PEARSON english CUSTOM

S.B.

7-8

John Paul College



AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

Table of Contents

1. English preliminaries 3
2. Craft of writing 11
3. Diaries, biographies and life writing 43
4. Literature 75
5. Fantastic worlds 107
6. Poetry 139
7. Out in front 155
8. Focus on language Year 7 187
9. Visual literacy: Comics and graphic novels 203
10. Transformations 235
11. Life: Cultural contexts 267
12. Appreciating fiction 299
13. Focus on language Year 8 331
14. Acknowledgements 347

Index 359



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PEARSON english



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AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

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How to use this book
Pearson English

Whether through short stories from centuries ago or new graphic novels and digital texts, the **Pearson English** series aims to expose students to the richness of the English language. This student book is written and presented in a student-friendly manner to further encourage engagement with the content and the topics.

Significant care has been given to the wide selection of resources and accompanying tasks to ensure that the demands of the strands and sub-strands of the Australian Curriculum: English are met. All chapters have been audited against year-level descriptions, general capabilities and cross-curricular dimensions to make sure that they comply in a pedagogically appropriate way.

The student book chapters contain the following features:

Chapter opener



Each chapter opens with a striking image accompanied by an engaging quote that aims to generate discussion before students engage with the content inside.

Modules



Each chapter comprises clearly defined modules to allow teachers and students to move freely between topics as they see fit, thus providing flexibility of teaching and learning.

Breakaway tasks



Throughout each module there are *Breakaway tasks* which offer a wide range of individual and collaborative tasks.

These tasks are structured around Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Processes. The questions move from straightforward, lower order questions (**remembering**, **understanding** and **applying**) through to more complex, higher order questions (**analysing**, **evaluating** and **creating)**.

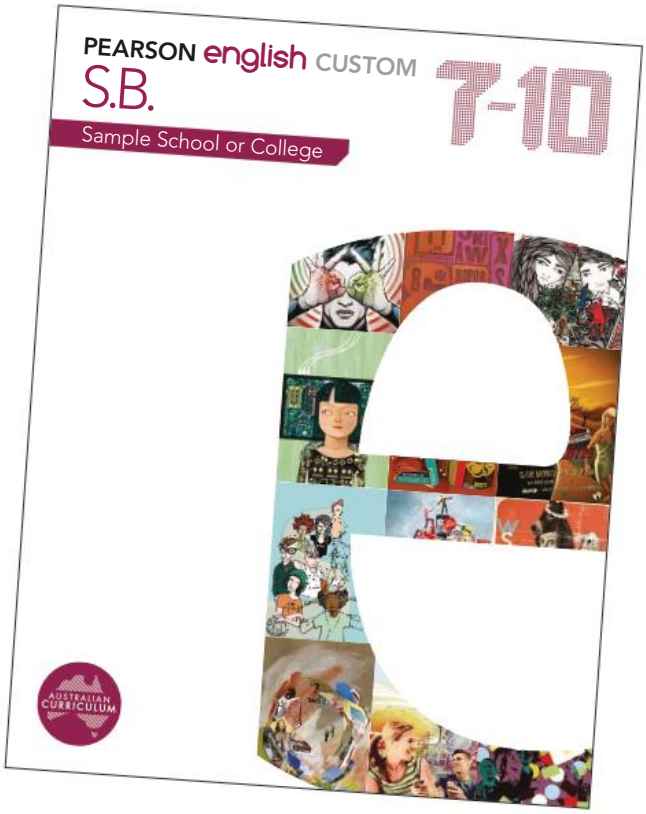
The pedagogy of these questions is based upon:

- keeping topic momentum within the classroom to allow the teacher to facilitate individual and/or collaborative work after a block of 'teacher centred' learning
- reinforcing learning within the context of the chapter
- providing activities that are engaging and can be answered from the unit they appear in, while also encouraging students to think beyond the text
- ensuring all tasks engage with both the strands and sub-strands found within the Australian Curriculum documentation.

