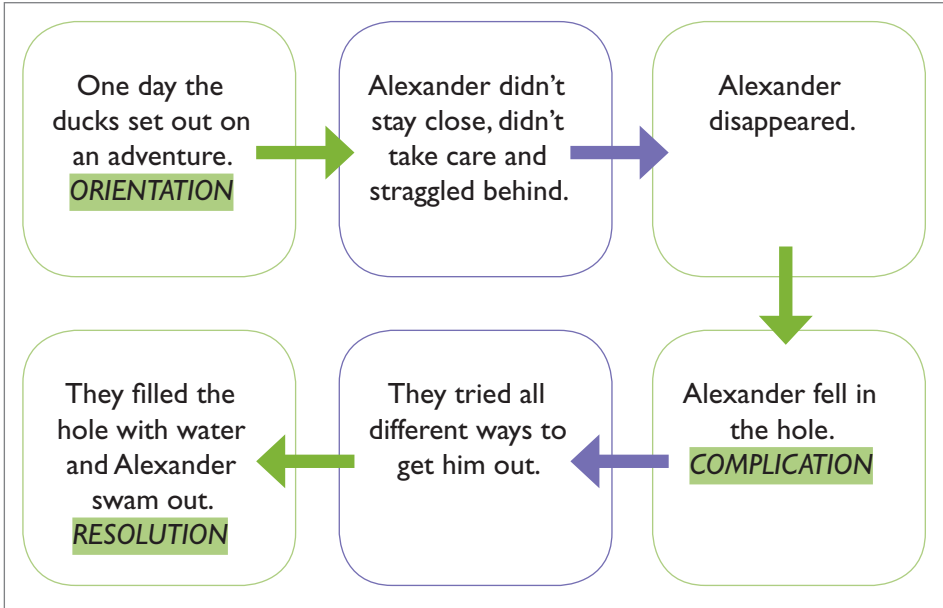
Students can record their story sequence on art paper with or after the guided activity. This can be illustrated. It is important that students identify and label the 'boxes' with the junctions of orientation, complications/problems/resolution.

Independent

Exploring student understanding (QTF)

Students choose a text at independent reading level (greater than 90% accuracy rate) and deconstruct the storyline using the mapping strategy to identify and record the storyline of a narrative text. Students on similar levels can work in pairs.

The provision of a scaffold and guidance through the recording of ideas such as the one shown above will assist students with additional educational needs.



Problems	Possible actions taken to resolve problem
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

Share the final text with the class. Students discuss the effectiveness of each text.

Skill Focus: Identifying text structure – narrative structure

STAGE 2–3: Supporting ESL Students

Strategy

Text deconstruction

Students analyse published texts to identify purpose and structure in narratives.

Controlled (modelled)

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Students are given copy of a short narrative.

The short narrative is provided on OHT or as an enlarged copy. The teacher models how to identify and highlight the orientation, complication and resolution sections on the text.

Students are given this proforma:

NAME: _____
NARRATIVE PLAN
Title: _____
When? The time
Where? The place – setting of the story
Who? The people and or animals – main characters
Problems/Complications? What caused the problems? How did it create the problems?
Solution/Resolution

ESL Scales

4:1:13: Incorporates a number of identifiable stages in common texts

4:9:7: Maintains a storyline and some characterisation of events

6:9:1: Writes a variety of fictional and non fictional narratives using orientation, complication and resolution

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 2

The Box

Today you are going to write a narrative or story.
The idea for your story is 'The Box'.
What is inside the box? How did it get there?
Is it valuable? Perhaps it is silver?
The box might reveal a message or something that was hidden.
What happens in your story if the box is opened?
Think about:
• the characters and where they are
• the complication or problem to be solved
• how the story will end.
Remember to:
• plan your story before you start
• write in sentences
• pay attention to the words you choose,
your spelling and punctuation, and paragraphs
• check and edit your writing when you have finished.



Item Descriptor

The organisation of narrative features including orientation, complication and resolution into an appropriate and effective text structure

Statements of Learning for English

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to clarify meaning.

They use typical generic structure of imaginative texts (orientation, complication and resolution).

Teacher models how to deconstruct the text by recording details of the components of the text in the proforma.

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

The teacher provides several orientations from a variety of narratives on A3 paper.

Students analyse the text orientations to identify common and differing elements.

Guided

Brainstorm and record a number of titles for a story.

For example: *The Haunted House, Lost at Sea, Space Adventure, Found*

Organise students in pairs or small groups.

Using the scaffolding proforma provided, students choose a title and write an orientation that matches the scenario.

Students share their orientation scenarios in a writers' circle.

The teacher can create OHT of students' texts and the class identifies the WHEN, WHERE, WHO using different colour OHT pens.

Independent

Exploring deep understanding and problematic knowledge (QTF)

Students are grouped into pairs. They work together to sequence narratives that have been cut out and segmented. Then they categorise the text into the headings of *Orientation, Complication* and *Resolution*

Students reorganise a jumbled up narrative from their guided reading text. They need to:

- order the events
- match the text to three structure sub-headings of *Orientation, Complication* and *Resolution*.

Guided

Students in pairs or groups compare two texts (one effective narrative and the other poorly constructed).

Using the scaffold provided, students analyse the components of each section of two narrative examples. An example is given below:

NAME: _____
NARRATIVE PLAN
Title: <i>Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets</i>
When? The time <i>One dark night</i>
Where? The place – setting of the story <i>In the sky over Hogwarts</i>
Who? The people and or animals – main characters <i>Harry and Ron</i> <i>Hedwig</i> <i>Scabbers</i>
Problems/Complications? What caused the problems? How did it create the problems? <i>The car engine stopped.</i> <i>They crashed into a tree.</i> <i>The tree started attacking them.</i>
Solution/Resolution <i>The car engine restarts.</i> <i>They escape from the attacking tree</i>

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

In pairs, students compare the two scaffolds and score the effectiveness of each component – 1 being ineffective and 5 being highly effective.

Skill Focus: Exploring narrative text structure

STAGE 4

Strategy

Analysing to identify conflict in plots

Identifying conflicts in narrative plots

Activities to support the strategies

Guided

Read the passage with the class and identify as a group:

- where the event should be placed in a narrative (orientation, the beginning or continuation of a conflict, a resolution)
- the conflicts or problems in each scenario
- the characters and their relationship.

Underline key words that helped you to make your decision.

The following day during year nine History, Bobby found himself sitting near Attikus again. To avoid his gaze, Bobby looks down to the floor and sees a red pen on the floor near him. As he reaches for it, Attikus grabs for it but Bobby gets it first. He snatches it and Attikus loses his grip, sending the pen rocketing into Bobby's hand. Attikus stands, scraping his chair along the wooden floor. They begin to disagree over who owns the pen. They begin to talk faster, and then louder until they are both grabbing for the pen again. Now they feel like they can't back down – their classmates are watching. The teacher stops the lesson and glares like the sun at both of them.

KLA Outcomes

- | English 4.6.10: Writes more involved literary texts
- | English 4.6.4: Talks about how literary texts are structured in order to entertain and engage the reader's interest

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 2

Item Descriptor

The organisation of narrative features including orientation, complication and resolution into an appropriate and effective text structure

Statements of Learning for English

When students interpret the texts they have the opportunity to:

- draw conclusions about characters and major ideas using reference to particular moments and incidents.

Students have the opportunity to understand that:

- readers' and viewers' responses to characters and situations may vary at different points within a text.

