

Exploring the 2011 CBCA Short List

Sophie Honeybourne



The e:lit Teachers' Guide to the Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year Awards

How to use this guide

Exploring the 2011 CBCA Short List, the e:lit Teachers' Guide to the short-listed titles in the Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year Awards, provides a modern, contextual literary journey for you and your students to explore some very special books.

From the many hundreds of titles by Australian authors and illustrators the CBCA has chosen the titles featured here. This guide suggests themes and learning activities for each book which will enable you to authentically link these texts to whatever you are teaching in the classroom. Literature is a powerful learning tool for students and is an important focus in the new Australian Curriculum: English '... Students learn to interpret, appreciate, evaluate, and create literary texts such as narrative, poetry, prose, plays, films and multimodal texts in spoken, print and digital/online content.'

In response to the introduction of the new Australian Curriculum: English, *Exploring the 2011 CBCA Short List* has been updated and enhanced from previous years. It has a strong focus on multimodal teaching and learning and suggests relevant software and web 2.0 tools that can be used to examine and respond to the texts.

The 2011 guide embeds the new English curriculum's focus on examining and responding to quality literature and links teaching and learning activities to the strands and sub-strands of this new curriculum.

The key sub-strands of both Literature and Literacy are combined in the first four sections of each teaching guide. The teaching and learning activities in these sections enable students to explore and develop key understandings about the *context* of each text. They then guide students to *examine* and then *respond* to what they have read and viewed. Suggestions on how students might *create* their own texts are also included.

The Language strand activities address relevant aspects of the texts which are associated with *text structure and organisation* (text-level features) and *expressing and developing ideas* (sentence-level features).

Embedded within the activities and resources are a range of *modal* (speaking, listening, reading, viewing, writing) and *multimodal* ideas and suggestions. Web 2.0 tools are suggested to enable students to create their own multimodal texts. The activities also encourage students to respond creatively through *drama*, *music* and *visual art*. Student responses in the forms of spoken, written and multimodal texts could be used by teachers as relevant assessment opportunities.

To demonstrate how technology can interact with text in the new curriculum, the author Sophie Honeybourne, has offered ideas for digital interaction for two of the books featured in this guide, based on their websites. This exciting new development will demonstrate to teachers what using technology to explore literature can look like in the classroom. Visit the pages for *Why I Love Australia* (pages 4–5) and *The Return of the Word Spy* (pages 26–27) to find out how you can go on digital journey with your students!

This year's e:lit guide truly enhances the Book Week concept of 'One World, Many Stories'. We hope that you use it in the classroom to support your students in a guided, deep and inspirational exploration of these fantastic texts!

About the author

Sophie Honeybourne is currently working as an Assistant Principal at Beauty Point Public School. After gaining a B.A. Hons in English Literature from Exeter University in the UK, she began her career as an Exhibition Coordinator in Europe. Sophie later changed careers and migrated to the sunny shores of Sydney, seven years ago, to complete her Master of Teaching at the University of Sydney. Prior to her current role she worked as a teacher at North Sydney Demonstration School where she co-authored last year's *Exploring the CBCA Shortlist*. This year's CBCA guide has given Sophie the opportunity to combine her knowledge and enthusiasm for new technologies with her passion for teaching quality Australian children's literature.

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Children's Literature in the

Primary Classroom

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Author and illustrator:
Jeannie Baker
ISBN: 9781406309140
Publisher:
Walker Books Australia
www.walkerbooks.com.au
RRP: \$39.95



Theme Family, cultural diversity, harmony

Readership Ages 5–12 (guide only)

Synopsis

Two diverse cultures, countries and families are linked with warmth and charm in this two-in-one picture book.

This innovative picture book comprises two stories designed to be read simultaneously — one from the left, the other from the right. Page by page, we experience a day in the lives of two boys and their families: an Australian family, whose way of life strikes a familiar chord, and a family from a faraway country with a way of life more different than one can imagine. As we read we discover the simple truth that despite these differences we are all the same. We are the mirror of each other.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Set a research project on the Valley of the Roses in Morocco. Divide students into groups and ask them to prepare a PowerPoint presentation on one aspect of the area such as landscape, history, industry or daily life.
- Using Google Earth, zoom in on Sydney and then on to the Valley of the Roses. Use both the satellite view and the street view functions to explore the two areas.
- Explore Arabic calligraphy writing online and find out about its similarities and differences to English. Compare and contrast using a Venn diagram.
- Turn English words into Arabic writing online at the Firdaous website. Create a wall display with English names on the left and Arabic names mirrored on the right.
- Research online through Google images to find pictures of Sydney and the Valley of the Roses. Use these and some appropriate furnishings to decorate a 'split classroom' with a Sydney side and a Morocco side.

Examining literature

- On the first pages, we only meet the Australian boy. Why do we not see the Moroccan boy? What does this tell us about the two children?
- There are objects common to both Morocco and Australia that tell a story of global trade. Find examples and discuss how the author uses these objects to create connections between the two worlds.
- This book is presented in an innovative and unusual way. Discuss how the 'mirror' features change our reading of the book.

Responding to literature

- Both boys try to educate their parents about the other country (with the magic carpet story and the computer). What is this saying about 21st century children? Why does each boy yearn for what the other has?
- Would you like to live in Morocco? Why or why not? Support your arguments with references from the text.
- Use the images of Morocco to write a recount about an imaginary trip you took to visit the boy in the Valley of the Roses. Use images from the internet to create a slideshow of the trip and set it to appropriate Arabic music using PhotoShow.

Creating literature

- Neither child is depicted going to school. Draw a picture that would illustrate an aspect of a boy's day at school in Sydney. Research pictures of school in Morocco and then draw the 'mirror' image.
- Create factual sentences for each page to narrate the events. Then write a literary narration for each page. Compare and contrast the two.
- Create a collage based on an image of your school or home. Use a variety of materials. Discuss why you think the author chose this medium for her illustrations based on your experiences.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- Create a timeline for each family. How similar are these timelines? How do they illustrate the similarities and differences in the book?
- Explore how the images are presented on each page. How does the organisation of the images create a cohesive narrative on each side?

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- Create a noun wall for each country based on the pictures. How does this help us understand the similarities and differences in the book?
- Why do you think the author wrote the introduction in two languages?

Examining visual and multimodal features

- Why are sequences of smaller images used? What function do they serve?

Useful websites

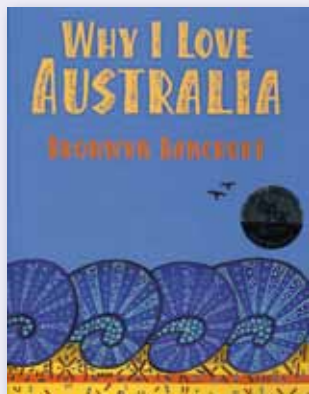
www.jeanniebaker.com/picture_books_index.htm
www.walker.co.uk/UserFiles/file/Downloads/Mirror%20Classroom%20Ideas.pdf
www.firdaous.com/en/?13-a
www.google.com.au
www.photoshow.com/home/start

Author and illustrator comment

Mirror came from my own delight travelling in a country very different from my own. While there was much political poisoning of attitudes towards foreigners and 'foreignness' in Australia, travelling alone in remote Morocco, a woman 'stranger' myself, I was met with much friendliness and generosity from 'strangers'. The idea for the book was right there: outward appearances may be very different but the inner person of a stranger may not be a stranger at all. Like each other, we live to be loved by family and friends and be part of a larger family, a community. Inwardly we are so alike it could be each other we see when we look in a mirror.

Jeannie Baker

Why I Love Australia



Author: Bronwyn Bancroft
 ISBN: 9781921541780
 Publisher: Little Hare Books
 www.hardiegrant.com.au
 RRP: \$24.95

Pages of activities linked thematically to the Australian Curriculum.

Home page with a brief introduction to the website.



Embedded Youtube videos to help develop student understanding of the context of the text using a multimodal perspective.

The site is structured around key elements of the Literature, Literacy and Language strands from the new Australian Curriculum. Two pages of the site (Examining Literature and Analysing Language) include direct links to content descriptions and elaborations to demonstrate how the activities link specifically to the curriculum.



Links to online digital resources, which can engage your students, and illustrate big ideas and concepts in the text.

Save time searching for resources! Galleries of selected images are included to help broaden your students' knowledge of Aboriginal artworks and help orientate them to the visual imagery used in the text.

Google Earth is embedded in the website for easy access and use on an IWB. It can be used to model the activity before students independently use the software to explore Australian locations.

Go to the following password protected website to find how you can use technology to explore this title:

<http://iloveaustralia.yolasite.com/> <http://whyiloveaustralia.yolasite.com/>

Username: elit

Password: CBCA2011



Links and suggestions to use other e:lit publications that will support your understanding and use of specific pedagogies.

Resources and worksheets are included and ready for you to use at the click of a button! Just click on the files to open them up and use them on an IWB, or copy them and insert them into a Word document to prepare an independent worksheet.

Suggested links to content descriptions and elaborations from the new Australian English Curriculum. Click on the hyperlink to visit the specific content elaboration embedded within the curriculum site.

Picture Books

Suggestions on how students can create their own multimodal texts. Hyperlinks to useful online web 2.0 tools are included to demonstrate how easy it can be to use these tools to bring texts alive!

Work samples to provide both teacher and student with an idea of what finished product might look like after using specific software or web 2.0 tools.

Hamlet



Author: Nicki Greenberg
ISBN: 9781741756425
Publisher: Allen & Unwin
www.allenandunwin.com
RRP: \$49.99



Theme Death, revenge, relationships, love

Readership Age 14+ (guide only)

Synopsis

Denmark is in turmoil. The palace is seething with treachery, suspicion and intrigue. On a mission to avenge his father's murder, Prince Hamlet tries to claw free of the moral decay all around him. But in the ever-deepening nest of plots, of plays within plays, nothing is what it seems. Doubt and betrayal torment the Prince until he is propelled into a spiral of unstoppable violence.

In this sumptuous staging of Shakespeare's enigmatic play on the page, Nicki Greenberg has created an extraordinary visual feast that sweeps up all in its path as the drama intensifies both on stage and off.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Set a class project to research William Shakespeare. Create a multimodal poster online using Glogster including images, videos and text from both his plays and poems, and information about his life.
- Read a short extract of a Shakespeare play to the class and ask them to summarise it. Discuss why the activity was difficult. How could you present the text in a way that would make it easier to understand?
- Read the colloquially written plot summary from Shmoop. Discuss how modern spoken language differs from written language. Discuss the concept of 'texting' language and how language changes over time. Show students brief extracts from Chaucer, Shakespeare and Dickens to highlight this.
- Organise an excursion to see *Hamlet* in the theatre and/or watch a DVD of a recent performance of the play.

Examining literature

- Choose one scene from *Hamlet* and analyse how the pictures help the reader interpret how the characters are feeling.
- What function does the ghost play in *Hamlet*? How is it presented in this book? What function does the ghost perform in the play and how does it help us understand the characters in the play?
- Explore Hamlet's famous soliloquy in close detail unpacking the imagery and meaning. Perform it.
- Discuss the theme of revenge. Why is revenge so important to Hamlet? How does he achieve his revenge in the end? What was the cost of his revenge?

Responding to literature

- Why do you think the author choose to present *Hamlet* as a cartoon using fantasy creatures and backgrounds?
- Use the BBC website 60 second Shakespeare to create your own newspaper article summarising the plot of *Hamlet*.
- If you had to present *Hamlet* to an audience in a way that would make it easily understandable, what medium would you choose and why?

Creating literature

- Choose a short piece of dialogue between two characters and create your own cartoon to illustrate what is happening in that section of the play.
- Write an imaginary suicide note from Ophelia to Hamlet, explaining why she killed herself.
- Imagine if Hamlet had survived and become king. Do you think he would have been a good king? Why, or why not? Hold a class debate and then use the debate to write a persuasive text in favour of one side of the argument.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- Explore the concept of iambic pentameter using Hamlet's 'to be or not to be' soliloquy. Use an IWB to mark the stresses on the words and then clap the rhythm.
- Examine the use of apostrophes to shorten words. Are these commonly used patterns in modern English? Why do you think Shakespeare has used them in this way?

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- For each scene, assign a small group of students to record 20 words they have not seen before. Each group then creates a glossary for that scene which the whole class can use to interpret the book.
- The verb 'to have' was often in a different form in Shakespeare's time. Decline the verb (e.g. he hast, thou hast).

Examining visual and multimodal features

- Discuss how the illustrations develop the mood of the play through the use of colour.
- What different media has the illustrator used on the title pages for the scenes and acts? Develop your own title page for one act using a similar mixed-media approach.

Useful websites

www.glencoe.com/sec/literature/litlibrary/pdf/hamlet.pdf
www.thekidswindow.co.uk/Kids-pages/William_Shakespeare.htm
www.glogster.com
www.shmoop.com/hamlet/summary.html
www.bbc.co.uk/drama/shakespeare/60secondshakespeare/themes_hamlet.shtml

Two Peas in a Pod



Author: Chris McKimmie
ISBN: 9781742373041
Publisher: Allen & Unwin
www.allenandunwin.com
RRP: \$29.99



Theme Friendship, belonging, imagination

Readership Ages 5–8 (guide only)

Synopsis

Marvin and Violet have been friends since they were babies. They are like two peas in a pod. But then Violet moves away...