Strands in action



At the end of each module students are provided with a wealth of rich tasks called *Strands in action*. The term *Strands in action* is taken from the three interrelated 'strands' that are the centre of the Australian Curriculum for English. This means that each rich task requires students to engage in some way with language, literature and literacy. *Strands in action* by their nature require more class time than the *Breakaway tasks*. Many of the activities require detailed research and for students to work collaboratively. *Strands in action* tasks engage with all four modes of assessment, namely reading, writing, speaking and listening.



Other features or icons





The *Did you know?* feature contains useful information related to the topic that students will find interesting.





One of the central components of any English curriculum is the building of the student's skill base. *Writer's toolbox* is where students can read about the tips and tricks of the English language. While grammar, spelling and punctuation hints are the mainstay of the *Writer's toolbox*, useful definitions and tailored guidance on key language issues and concepts are also included.

Annotated extracts and poems



Through judicious placement within chapters, this feature is intended to help students to connect with key terms and ideas within reading activities by providing examples and explanations in context. Further, annotations improve comprehension and expand the student's skill base by scaffolding learning.

Pearson Places





Pearson Places icons direct students to websites for additional material.

A wealth of digital resources can be found in the Pearson Reader Starter Pack. Go to **www.pearsonplaces.com.au** to find out more.


EMO
GIRL
12
LOVE
Organic

My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word to make you hear, to make you feel—it is, before all, to make you *see*. That—and no more, and it is everything.

Joseph Conrad (1857–1924),
Polish-born English writer



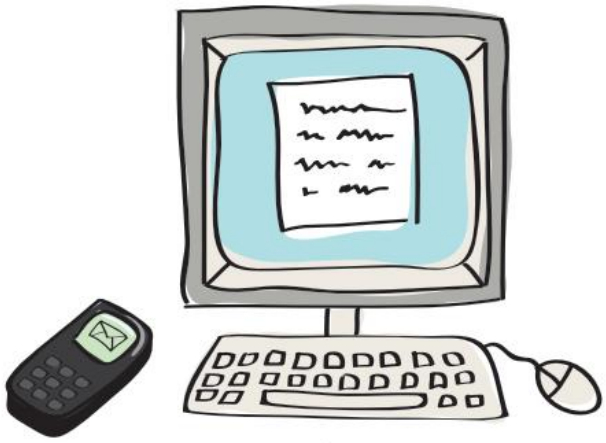
Craft of writing

Chapter overview

The world of writing is everywhere—notes and diaries, letters and messages, stories and poems, instructions and explanations. The world of communication is changing rapidly. Just a decade ago, Facebook®, text messaging and Twitter did not exist. These days you need to know how to communicate using these and many other different ways of writing in the world. Writing also allows you to explore the world of your imagination and beyond! Writing about your life and the lives of others teaches you about your own life, and prepares you for the future.

1

Your writing, your world



We often use personal writing to communicate our thoughts and ideas. Sometimes we write just for ourselves, for instance in a diary or a journal. Sometimes we write for close friends, classmates or family, for example in a text message or an email, or on a social networking site or blog. We might aim to amuse someone by writing about a funny experience, or persuade a friend with our view of a new film or online game.

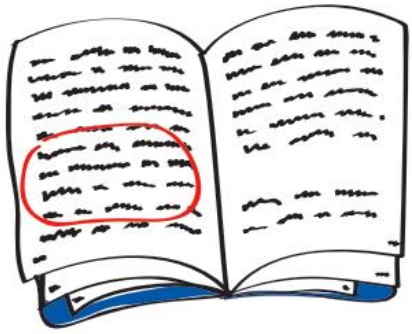




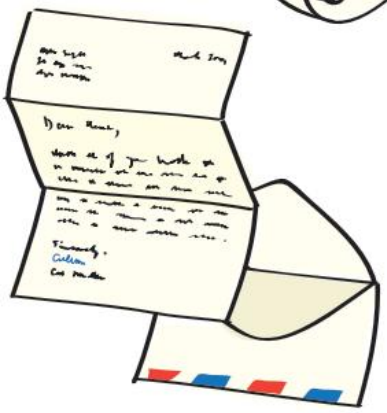
Types of personal writing

There are a wide variety of personal writing texts, including:

- personal recounts
- online blogs
- emails
- SMS text messages
- online chatrooms
- social networking sites (such as Facebook, Twitter or flickr®)
- notes and letters
- diaries and journals
- autobiographies, biographies and memoirs.