Ask students to repeat the process for the following passage.

James was skateboarding out the front of his house. Soon all the other guys in the street join him and bring their boards too. The fun explodes on the front lawn. They begin building ramps from old pieces of timber and bricks. Hours race by and night begins to creep up on them. Distant calls from mums are telling them to head home before the dark sets in. The next day, as James is walking inside after school, he sees a flickering red in the grass. As he moves closer, he realises it is a twenty dollar note and picks it up. He's really excited but he knows the money isn't his. He wants to keep it really badly and after all he isn't sure who it belongs to. This money would go towards new wheels for his skateboard – this would surely save his mum some money. He thinks he found it in his yard so it could now belong to him. Before he knows it the note is folded and pushed deep into his pocket.

Ask students to plot the event, identify and record the struggle for survival in the following passage.

As I stare out the window of my farmhouse the winds lash leaves against the glass. The stomping rain on my tin roof makes it difficult to hear the evacuation procedures on the radio. As the fierce lightning strikes it wakes the darkness and I can see the floodwaters rising. I am alone and with every flash I see the waters nearly blanket the chook pen. The cattle huddle on the last of the high ground. I can hear their fear but not over my heart beating at my chest and belting in my ears.

Discuss the results as a class.

Independent

Students complete a proforma which requires them to deconstruct texts using particular elements as they read a chapter of a chosen narrative. An example of a proforma is provided.

Ask students to read a chosen text and record the conflicts and struggles that they identify.

Plotting the structure of the narrative Problem or conflict	Linking in the characters Characters involved (relationships developed with other characters)	Identifying ideas Characters' reactions to the event (words, actions, thoughts)	Theme or underlying messages from the conflict

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Students convert the information from their summaries of the narrative to:

- a concept map to show relationship connections and complications
- a written analysis as a review.

Skill focus: Writing effective resolutions

STAGES 4–5

Strategy

Analysing resolutions in texts

Deconstructing endings from a variety of novels and picture books

Guided

Exploring higher order thinking using Bloom’s taxonomy (QTF)

http://www.learnerslink.com/journal_article.htm

Discuss with students narrative resolutions (endings) that they have read before and identify common elements.

The focus can include: themes and messages, language used, the character or development or journey, changes in the setting.

How the resolutions are the same?	How the resolutions are different?

Exploring higher-order thinking (QTF)

Guide students to look for elements in the resolution:

- Situations that lead characters to a new understanding, place and or action in their life
- Themes that are revealed in the ending
- The effectiveness of the last paragraph or last sentence
- How you could relate to the story and why.

Discuss the effect of the last sentence (language choice) in completing the underlying themes or asking a new question.

For example: *The Crime of the Agent Mariner* by Pia Santaklaus asks the reader a question:

Who could profit from these words? Why anybody can.

Give examples of endings that aren’t effective. Students may also be able to add to this list.

For example:

- They woke up and it was a dream.*
- They lived happily ever after.*
- Then they went to bed.*
- They never went there again.*

KLA Outcomes

English 4.6.4: Uses the features and structures of texts to compose their own writing and engage their audience

English 5.6.3: Students learn to compose texts that demonstrate originality, imagination and ingenuity in content and language

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 2



Item Descriptor

The creation, selection and crafting of ideas for a narrative

Statements of Learning for English

When students write texts they have the opportunity to develop a storyline of sequenced events involving complications and resolutions with relevant details.

Links

www.elit.edu.au

http://www.learnerslink.com/journal_article.htm

They all died.
After the accident there was nobody left.
The planet was destroyed.
That was the end of the story.
The end.

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Use a series of prompt questions to assist students to score or rate endings:

- Was the finish slow or fast?
- Did the ending surprise you or did you predict the ending?
- Was the ending descriptive? If so, did it describe the characters/the setting/feelings?
- Did the ending leave some things unresolved?
- Did it leave the story open for a continued series?
- Is there a coda, lesson or message for the readers?
- Could you identify the theme in the narrative, and was it made clear in the resolution?

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Ask students to gather examples of effective endings that they have found in books they have read, their own writing or the writing of others.

A good source of short stories written by primary children is *Brainstorms! Superior stories for superior kids* at www.elit.edu.au

The students justify their choices, explaining why the endings are effective and what they give to the overall narrative in terms of:

- theme, ideas, messages and questions
- engaging the audience
- portraying the intended meaning of the author.

Verbs Overview

The verb is the element that expresses what is happening in a sentence and locates it in time (tense). Verbs are central to a clause.

Verbs can depict:

- **actions** (run, jump, sink, swim)
- **thoughts** or thinking activities (think, want, remember, decide)
- **speech** or ways of communicating (speak, sing, shout, argue)
- **feelings** (hate, love, wonder, fear)
- **relating** (be, have, appear, become, involve, seem)

Verbs work both as single words or as group of words.

We can identify the verb groups by asking: 'What is happening or being done?'

Suddenly the door *slammed* in the wind.

What happened or was done? The door *slammed* (the verb).

She *should have been waiting* at the bus station.

What happened or was going to happen? She *should have been waiting* (the verb group).

Effective verbs add interest to texts and assist many literacy devices.

For example, as part of personification:

My sorrow *leaked* from me.

Darkness *swallowed* the room only *allowing* the light from a single lamp to escape.

The air *breathed* uncertainty as he *sat* lifeless in the chair.

Common verb errors

Certain verb errors are commonly identified:

Incorrect verb form: *I seen it on video but I could of gone to the movies.*

Inconsistent verb tense: *In the end he escaped and sees his friend again.*

Incorrect subject/verb agreement: *The girls sings in a choir.*

Verb form

I. Simple verbs

There are two types of verbs: regular and irregular.

Regular verbs form their past tense by adding *ed*, e.g. *cried, jumped*.

Irregular verbs do not form their past tense by adding *ed*. They change their middle vowel (*dig/dug*) or the whole word is changed (*say/said*).

Other irregular verbs that have specialised forms are the verbs *to be* (*am, is, are, was, were*) and *to have* (*has, have, had*).

2. Verb groups

Sometimes more than one word is needed to express the nuances of meaning of the verb (e.g. *tried to establish, must have been thinking*). It is then called a verb group.

The players were running quickly.

Police had continued to patrol the crash site all night.

The children could have been included very easily.

Subject/verb agreement

Students may have difficulty making sure the verb agrees with the number of its subject. That is, a singular subject requires a singular verb and a plural subject requires a plural verb.

Correct:	<u>singular subject</u> <i>My new cat</i>	<u>singular verb</u> <i>plays in the backyard.</i>
Incorrect:	<u>singular subject</u> <i>The horse</i>	<u>plural verb</u> <i>gallop past me</i>

Tense

Tense refers to the capacity of verbs to express time, such as the present, the past, the continuous past and the future. In English there are two ways of changing the forms of verbs to express different tenses. Participles (*-ing* and *-ed*) can be added to the base form of the verb and auxiliaries (such as forms of the verbs *to be, to have* and *to do*) can be added to verbs to express tense.

For example, consider the verb *to jump*:

Present tense	<i>I jump. I do jump. I am jumping.</i>
Past tense	<i>I jumped. I did jump. I was jumping. I have jumped. I had jumped.</i>
Future tense	<i>I shall jump. I will jump. I will be jumping.</i>

Here we see the use of auxiliaries such as *do, am, did, was, had, have, shall* and *will* to form specific tenses, as well as the participles *-ing* and *-ed* being used for different forms of the present, past and future tenses.