With a unique Australian flavour, this story of friendship is both tender and truthful.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Complete a profile about a best friend (including appearance, likes, dislikes, habits, favourite foods). Select some students to present their profiles to the class.
- Write a recount about your best day ever with your best friend. Publish it online on a class blog and comment on other students' blog entries. Add any photos of you and your best friend.
- Hold a class discussion about a time when someone close to you left. How did you feel? In pairs, ask students to 'sculpt' each other to show how you might feel when someone you love leaves.
- Brainstorm a list of books about friendship and read a selection. Elicit a discussion about why so many authors write stories about this theme.

Examining literature

- Scan in the page with the list of 'pairings' and show it on an IWB. How do these pairings illustrate the relationship between Violet and Marvin? Add some more commonly used pairings and make up some of your own. Write them in funky fonts to create a classroom display.
- In pairs create a short sequence of dramatic freeze-frames to show: Marvin and Violet playing, the day Violet tells Marvin she is leaving, the day she leaves, and their reunion. How do these activities help us understand the characters?
- Using the page 'And she was gone' discuss how the visual imagery draws the reader's attention to the words. What emotional response does this elicit from the reader?

Responding to literature

- Even though everyone thinks Marvin and Violet are quite similar, they can be quite different. Record their similarities and differences using a Venn diagram on an IWB. Which character do students prefer and why?

- Why do you think the author wrote this book? Do you think the author might have had a close friend who moved away? How could you find out if it did? Research the answer using both the book and the internet.
- The settings are a magical and imaginary world created out of the everyday. How do these settings help the reader better understand the two main characters?

Creating literature

- Design and then write a postcard from Violet to tell Marvin about what she has been doing since she left. Alternatively use the Postcard Creator from ReadWriteThink to create an electronic postcard.
- Use a digital camera to take pictures of your school, upload the photos then draw on magical elements using a website such as Picnik to create similar settings to those in the book.
- Rewrite the text from Violet's point of view. Analyse how this changes the tone and mood of the book.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- Half way through the book the text switches from present tense to past tense. Why do you think the author does this? What purpose does it serve?
- Why did the author use a combination of printing and handwriting for the text? Write your own story from a young child's point of view and use a mixture of fonts and handwriting. Discuss which words were chosen for handwriting and why.

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- At the beginning of the book, the descriptions of clouds function as metaphors to represent the characters of Marvin and Violet. Discuss how these metaphors illustrate the differences between the characters. Create some new metaphors in a similar style.
- Introduce the students to idiomatic phrases and discuss why an idiom might have been used as a title for the book. Brainstorm a list of other idiomatic phrases and use Scrapblog to create a page to illustrate and explain one idiom.

Examining visual and multimodal features

- Focus on the two images from the pages immediately after Violet has left (the bird and the desert). Discuss how the use of colour, size and choice of image are used to enhance Marvin's feelings of loss and loneliness.

Useful websites

www.allenandunwin.com/_uploads/BookPdf/TeachersNotes/9781742373041.pdf
www.edublogs.com
www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/postcard/
www.picnik.com
www.scrapblog.com

Family Forest



Author: Kim Kane and
Lucia Mascuillo
ISBN: 9781921564703
Publisher:
Hardie Grant Egmont
www.hardiegrant.com.au
RRP: \$24.95



Theme Family, divorce, relationships, difference

Readership Ages 5–8 (guide only)

Synopsis

While some kids have a family tree, WE have a family forest! Do you have half-sisters, big brothers, step-parents? The modern family comes in all shapes and sizes. This gentle and witty picture book looks at one such family.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Draw a picture of your immediate family and label each person with their name and their relationship to you. Find out the history of these family members (e.g. age, birth location, places lived in, jobs).
- Show students an example of a family tree. Decode it by discussing its layout, order, levels and connections. Draw individual family trees then create an electronic family tree online using the Family Tree Kids website.
- Depending on the cultural background of students' families, explore family traditions and celebrations. Create a poster including a map to show where family members come from, details of some special celebrations and a deeper focus on one celebration including traditions and foods.
- Discuss, with sensitivity, the issue of divorce. Use the website KidsHealth to read and listen to some advice on this topic.

Examining literature

- The main character isn't given a name, but we can infer a lot about him by his descriptions of others. Discuss what kind of a person he might be in real life and create a character profile of him.
- Write a list of all the different settings pictured in the book. How do these settings help us understand what the family likes to do together?

Responding to literature

- Read *Two of Everything* by Babette Cole. Compare how both authors help students see that different families can be a positive experience by doing a PMI (plus, minus, interesting) chart on an IWB.
- Explore how split families can relate to each other online. Conduct a poll to see who has communicated with a family member online using Skype or safe social networking tools such as Edmodo or Togetherville. Write a list of advantages of how this might help blended family members stay close to each other.

- Find information books from the library with people's profiles in them. Complete a SWOT analysis for both the factual profile and the book's literary elements to effectively compare the purposes and features of each style.

Creating literature

- Invent another relative that could be added to the family 'forest'. Use the list of homonyms from the website First School Years to choose a homonym that could be used to describe this new relative (e.g. bright). Use an IWB to model this process and create illustrations to show the double meanings from the homonyms e.g. Uncle Toby is very bright (one picture of him glowing like a light bulb, then a picture of him being really clever and inventing something).
- Create a 'class forest' where everyone creates a page about a friend by drawing an image of them and writing a positive sentence about them. Experiment with how to sequence pages to create a coherent story.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- Each character is introduced and their connection to the narrator explained. Why do you think the authors used this structure? Could they have structured the book in a different way? Record suggestions on an IWB.
- Analyse the use of pronouns in the book and how they help cohesion in the text. Use the BBC Skillswise site to find out more about pronouns and practise their use.

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- The text takes many well-known sayings (e.g. half-sister) and explains both their literal and inferential meaning. Complete a retrieval chart listing these on an IWB including their literal meaning and explanation of their inferred meaning.
- Create a word wall of homonyms (words that have the same spelling and pronunciation but different meanings e.g. bright (as in light) and bright (as in intelligent)).

Examining visual and multimodal features

- Discuss how the images in the book enhance its positive message through the expressions on the characters' faces and the choice of warm colours. Scan some pages of the book in and use photo manipulation software such as FotoFlexer to change the overall colour of the images and the characters' expressions. How does this change the mood and tone of the book?

Useful websites

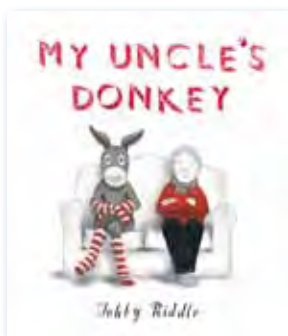
kids.familytreemagazine.com/kids/FamilyTreeForm.asp
kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/home_family/blended.html
www.edmodo.com
www.togetherville.com
www.firstschoolyears.com/literacy/word/other/
homonyms/resources/homonyms.pdf
www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/words/grammar/
interestsentences/pronouns/
www.fotoflexer.com

Author comment

My own family circumstances led to the conception of *Family Forest*. What I find interesting is how people class us as a 'modern' family when really there is nothing really modern about our set-up at all. I had always intended *Family Forest* to be instructive because even if children come from very 'nuclear' families, their lives are likely to have been touched by blended families. Above all, I wanted this book to express our experience that the blended family need not be miserable.

Kim Kane

My Uncle's Donkey



Author: Tohby Riddle
ISBN: 9780670040339
Publisher:
Penguin Group Australia
www.penguin.com.au
RRP: \$24.95



Theme Friendship, humour, animals, people

Readership Ages 5–8 (guide only)

Synopsis

My uncle's donkey is allowed in the house. And in the house, the donkey gets up to all sorts of things — he talks to his friends on the phone, does hoofstands in the kitchen, cartwheels in the living room, takes long baths and stays up late. A humorous and entertaining picture book that will delight children and adults alike!

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- The idea for this book came from a silly conversation with the author's niece. Hold a discussion on silly stories the students might have heard from their families. Record on paper or an IWB.
- Play a verbal or written game of consequences that starts with an animal, moves onto a place and then an action. Discuss why this is funny and how it could be used to create a comic story.
- Read *The Gruffalo* or other 'tall stories' picture books by Julia Donaldson to students. Record student ideas on an IWB about what is real, possible and fantasy.
- Research information about donkeys using the school library and video sites such as YouTube and TeacherTube. Create an interactive class poster about donkeys on the IWB using Glogster.
- Scaffold students to research and write an information report about donkeys.

Examining literature

- Scan in one of the images containing the Uncle and the donkey. Insert and then fill-in speech, thought and feeling clouds for each character.
- Examine each illustration in detail. Elicit the fact that the donkey and the Uncle don't make eye contact. Do the students think the donkey is real? Use an interactive IWB voting tool or create a survey online using SurveyMonkey.
- Split the class into groups. Each group creates a short drama freeze-frame based on a page of the book (with the Uncle unaware of the donkey). Photograph or video the groups. Create another freeze-frame where the Uncle sees the donkey. Photograph or video. Use an IWB to review the footage and discuss how this changes their opinion of the characters and the story.

Responding to literature

- Imagine you lived with a donkey! Complete a class PMI (plus, minus, interesting) chart on paper or on an IWB to analyse this situation.
- Draw or write a diary entry about a day spent living with a donkey.
- Why is this book funny? What aspects make it amusing? Brainstorm ideas using a mind map tool such as bubbl.us.

Creating literature

- Draw another image of the donkey doing a different activity in the house and write a matching sentence in the same style. Scan in and collect all the pictures to create an online class book using Tikatok.
- Choose another set of circumstances (perhaps based on a previous consequences game played by your class) and write and draw a new story. Animate this story online using the 3D pop-up book tool ZooBurst.
- The inside covers are created from an imagined hoof print. Using fingers, sponges or potatoes, students create their own animal print artwork.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- Identify the sequence of events in the book using a timeline. Re-tell the events as a recount.
- Identify the apostrophes on each page and explore using apostrophes to refer to students' own pets or things.

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- Create new sentences and activities by completing cloze passages using similar grammatical patterns to the text (e.g. 'My Uncle's donkey (*verb prepositional phrase*), might become 'My Uncle's donkey tiptoes along the washing line').

Examining visual and multimodal features

- Scan in one of the pictures in the book and look at the vectors for where each character is looking. None of the characters look directly at the reader. Why do you think the illustrator did this? If the man looked at the reader, how would that change the book?

Useful websites

www.tohby.com
www.youtube.com
www.teachertube.com
www.glogster.com
www.surveymonkey.com
bubbl.us
www.tikatok.com
www.zooburst.com

Author comment

The idea came out of raucous banter with a group of three-year-olds. When I said that I had a donkey in my apartment they had a lot of questions and my answers more or less formed the book. Donkey gets to do things many children would love to do, so I felt children would get a vicarious pleasure out of seeing him staying up late, eating popcorn, or rollerskating around the house and so on. This book posed a good challenge for me. Simplicity of statement — in words or pictures — is hard!

Tohby Riddle

The Tall Man and the Twelve Babies



Author: Tom Niland Champion
and Kilmeny Niland

Illustrator: Deborah Niland

ISBN: 9781742371153

Publisher: Allen & Unwin

www.allenandunwin.com

RRP: \$24.99



Theme Family, home, adventure

Readership Ages 3–6 (guide only)

Synopsis

From a much-loved family team, this hilarious story is a riotous triumph of problem-solving.

*In a big, big city,
in a tiny, tiny apartment,
lived a tall, tall man
and twelve babies.*

*All the boys were called Alistair.
All the girls were called Charlene.*

One day the door slams shut ... with the Charlenes on one side and the Alistairs on the other. What will the tall man do?

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Discuss different types of family structures by drawing a picture of your own family. Are all families the same?
- Create an electronic family tree using the Family Tree Kids website.
- Tell the class a story about a funny thing that happened to you or your family.
- Why are different kinds of homes built in specific places (e.g. in the city or in the country) and how are they adapted to these environments? Use the BBC website 'homes' activity to enable students to better understand the context and purpose of homes and then design their own.

Examining literature

- Scan in pages of the book and add speech, thought and feeling clouds for the tall man at various stages in the book.
- Create a graph to plot the action in the book and show how the author builds tension. Annotate this to show key events.
- The font size and style varies throughout the book. Identify these variations then elicit why the author may have done this. What is the effect of each?
- Why do you think the author called all the babies by the same name? Give each baby a new name and add an adjective to describe them.

Responding to literature

- Do you think the tall man was a responsible parent? Support your opinion with references from the text.

- Could this story be based on a real-life event? Complete a Venn diagram online using the ClassTools website to compare and contrast aspects of the story in order to decide.
- Discuss tall stories and brainstorm some examples of them. Elicit the conceptual link between tall stories, the tall man and the tall building.
- The tall man has strange hair and unusual clothes. Use the website DoppelMe to get students to create cartoon avatars of themselves. How would this image help them to become a comic character in a book?