Formal or informal language can be used in personal texts, depending on their audience and purpose. Your audience and your purpose will help you choose the best ways to communicate—whether via SMS, email, written note or any other way.



Formal language is used for public audiences, for example those who read school newsletters or school websites. Close attention needs to be paid to spelling, punctuation, grammar rules and layout conventions.

Informal language is a casual or colloquial style of writing that can include slang words and relaxed punctuation and grammar rules. It is often used when writing blogs, diaries and letters to friends, or sending text messages or emails.

It is always important to think about your audience and your purpose when you are composing personal texts, because this affects the language you use and also keeps you focused on your ideas and how to express them. For example, if your audience is your grandparents you will use different language than if you are writing to close friends. If your purpose is to apologise for something, you will write in a very different way than if you are writing about a funny or scary experience.

Breakaway tasks 1

Remembering

1 What is personal writing?

2 What are five popular types of personal writing?

3 Who are three common audiences for personal writing?

4 What are three typical purposes for personal writing?

Understanding

5 How will your choice of audience and your purpose influence the type of personal writing you compose?

6 What is the difference between formal and informal language?

Applying

7 With a partner, make a list of three topics that a person might typically write about in each of these personal texts:
- an online blog
- a diary
- a letter to grandparents
- a Facebook or Myspace site
- an autobiography.

Analysing

8 Rank the personal texts in the list on the previous page to show how often you use them. Then compare your list with a partner.

Evaluating

9 Why do you think personal texts are so popular in today's world?

10 With a partner, give two reasons why someone would write to each of these audiences using a personal text:
- a fan site for a music group
- classmates in a science class
- a group of dog owners
- a football team's supporters.

Recounting personal experiences

Very often the experiences that make us laugh, cry, be afraid or feel embarrassed provide the basis for the best stories. Writing about yourself is not as easy as it sounds, but describing your own dramatic experiences can develop your writing skills. A personal recount is a remembered event described in detail by the writer. It is usually written in the first person and the past tense.



When you write in the **first person** you uses pronouns such as 'I', 'me', 'mine', 'we', 'us', 'ours'. First person pronouns take the place of people's names, but do not change the meaning.

When you write in the **past tense** you use verbs that refer to events that have taken place in the past. For example:

We *passed* the rundown house.

Read the following personal recount and complete the activities that follow.

NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCE!

By Ben

I'm no chicken, OK? I'm into rugby. I know I have a good imagination but I swear the following story is true.

Last Xmas my parents *made* me camp out overnight.

You have to understand about my parents. They are kind and feed me regularly but I swear they come from another planet! They think everything on Earth is great, including me, no matter what I do. It's hard to live with aliens—they're soooo positive all the time!

'The Aussie bush is fabulous—lots of stars, clear skies, smells great, heaps of green—not like any other planet. Isn't it marvellous, son?' said Dad.

He says 'son' like it's my name.

'BUSHWALKING IS AS BORING AS BAT@##*!!

DON'T YOU REALISE THERE'S NO TV, NO PHONE, NO EMAIL, NOOO TOILETS, AND FERALS LIVE THERE?'

'Isn't it wonderful?' the aliens replied.

That night I sat sunburnt, bitten to death by mosquitoes the size of bees, itchy from some poisonous plant and boiling hot next to a raging campfire Dad had built even though it was 30 degrees. We'd walked a massive 6 km and my legs refused to move.

'We're going for a night walk to check out the stars. Wanna come, son?' asked Dad.

'No thanks. I'll just stay here and scratch myself to death,' I answered.

'OK then, see you later.'

And off they went into the blackness. (See, I told you they were weird. I'm sure they crashlanded and stole me from a hospital as part of an intergalactic experiment.)

I must have dozed off from all the pain but I'm not sure for how long. The fire had gone out.

CRUNCH! CRUNCH! THUD! THUD!

$##@! I froze.

Was it one giant big thing, or thousands of little ones?