Consistency in verb tense

The use of tense in texts needs to be consistent. This does not mean that all verbs must be in the same tense because skilled writers often make shifts in tense to create effect. In some types of writing, movements in tense are appropriate and intentional. These internal tense shifts are deliberate and/or appropriate to the student's written response.

Skill Focus: Identifying and using verbs in the correct tense

STAGES 1–2 Supporting ESL Students

Strategy

Providing a matrix to identify and manipulate verb forms

Matching verb forms

Modelled (controlled)

Students are provided with a teacher prepared chart which lists verbs and their past tense.

Emphasis is to be placed on irregular verbs and their past tense.

The teacher says a verb from the list: see.

The students repeat the word as the teacher points to the word 'see'.

The teacher reads the present tense verb again and then models a sentence that uses the verb.

I can see a dog.

The teacher says the past tense of the verb (saw) and the students repeat the word.

Students offer sentences using the verb in past tense.

The teacher provides specific feedback on their attempts.

I saw a dog.

see	ring	caught
go	mean	drank
swim	wake	ate
fly	saw	rang
catch	went	meant
drink	swam	has woken
eat	flew	

Guided

Activity one

The teacher prepares a set of cards using the verbs in the above list.

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Students play *find your partner* using the prepared cards.

One child has the present form of the verb on a card and another has its past tense.

K–6 Outcomes

- WS1.6: Identifies subject–verb link
- RS2.8: Understands that subject–verb agreement in terms of person and number is essential for accurate sentence structure
- WS1.10: Uses different types of verbs in own writing
- WS2.10: Uses correct verb form and number in verb groups
- WS2.6: Uses accurate tense and number in verb groups

ESL Scales

- 6.11.4: Uses simple past and continuous tenses with some consistency in narratives and reports

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 5



Language Conventions

Year 3 Q: 24, 27, 35 and 37

Year 5 Q: 33, 36 and 41

Year 7 Q: 34, 44, 48 and 49

Year 9 Q: 41

Item Descriptor

Students develop a range and precision of language choices

Statements of Learning for English

Students can draw on their knowledge of texts and language to use thinking, doing and feeling verbs to give reasons and express opinions.

Students have to find one another; matching the present and past tense verbs.

Students may refer to the chart for support.

Activity two

Shared reading activity

The teacher shares a picture book that uses past tense and is suitable to the needs of the class. The type of narrative can be simple or complex.

For example: *I'm coming to get you* by Tony Ross

The text is re-written in the past tense on sentence strips. Students are organised into pairs or groups and are given a random text strip.

Students are required to write the correct present tense form under the sentence. They underline the words they have changed to create present tense (identifying the verb group).

Students then create an illustration which explains the sentence. They can refer to the picture book.

They then organise the sentence strips into the correct order to match the narrative events.

Exploring higher-order thinking (QTF)

Discuss with the class that the pictures often illustrate present tense while the words represent past tense.

Ask probing questions about the reasons for this.

Deep in another galaxy, a spaceship rushed towards a tiny, peaceful planet.
(text)

Deep in another galaxy, a spaceship is rushing towards a tiny peaceful planet.
(illustration)

Independent

Students complete a cloze where the deletions focus on verbs in the past tense. The cloze passages may be on a class shared book or within their guided reading text activities. Students are not provided with a list of verbs but are allowed to add any appropriate verb in the gaps.

For example: Deep in another galaxy, a spaceship _____ towards a tiny planet.

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Using a thesaurus or other authoritative text, students create lists (verb banks) for common verbs such as; *end up, catch up, catch out, give it up, washed up*.

end up	<i>endure, through, finished, done for, washed up, give it up</i>
---------------	---

These verb banks can be added to as students discover new words in books they read.

Skill Focus: Identifying and using verbs in the correct tense

STAGE 3 Supporting ESL Students

Strategies

Deconstructing narratives and the language used for effective verbs

Building a matrix to compare language choices

Building a continuous verb bank

Modelled (Controlled)

Students are given a short narrative which contains a variety of verbs.

The following is an extract from *Zathura* by Chris Van Allsburg.

The narrative is copied as an OHT for group deconstruction.

The teacher reads the first paragraph and models how to identify the effective verbs by talking aloud the strategies used.

The teacher may say:

The verb tells me what is happening. It acts on the subject. I am going to look for the subject in the sentence first, and then highlight what it is doing, thinking or feeling. The first subject is Danny and Walter.

The Alien (from Zathura)

Danny and Walter are alone at home one afternoon when they discover a board game called Zathura. As they play the game, whatever is written on the cards actually happens to them ...

Walter led Danny back to the living room and showed him the Zathura game board and the cards. A card popped out. Danny read it silently. 'This is bad,' he whispered. 'Aliens attack.'

Guided

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

The teacher asks the students what they can do to identify verbs in sentences and asks probing questions so that students verbalise their knowledge and the strategies they can use to complete the task.

Students read each paragraph together and highlight the verb groups in pairs, discussing their choices.

K-6 Outcomes

RS3.6: Identifies adverbial phrases

RS3.8: Identifies correct tense

WS3.10: Uses different types of action, thinking, seeing, feeling, relating verbs

ESL Scales

6.1.1.4: Uses simple past and continuous tenses with some consistency in narratives and reports

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 5



Language Conventions

Year 5 Q: 42 and 48

Year 7 Q: 31, 37 and 54

Year 9 Q: 34

Item Descriptor

Students develop a range and precision of language choices

Statements of Learning for English

Students can draw on their knowledge of texts and language to use thinking, doing and feeling verbs to give reasons and express opinions and adverbs to elaborate ideas.

The Alien (from Zathura)

Danny and Walter are alone at home one afternoon when they discover a board game called Zathura. As they play the game, whatever is written on the cards actually happens to them ...

Walter led Danny back to the living room and showed him the Zathura game board and the cards. A card popped out. Danny read it silently. 'This is bad,' he whispered. 'Aliens attack.'

The room shook as the spaceship banged up against the house. The boys heard footsteps on the roof. Through the opening in the ceiling they saw someone or something climb through the hole in the roof and enter the room above them. They held each other, too terrified to move.

Suddenly the scaly tail and lizard-like legs of the alien swung down from the hole in the ceiling. Danny grabbed a rope and tied it sharply around the creature's tail. It thrashed and wailed, banging against the walls overhead. The alien howled, jerking itself back through the hole. The boys heard it scramble across the roof and saw the flash of the rockets as its ship sped away.

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

The teacher asks students to share the verbs they identified in the passage. They are cross checked on the OHT copy and a student records the class's responses on the board.

The lists of verbs on the board are deconstructed (using a thesaurus) by building a matrix.

The students are encouraged to supply the simple verb form of that verb from their prior knowledge, and then use an authoritative source (thesaurus) to list several alternative words with similar meanings (synonyms) such as the examples below.

base word	word in text tense	how is it changed?	alternative words
shake	shook (past tense)	change form	trembled, quivered, fluttered, bounced
devour	devoured (past tense)	add 'ed'	ate, swallowed, gorged
bang	banged (past tense)	add 'ed'	hit, smashed
hear	heard (past tense)	change form	listened, perceived, noted

Ask the students:

How would the choice of word be affected by the context in which it appears? Why?
Example: type of text, position in sentence, purpose of text.

What do you notice about the base word and the form of the word in present tense?

How does the imagery change when effective verbs are used?

How would this help in our writing?

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Deconstruct a text that is in present continuous tense such as *The Gizmo* by Paul Jennings. Discuss the effect of the tense on the writing and the audience.