Creating literature

- Change the tall man to another type of man (e.g. short man, funny man). Create a new story about this man. Using the Flipbook website, draw this adventure and compile it online.
- Create a cityscape collage and add further details with pen such as windows, chimneys and satellite dishes.
- The tall man gets back into the house through the cat flap. Imagine another crazy way he could get into the apartment (e.g. fly through the window). Rewrite the scene using this idea.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- Identify the sentence repetition used to create the first four pages. Create a cloze activity to use different adjectives to describe the city, the apartment and the man. Drag and drop suggestions using an IWB.
- Locate all the exclamation marks in the book. Perform the sentences with and without exclamatory emphasis and elicit the difference.

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- Brainstorm a list of onomatopoeic words and then use different fonts on Microsoft Word or SMART Notebook to create a display.
- Pull and push are opposite actions. Brainstorm pairs of similar action verbs and build a vocabulary bank.
- The book links in numeracy by counting the babies. In pairs, create a poster for each number, showing the numerical format and the number word. Use these to create a classroom display.

Examining visual and multimodal features

- Discuss how the font format and text layout of the book is non-linear. Read a variety of *Charlie and Lola* books by Lauren Child and discuss how this concept changes our reading of a book. Use an online presentation editor such as Scrapblog to create similar pages.

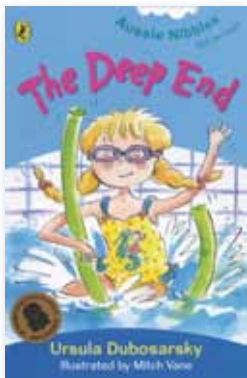
Useful websites

kids.familytreemagazine.com/kids/FamilyTreeForm.asp
www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/education/www/homes/kids/index_choice.shtml
www.classtools.net
www.doppelme.com/
www.benettonplay.com/toys/flipbookdeluxe/scrapblog.com
www.deborah-niland.com.au

Illustrator comment

One of Kilmeny's last requests was for me to illustrate this story of her son, Tom. When I read it I was impressed by its lunacy. I wanted to match Tom's creativity with somewhat madcap illustrations and to give the layout a messy chaotic playfulness. It was a challenge to draw so many babies on nearly every spread. I wanted the characters to feature strongly and kept the backgrounds quite uncluttered with patterns which sometimes echoed the babies' clothing. The Tall Man had to be a fanciful character so he has some wild, coloured hair and slightly eccentric clothes.
Deborah Niland

The Deep End



Author: Ursula Dubosarsky

Illustrator: Mitch Vane

ISBN: 9780143305279

Publisher: Puffin Books Australia

www.puffin.com.au

RRP: \$12.95



Theme Fear, bravery, family

Readership Ages 6–8 (guide only)

Synopsis

Becky has reached the point in her swimming lessons when she has stopped being a Frog and has moved up to be a Platypus. She has to go into the deep end and she's not at all sure she's ready for it. She wishes she could be a Frog for just a little while longer.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Discuss a time when you had a 'funny feeling in your tummy'. What does this feeling mean? What can you learn from it? Is the feeling a good thing or a bad thing?
- Write a recount about a time when you were frightened of doing something. Use the Voki website to record your own voice telling the recount as an animated character. Present this to the class and discuss similarities between students' recounts.
- Write 'In the deep end' on an IWB. Explain that sometimes words and phrases can have other meanings than their literal ones and give an example. Brainstorm suggestions around the words to describe situations where a person could be 'in the deep end'.

Examining literature

- Scan in the picture of Becky at the end of chapter 1. Use the Speechable website to add thinking and saying bubbles to her picture to describe how she is feeling. Complete the same activity with the image at the end of chapter 6. Compare and contrast.
- The context and setting of the book is a swimming pool. What other situations could the author have chosen for Becky to be scared of? Draw an alternative setting and write a few sentences to describe it.
- What does the seahorse on Becky's swimming costume represent? Why do you think the author chose a seahorse and used this idea in the book?

Responding to literature

- Use an online or IWB voting tool to hold a vote about whether or not Becky was justified in her fear of the deep end.
- What purpose did the character of Becky's little brother Ed play? What did he help us learn about Becky?
- Becky is not feeling confident at the edge of the pool but the other kids seem fine. Have you ever experienced a situation like this? What was it like? How did it make you feel?

- Hold a class debate about whether or not you think Becky was brave to jump into the deep end. Use it to write a persuasive text to either convince Becky to go in, or convince her not to.

Creating literature

- Closely read the section where Becky is imagining that she is riding a seahorse. Deconstruct it to highlight verbs and adjectives. Then write a similarly inspired passage about an experience such as running fast or climbing a mountain.
- Write a short story about Ed, set when he is Becky's age and has to face a fear. Sequence it using a storyboard and then produce it using an animation tool such as ZooBurst.
- Becky doesn't actually describe what it is like in the deep end. Write a short description of the experience as if you were Becky.
- Create an online swimming certificate for Becky using the Certificate Creator website to commemorate her jumping into the deep end and becoming a 'platypus'.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- The book is written as a chapter book with illustrations. Discuss how it would change if it were a picture book. What sections of the text could be replaced by images? Use the discussion to develop one section of the book into a picture book.
- Read sentences which end in an exclamation mark. Discuss the function of the exclamation mark as an emphasis tool. Practise the sentences with and without emphasis.

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- Discuss the idea of simple similes. Use the example of Arthur who 'came up out of the water like a crazy sea lion'. Jointly create some similes for the other children in the book based on marine creatures.
- Create a word bank of past tense verbs used to describe movement in the water. Add to the list and then use it to write sentences about Becky swimming.

Useful websites

www.voki.com
en.speechable.com/
www.zooburst.com
www.certificatecreator.com/
www.ursuladubosarsky.com
www.mitchvane.com

Author comment

In the Becky books I wanted to write funny early reader stories that reflect ordinary suburban life, and celebrate the richness of a child's individual imagination which transforms those ordinary experiences into what to them is extraordinary. Becky can be a victim of her imagination, but imagination can also, as it does here, be vital in helping her through the challenges she encounters.

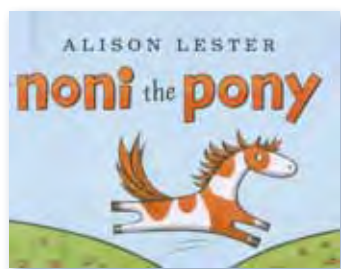
Ursula Dubosarsky

Illustrator comment

Creating Becky was delightful. She is a little on the bossy side, but incredibly motivated and creative ... perhaps a bit of myself at that age, and there are many details from my childhood here.

Mitch Vane

Noni the Pony



Author and illustrator:
Alison Lester
ISBN: 9781741758887
Publisher: Allen & Unwin
www.allenandunwin.com
RRP: \$24.99



Theme Friendship, animals

Readership Ages 3–7 (guide only)

Synopsis

*Noni the pony is friendly and funny.
Her shimmering tail is the colour of honey.
She lives on a farm at Waratah Bay,
and likes eating apples and carrots and hay.*

Would you like to meet Noni? She loves to entertain the cows and play with the hens and the ducks, and her best friends are Dave the Dog and Coco the Cat.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Listen to and watch the text online at the publisher's website or on YouTube.
- Using a mix-and-match function on IWB interactive software, create a matching activity for pictures and words of farm animals.
- Upload images of farm animals and record young children making the animal noise to match them using Photo Story 3 software.
- Organise an excursion to a local country or city farm. Take photos and videos for later use.
- Learn all about farm animals on an IWB using the Enchanted Learning website.

Examining literature

- Draw and label all the characters in *Noni the Pony*, and write a sentence to describe each of them.
- Read the story aloud and challenge the students to clap its rhythm. Read other poems or story books that also have a 4/4 rhythm.
- Use body percussion and actions to accompany the online reading of the book. Video students' actions and play back to them. Discuss what worked and what did not work.
- Go to an informational website about horses or get books out of the library. Compare and contrast these with *Noni the Pony* using a chart on an IWB. Ask students which type of book they would read for learning and which they would read for enjoyment.

Responding to literature

- Draw a picture about a visit to a farm or when you have met an animal. Describe your picture and what is happening in it to the class.

- Hold a class discussion about Noni as a character. What words could you use to describe her? Record the words on post-it notes and stick on to the book, or write them on an IWB around a picture of Noni.
- Give the book a mark out of ten and explain why you gave it that mark. Present or write a short review recommending it to a friend.

Creating literature

- Using drawing software such as Tux Paint, create a picture of Noni doing something else on the farm. Use an IWB to show students' drawings then jointly construct a rhyming sentence to match it.
- Invent a new farmyard character with an alliterative or rhyming name. Write a sentence to describe this character.
- Create your own story about an animal. Think about where it will live and what other animals it might meet. Draw and write your story.
- Use the bunny theme on GoAnimate to easily create an online animated cartoon about an animal.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- The book has a clear repetitive sentence structure and rhythmic framework. List the *Noni the Pony* sentences and discuss how the repetition acts as a structure for the book. Illustrate this structure by writing another *Noni the Pony* couplet.
- List all the names of people in the book. Elicit that all names need capital letters, but that common nouns (such as horse, cat and dog) don't need capitals.

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- Use the Crickweb farm interactive learning resource to test student vocabulary about farms.
- Create a vocabulary list of animals then add action verbs to them. Use the website Phrasr to find photos of the animals doing the actions.
- Using an IWB, drag and drop letters in to make basic CVC words such as cat and dog.
- Play the 'Words that Rhyme' game on the Roy the Zebra website to build rhyming knowledge.

Examining visual and multimodal features

- Scan in and examine on an IWB the page which shows Noni, Dave and Coco playing hide-and-seek. Discuss the function of the arrows on the page and what they are helping the reader understand.

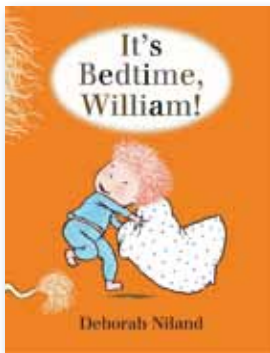
Useful websites

www.youtube.com/watch?v=v5qPg_MntvY
www.enchantedlearning.com/themes/faranimals.shtml
www.tuxpaint.org
goanimate.com/studioFullscreen/theme/bunny
www.crickweb.co.uk/ks1literacy.html#fmenu
www.pimpampum.net/phrasr/
www.roythezebra.com/reading-games-words-that-rhyme.html
www.alisonlester.net

Author and illustrator comment

Noni the Pony began as a little song that popped into my head when I was running and gradually, over more runs and horse rides, grew into a story. I think the running/riding rhythm has stayed. I like the way Noni is such a good friend and I envy her simple way of life. Like Noni, I sometimes get scared in the night and it's always good to have a pal for company. It was fun to illustrate with big shapes instead of the detail I often do.
Alison Lester

It's Bedtime, William!



Author and illustrator:

Deborah Niland

ISBN: 9780670073825

Publisher: Penguin Group

Australia

www.penguin.com.au

RRP: \$24.95



Theme Parents, family roles, responsibility, imagination

Readership Ages 5–8 (guide only)

Synopsis

'William, no more jumping,' says Dad.

'William, it's bedtime NOW,' says Mum.

But William has other ideas, and a very special friend to help make this his most memorable night ever!

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Hold a class sharing session where students recount their best 'bedtime excuse' anecdote.
- Create short dramatic role-plays with parents who have to try to convince the children to go to bed and children who create excuses. Discuss how each character felt.
- Discuss the idea of 'being in somebody else's shoes'. Where did this expression come from and what does it mean?
- Watch the scene from the movie *Shrek the Third* where Donkey and Puss in Boots switch roles. How did they react? How would you react if you switched roles with your parents?

Examining literature

- Hot-seat students in roles as: the parents, William, and the Lion at various points throughout the book. Use props such as pyjamas and a teddy bear to help students get into role.
- Use Speechable to upload scanned pictures of William looking frustrated and the Lion being playful and add speech and thought bubbles to the images. Use these to explore the different characters' perspectives.
- List all the phrases William's parents say when he is going to bed and compare them to the responses William gives to Lion. How are they similar? Jointly create some more phrases the parents might say and list them on an IWB.

Responding to literature

- How would you feel if you found a lion in your bedroom one night? Write a diary or blog entry. Alternatively film a fake news story including an interview about a boy who found a lion in his bed. Edit and produce it online using Animoto.
- As a class, brainstorm reasons for both sides of the topic 'Children should go to bed by 7 pm'. Hold a debate in class or choose one side and write a persuasive text to convince your reader.
- Read *I Am Not Sleepy and I Will Not Go to Bed* by Lauren Child. Compare and contrast this book with *It's Bedtime, William!* using a matrix on an IWB with the headings: 'excuses for not going to bed' and 'reasons why you should go to bed'.