2

3

4

5

6 + 7 + 8 + 10

1 + 9

5

Language features:
1. Past tense used, for example 'asked', 'answered'
2. First person pronouns, for example 'I', 'my', 'me'
3. Specific reference to setting and time
4. Names and roles of characters included
5. Linking words to show time sequence, for example 'That night', 'And off they went', 'After about a zillion hours'

Structure features:
6. Retelling series of events in the order they occurred
7. Recounting dramatic experiences in humourous detail to add interest
8. Orientation to the events, for example when and where they happened, and who was involved
9. Comments on the events and personal viewpoints
10. Details about characters and setting

SNAP! CRUNCH! THUD!

Branches snapped. A bear! (No, wrong country.) A giant python! (Get a grip Ben!) Feral critters—that's it, a herd of giant feral kangaroos or possums!! 9

What do I do? What do I do? I asked myself.

Run! Hide! Run! Hide! Now!!!

I dived into the tent, zipped it up, and grabbed the torch as a weapon. 7

More noises, whining like an motor. Were the feral critters driving a giant tractor?

Suddenly the whole tent glowed and I could see huge shadows—huge things.

&*%#! I'm not proud of what I did next. I hid head first in the sleeping bag, zipped it up and played dead.

After about a zillion hours the noises stopped and I heard Mum and Dad. 5

'Wasn't it wonderful?'

'Lucky son fell asleep or he might have been frightened on his own.'

Weird huh? I get attacked by feral critters with humungous torches and they are completely obsessed with stars! 9

Breakaway tasks 2

Applying

1 Give three reasons why *Near Death Experience!* is a personal recount.

Analysing

2 Who might be the intended audience for this personal recount?

3 What do you think is the purpose of the writer who composed this text?

4 Locate three examples from this personal recount that show the composer is using informal language in his writing.

5 Identify three characters in this recount and explain their roles in the events described.

6 Describe the setting of this recount, including the time and place.

Creating

7 Select one experience you've had that was funny, scary, sad, embarrassing or painful, such as:

- your first day at school
- getting injured
- the death of a family pet
- being in a car accident
- getting lost
- watching a horror film
- a funny family story
- making an embarrassing mistake.

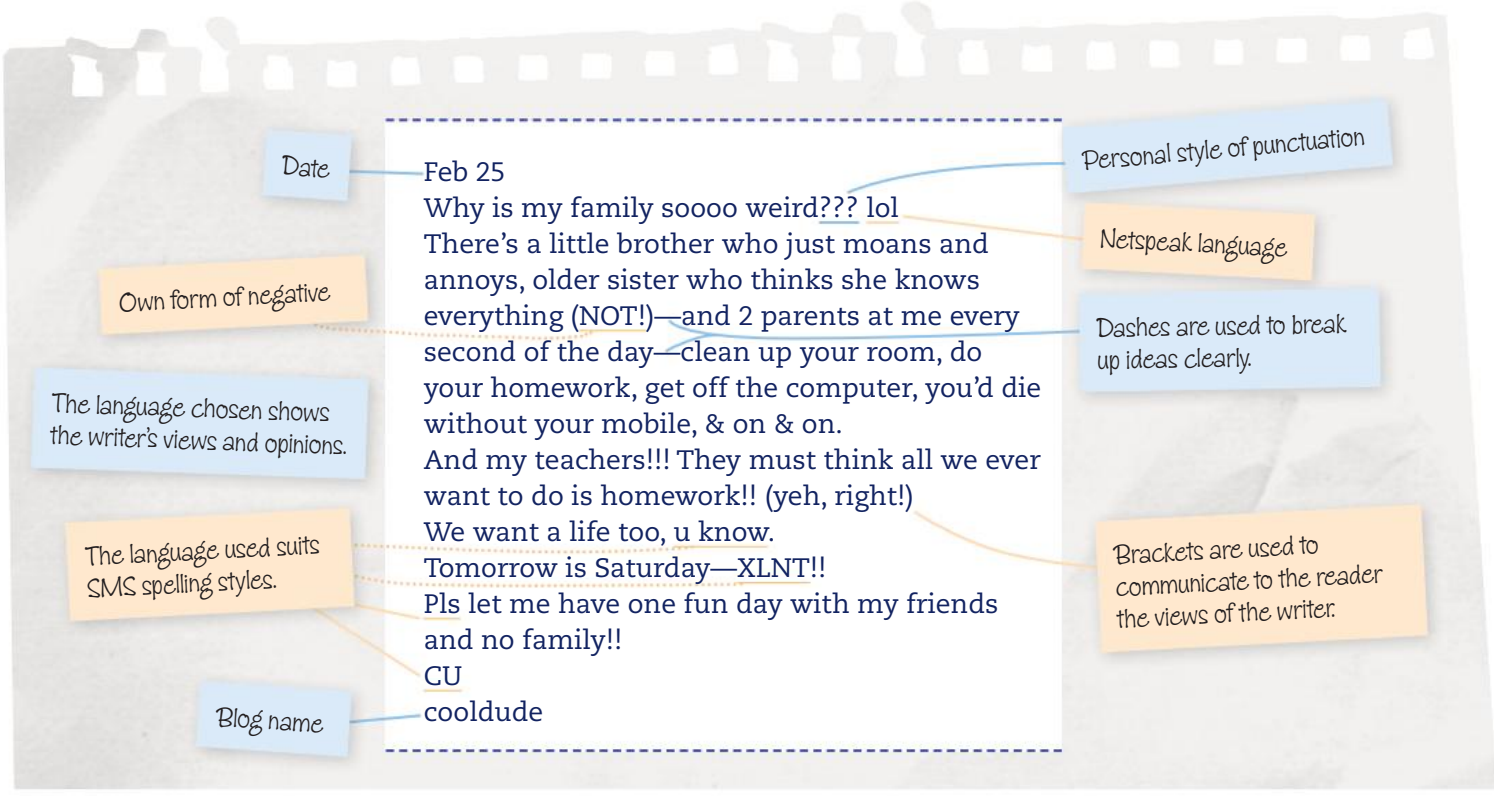
Write your story of that experience, including a description of the setting and the people involved. Your audience is your classmates and your purpose is to show what the experience felt like for the people involved. Use the first person and past tense in your personal recount, and write about 300 words. Share your recount with others in the class.