Identify the subject–verb agreement and the verb groups in the text.

Independent

Students interpret the meaning of sentences from the text.

Evaluative language in narrative

Read each sentence from *Zathura* and highlight the action verbs which make the event more exciting.

Write the core meaning for the action verb. The first two examples are completed.

Sentences from the text <i>Zathura</i>	Core Meaning
The alien howled .	cried
The boys saw the flash of the rockets as its ship sped away.	went, moved away fast
A card popped out.	
Danny grabbed a rope.	
The boys heard it scramble across the roof.	
Suddenly, the scaly tail and lizard-like legs of the alien swung down from the hole in the ceiling.	
It thrashed and wailed banging against the walls overhead.	

Teacher prepares cards and a chart as shown below with simple verbs matching more precise forms of the verb.

Common verb	Effective verb
ate	devoured
fell	plummeted
saved	rescued
held	clutched
hit	collided

Independent

Students play games using the prepared verb cards such as 'concentration' and 'find your partner.'

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

In pairs or small groups, students complete verb word banks by supplying a range of precise and effective verbs to replace commonly used simple verbs.

Sheets of A3 paper are titled with a simple verb in present tense.

Each group must add a synonym for the verb and supply both the present and past verb form for their suggestion.

run – scamper, sprint, dart, chase, pursue, race, battle, dash, scurry, fly, dodge, evade

jump – leap, bound, vault, somersault, dive, tumble, plummet

skate – glide, ollie, bunny-hop, kick-flip

write – create, scrawl, carve, note, draw, paint, illustrate, sketch, depict

talk – articulate, lecture, preach, chat, natter, narrate, recite, describe, recount, report, express, explain, converse

act – entertain, perform, amuse, present, pretend

kick – boot, punt, dribble

bat – strike, whack, slug

throw – bowl, pitch, hurl, chuck

explore – investigate, discover, scrutinise

entertain – mesmerise, enthrall, fascinate, charm, captivate

solve – decipher, unravel, elucidate

make – design, invent, construct

think – contemplate, consider, ponder, reflect, imagine, devise, dream, fantasise

eat – devour, gobble, munch, nibble, masticate, gulp, consume

dance – twirl, boogie, pirouette

work – toil, labour, control, operate, succeed, study, research, analyse, learn

climb – mount, ascend, clamber, scramble

play – frolic, cavort, trick, caper

tease – torment, taunt

laugh – chuckle, snicker, giggle

cry – weep, sob, whinge, whine, complain, grumble, criticise

Students in pairs or groups are given sentences containing the simple verbs.

The groups are asked to rewrite as many sentences as possible in a specified time frame, substituting the simple verbs with more effective verbs from the lists they have developed. The group with the highest number of correct sentences wins.

Skill Focus: Identifying and using verbs in the correct tense

STAGE 4

Strategy

Deconstructing texts using effective verbs and discussing the verb form

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Activity one

Access the site: <http://www.nonsenselit.org/Lear/BoN/bon010.html>

Students view the images and identify the effective verbs that assist in creating imagery.

Students rewrite one of Edward Lear's poems using present tense. Such as 'The Owl and the Pussycat'.

Exploring higher-order thinking with metalanguage (QTF)

Asking probing questions that require students to:

- hypothesise on how tense changes affect the audience
- consider how rhyme affects verb choice

Activity two

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Access: <http://www.bellshakespeare.com.au/education2008/14resources/14resources.html>. Then: select *List by resource type*. Go to *Teacher's Kit*. Select *2007 Macbeth*. Download pdf, on page 20 you will find *32-second Macbeth*.

Students read and enact the *32-second Macbeth*.

Prior to enacting, students deconstruct the language in terms of effective verbs and the use of tense in the play.

Specialist groups of students rewrite the play using modern language:

- SMS message language
- theatrical language in future tense (future context)
- everyday language (contemporary context)

Use the *Teacher's Kit Macbeth* page 19 the *Language of Betrayal* as a stimulus for discussion.

Independent

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Each group of students perform their *32-second Macbeth* and critically analyse the use of language by discussing:

- effect of language (verbs groups) from the writer's perspective
- effect of language (verb groups) from the audience's perspective
- effect of language (verb groups) with added visual effects in play

KLA Outcome

English 4.4.2: Students understand language forms and language conventions when reading texts

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 5



Language Conventions
Year 9 Q: 42 and 49

Item Descriptor

Students develop a range and precision of language choices

Statements of Learning for English

Students can draw on their knowledge of texts and language to use thinking, doing and feeling verbs to give reasons and express opinions and adverbs to elaborate ideas.

Other Links

<http://www.bellshakespeare.com.au/education2008/14resources/14resources.html>

<http://classes.aces.uiuc.edu/ACES100/Mind/c-m3.html>

Vocabulary Overview

The vocabulary criterion examines students' use of language.

Emergent writers may only use drawing and symbols as their language to convey meaning, or a few simple content words or word groups.

Examples of more developed vocabulary:

- Attitudinal, technical, formal, colloquial and evaluative language appropriate to the genre and purpose
- Precise single words (nouns, verbs, adjectives) and/or word groups (adverbial and adjectival groups)
- Similes
- Metaphors
- Alliteration
- Personification

Supporting students with special educational needs

Vocabulary is profoundly important to understanding the message in what is said, written and read (comprehension). Students with limited or inefficient vocabulary knowledge will have greater difficulty combining concepts and expressing them. Difficulties increase as the intensity and frequency of content words increases. Limited vocabulary can also affect students' lexical decision speed and accuracy. (Fawcett and Nicolson 1991).

The building of content and grammatical vocabulary within the context of students' learning – in particular for those with special educational needs – helps them to write and understand more elaborate content and grammatical word classes.

Students with special educational needs can have greater challenges with both:

1. **Receptive vocabulary** – the meaning of words that a person understands.
Given a word and several meanings, students can match the correct meaning to the word; or can tell what a word means
2. **Expressive vocabulary** – the words a person can produce to match a meaning.

Skill Focus: Developing descriptive language

STAGES 1–2

Strategy

Communicating descriptive information effectively

Activities to support the strategy

In barrier games, students have to communicate information. Information is hidden from one student and they must convey the information to another student. Explain to students that descriptions elaborate characteristics and occur in many different types of texts.

The nature of each description depends on the purpose of the text.

Modelled

The teacher has a drawing of an imaginary creature.

The teacher describes this picture to the class. As the picture is described, the class draw the creature, without seeing it. The teacher writes these categories on the board:

- Body
- Head
- Parts of the head
- Body parts
- Texture, skin covering
- Mood

Then students label the parts on their illustration.

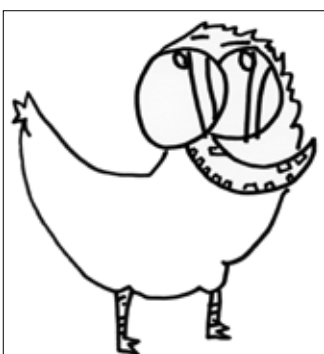
Students then compare and contrast their drawings with each other.

The teacher guides a class discussion on the reasons why some parts were easy to draw and others difficult in relation to the way they were described. Solutions to make the drawing easier (i.e. clearer descriptions) are discussed and added to the categories on the whiteboard.

Guided

Exploring substantive communication (QTF)

1. A small number of volunteer students are asked to draw the imaginary creature on the white board as the class describes the unseen picture to them. The teacher guides students to use the descriptor categories written on the board.