Creating literature

- Brainstorm a list of situations where a parent and child might have different opinions (e.g. cleaning your teeth, doing your homework). Consider how you would develop a plot to show either the child or the parents changing their opinion. Write a short story based on these ideas.
- Discuss what William learned about going to bed on time and why it is important. Show students some different opening sequences of *The Simpsons* and record the blackboard messages. Use the website Add Letters to create your own Simpsons-inspired blackboard showing what William has learned (e.g. I must go to bed on time).
- Plan and draw a short cartoon about another situation with Lion and William where William ends up in the responsible role and Lion uses avoidance tactics.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- Examine the language that William uses towards the end of the book and compare it with that of his parents at the beginning. What are the similarities? How do they help develop both plot and cohesion in the book?
- Use examples of dialogue to teach the punctuation associated with direct speech.

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- The parents use strong modality while William initially uses weak modality then strengthens his language. Discuss how the author has used this grammatical feature to help us understand William's growing frustration.
- Use the range of statements, commands, exclamations and questions to teach the different functions of a sentence. Explore sentences using the website Ed on the Web and then play the question mark game on the Roy the Zebra website to learn about different types of sentences.

Examining visual and multimodal features

- Scan in the two pictures where the lion fills the page. On an IWB, circle the positioning of William (foreground or background?) and discuss how this explains the power relationship between the two of them, and how it changes.

Useful websites

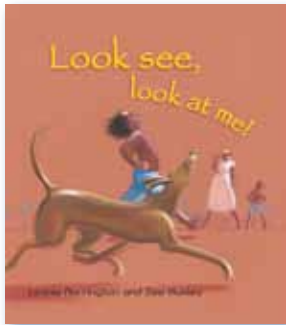
en.speechable.com
animoto.com
addletters.com/bart-simpson-generator.htm
www.edontheweb.com/the_ed_files_flash.asp?ModuleID=127&MovieName=Edontheweb3.swf
www.roythezebra.com/reading-games/question-mark-1.html
www.deborah-niland.com.au

Author and illustrator comment

When it comes to going to bed, children are experts in delay tactics. I thought it would be an idea to portray the problems a parent faces from a child's perspective. The illustrations for this book were fun. I wanted to show the smallness of William by comparison with the mighty lion but give William enough authority to take charge when the occasion arose. The lion character is a bit of a pussycat, cuddly and definitely childlike. He and William have similarly wild hair. Is the lion real? Or is he imaginary? I like to think he's real but the reader must decide.

Deborah Niland

Look See, Look at Me!



Author: Leonie Norrington

Illustrator: Dee Huxley

ISBN: 9781741758832

Publisher: Allen & Unwin

www.allenandunwin.com

RRP: \$24.99



Theme Indigenous Australia, growing up, outback

Readership Ages 2–6 (guide only)

Synopsis

Look See, Look at Me! is a delightful celebration of outback family life in an Aboriginal community. With its exuberant rhyming text and wonderful illustrations, *Look See, Look at Me!* perfectly captures a child's everyday life and will be wonderful for sharing over and over again.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Visit the communities of Wugularr, Barunga and Manyallaluk that the authors visited whilst researching the book via the Sharing Stories website. Look at photos and watch videos of traditional stories told by residents.
- Ask students to list three new things they have learned to do recently that they could not do when they were younger. Present it to the class and create a list on an IWB.
- What are your favourite things to do? Choose one and act it out as a charade for the class to guess. Then talk about why you like doing it.

Examining literature

- Scan in one of the pictures showing the setting in the book. Brainstorm words to describe the setting. Ask students what they would like about living there.
- What is the main character like? What does he look like? What does he like to do? Create a character profile of him then scan in a picture of him and help students use the Blabberize site to make him speak about himself.
- Explore the rhythmic quality of the words by performing the book. Use body percussion, percussion and Aboriginal instruments to create a background rhythm.

Responding to literature

- Do you like the boy in the book? Why, or why not?
- Discuss the page 'I can stop'. What has the character learned on this page? How do you know this?
- Look at each picture which represents the community. What do people in the book like to do? What do you like to do? Draw a Venn diagram on an IWB to compare and contrast your own community to that in the book.

- Use the information from the pictures and explore websites such as Gondwananet to learn about life in remote Aboriginal communities. Draw a series of pictures to describe a day in the life of an Aboriginal child.

Creating literature

- Brainstorm what the boy could do at the age of five. Draw a series of pictures to describe what he can do and write short sentences to match them starting with 'I can ...!'
- Video students making a statement such as 'I can jump' then acting it out. Use the videos to build an electronic verb wall.
- Examine a series of the illustrations and discuss why chalk is a good medium to use for these pictures. Use red- or orange-coloured paper and photos of the outback from a site such as Flickr to inspire students to create outback landscapes.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- Why did the author make some of the words rhyme? Why is this good for the reader and the listener? What does rhyming help you do?
- Is this a story, a poem or a recount? Talk about the features of each text type and come to an informed class decision. If the class is capable, rewrite the text as one of these text types.

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- Analyse the text to identify rhyming words. Create a list of these words and then add to them.
- Use the text to identify and then learn about action and auxiliary verbs. Use the PBS Kids website to learn about more action verbs.

Examining visual and multimodal features

- Look at the first page where the boy is saying 'Look see, look at me'. Discuss the vectors in the picture, including those created by the gaze of characters' eyes onto the boy, and boy's direct demand of the viewer. How does all of this draw our attention to the boy?
- Use the 'I can stop' page to discuss the perspective of the viewer and the concept of vertical angle and power. How does this make the viewer feel about the boy's choice to climb?

Useful websites

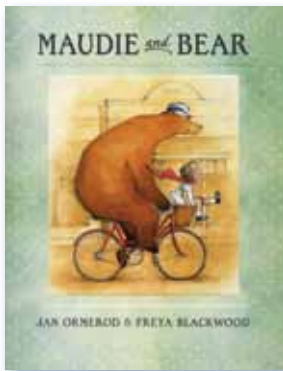
www.sharingstories.com.au/communities
blabberize.com/
www.gondwananet.com/australia-facts-aboriginal-history.html
www.flickr.com
pbskids.org/lions/games/wordplay.html
www.leonienorrington.com

Author comment

This was written in co-operation with women from three northern communities, mostly in response to the federal government's intervention programme. They wanted a book that showed the rest of Australia that Indigenous parents are like all parents, full of love and care. For me this book was about adding remote Indigenous people to the list of voices heard in Australian literature and enabling children to see themselves in the literature they read. As humans we understand ourselves, and our potential, through story; the stories we live and the stories we hear, read, and see around us during our lives.

Leonie Norrington

Maudie and Bear



Author: Jan Ormerod
Illustrator: Freya Blackwood
ISBN: 9781921541407
Publisher: Little Hare Books,
Hardie Grant Egmont
www.hardiegrant.com.au
RRP: \$29.95



Theme Friendship, love, parents

Readership Ages 5–8 (guide only)

Synopsis

Maudie tests love to its limits, and Bear passes the test every time. Maudie's world revolves around Maudie. Bear's world also revolves around Maudie — he is as patient and solid as a rock. Maudie is so confident of Bear's love that she makes demands, throws tantrums, lays down rules and lets Bear do all the work, knowing he will love her unconditionally. And he does ... right to the end.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Discuss experiences of spending time with a younger sibling, cousin or friend. Record how students felt in this situation using a retrieval chart on an IWB.
- Pair up with an older class in the school and complete a range of activities. Compare and contrast the experience to playing and working with similar-aged children. Draw a picture or write a diary entry about the experience.
- Brainstorm and share examples of when students were difficult or unfair. Talk about how their behaviour affected their friends and parents. How do you think the friends or parents felt?

Examining literature

- List all the settings in the text. Discuss how they are all familiar to young children. Why do you think the author chose these settings? Suggest a new setting and draw a picture of it.
- Create character profiles for Maudie and Bear, including their looks, habits, likes, dislikes and personality traits. How are the two characters similar and how are they different?
- Re-read the traditional story of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. How has the author of *Maudie and Bear* added and amended the traditional fairytale in this re-telling?

Responding to literature

- Hot-seat students in character as both Maudie and Bear and video their responses. Use the video to compare and contrast their viewpoints.
- What do you think of Maudie? Scan in a picture of her and brainstorm adjectives/descriptive phrases around her image on an IWB to record student responses. Do the same for Bear.
- At various turning points in the book create a conscience alley for Bear to help him decide what to do e.g. should he go and apologise to Maudie in 'Making Up'?

- Imagine if Bear was a human. What might he look like? Use an online search function such as Google Images, Pics4Learning or Behold to find images of people that might fit.

Creating literature

- Using a cartoon strip, outline another chapter of *Maudie and Bear* where Bear helps or cares for Maudie. Then complete another outline where Bear refuses. Compare and contrast these.
- Design a card and write a thank-you note inside from Maudie to Bear. Create a thank-you card online for an important person in students' own lives and email it to them using the online tool Smilebox.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- Choose one short story in the book and jointly record the sequence of events on an IWB. Use this to identify the beginning, middle and end of the story.
- This book is a series of short stories. Jointly or independently write a synopsis for each story then use them to identify bigger themes and ideas in the story.
- Use the book's dialogue to help students to learn how to use punctuation cues for speaking. Upload images of the book's pages then record students performing the book on VoiceThread. Use this performance to re-create written dialogue.

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- Type in one chapter of the text and input into Wordle. Use the word cloud to analyse the most frequent words and try to work out which words are linked to Maudie and which ones to Bear.
- Examine the modality of language that Bear and Maudie use (Maudie uses much stronger modality than Bear). Discuss how this use of modality helps add to our understanding of the characters.

Examining visual and multimodal features

- Explore character positioning and eyesight vectors in the illustrations of Bear and Maudie. How is each used to set up the relationship between Bear and Maudie? Discuss how these images help the reader to further understand the characters.

Useful websites

www.pics4learning.com
behold.cc
www.smilebox.com
voicethread.com/
www.wordle.net

Just a Dog



Author: Michael Gerard Bauer
ISBN: 9781862918870
Publisher: Omnibus Books
www.scholastic.com.au
RRP: \$14.99



Theme Pets, family, grief, relationships

Readership Ages 8–12 (guide only)

Synopsis

Mr Mosely isn't a pedigree dog, but he is just the dog Corey and his family want: he is loyal, protective and loving. And he is much more than that — he might well be the one thing that holds them all together.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Create a PowerPoint presentation about a current or past pet. Include photos, a description, an anecdote or story about them and write about why they are an important part of the family. Present it to the class.
- Split the class into groups and give each group a breed of dog to research (use Petnet or WorkingDogWeb for information). Include reasons as to whether particular breeds make good family pets or how they have been used in the past to help humans. Each group then creates a poster about their breed.
- Sensitive discussion of the concept of grief in the class. Share stories about when a pet has died and how it affected individuals and families.
- Watch the movie *Marley and Me* (PG rated). Analyse Marley's role in the family using a PMI (plus, minus, interesting) chart. Did he help bring the family together, or separate them?

Examining literature

- Write a character profile of Corey based on clues from the book. Draw him or find an appropriate picture on the internet based on what you think he would look like.
- List Mister Mosely's reactions to major events in the book. How do these reactions humanise him? Compare and contrast Mister Mosely when he is calm to when he is angry. Draw pictures to illustrate.
- Do you think Corey lives in a rich suburb? Why or why not? What do you think his house looks like? Draw a picture of it and explain its features to the class using references from the book. How does the setting of Corey's house illustrate some of the book's themes?

Responding to literature

- The voice of the first person narrator is very strong. Do you like this narrator? Why, or why not? What other choices could the author have made in terms of a narrator?

- Record a podcast review of the book using a program such as VoiceThread. What would you choose to talk about in the book and why?
- Is this story a comedy, a tragedy or an adventure? Argue which genre it would fall into based on references from the text.

Creating literature

- Discuss the concept of an obituary. Explore some online obituaries at the SMH website or read a selection from a newspaper. Make notes on an IWB of all the events from the book that you could refer to about Mister Mosely. Individually write an obituary for Mister Mosely. Publish it as a newspaper article using the Newspaper Template website.
- Brainstorm ideas about what happened when Mister Mosely disappeared for two weeks. What characters did he meet? How did he get the ring? Develop your ideas into a short story.
- Create a short picture book about Mister Mosely for young children. Use a program such as ArtisanCam to write and publish it online.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- At the end of each chapter Corey hints about what is going to happen next. Record some of these hints on an IWB and discuss how they function as plot markers in the book. Do they work well in terms of structural elements? Why, or why not?
- The story is based on a sequence of events narrated by Corey. Turn these into a timeline and discuss how the narrative could be alternatively sequenced. Write down key events onto separate post-it notes and rearrange them to play with the sequence.

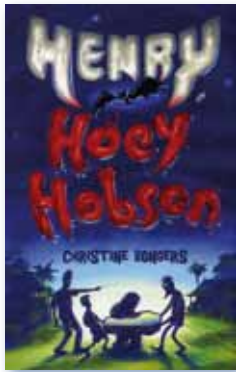
Examining grammar and vocabulary

- The voice of Corey is that of a colloquial Australian speaker. Find ten examples of spoken or colloquial words and phrases in the book and discuss how they help the reader gain a deeper understanding of Corey's voice.
- Find examples of contractions in the book. Write the contraction next to the full words or phrase. What function do the contractions serve in the book? Would we see this many contractions in a factual text?