Blogs

A blog is a type of online diary or personal journal written on the Web. The name comes from the word 'weblog' (a log on the Web), and can include:

- news of personal events and experiences
- ideas and views about favourite subjects, hobbies or pastimes
- links to other sites
- graphics and photos
- feedback links from others.

A blog can combine texts and images, but is mainly a written journal. The most recent news and views are at the beginning of the blog site.



Netspeak on SMS, chatrooms and social networking sites

When you write to friends or family using SMS or Twitter, or write on social networking sites like Facebook or Myspace, you will often communicate using the jargon that is popular on the internet. Common abbreviations (using letters, numbers or symbols), popular emoticons and other informal language features enable you to communicate quickly and efficiently, especially with SMS messages where there can be a 140–160 character limit.



Jargon is the special language used by a particular group of people. For example, when you send a text message you might write 'tx' for the word 'thanks'.



Emoticons can be typed characters that, when viewed sideways, are meant to show the feelings of the writer. For example :) = happy

As the number of computer and mobile users grows, so does the number of new terms in Netspeak and SMS text language. Here are some popular Netspeak and SMS terms:

2	to
2moro	tomorrow
4	for
4got	forgot
4yeo	for your eyes only
afaik	as far as I know
afk	away from the keyboard
atm	at the moment
bbl	be back later
btw	by the way
cu	see you
dxtnre	dictionary
gal	get a life
g2g	got to go
gr8	great
hhok	ha ha, only kidding
kul	cool
icwum	I see what you mean
l8r	later
lol	laugh out loud
nc	no comment
omg	oh my god
pcm	please call me
ptmm	please tell me more
ttul	talk to you later
tx	thanks
u	you
wot	what
xlnt	excellent
y	why

Some of the most popular emoticons include:

:)	happy
:(	sad
:?	confused
:'(	crying
;)	winking
:o	surprised
I o	tired
:D	laughing out loud

DID YOU KNOW...

SMS stands for Short Message Service.