K–6 Outcomes

WS1.9:Writes elementary texts and elementary descriptions of familiar people and places

WS2.9:Writes a wider range of texts and fuller descriptions of people, places, animals and objects.

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 5



Item Descriptor

Students develop a wide range of more precise language choices.

Statement of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language use.

After they have drawn their creatures they compare their interpretation with the original picture.

2. The teacher provides a picture of an imaginary creature, which is half completed. The students complete the drawing, using line and colour to develop texture for their creature.

As they draw their creature, encourage discussion about the body parts using detailed and specific nouns and noun groups. Record some of these words on the board.



Independent

Exploring substantive communication (QTF)

The teacher collects a number of pictures to use for this activity. They can be based on a particular topic, include pictures of imaginary creatures, or be objects or everyday items. The use of imaginary creatures is preferable for beginning stages as it reduces the likelihood of students calling out the name of the object.

Students are grouped in pairs and work with their partner. In this barrier game, the first student hides a picture that they have been given and describes it to the second student. The second student draws the picture as it is described.

Students compare their pictures then write a description of their creatures.

Skill Focus: Developing word banks

STAGE 2 Supporting ESL Students

Strategy

Using word banks to build description using noun groups and adjectival phrases

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Teacher displays a variety of pictures depicting dragons. Students brainstorm descriptive words and phrases to describe the creatures.

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

The teacher records the discussion using the following proforma on the board. As the students provide the words, the teacher writes and categorises them into the following elements:

Adjective	Noun	Groups of describing words
sharp	teeth	extremely sharp, little teeth
golden	scales	particularly troublesome
smoke	rings	fire-breathing breath
ruby red	eyes	huge balls of fire
piercing	appetites	monstrous, scaly head
huge	roar	large, snake-like eyes
clashing	body	long threads of sticky green saliva
pointy	ears	
shiny		short, stumpy wings

Guided

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Students are given a line drawing of a dragon. They label it using the descriptive words and phrases provided. For additional support, partial labelling may assist e.g. _____, sharp teeth.

ESL Scales

- 3.11.12: Selects suitable descriptive words to enhance effectiveness of writing
- 4.3.8: Employs a small range of vocabulary to describe shades of meaning
- 4.10.6: Creates mood and feeling by use of appropriate words
- 5.10.6: Uses fitting detail in description

Question & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 5



Item Descriptor

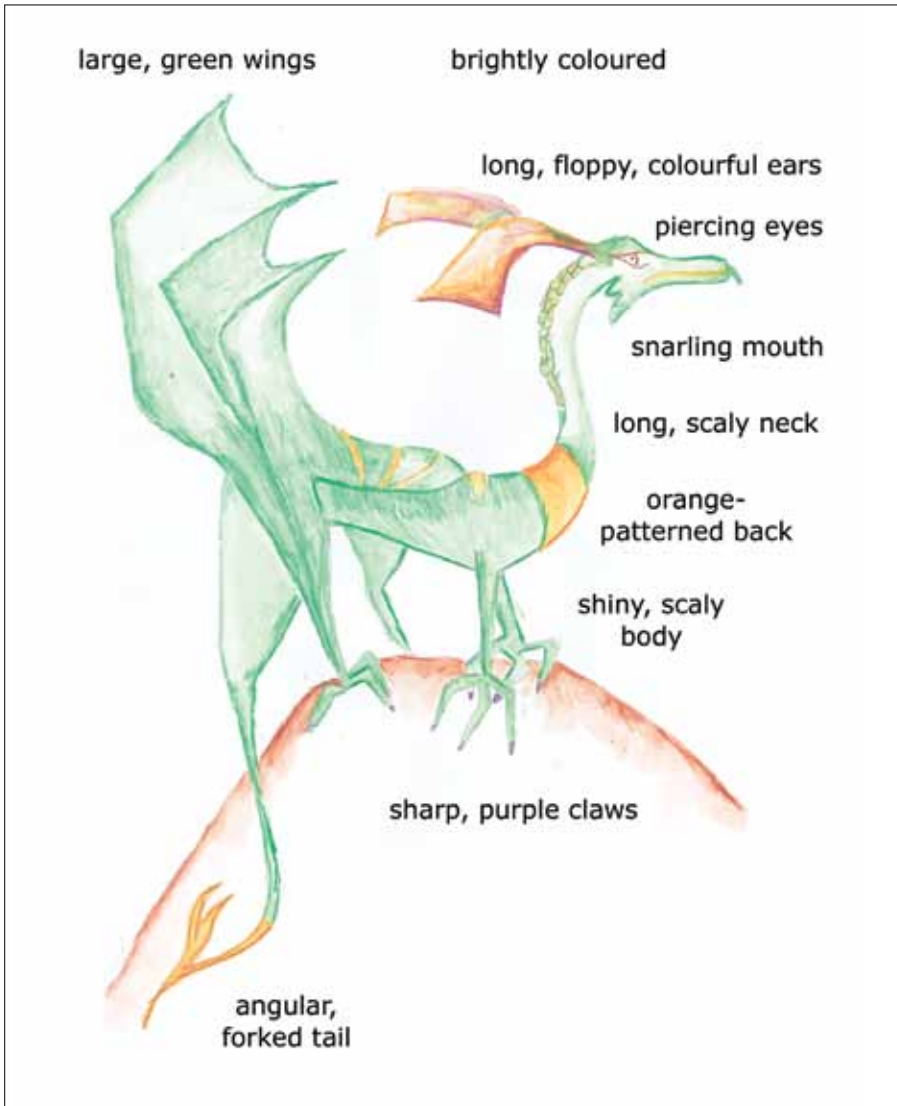
Students develop a range and precision of language choices

Statements of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language use.

Discuss what a dragon's body looks like, feels like, smells like (senses description) and then what materials students could use to create these effects when drawing their own dragon.

Teacher creates a word bank of these descriptive words and phrases (see example).



Students draw their own dragon using colour, textures (from texture rubbings) and different media (crayon, paint, paper, ink).

Skill Focus: Developing imagery in description

STAGE 2

Strategy

Using comparisons (similes) to build images

Activities to support the strategy

Exploring the way writers and illustrators have described characters in narratives provides students with models of how to describe characters in their own writing. Choose books that explore these aspects both visually and in words.

Examples of texts to deconstruct are:

The Crime of the Agent Mariner, by Pia Santaklaus.



The Gizmo by Paul Jennings explores characters of two boys with opposing values and personas. The illustrations add to the character profiles.

Modelled

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Collect pictures of the characters and separate the images and the text describing the characters.

Enlarge several images for demonstration. Model how to describe and talk about the characters, noting how the comparisons build images.

Guided

Involve students in matching the description of the characters to their images.

After matching the descriptions and comparing the character representations introduce the word 'like'.

I noticed that you were using the word 'like' in your descriptions when you were comparing your characters.

Discuss how characters' physical and emotional descriptions can be *like* other things.

Give examples of similes in each category below and ask students to provide other examples:

K-6 Outcomes

WS2.9: Writes a wider range of texts and fuller descriptions of people, places, animals and objects.

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 5



Item Descriptor

Students develop a wide range of more precise language choices

Statements of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to include brief descriptions of familiar characters, places and things.

Students have the opportunity to understand that stories have purposes to entertain or inform an audience.

- How it feels compared to how something else feels

His skin was as slippery as plastic.
Her skin was like satin.