Useful websites

www.scholastic.com.au/schools/education/teacherresources/assets/pdfs/Just_a_dog.pdf
www.petnet.com.au/dog-breeds
www.workingdogweb.com/kids&dogs.htm
voicethread.com/products/k12/
www.smh.com.au/obituaries/newspapertemplate.biz/
www.artisancam.org.uk/flashapps/picturebookmaker/picturebookmaker.php?PHPSESSID=cba2b50a15700462b92b17052c9bf55d

Henry Hoey Hobson



Author: Christine Bongers
ISBN: 9781864719956
Publisher: Woolshed Press,
Random House Australia
www.randomhouse.com.au
RRP: \$16.95



Theme Family, prejudice, alienation, bullying

Readership Ages 8–13 (guide only)

Synopsis

Twelve-and-a-half-year-old Henry Hoey Hobson is drowning in the dangerous waters of Year Seven. He arrives at his sixth school in as many years, Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, to discover that he is the only boy in the grade.

Fatherless, friendless and non-Catholic, Henry earns a reputation as a vampire on his first day. His only chance to redeem himself is at the school swimming carnival — sink-or-swim time in the treacherous waters of Year Seven.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Complete a class survey to find out about family situations using an anonymous online tool such as Zoomerang. How many people have siblings, married parents, divorced parents, step families and grandparents? Discuss the findings in the context of the modern family.
- Discuss the concept of a safe place, or a place you might escape to. Draw a picture of it, scan it in then narrate over it using VoiceThread.
- Brainstorm types of bullying behaviours then discuss the effects they might have on the victim. Discuss why people might bully in the first place and what coping methods victims adopt.

Examining literature

- The characters of Henry and his mother are almost a role reversal of the classic mother/son relationship. Find evidence in the text which supports this statement and record findings on a retrieval chart on an IWB.
- Hot-seat students as Henry at various points throughout the book to explore how he is feeling about all the changes happening in his life. Complete a timeline online at ReadWriteThink to chart his changing feelings.
- The settings in the book help to accentuate the contrast between perception and reality (e.g. the school has positive messages of support but a bullying mentality, the house next door looks creepy but is actually welcoming). Discuss how these settings reinforce the theme of alienation in the book.

Responding to literature

- Is Angelica a character to be hated, pitied or liked? Hold a class discussion, using evidence from the book to support the arguments.

- Create dramatic freeze-frames which demonstrate feelings of rejection and isolation due to the behaviour of school bullies. Take photos of these and examine their visual literacy dynamics on an IWB.
- Imagine you moved to a new school and were the only boy/girl in your year. How would you feel? What would you do?

Creating literature

- Write a letter from Henry to a friend in one of his old schools about his new house, neighbours and school using the Australia Post interactive site.
- Create a short story or cartoon about a misinterpreted situation using the book as inspiration e.g. when the other children think Henry is a vampire, or where he thinks the people next door are creepy.
- Anders creates images which represent his sadness and sense of loss over his son. Re-read the sections which describe his images, then draw your own picture in graphite or charcoal, based on what Anders might have drawn.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- Identify some of the motifs and symbols running through the text as suggested on the Random House Australia teaching support page. Discuss how these help to achieve cohesion throughout the narrative. Suggest an alternative motif that could be introduced.
- The book uses a linear timeline structure. Discuss where and why you might alter this structure and what you might introduce (e.g. flashbacks).

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- Henry uses lots of similes and metaphors. Find some examples of these and discuss how and why they are effective.
- Compare and contrast the vocabulary that Henry and his mother use with that of Manny, Caleb and Vee. How has the author used vocabulary choice to reinforce characterisation?

Useful websites

www.christinebongers.com
www.randomhouse.com.au/Downloads/Kids/TeacherGuides/TSKHenryHoeyHobson.pdf
www.zoomerang.com
voicethread.com
www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/timeline
auspost.com.au/education/assets/video/Letter_Writing_Interactive_Preload1.swf

Author comment

I found Henry a fascinating conundrum, a likeable kid that nobody liked. How was that even possible? For me, *Henry Hoey Hobson* is special because it is about important themes: family, friendship, resilience, being true to yourself, and accepting of difference. Like Henry, kids need supportive friends and family, but they also need to be given the freedom to fail, to make mistakes, to pick themselves up when they fall, and to figure things out for themselves. Funnily enough, the ability to laugh at themselves helps. That's why I made humour such an important part of *Henry Hoey Hobson*.
Christine Bongers

Violet Mackerel's Brilliant Plot



Author: Anna Branford
Illustrator: Sarah Davis
ISBN: 9781921529177
Publisher: Walker Books Australia
www.walkerbooks.com.au
RRP: \$19.95



Theme Family, imagination, kindness, community

Readership Ages 7–10 (guide only)

Synopsis

Violet Mackerel thinks she would QUITE LIKE to own the blue china bird at the Saturday markets. This is not just a SILLY WISH. It is instead the start of a VERY IMPORTANT idea. But what she needs is a PLOT — a BRILLIANT plot.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Ask the class to draw a picture of something they really want, but don't have. Each student then explains why this object is important to them.
- Watch a how-to-knit video on YouTube and try it in the classroom. Alternatively, for younger children, watch a video on finger knitting and attempt it.
- Explore the job of an archaeologist by visiting the Mrdonn website on archaeology. Write up a job profile of an archaeologist.
- Look up the word 'plot' in the online Yahoo Kids dictionary. Discuss which of the definitions you think the book might be about and why, using the front and back cover for reference.

Examining literature

- Explore the character of Violet at different stages throughout the book (e.g. when thinking of her plot, when she has dug up the garden, when she is given the bird) by completing thought, feeling and speech bubbles onto scanned images of Violet.
- Hot-seat Violet's mother and sister after Violet has dug up the garden to explore their reactions.
- Show pictures of various markets on an IWB and get groups of students to explore an imaginary market using drama techniques. Why is the market important in the book? How would the book change if it were set somewhere else?

Responding to literature

- In pairs, get students to sculpt each other into characters in the book at key action points in the story. Take photos and show them on an IWB to compare and contrast to the illustrations in the book.
- Why do you think the red button was important to Violet? Ask students if they have something they have found that is important to them. Bring the objects into the class and create a display with annotated tags for each object. Read the book *Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge* by Mem Fox and discuss the concept of memories and objects.

- Do you think Violet's plot was 'brilliant'? Why, or why not? Reference with examples from the book.

Creating literature

- Invent a new item of clothing and then draw it. What is special about it and why? Label its features.
- Violet draws her own version of 'Think outside the Square'. Examine other brainteasers and puzzles online at the NIEHS Kids' Pages or the Think Outside the Box websites. Create your own rebus-style picture and word puzzles.
- Write a short story about another brilliant plot that Violet invents. Animate it online as a pop-up book using ZooBurst.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- Write a sentence summary for each chapter to summarise the plot. Use these sentences to create a plot graph which shows the dramatic portions of the plot.
- The author has chosen to bold certain words. Discuss why she did this, then suggest other words from the book that she could embolden. Use GlitterTextLive to write sentences and draw attention to the relevant words in a different way.

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- Violet learns some new expressions in the book: 'if I can see it I can be it' and 'your mind's eye'. What do these expressions mean? Brainstorm a list of other expressions and discuss their literal and metaphorical meanings.
- Brainstorm a list of synonyms and antonyms for the adjective 'brilliant' and try them with the word 'plot' as a drag-and-drop exercise on an IWB. Use this as a starting point to teach noun groups.

Examining visual and multimodal features

- Look at the image of Violet holding the bird on the last page. What visual literacy techniques has the illustrator used to demonstrate how precious this bird is?

Useful websites

www.sarahdavisillustration.com
www.walkerbooks.com.au/statics/dyn/1301618354851/Violet-Mackerel-Classroom-Ideas.pdf
www.youtube.com/watch?v=3uw-nUvGrBY (how to knit)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=t3LKAIDz9ig (how to finger knit)
archaeology.mrdonn.org/index.html
kids.yahoo.com/reference/dictionary/english
www.joe-ks.com/outside/Outside_The_Box_Puzzle.htm (rebus word puzzles)
kids.niehs.nih.gov/braintpics.htm (rebus word puzzles)
www.zooburst.com
www.glittertextlive.com

Illustrator comment

Violet is such a vivid little character. I love the way the storylines focus on small things, like wanting the china bird or finding the red button. I remember when I was a child that every little thing had its own personality and significance. The little things are very important for Violet and in the end always prove to be connected to very big ideas, like love, generosity, friendship, and the interconnectedness of everyone and everything. To capture the feeling of Violet's world I harked back to my own childhood — I think I was a little like Violet.
Sarah Davis

The Red Wind



Author: Isobelle Carmody
ISBN: 9780670074037
Publisher: Penguin Group Australia
www.penguin.com.au
RRP: \$19.95



Themes Family, fear, adventure

Readership Ages 8–12 (guide only)

Synopsis

In this captivating first book, brothers Zluty and Bily live happily in their little house in the desert. Every year Zluty journeys to the great forest while Bily stays to tend their desert home. And every year Zluty returns with exciting tales of his adventures.

But then a devastating red wind sweeps across the land destroying everything in its path. And each brother must fight for his survival.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Use visual literacy skills to decode the cover and predict the story. Who might the two characters at the bottom left be? What might their relationship to the cat be?
- What could a 'red wind' be? Write a description of one and read it to the class. Engage in a series of freeze-frame drama activities where: you see the red wind coming, it starts up, it is overhead and then it leaves. 'Tap in' to find out how students feel at each point.
- Use the websites listed to find out about natural disasters. Choose one type of natural disaster and create an online poster using Glogster about how it happens and how it can affect people.

Examining literature

- Bily and Zluty are very different characters. Use a retrieval chart on an IWB to record how they think and feel about a range of activities and events that occur in the first section of the book.
- Much of the plot involves Bily and Zluty being separated. Create an interactive plot timeline for each character using the website Timetoast, and chart events for each at comparative points. How does this help the reader to understand how Bily and Zluty are becoming more similar?
- How have Bily and Zluty changed through the course of the book? Brainstorm adjectives and phrases around scanned-in pictures of each character for both the beginning of the book and the end of the book.

Responding to literature

- There are unsolved 'mysteries' throughout the book (e.g. the metal pieces, the egg, the crater in the forest, the voices). Jointly create a list of these, then, in pairs, brainstorm explanations for them.

- The first chapter describes the setting of both the brothers' house and the imaginary land in which they live. Use this information to draw a map of the country, or a plan of their house.
- Do you like the fact that the book finished without a resolution? Why, or why not? What other endings could the author have chosen?

Creating literature

- The book ended abruptly with the brothers and the Monster setting out West. Write the next chapter to show what might happen to them on their journey.
- Watch archival footage of natural disasters from ABC's Behind the News. Write, practise and then record a series of different disaster and weather reports about the red wind using a video camera. Upload and edit the footage, presenting it on SchoolTube or embedding it into a blog.
- Think of a name for the type of creature Bily and Zluty might be. Use the clues in the book about their birth and early years to create an explanatory text about the life cycle of their kind. Animate their life cycle using GoAnimate.
- Create a website about the land, including all the information found in the book and adding more.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- The narrative has a long orientation and complication, then a small resolution followed by another complication. Why do you think the author structured the text in this way? How does each section engage the reader?
- What future predictions are there in the book and how do they act as cohesive devices to move the plot onwards?

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- The author manages to create an imaginary world using everyday words. Examine one section of the book (e.g. the chapter about their house, or the cave) and create a noun word wall. How does putting these nouns together create a new world?
- Examine the bees' speeches. How is past tense used to predict the future? Create some new past/future predictions using the same style.

Useful websites

www.fema.gov/kids/dizarea.htm (information about natural disasters)
environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/natural-disasters/
www.glogster.com
www.timetoast.com
www.abc.net.au/btn (Behind the News)
www.schooltube.com
www.goanimate.com
www.isobellecarmody.net

Author comment

The Red Wind came about because Babicka, our Czech grandmother, loves rummaging in second-hand stores. In one of her forays she found these two little guys. The minute I set eyes on them, I wanted them. Babicka gave one to my daughter, Adelaide and the other to her granddaughter, Klara, slightly older and rather sophisticated. It was a wrench seeing them parted. When Klara was older, the white one migrated to our house. I was very glad as I felt they belonged together and that they belonged with us. It sounds mad but that was how I felt.
Isobelle Carmody

Duck for a Day



Author: Meg McKinlay
Illustrator: Leila Rudge
ISBN: 9781921529283
Publisher: Walker Books Australia
www.walkerbooks.com.au
RRP: \$13.95



Theme Pets, friendship, school, family

Readership Ages 7–10 (guide only)

Synopsis

Duck for a Day is a contemporary story set in a primary school class, where the teacher, Mrs Melvino, brings in a new class pet — a duck called Max. All of the students, including the main character, Abby, want to take Max home for the night, however they must abide by Max's strict demands before Mrs Melvino allows it. Abby works hard to make her home appropriate but when Max finally comes home with Abby, he waddles away to the park. Abby has to rescue him from the pond but needs the help of her neighbour, the annoying Noah.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Hatch and care for baby ducklings in the classroom with the Hatch'n'Grow program.
- Research ducks on the internet, take photos and video of the class ducks and then write procedures about how to care for them. Collaboratively create a wiki or website (using Wikispaces or Wix) about ducks as pets.
- Design the ultimate duck enclosure for a park or a zoo. Label its features and present it to the class.
- Brainstorm a list of rights and responsibilities. Discuss what kinds of responsibilities children might have. Create a list of all the responsibilities you might have if you looked after a pet.