Netiquette

Netiquette refers to the etiquette, or appropriate and accepted guidelines, for writing on the internet. Whenever you are writing on social networking sites, in emails, in chatrooms, on blogs or on forums, your personal writing should follow these basic rules:

1. Do not use sexist, racist or ageist language, or comments offensive to other cultures or people.
2. Make sure you always have your family's permission to access social networking or blog sites, and also to contribute to them. You should never trust what strangers tell you via the internet, and never send personal information to strangers.
3. Don't SHOUT (using all capitals) in forums and chatrooms.
4. Make messages concise by using suitable abbreviations and emoticons.
5. If an attachment is very large, check with the person you are sending it to that their computer can cope with large files.
6. Don't forward spam, hoaxes or chain letters.
7. Trash offensive or abusive messages. Cyberbullying is illegal.
8. Remember, there is no such thing as privacy on the internet, so never write or post anything you would not like anyone to read or see.
9. Always fill in the email subject line.
10. Turn off HTML settings—just email in plain text.

Breakaway tasks 3

Remembering

1 What is a blog?

2 Make a list of three popular features on a blog site.

Understanding

3 Why do people use jargon, abbreviations and emoticons on the internet?

4 Why is netiquette important when writing on the internet?

5 Why must you be very cautious about communicating with strangers on the internet and trusting what you read there?

Applying

6 Form a small group and add ten more Netspeak terms to the Netspeak word list on the previous page.

7 In your small group, see if you can add three or four more netiquette rules that people should be aware of.

Evaluating

8 Read the netiquette list on the previous page, then re-order the ten rules in their order of importance, from 1 (most important) to 10 (least important). Give a reason for your number one choice.

9 In a small group, discuss and make a list of three positive and three negative features of chatrooms. Give a reason for each choice.

Diaries and journals

The main purpose in keeping a diary is to have a personal record of your thoughts, experiences and feelings. The intended audience is usually yourself, and for some people a diary is so private they would never show it to anyone else. However, sometimes people allow their diaries to be published or read by others, especially if they are of particular interest because of the time they were written or the people they are about. Diaries can be written in special blank-page books or on computers in files.

Because diaries are personal, the language used in them can be very informal. Diaries can contain notes, drawings and even favourite objects to be preserved (like strands of hair, cards or flowers). They can be written in the present tense (for example, 'Today, I'm really happy—I have been selected for the school soccer team'), but if they are written about events that have already happened they are usually in the past tense (for example, 'We went on a bushwalk last weekend and it was tough').

Zlata Filipovic was a teenage girl living in the city of Sarajevo during a civil war in the 1990s, and she saw the death and destruction caused by a modern war. Here is an extract from one of her early diary entries.

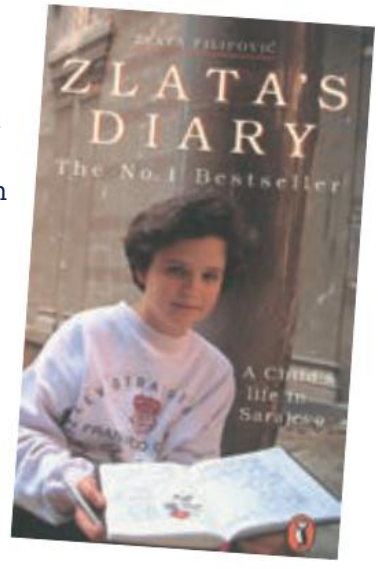
ZLATA'S DIARY

By Zlata Filipovic

Saturday, 2 May 1992

Dear Mimmy,

Today was truly, absolutely the worst day ever in Sarajevo. The shooting started around noon. Mummy and I moved into the hall. Daddy was in his office, under our flat, at the time. We told him on the interphone to run quickly to the downstairs lobby where we'd meet him. We brought Cicko [Zlata's canary] with us. The gunfire was getting worse, and we couldn't get over the wall to the Bobars, so we ran down to our own cellar.



The cellar is ugly, dark, smelly. Mummy, who's terrified of mice, had two fears to cope with. The three of us were in the same corner as the other day. We listened to the pounding shells, the shooting, the thundering noise overhead. We even heard planes. At one moment I realised that this awful cellar was the only place that could save our lives.