- How it looks compared to how something else looks

His hair was as spiky as toothbrush bristles.
His hands were wrinkled like prunes.

- How it smells compared to how something else smells

The air was as spicy as pepper.
The room smelt like rotting fruit.

- How a character behaves compared with something else

He ran like a cheetah through the school gate.

Complete some similes on the white board together.

As sly as a _____
As slippery as a _____
As sneaky as a _____
As quiet as a _____
As brave as a _____

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Students research similes online to build their repertoire. Students can build a data bank of similes by adding their favourite simile from the different websites to a class simile list.

Students choose a character from the texts that have been deconstructed and describe them using at least three similes.

Alternatively, small groups can take a character and write a number of similes on large sheets of butcher's paper or flashcard strips. These can be shared with peers in a writers' circle and displayed in the classroom.

Skill Focus: Developing descriptive language (adverbs)

STAGE 2–3

Strategy

Communicating descriptive information effectively

Activities to support the strategy

Details about the action in a story are provided by adverbs and adverbial phrases that tell more about how and where action takes place. Provide students with simple sentences and ask them to provide words or phrases that tell more about how.

*He opened the door **quietly**.*

*My brother and I hid **nervously**.*

*I rushed **frantically**.*

This can be repeated with students adding phrases that tell about where actions occur.

*He opened the door **of the study** quietly.*

*My brother and I hid nervously **under our beds**.*

*I rushed frantically **out onto the verandah**.*

Thinking and feeling verbs

Readers can be given insight into what characters are experiencing emotionally using thinking and feeling verbs. They are also used to show characters' reflections on the events that they are experiencing. Assist students to identify thinking and feeling verbs from texts and make word banks of effective choices for them to use in their own writing.

Thinking verbs	Feeling verbs
thought, wondered, knew, wished, remembered, considered, imagined, realized, believed, decided, expected.	loved, disliked, hated, scared, hurt, enjoyed, frightened, worried, amazed, shocked, delighted, disgusted, cherished

K–6 Outcomes

WS2.10: Identifies nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs in own writing and how these add to the meaning of the text .

WS3.10: Uses different types of verbs, eg action, thinking, seeing, feeling, relating.

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 5



Language Conventions

Year 3 Q: 31 and 42

Year 5 Q: 26, 40 and 45

Year 7 Q: 33 and 55

Year 9 Q: 35

Item Descriptor

Students develop a wide range of more precise language choices.

Statement of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to include brief descriptions of familiar characters, places and things.

Skill Focus: Developing descriptive language

STAGE 3–4

Strategy

Deconstructing imagery in texts

Successful writers craft descriptions using a variety of techniques. Imagery is an essential component of effective writing as it assists readers to imagine what is in the writer's mind. Imagery is most effective when intensity or polarisation of images is described.

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

How to spot a simile in texts

A simile is when one object is compared to another. Similes are used to describe feelings and settings to create a better mental picture of what is happening for the reader.

Similes are usually identified by phrases using:

- like
- as if
- similar
- looked as if
- looked like
- sounds like
- feels like
- acts like

A simile uses *like* or *as* in its construction to compare two things

Model for students how to create similes by first saying what something else is like:

- *a neck like a pipe*
- *hair like rats' tails*
- *trees like feather dusters*
- *hail like jagged rocks*
- *lightning like a laser show*
- *thunder like a roaring beast*

Then show students how to use the information in a different form:

- *rat's tail hair*
- *whips of lightning*
- *bubble wrap skin*
- *bruised flesh of the clouds*
- *black ribbon of the road*
- *the drum beat of thunder*

K–6 Outcomes

WS2.9: Writes a wider range of texts and fuller descriptions of people, places, animals and objects

WS3.I3: Discusses how metaphor, idiom and personification enhance own text.

KLA Outcome

Design and Technology 4.6.3: Uses a range of technologies appropriately and safely in the development of quality design solutions

English 4.6.II: Students learn about techniques used to create imaginary texts such as imagery.

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 5



Reading

Year 7 Q 43

Item Descriptor

Students develop a wide range of more precise language choices.

Statements of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to include brief descriptions of familiar characters, places and things.

When students interpret texts they infer meanings and messages.

Guided

Access the site www.australianscreen.com.au

Show the film clips titled *Wading through the floods* and *The muddy aftermath*:
from <http://australianscreen.com.au/education/environment/disasters/>

Clip no. 2 Maitland Floods: Home movie 'Wading through the floods'

Clip no. 3 Maitland Floods: Home Movie 'The muddy aftermath'

After viewing each film clip, brainstorm the events in detail including components such as:

chairs

flooding water

furniture

debris

houses

river

telegraph wires

animals

boats

people

Students list action verbs for these objects and then compare each of these items to another object such as:

chairs – The chairs were floating like boats.

flooding water – The water was running like a herd of wildebeests.

debris – Debris was hanging from the telegraph wires like dirty socks on the clothes line.

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Brainstorm with students extreme events that could be described using similes.

Students discuss personal experiences of any of these events.

For example:

Volcanic eruption, cyclone, explosion, race car crash, collapsing building, sinking ship, crashing aeroplane, birth, death.

Explain that these events can be made more vivid to readers by using language that develops a picture in the reader's mind.

Using a topic that the students choose, construct a poem using similes.

When constructing, students need to think about: appearance, sound, smell and feelings.

Other links

www.australianscreen.com.au

www.australianscreen.com.au/education/environment/disasters/

THE STORM

Looks like a mud puddle in the sky

And smells like mouldy leather

It sounds like a giant's stomach rumbling

And feels like being turned inside out.

Following the explicit teaching of imagery in modelled and guided reading sessions, select a descriptive passage (see suggestions below). Present this to students as a cloze passage with the passages of imagery below.

For example:

Beyond our desolate farm I can see the horizon where a few dark clouds
_____.

It never comes, and now our dam is a patch of dry cracked mud
surrounded by brown land.

The cicadas have been shrilling, _____. This morning they
are quiet. The silence _____. It spreads and suffocates
everything, _____.

steals into corners, nooks and crannies

calling impatiently for rain

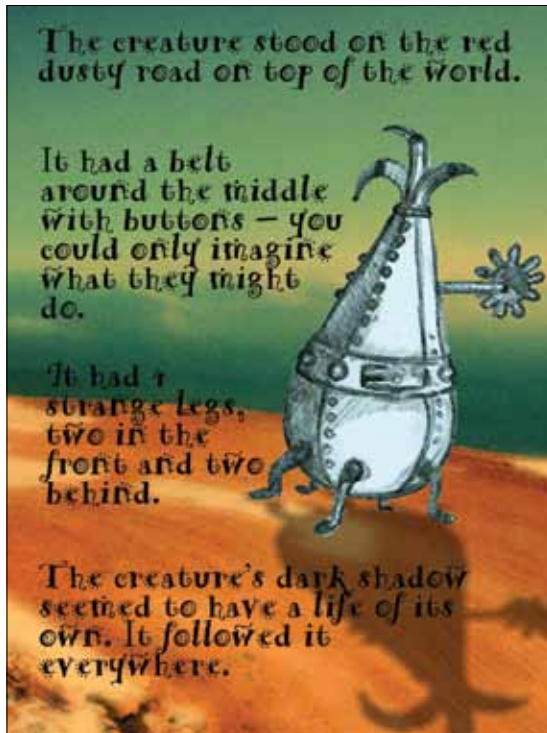
like a hot dry blanket

cruelly taunt us with promises of rain

Suggested texts rich in imagery suitable for deconstruction include:

- *The Twits* by Roald Dahl
- *Blueback* by Tim Winton
- *Storm Boy* by Colin Thiele
- *Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame
- *Fox* by Margaret Wild
- *Rain Dance* by Cathy Applegate

Ask each student to swap their artwork with another student and to construct a descriptive text using the information presented in the artwork.