Examining literature

- Ask students to draw a stereotypical teacher and write a paragraph to describe them. Scan in students' work and show it on an IWB. Brainstorm descriptive phrases around a scanned-in picture of Mrs Melvino. Compare and contrast her to the stereotypes.
- Create a table with the main characters as rows, with two columns titled 'beginning of the book' and 'end of the book'. Describe how each character thinks and feels at both points. How does each character change?
- Ask parents to donate some old 'home' magazines to the class. Cut out pictures students think look like Abby's house, describe the house and how they would feel if they lived there. Draw a picture of Noah's house. How is each setting different?

Responding to literature

- In groups, students create short role-plays about having a new teacher, with a duck as a class pet. Ask students to explore: their reaction to the duck, learning with a duck around, and persuading the teacher to let them take the duck home.
- Is Abby a happy child? What evidence is there to show she is happy or unhappy?
- Do you think a duck is a good animal for a class pet? Why, or why not? Hold a class debate.

Creating literature

- Play a game of consequences about an unusual class pet. Choose the best suggestion and write it up as a short story. Develop it into an animation using clay or plasticine then film and edit it using Movie Maker or iMovie.
- Explore manuals using real-life examples and then write up a 'How to Care for Max' manual based on Mrs Melvino's guidelines. Save this as a pdf file then publish it using Youblisher.
- Create a poster to convince the teacher and the rest of the class to get a class pet of your choice then deliver a speech to the class to try to persuade them. Vote on the best pet.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- The author has interwoven a number of different forms of communication into the book (including text types, visual communication and body language). List them and then discuss how each form is different and how they express ideas to a reader or viewer.
- Use the text as a starting point to teach dialogue punctuation and the use of italics.

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- Locate, then list all the words from the book about ducks into the outline of a duck to create a word cloud.
- What other meaning is the author attributing to the word 'hop' at the end of the book?

Examining visual and multimodal features

- Scan in and examine a range of pictures of Abby. How has the illustrator presented her? Why is her mouth rarely included in the drawing? What expressive functions does a mouth serve?

Useful websites

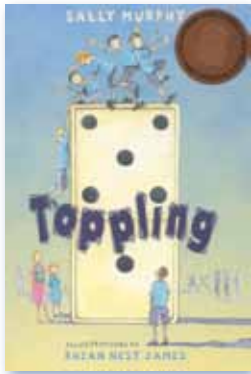
www.walkerbooks.com.au/statics/dyn/1304982654965/Duck-for-A-day-Classroom-Notes.pdf
www.hatchngrow.com.au/index.php
www.kiddyhouse.com/Farm/ducks.html (information on ducks)
www.kidskonnnect.com/subject-index/13-animals/438-ducks.html (information on ducks)
www.wikispaces.com/content/for/teachers
www.wix.com
youblisher.com/
www.megmckinlay.com

Author comment

The very beginnings of *Duck for a Day* formed when I saw an interview with the cartoonist Michael Leunig talking about how people are sometimes confused by his ducks, wanting to know what they're about. A rather demanding duck began to form in my head but I had no idea what it was going to be about. Eventually other ideas came along and attached themselves to it and slowly, the story began to form.

Meg McKinlay

Toppling



Author: Sally Murphy
Illustrator: Rhian Nest James
ISBN: 9781921529429
Publisher: Walker Books Australia
www.walkerbooks.com.au
RRP: \$15.95



Theme Friendship, illness (cancer), bullying

Readership Ages 8–12 (guide only)

Synopsis

Dominic Fraser likes footy, soccer and cricket. He has a dog named Butch and five goldfish but no brothers or sisters. He's funny, loyal and he's John's best mate.

But when John's friend Dominic becomes ill, John's world begins to topple.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Read and listen to a variety of rhyming and non-rhyming poems and compare and contrast the different styles. Discuss how poetry can perform a narrative function.
- Watch the world record for toppling dominoes at YouTube. Set up a domino topple in the classroom and film it.
- Sensitively research cancer in kids using the KidsHealth website. Listen to the podcasts and read the information.
- Explore the Canteen website and organise a fund-raising activity for this or another children's cancer charity.

Examining literature

- The plot has two major twists (Dom's cancer and Ky's father's death). Elicit these twists and how they affect our understanding of the characters. Complete character profiles of Dom and Ky before and after Dom's illness. How have both characters changed?
- Identify the sub-plots in the book by completing a bubble mind-map. The central plot is Dom's illness but what else happens? How do these sub-plots help us understand the main plot?
- Juxtapose the two settings of school and hospital. What are their similarities and differences? Complete a Venn diagram to analyse them.

Responding to literature

- Create an 'emotional journey' map of the book, linking a reader's emotional response to the main events in the book. Present this map electronically using animated 'emoticons' from the Addemoticons website to illustrate the plot events.
- Why do you think the author wrote this book? Imagine you are going to interview her for a TV documentary. Write a list of questions to find out about her motivations.
- Read Sally Murphy's book *Pearl Versus the World* about Alzheimer's disease. Compare and contrast the two books.

Creating literature

- Design, make and write a 'get well soon' card for Dom from an imaginary character in his class or go online and use the BlueMountain website to create an electronic card.
- Write a letter from Ky to Dom in hospital.
- Write a narrative poem about an important event in your life (either happy or sad).
- Develop the character of a new friend who joins their gang. Write a description of him in narrative poetry style then read it to the class.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- Examine the line breaks in the author's poetry. How has she used them to add emphasis to words?
- How are dominoes used as a cohesive device throughout the story? What different functions do they perform for both John and the reader?

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- List the phrases John associates with his experience of visiting his Grandpa in hospital then do the same for his visit to Dom. Create similes to describe Dom's hospital.
- Toppling is a verb that is used to metaphorically describe how Dom feels. List other verbs and link them metaphorically to emotions. Create a short flip book using the Benettonplay website to illustrate a verb and its linked feeling.

Examining visual and multimodal features

- Scan in the 'Get Well DOM' image and display it on an IWB. How has the illustrator organised the foreground and background? Where are the characters' eyes looking to create the vectors in the image?

Useful websites

www.walkerbooks.com.au/statics/dyn/1269584818177/Toppling-Classroom-Ideas.pdf
kidshealth.org/kid/cancer_center/#cat20678
www.canteen.org.au/
www.addemoticons.com/emoticon/animated/index.html
www.bluemountain.com/category.pd?path=35031
www.benettonplay.com/toys/flipbookdeluxe/guest.php
www.sallymurphy.net

Author comment

I didn't set out to write a book about cancer. The story began with an image of a kid (John) who is crazy about dominoes, and in particular about setting up domino toppling. Then I started thinking what it would be like if there was something going on in his life where someone close to him was in danger of toppling — of not being able to carry on with their normal life. It was a hard story to write, in some ways, because it has sad parts but it also offers hope, and the chance to smile.

Sally Murphy

Graffiti Moon



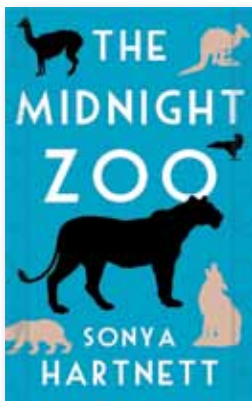
Author: Cath Crowley
 ISBN: 9780330425780
 Publisher:
 Pan Macmillan Australia
www.panmacmillan.com.au
 RRP: \$16.99

The Life of a Teenage Body-Snatcher



Author: Doug MacLeod
 ISBN: 9780143203919
 Publisher: Viking Books,
 Penguin Group (Australia)
www.penguin.com.au/products/9780143203919/life-teenage-body-snatcher
 RRP: \$17.95

The Midnight Zoo



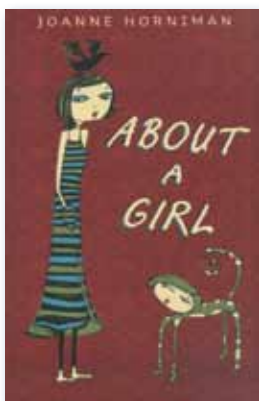
Author: Sonya Hartnett
 ISBN: 9780670074051
 Publisher: Viking Books,
 Penguin Group (Australia)
www.penguin.com.au/products/9780670074051/midnight-zoo
 RRP: \$24.95

The Piper's Son



Author: Melina Marchetta
 ISBN: 9780670074235
 Publisher: Viking Books,
 Penguin Group (Australia)
www.penguin.com.au/products/9780670074235/pipers-son
 RRP: \$24.95

About a Girl



Author: Joanne Horniman
 ISBN: 9781742371443
 Publisher: Allen & Unwin
www.allenandunwin.com
 RRP: \$17.99

Six Impossible Things



Author: Fiona Wood
 ISBN: 9780330426060
 Publisher:
 Pan Macmillan Australia
www.panmacmillan.com.au
 RRP: \$16.99

Theme Parks, Playgrounds and Toys



Author: Nicolas Brasch
ISBN: 9781420268942
Publisher: Macmillan
Education Australia
www.macmillan.com.au
RRP: \$31.99



Theme Physics, scientific laws, theme parks, toys

Readership Ages 9–15 (guide only)

Synopsis

This book is part of a compelling series posing and answering intriguing Science questions that upper primary students are curious about.

Focusing on theme parks, playgrounds and toys it presents information via thirteen engaging question-and-answer spreads. The pages are highly visual and engaging, to assist understanding of sometimes quite complex concepts and processes.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Organise an excursion to a theme park. After the excursion, complete a KWHL chart in order to create a list of questions that will enable students to find out more about the science behind the rides.
- If there is play equipment at the school, take photos and video of the students playing. Show the images and video on an IWB then brainstorm all the movements and directions the students travel (e.g. up, down, around, forward, backward).
- Set up a range of experiments in the classroom to demonstrate Newton's laws of motion. Use marbles for the first and third law and a range of different size and weight balls for the second law.
- Explore Newton's laws of motion using online interactive activities and games such as the BBC site's Pushes and Pulls or the PBS Kids site's 3 Puck Chuck.

Examining literature

- Move from page to page looking at the short history sections on the top left of each page. Why do you think the author has included these?
- What is the function of the notepad background in the 'try this' sections?
- Follow one of the procedures in the text. Did the instructions work? Could you improve them in any way?
- Key in one of the explanatory sections in the text and paste it into the website Wordle to create a word cloud. Use this to analyse the most important words and concepts in the explanation.

Responding to literature

- Do you like the question format of this book? Why, or why not? What other formats could the author have used to structure the book?
- Hold a discussion about whether you think the book explains the scientific concepts in a way that is easy to understand. Reference the discussion with examples from the book.
- Compare and contrast this book to other books in the school library about similar concepts. Rate each book out of ten based on the following features: ease of navigation, quality of explanation, quality of illustrations, attractiveness, and overall level of interest generated. Total up the marks and place the books in order accordingly.

Creating literature

- Write down a list of more questions associated with fairgrounds, theme parks and toys. Choose one and research the answer to it. Break up into groups to write different parts of the text such as an experiment to illustrate the concept, an explanation of how the concept works and some descriptions of the concept in action.
- Create a series of photos to explain one of Newton's laws of motion. Use the website Speechable to add captions to the photos to explain what is happening.
- Plan and create a short cartoon to explain a key concept from the book using the website ToonDoo.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- Why did the author title the chapters with questions? What function does this serve in the book?
- The same elements and formats are repeated throughout the book. Write a list of these elements and formats (e.g. word watch, try this) and discuss the function of each.
- How are different fonts used to indicate different sections?

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- As a class, create a list of all the technical words in the book. Create a glossary to accompany the book which explains their meanings.
- Find examples of passive voice in the text. Discuss how this develops the informational style of the book.
- Explore abstract nouns and find ten different examples in the text.

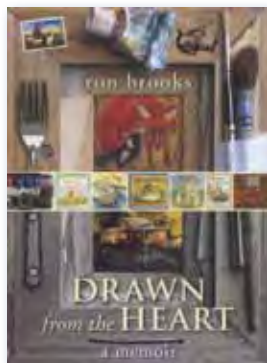
Examining visual and multimodal features

- Scan in a few different examples of explanatory illustrations from the book. On an IWB, circle the features that demonstrate movement. What strategies does the illustrator use to show movement (e.g. arrows, faded images to show a movement track)?