Skill focus: Developing the range of descriptive language

STAGES 3, 4 and 5

Strategy

Using film and photography and existing text to identify and build descriptive devices in writing

Activities to support the strategy



Guided

Using the *PowerPoint* presentation provided, students are asked to deconstruct and record the images they saw, using:

- Personification
- Body vocabulary
- Effective verb and noun groups

Ask students how the words they have chosen increase the interpretation of the image.

Link to the *PowerPoint* presentation

Independent

After brainstorming ideas using the *PowerPoint* presentation, students create a brief story orientation using these ideas.

Provide the stimulus from the Powerpoint pages 1 and 4 to assist them to complete the task.

K-6 Outcome

WS3.13: Students discuss how metaphor, idiom and personification enhance own texts.

KLA Outcomes

Visual Arts 4.4.2: Students explore the function of and relationships between artist – artwork – world and audience.

English 4.6.11: Students discuss how metaphor, idiom and personification enhance own texts.

Students write more detailed descriptions and more involved literary texts.

English 5.1.12: Students learn about how inference and figurative language can be used in complex and subtle ways.

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 5



Item Descriptor

Students develop a wide range of more precise language choices

Statement of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to include brief descriptions of familiar characters, places and things.

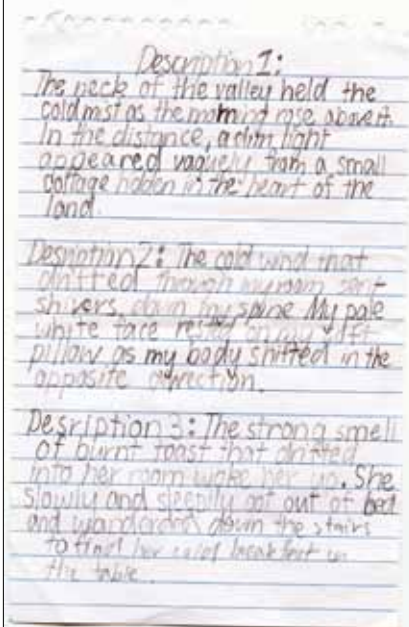
Students have the opportunity to understand that stories have purposes to entertain or inform an audience.

Guided

Exploring deep knowledge (QTF)

Develop intellectual quality by discussing students' prior knowledge of horses in terms of behaviours, uses, riding equipment and any personal experiences with horses.

Stage 3 student sample



The neck of the valley held the cold mist as the morning rose above it. In the distance, a dim light appeared vaguely from a small cottage hidden in the heart of the land.

Description 1 uses personification of the landscape

Description 2 focuses on first person description

Provide students with the Andrew Barton 'Banjo' Patterson poem – 'The Man from Snowy River'.

www.wallisandmatilda.com.au/man-from-snowy-river.shtml

Ask students to visualise what they are reading and then verbalise what they visualised in their own words.

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Download a copy of the poem for students to deconstruct, focusing on stanzas 8 to 12.

<http://nationaltreasures.nla.gov.au/index/Treasures/item/nla.int-ex6-s22>

Discuss the narrative with focus on stanzas 9 to 12 beginning with:

When they reached the mountain's summit, even Clancy took a pull'

When discussing the scene, explore the use of images set by effective verb groups and other literary devices. For example '*standing mute, halted cowed and beaten*'

Other links

www.wallisandmatilda.com.au/man-from-snowy-river.shtml

www.australianscreen.com.au

www.australianscreen.com.au/titles/man-snowy-river



Ask students to highlight unfamiliar or unknown words, particularly verbs, adjectives and nouns.

Ask students to write down and research unknown nouns such as: gorges, wildhop scrub, saplings, bridle, bloodhound.

Discuss unfamiliar terms such as “Clancy took a pull”, “colt of Old Regret.”

Develop students’ problematic thinking (QTF) through probing questions such as:

- Look at the title and consider the content. What is the author telling us about?
- What words were difficult to understand and how did this create a problem in understanding the content and messages in the poem?

Examine lines in the poem which use unusual or less common descriptions and discuss these with the students such as:

...saw him ply the stockwhip...

...his pluck was still undaunted...

- What difficulties or confusions did you encounter with the descriptive language or specific nouns?
- What influence does context have on understanding the content of the text?
- How does learning about different contexts, environments and issues help us to understand texts?
- Why do you think these problems in interpreting the vocabulary occurred?

Discuss 21st Century vocabulary that would have been difficult for people living in 1890s to understand such as ‘Google, wiki, blog, television, CD, computer’ etc

The poem was written in 1890. Patterson claimed he was attempting to reach urbanised Australians.

- How has the issue in the poem overcome the problem of time and remained appropriate to this century?
- How has the issue in the poem become isolated from or disassociated from this century?

To assist students identify the issues, problems and relevance to today’s society, refer them to the following links;

http://www.brumbwatchaustralia.com/old_index.htm

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brumby>

- What is the struggle or problem that Patterson is trying to represent in the poem?
- How do the horsemen attempt to solve the problem and would the solution be different 1890 to 2008?
- After viewing film clip number three, how would the Brumby perceive the problem?

In the poem, the horsemen are chasing after an old racehorse that had escaped. The capture of this horse was worth a great deal of money to the horsemen.

- Who was the owner of the racehorse and why had it become so notorious?
- Who is seen as the hero and how are they portrayed?

Go to: www.australianscreen.com.au/titles/man-snowy-river/

Present the film clip to investigate one interpretation of the imagery in the film adaptation.

Ask students:

- How did this scene increase/decrease/change your understanding of the poem?
- What written imagery was clearly expressed in the film?

Ask students to quote stanzas from the poem such as:

...any slip was death...

...stockwhips woke the echoes...

- How did the film overcome the language problems with their use of sound, light, pacing and camera angles?

After discussing stanzas 9 to 12 from the poem, show the class clip no. 3 'A stripling on a wild and weedy beast'.

Discuss the effect of the following elements:

- Sound
- Pacing (slow and fast motion)
- Close ups and panning shots
- Colour
- Last scene of the horse and audience meeting eye to eye – character engagement

Return to the poem. Now deconstruct the poem highlighting the imagery as it is read. (Refer to insert for student sample of deconstruction.)

Categorise the imagery from the poem using the following table as a guide. Examples have been included.

Example	Type of device	Image created
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a stripling on a small and weedy beast	Effective adjectives and nouns	Weak, powerless horse and inexperienced rider
And he wore a badge of gameness in his bright and fiery eye.	Metaphor	Good self esteem and determination of character.

Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Students use the thesaurus to develop words that match the elements above. Students then write a narrative orientation to the scene in their own words.

Skill Focus: Identifying alliteration in sentences

STAGES 4–5

Strategy

Highlighting for students how successful writers craft descriptions using alliteration

Activities to support the strategy

Alliteration is a literary device used to develop mood and effect. The analysis of its use assists students to identify and use it in their own writing.

Question what students know about alliteration:

- How do you think alliteration is used?
- What types of texts is alliteration used in? (e.g. poetry, narrative, song, plays)
- Why do you think it is used?
- Do you think it is effective?

Ask students to provide reasoned arguments for their decisions and clarify the concept.