Useful websites

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/scienceclips/ages/5_6/pushes_pulls.shtml
pbskids.org/zoom/games/3puckchuck/
www.wordle.net
speechable.com/
www.toondoo.com/

Drawn from the Heart, A Memoir



Author: Ron Brooks
ISBN: 9781742371559
Publisher: Allen & Unwin
www.allenandunwin.com
RRP: \$49.99



Theme Art, illustrations, self-esteem

Readership Age 12+ (guide only)

Synopsis

In this searching memoir Ron Brooks recreates his life as an artist, husband and father, with all its twists and turns, its pain and joy. Along the way he offers rare insights into the 'secret' process of picture-making and story-shaping. Illustrated with roughs and finished art from his best-loved books, *Drawn from the Heart, A Memoir* is a classic in its own right.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Find examples of memoirs or autobiographies and read extracts. Brainstorm a list of reasons why people might want to write a memoir. Read some of the memoirs on DailyLit.
- Explore the Memoirs Online site about a North Queensland town. What have people chosen to remember and why?
- Read and explore a range of picture books illustrated by Ron Brooks in the chronological order they were completed. Discuss how his style changed over time.
- Ask students to write a personal account about a difficult time in their life and present it to the class. How did being so publicly honest make them feel?

Examining literature

- Discuss the function of the first few chapters of the book. Why do they help the reader understand Ron better? How do they set the context for the rest of the book?
- Why did the author include so many descriptions of his experiences in the bush? What does this setting help us understand about him?
- Discuss whether a memoir can have a plot. If it does, what is the plot in this book and how does it unfold?

Responding to literature

- Why do you think Ron Brooks wrote this memoir? Why did he include so much personal grief and pain in it?
- Do you think that Ron Brooks enjoys illustrating? Why, or why not? Support answers with evidence from the text.
- Using the book *Fox* by Margaret Wild and Ron Brooks and Part Three of *Drawn from the Heart: A Memoir*, analyse the creation of the pictures from Ron Brooks' descriptions. How does knowing the creation process help to better understand the pictures?

- Narrate a review of this book using VoiceThread and intersperse it with images of Ron's illustrations.

Creating literature

- Set students the task of illustrating their own picture book based on a short story. Discuss what they found challenging about the task and why.
- Write about a personal memory and post it on a class blog site using a school blog or Edublogs.
- Write a letter to someone explaining your motivation for something you love doing (as in the letter Ron sent Margaret Wild).
- Create an online memoir-style museum box using the site Museum Box. What would you include and why?

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- The structure of the book is essentially organised around the creation of the various book illustrations. Do they form a cohesive whole when coupled with the first and last sections of the book? Why, or why not?
- Read Part Four of the text closely. How does the structure and organisation of the text replicate the author's sense of falling apart?

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- Create adjective word banks around topics or themes within the book (e.g. the bush, sadness) based on adjectives found in the text.
- The author often puts words in inverted commas. Find a few examples of this in the book and discuss how the inverted commas change the emphasis in the reading of the word.

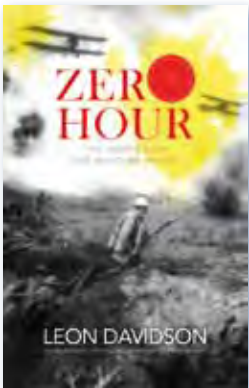
Examining visual and multimodal features

- Compare and contrast one of the black-and-white roughs for *Fox* with the finished page. How does colour change the mood and tone of the image?
- Explore all the media that Ron Brooks uses to create his own images. For each media, discuss how it can lead the viewer to respond to the text and set the context for the writing (e.g. pen, ink and watercolour can create an old-fashioned, nostalgic feel).

Useful websites

www.dailylit.com/tags/memoir
www.memoirs-online.com.au/
voicethread.com
www.edublogs.com
museumbox.e2bn.org/

Zero Hour: The ANZACs on the Western Front



Author: Leon Davidson
ISBN: 9781921656071
Publisher: Text Publishing
textpublishing.com.au
RRP: \$19.95



Theme War, death, relationships

Readership Age 11+ (guide only)

Synopsis

The First World War was only meant to last six months. When the Australians and New Zealanders arrived at the Western Front in 1916, the fighting had been going for a year and a half and there was no end in sight. The men took their place in a line of trenches that spread through Belgium and France from the North Sea to the Swiss Alps. Beyond the trenches was no-man's-land, an eerie wasteland where rats lived in the ribs of the dead and the wounded cried for help. Beyond that was the German Army. The ANZACs had sailed for France to fight a war the whole world was talking about. Few who came home ever spoke about it again.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Organise a visit to your local war memorial. Research its history including why it was erected. Take pictures of it and write an information report about it.
- Explore the Kids HQ section of the Australian War Memorial website. Complete the interactive activities individually or on an IWB.
- Learn about the major battles of the Western Front using the animations on the BBC Schools website.
- Watch and listen to video and audio from the war using the First World War website.
- Explore the role of child fighters in the war using the Great War website. Divide into groups and set each group the task of creating a presentation about a child soldier.

Examining literature

- Record some of the soldiers' quotes on an IWB in a matrix organised by the start, middle and end of the war. Compare and contrast the level of soldiers' optimism and pessimism throughout this timeline.
- Discuss the lack of one central character and how the reader's emotions might be influenced if the events were linked to a character. Use the Australian War Memorial website to research and suggest a suitable war hero whom the author could have used.
- The book is written as a factual recount and structured around a chronological theme. What other text types/structures could the author have used? Refer to the books *M is for Mates* by the Department of Veterans' Affairs or *Simpson and his Donkey* by Mark Greenwood to explore alternatives.

Responding to literature

- Organise a conscience alley to explore the idea of conscription and white feathers. Afterwards hold a class debate about whether it was right or not for soldiers to be given the 'white feather'.
- Re-enact a war scene on the playground using desks and chairs as trenches and rolled balls of newspaper as ammunition. Ask the students to charge the 'no-man's-land'. Discuss how this must have felt at night, under heavy machine fire. Write a personal response about the experience of war.

Creating literature

- Divide the class into expert groups. Set each group a major battle chapter to focus on. Groups research these battles on the internet, then create a multimedia presentation using Prezi to explain what happened in the battle and tell a hero's story from the battle.
- Research famous war poems of the era. Choose a favourite poem and then present it as an image (similar to those in the book) using Scrapblog. Using the site Audacity, students can record themselves performing the poem and embed the audio into the image.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- Many of the sentences are short and powerful. Find examples of these and explain how the author has made them effective.
- Examine the use of passive voice in the text and how it is used to create a formal, factual tone.

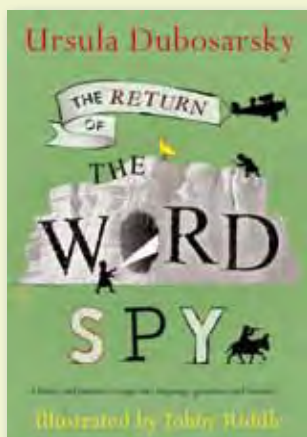
Examining grammar and vocabulary

- Type up and paste a section of the text into Wordle to examine the vocabulary. Use the generated word cloud to build a vocabulary wall of technical words from the First World War in the classroom.
- Examine the quotes from the soldiers, and discuss how vocabulary and tone in writing has changed over the last hundred years.

Useful websites

www.awm.gov.au/kidshq/
www.bbc.co.uk/schools/worldwarone/
www.greatwar.nl/
www.firstworldwar.com/audio/index.htm
prezi.com/
scrapblog.com/
audacity.sourceforge.net/
www.wordle.net/

The Return of the Word Spy



Pages of activities linked thematically to the Australian Curriculum.

Author: Ursula Dubosarsky
 Illustrator: Toby Riddle
 ISBN: 9780670073542
 Publisher: Penguin Australia
 www.penguin.com.au
 RRP: \$24.95

Home page with a brief introduction to the website.



The site is structured around key elements of the Literature, Literacy and Language strands from the new Australian Curriculum. Two pages of the site (Examining Literature and Analysing Language) include direct links to content descriptions and elaborations to demonstrate how the activities link specifically to the curriculum.

Embedded hyperlinks to useful websites.

Notebooks are ready and prepared for your use (for those of you with Smartboards and notebook software).

Save time finding images on the internet to illustrate some of the key topics in the book! A gallery of Aboriginal symbols has been researched and collated ready for display or printing. Simply click on the image to make it appear and then save it for later use if required.

Go to the following password protected website to find how you can use technology to explore this title:

<http://thereturnofthewordspy.yolasite.com/>

Username: elit

Password: CBCA2011

explore literature online

Work samples to show what a finished student product might look like. This sample used a web 2.0 tool to directly illustrate a personal response to one of the topics contained in the text.



Links to relevant websites and in this case, the author's book blog, are included to provide students with the opportunity to directly interact with the author online.

Example of a web 2.0 interactive polling tool. These types of tool enable students to respond to the content and theme of the text in an engaging and multimodal way.

What was your first word?

- mummy (or mamma)
- daddy (or dada)
- me
- yes
- no

vote

Share Do more

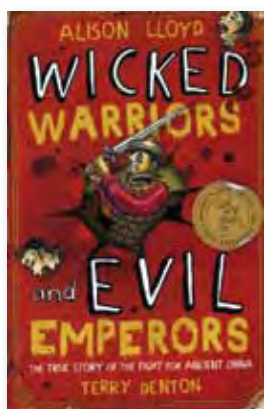


Suggested links to content descriptions and elaborations from the new Australian English Curriculum. Click on the hyperlink to visit the specific content elaboration embedded within the curriculum site.

A useful link to a pdf document, which acts as a glossary to explain terms. Just click on the link and the pdf will automatically load onto the screen.

Alternatively use the Wikipedia hyperlink to model research skills to students when they are using a website and don't understand a term.

Wicked Warriors and Evil Emperors: The True Story of the Fight for Ancient China



Author: Alison Lloyd

Illustrator: Terry Denton

ISBN: 9780143304340

Publisher: Puffin Books Australia

www.puffin.com.au

RRP: \$16.95



Theme War, history, China

Readership Ages 9–12 (guide only)

Synopsis

Imagine you're made king at the age of twelve. You have plenty of enemies. You have a million soldiers armed with all kinds of awesome weapons; you have tons of gold and a network of spies. What would you do with all that power?

It happened to a real boy, who made himself China's first emperor. He was brilliant and brutal. His legend and the stories of his wicked warriors have lived on for thousands of years. You might call him evil, but when empires are at stake, people do incredible things.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Visit the National Geographic Kids website about China. Read the facts and photos section then watch some of the videos.
- Explore the history of ancient China via the Kidipede History for Kids website. Groups research different aspects of ancient Chinese culture (e.g. food) then share their findings with the class.
- Show pictures and videos of the First Emperor's terracotta warriors. Discuss why an emperor may have wanted to create these and what they tell us about him.
- Research the history of Australia, China and the UK during the same period of time (2300 years ago) in order to learn that China was very advanced. Draw a picture to illustrate life in each place.

Examining literature

- Chapters 6 and 7 tell us a lot about the Emperor, his motivations and actions. As a class write a list of his actions and what they tell us about him on an IWB.
- Research references to everyday ancient Chinese people in the book. Use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast their lives to that of the Emperor.
- As a class, read a conventional information book about the First Emperor. How does the writing style of this author and the book's layout contrast with the more traditionally written information book?

Responding to literature

- Imagine you are a reporter in Ancient China writing an article on Zheng the boy king. Write down ten questions you would ask him. Ask another student to play the role to answer them.
- If you were a girl, would you have liked to live in Qin? Why or why not? Back up your opinion with references to the text about the life of girls and women in ancient China.
- At the end of the book there is an evil scale (p. 187). The author asks where the First Emperor would rank on this scale. Make a choice and justify it with reference to the Emperor's actions.

Creating literature

- The book has many references to war and the army. Write a diary entry about a day in the life of a soldier in ancient China.
- The book is full of headings that often rhyme, alliterate or are a play on words e.g. Qin Wins, The Suicide Stabber and Washed a Wei. Elicit that these are similar in style to tabloid newspapers. Use the Fodey website to create and publish alternative headings and short synopses of chapters.
- The illustrator has created short cartoons to accompany some of the information sections. Choose an un-illustrated section and draw your own cartoon sequence about it. Use the website Chogger to publish it.

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- Discuss how the book is structured (along a timeline). Why do you think the author intersperses the chapters with information about life in ancient China, together with stories and quotes from the time? How do these make the book more entertaining?
- How does the book use borders to separate and organise sections? Provide examples and discuss how these help you navigate the text.

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- Create a word wall of technical vocabulary associated with ancient China. Organise it into sections with sub-headings e.g. weapons, provinces, people.
- Go through the book again and use the references at the bottom of some of the pages to create a glossary. Add some more words to the glossary from the book.

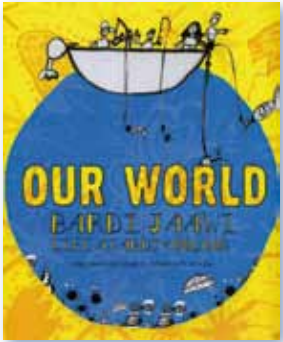
Examining visual and multimodal features

- Illustrations in the book perform a number of different functions. Brainstorm what these functions are and select illustrations as examples.

Useful websites

www.penguin.com.au/educationcentre/pdf/teachers_notes/PDF/9780143304340.pdf
kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/places/find/china
www.historyforkids.org/learn/china/
www.fodey.com/generators/newspaper/snippet.asp
chogger.com/create

Our World: Baardi Jaawi: Life at Ardiyooloon



Author: One Arm Point
Remote Community School
ISBN: 9781921248238
Publisher: Magabala Books
www.magabala.com
RRP: \$29.95



Theme Community, schools, Aboriginal Australia, sustainability

Readership Ages 7–12 (guide only)

Synopsis

Ardiyooloon is home to the Bardi Jaawi people and sits at the end of a red dirt road at the top of the Dampier Peninsula, 200 km north of Broome in the north-west of Western Australia. Also known as One Arm Point, the community is surrounded on three sides by the saltwater that plays such an integral part in the people's lives.

Our World: Bardi Jaawi, Life at Ardiyooloon takes readers inside the lives of the children of a remote Indigenous community — lives very different to those experienced by most Australians.

Literature (and Literacy)

Exploring the context of literature

- Find out more about Aboriginal Australia through websites and library books.
- Explore the Aboriginal culture of the Dampier Peninsula by visiting the Ardi website.
- Use Google Earth to zoom in on One Arm Point. Map a journey from your school to One Arm Point then explore the surrounding areas. Compare and contrast the two using a matrix on an IWB which includes: infrastructure, buildings, natural environment, services and places of interest.
- Use the Australian Tourism website There's Nothing like Australia to click on photos of the areas around the Dampier Peninsula. Plan a holiday there by researching what the area looks like, where you could stay and what activities you could do.

Examining literature

- Read the book in a variety of different ways by only reading one text type at a time e.g. read only the procedures. Discuss how these different readings change the purpose of the book.
- Many of the recounts employ Aboriginal English words such as 'nowadays' and 'old people'. Find ten examples of these and then find formal synonyms to replace them (e.g. 'in modern times' and 'elders'). Discuss how the use of Aboriginal English helps develop a sense of author voice throughout the text.

Responding to literature

- How do you think you would feel if you lived at One Arm Point? Write a diary entry about an imaginary day at school there. How would your day be different to one spent at your own school?

- Carry out a SWOT analysis on an IWB about life in a remote Aboriginal community. Use this to hold a class discussion about the topic.
- Write an imaginary email to one of the students in the school. Include some observations about your own life and how different it is to life at One Arm Point.

Creating literature

- The authors created their own font for their titles inspired by Aboriginal culture. Create your own font and use the website YourFonts to turn it into an electronic font.
- List all of the activities you carry out in your school. Divide these up and in pairs write a range of texts about them. Scan them in and create an online digital book about your school using the Yudu website.
- The content of the text is based around many local and traditional materials, objects and animals. Choose one, research it and write an information report about it (e.g. monkey fish).

Language

Examining text structure and cohesion (including punctuation)

- The book incorporates a variety of different text types. Find an example of each text type and suggest reasons why the authors chose that particular style to match that particular content.
- With so many text types and writers, how have the authors ensured cohesion throughout the book? What repetitive features help the reader navigate all the differences?

Examining grammar and vocabulary

- Use the Aboriginal language words to create a short dictionary. Write one paragraph using some of the words then give the dictionary to a friend so they can translate the words into English.
- Focus on the procedures in the text. Scan in and deconstruct one on an IWB to analyse its grammatical features (e.g. command verbs and technical vocabulary).

Examining visual and multimodal features

- Compare and contrast the visual layout of the book to that of an informational website. How have the authors used colours and borders to organise and separate sections of the book? How is this similar to menu bars on websites?

Useful websites

www.ardi.com.au/en/default.htm
www.google.com/earth/index.html
www.nothinglikeaustralia.com/index.htm
www.yourfonts.com/
www.yudu.com/

Children's literature in the primary classroom

Penny Hutton



Exploring the 2011 CBCA Short List provides many interesting and innovative ideas for teaching about, with and through the texts that have this year been nominated for awards by the Children's Book Council of Australia. But quality literature is so much more than a teaching resource.

In his foreword to *Reading Under the Covers — Helping Children to Choose Books* (Alyson Simpson, Primary English Teaching Association, 2008), Maurice Saxby wrote, 'With the present educational emphasis on outcomes-based learning, standards and computer skills, one might well ask, "But what about the importance of the imagination, that basis of all creativity?"

Literature stimulates children's imagination and fuels their natural curiosity to explore real and imagined worlds. This key concept has been well recognised in the Australian Curriculum: English, with Literature being one of the three strands.

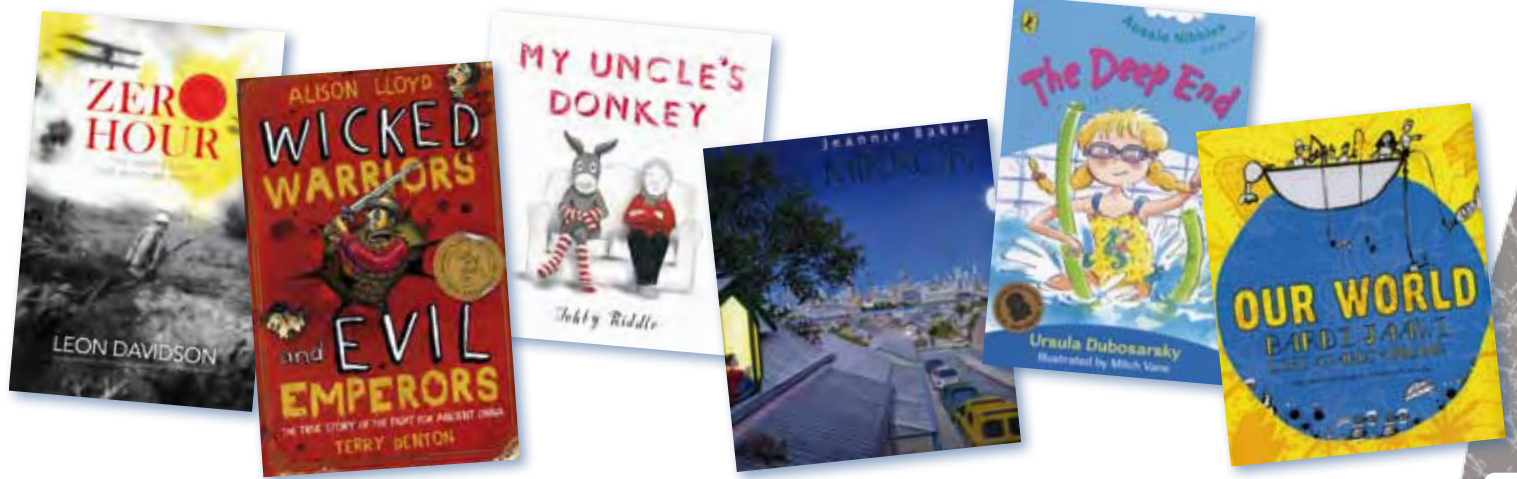
Children's literature has an important role to play within every child's life, beginning from the very earliest age. It is through quality literature that children learn about the subtleties, nuances and playfulness of their language and the ways in which their world, and the worlds of others, work. Early nursery rhymes allow children to experiment with the sounds of language and enjoy the rhythms of the ditty alongside the nonsensical situations presented. Think about the delight in considering a black spider sitting down beside you or a pie being opened to reveal twenty four blackbirds! While as adults

we might gain pleasure from knowing the political origins of many of our traditional nursery rhymes, for children they are just plain fun.

It is through literature that children begin to explore the notions of fantasy, possible experiences and reality. Could a donkey really live in a house and behave in ways that children wish they could themselves behave, and get away with, sometimes? Well, maybe not, but the sharing in the fantasy and the vicarious pleasure in wishing to be able to behave like the donkey increases the fun (***My Uncle's Donkey***).

However, many children can relate to how they felt when a close friend or family member moved away (***Two Peas in a Pod***) or to a time when they were faced with a seemingly impossible challenge (***The Deep End***).

Children can explore worlds that are vastly different from their own through books. They can gain insights into the lives of children living in places that are quite unlike their own (***Mirror*** and ***Our World: Baardi Jaawi: Life at Ardiyooloon***). But while they explore the differences in lifestyle, culture and geography, they can also recognise and appreciate the commonalities of theirs and others' experiences and aspirations. They can also learn about lives lived in the context of very different times and circumstances (***Wicked Warriors and Evil Emperors: The True Story of the Fight for Ancient China*** and ***Zero Hour: The ANZACs on the Western Front***).



Most importantly, children learn more about who they are, through exposure to the rich diversity of ways of being, as revealed in literature.

The Australian Curriculum: English includes three mandatory cross-curriculum priorities — 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia and Sustainability. The range of literary texts for Foundation to Year 10 comprises Australian literature, including the oral narrative traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as well as the contemporary literature of these two cultural groups, and classic and contemporary world literature, including texts from and about Asia.' (*The Australian Curriculum: English, ACARA*)

While this statement refers directly to the first two priorities, many children's books deal with the third, in the form of a didactic narrative or as a factual text. Some examples are ***Polar Eyes: An Antarctic Journey*** by Tanya Patrick and Nicholas Hutcheson, CSIRO (see *Exploring the 2010 CBCA Short List*), *The Fisherman and the Theefyspray* by Paul Jennings and Jane Tanner, Puffin Books (1994) and *The Hidden Forest* by Jeannie Baker, Walker Books (2000). A quick glance along your school or local library shelves will reveal many more.

Set aside time in your classroom to talk to students about what they are reading. Encourage students to talk about the books

they enjoy and why they found them enjoyable. Also encourage them to talk about books they have not found engaging. Was it the genre they found unappealing, or an aspect of the author's style, or an aspect of the world-view that it presented? Share your thoughts and feelings about books you have read — both positive and negative. A love of reading can be quite contagious!

All children (and many adults, too) love to be read to. Reading aloud to children not only allows them to experience literature that they may not be able to read independently at the time but also models what 'expert readers' do. But far more importantly, it allows you and your students to enter another world and share a new set of experiences as a community.

This article has focused on books as a literary artefact because the awards being presented by the Children's Book Council of Australia are for books. However, children in our classrooms are exposed to a wide variety of multimodal texts every day. It is therefore imperative that we provide them with opportunities to make meaning and gain information and enjoyment from these as well. Throughout this booklet references are made to useful websites which can be used to enhance their experience of the books. As you and your students explore the books, which have been deemed the most meritorious in 2011, also explore the suggested web-based resources to provide real multimodal experiences.

The Primary English Teaching Association (e:lit)

offers a wide range of practical and informative resource publications.

Exploring the 2011 CBCA Short List is e:lit's Teachers' Guide to the Children's Book Council Awards Short List, announced yearly by CBCA, to promote Australian children's literature and encourage young readers and writers.

Reading Under the Covers

Alyson Simpson
978-1-875622-72-6

Multimodal Literacy

Maureen Walsh
978-1-875622-82-5

A New Grammar Companion

Beverly Derewianka
978-1-875622-90-0

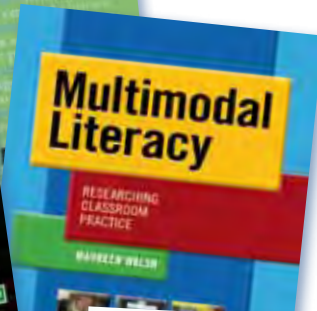
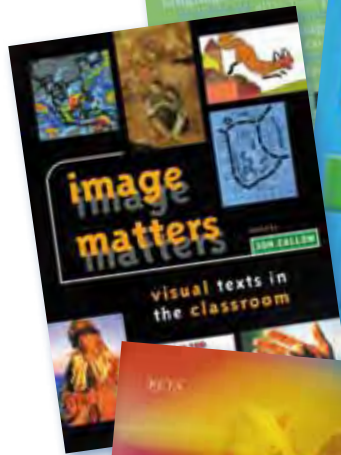
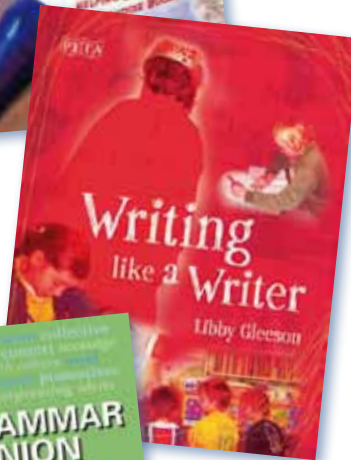
Conversations About Text: Teaching grammar using literary texts

Joanne Rossbridge and
Kathy Rushton
978-1-875622-80-1

Conversations About Text: Teaching grammar using factual texts

Joanne Rossbridge
and Kathy Rushton
978-1-875622-84-9

available
September
2011



Writing Like a Writer

Libby Gleeson
978-1-875622-70-2

Image Matters: Visual texts in the classroom

Jon Callow
978-1-875622-31-3

Beyond the Script: Take Two – Drama in the classroom

Robyn Ewing
978-1-875622-56-6

Designing Learning for Diverse Classrooms

Paul Dufficy
978-1-875622-62-7

Also available, a wide range of short articles, published as e:updates, formerly as PENS.