Explore the concept in context by analysing and critically reviewing a Shakespeare play.

Access:

www.bellshakespeare.com.au/education2008/14resources/14resources.html

This is a rich resource website which also contains a teachers' kit for Shakespearean plays.

Bell Shakespeare Company has regional touring education initiatives and Shakespeare in schools programmes.

Guided

Teachers can analyse sections of the play for examples of alliteration or students can identify the examples in excerpts or the full version available on the link: www.shakespeare.mit.edu/macbeth/full.html

Some examples of alliteration in the play are:

'Fair is foul, and foul is fair:

Hover through the fog and filthy air.'

'The merciless Macdonwald'

'Great Glamis!'

Independent

Students are given a number of excerpts from *Macbeth* and identify (highlight then record) the use of alliteration and analyse –

- What the words mean
- How they build effect and mood (e.g. surprise, anger, fear)

KLA Outcomes

Drama 5.1.3: Interprets and enacts drama using scripted text

English 4.6.11: Discusses how metaphor, idiom, alliteration and personification enhance own texts.

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 5



Item Descriptor

Students develop a wide range of more precise language choices

Statements of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to include brief descriptions of familiar characters, places and things.

Students have the opportunity to understand that stories have purposes to entertain or inform an audience.

Other links

www.bellshakespeare.com.au/education2008/14resources/14resources.html

<http://shakespeare.mit.edu/macbeth/full.html>

Skill Focus: Developing the range of descriptive language

STAGE 4–5

Strategy

Deconstructing texts written by others

When students write narratives, they should aim to make language choices that heighten the reader’s interest in the story. Students should be shown the functions of the different aspects of narrative text and also the kinds of words that are most effective in describing characters and events.

Activities to support the strategy

Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Review definitions of nouns, noun groups, adjectives, imagery and expressive verbs and adverbs. The table could be provided or developed with the class.

Aspect of meaning	Aspects of grammar	Examples
Who or what is involved: people, places, things, concepts, themes, emotions	Noun group	flying shards of crystal with sharp edges;
	Factual and opinion adjectives	a courageous act;
	Figurative language	thunder rumbling like a drum;
	Whole clauses	an indescribable wave of terror that sent shivers up my spine
What is happening: events, activities, behaviours, states of being, relationships	Verb groups	tried to escape; began
	Different types of verbs: – action verbs to describe events – saying verbs to express direct speech – thinking/feeling verbs to express the thoughts and emotional responses of the characters or narrator	howling and growling; smashed; shattered; huddled; exploded; shrieked; complained; whimpered; thought; wondered; knew; expected; worried
What is the context: the circumstances surrounding the events – when (the time), where (the setting), how (manner) and why (reason)	Adverbials: adverbs, adverbial phrases and prepositional phrases	fortunately; reluctantly; miserably; because of the terrible weather; a few moments later ...; during the night ...; into the basement; along the ridge; with an almighty heave

KLA Outcomes

- English 4.1.18: Students learn about inference and figurative language
- English 5.6.3: Students learn to compose texts that demonstrate originality and ingenuity in content and language
- English 5.1.12: Students learn about how inference and figurative language can be used in complex and subtle ways.
- English 5.4.13: Students learn about codes and conventions, including emotive, evocative and impersonal language and signs used to signal tone, mood and atmosphere in written texts.

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 5



Reading

Year 7 Q: 45

Year 9 Q: 23, 25 and 42

Item Descriptor

Students develop a wide range of more precise language choices

Statement of Learning for English

When students write stories they have the opportunity to include brief descriptions of familiar characters, places and things.

Students have the opportunity to understand that stories have purposes to entertain or inform an audience.

Students can give examples of these devices.

In the text below, the student has enhanced the descriptiveness of the writing by using effective **nouns and noun groups** and **imagery** to create clear and very evocative pictures in the reader's mind of what the character was seeing, feeling and experiencing.

The student has also used **expressive verbs and adverbs** to tell the reader how things were done.

Using this shared text, the teacher works through the passage highlighting the literary devices. A copy of the passage without the literary devices highlighted is below.

The Deep Blue Nothing

The flicks of silver fish tails sent flashes of light into my eyes. I swam through the school of herring, chasing them into the long sea grass. My laughter sent a stream of bubbles to the surface. I was free, weightless: nothing could hold me back. I kicked my legs and was propelled to the surface for my next breath. Then I could return to my underwater paradise, where I could kick and twist and ...

I felt something catch my ankle as my fingertips skimmed out of the water. I kicked again but I couldn't get my face to the air. I looked down. A fishing line, almost invisible, was wrapped around my ankle, cutting into the skin. I struggled to free myself but I only tightened it further. My head began to pound in lust for oxygen, but, hard as I tried, my fingers could do nothing to budge the miniscule knots. My lungs screamed for air, my throat burned, my head was in agony. In a last desperate act, I clawed for the surface. Blood flow was cut off to my foot and my head was still half a metre underwater. My insides burning, my skin freezing, my arms and legs exhausted, I relaxed. I took a deep breath in and felt a surge of icy water rush down my throat.

My head stopped hurting. All pain had disappeared, as had the water, the sea grass and the school of herring. In their place – nothing. An expanse of nothingness met my eyes. It was white; there was no colour. There was no heat, but I felt no cold. Something – a voice, maybe my own – said: 'You're dying.' I was. But I felt no sadness. I wasn't angry, disappointed, or even slightly annoyed. I was forgetting my life, my past and how to feel. I was dying.

In front of me, a shape formed out of nothing. I think it was called a 'door'. Yes, definitely a 'door'. It wasn't particularly interesting, but I don't think a 'door' is an object of great interest.

The handle turned silently: there was no noise here. The door began to open and the brightest, purest light imaginable shone out. Through the door – that was it. How simple it all was! I was so close now. The lack of emotion I thought I felt could have been happiness. It was so easy now ...

'I can feel a pulse!' Someone yelled this in the silence. That wasn't right! The door was closing; the light faded. It all dissolved back into the nothing. The nothing grew dark. Then the light, hot and dazzling, shone at me again.

The sun was in its cloudless blue sky, shining and beaming. Everything came back: sun, beach, herring, seagrass, swimming, fishing line, ankle. But they'd never been gone, had they? But yes, they did go and the door came out of the nothing. I smiled. It had all been so simple. Maybe one day I'd go back, and then I'd make it through that doorway!

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Independent

Students read through the passage below and highlight the literary devices used to create strong imagery.

The Farewell

Ruben signed up for war and then leaked the news gently to his mother. Her heart sank into the well of despair as her fear stole her comfort and feeling of safety.

As the morning tapped on his bedroom window telling him it was time to leave, he rose and took a last glimpse of the dancing leaves from the oak tree that stood outside his window. Secretly he watched his mother asleep in her bed comforted under the waves of sheets and the smell of fresh linen. Then he woke the kitchen and made tea and toast. It was very early and his breath made steam.

Silently Ruben's mother shadowed the kitchen doorway. Then sat; her son would sit for the last time at her breakfast table. Together they ate, sipping tea and bravery together before making their way to the farewell place.

Then they began their silent walk to the old ship that stood as guard in the port and stood waiting to pull the service men from their homes. His fear prickled the back of his neck but both mother and son were held high by their efforts to send unspoken messages of calm to each other. The whistle screamed and called the men aboard the ship. It groaned as the ocean pulled it away to war disappearing on the horizon as if it had never been there at all.

by Aden Bates, Year 6