Source: Zlata Filipovic, *Zlata's Diary*, translated by Christina Pribichevich-Zoric, Penguin, 1995

A journal is similar to a diary, but it is usually written so other people can read it. A journal is a record of events about a specific experience such as a journey, a holiday or an expedition. Journals can be written on paper or using computers. Explorers often keep journals of their voyages, and travellers often create them to let family and friends know about their journeys. Because the audience and purpose of a journal are quite different from those of a diary, the language used is often more formal and private feelings are not generally expressed.



Remembering

1 What is a diary?

2 How is a diary different from a journal?

Understanding

3 What are three important features of a diary?

4 What makes *Zlata's Diary* extract so interesting?

5 Why might someone want to keep a diary during a very difficult time, such as war?

Applying

6 What features of diary writing are evident in Zlata's diary entry?

7 Locate two adverbs in Zlata's diary and explain how they tell more about the event.

8 Why does Zlata's diary switch from past tense to the present tense, and back to the past tense again?

9 How does Zlata's diary show the writer's feelings about these events?

10 What are three things Zlata describes that make this diary so personal and powerful?

Creating

11 Compose a diary entry (100 to 200 words) about what happened in your own life yesterday.



The word 'diary' comes from the Latin word *dies*, meaning 'day'—so a diary is often a personal day-by-day record.

Letters

Today, people write personal letters in many different ways. Some people will write a traditional handwritten letter, but more often people will use a variety of techniques for writing letters depending on their purpose. They might write emails, notes or messages on Facebook to family or friends.

Personal letters have the following common features:

- a greeting that shows the relationship (for example 'Dear Mum', 'Hey dude')
- the body of the letter (for example information, questions, action requested, suggestions, opinions expressed)
- an ending (for example 'See you in two weeks', 'Write soon and tell me all your news')
- a friendly closing (for example, 'Best wishes', 'Lots of love', 'Bye')
- a signature or online name.

Some language features common to personal letters are:

- brief and direct ideas and messages
- conversational language to suit the audience (different for grandmother, teacher or friend)
- a warm and friendly tone
- short paragraphs and a variety of sentence patterns
- first person and a mixture of present and past tense.

Autobiographies

An autobiography is a person's life story written by that person. A biography is the story of a person's life written by someone else.

Autobiographies are written for a wide range of purposes, such as to record past events; to let people know about other times, people and places; to communicate deep feelings about past experiences; or to record the life stories of famous people or families.

Common features of autobiographies are:

- anecdotes told in chronological order
- personal details about the writer's life

- experiences in the home, at school, at work, in sport, travelling and in the community
- extended paragraphs and carefully structured sentences
- a point of view about people and events from the past
- use of the first person and also past tense to describe people and events
- generally reported speech with occasional direct speech.

DID YOU KNOW...

The word 'autobiography' comes from three ancient Greek words: *auto* means 'self', *bios* means 'life' and *graphein* means 'to write'.

Here is an extract from Sally Morgan's autobiography, *My Place*.

MY PLACE

By Sally Morgan

Summer was worst. Dad always wound the windows up and locked what doors were lockable in case anyone should try to steal us. He forbade us ever to get out of the car. These precautions meant that on hot summer's nights, we nearly suffocated.

One summer's evening, I could stand it no longer. Dad had been gone for ages, and I'd given up all hope of him returning with some bags of potato chips. Somehow, the sweet, clean smell of the Swan River managed to penetrate our glass and metal confines. Like the wisp of a cloud on a misty night, it floated around my shoulders and head, beckoning me to come.

'Let's go play down the river', I said suddenly. 'Dad's not going to bring us any chips. He won't notice we've gone.'

'We're supposed to stay in the car,' Jill said as she eyed me doubtfully. Two terms at school and she was a real stickler for convention.

'Look Jill, there's no use hanging around, hoping he'll turn up with something. He's forgotten about us again. I'm going whether you come or not.'



The thought of a paddle was too much for Billy, who leapt out with me. Jill followed, reluctantly. We wound our way quickly through the crowded car-park and down to the sandy foreshore. We splashed and laughed and built sandcastles decorated with bits of seaweed and stick.

Just as we were constructing an elaborate moat, a tall figure loomed above the beach.

Source: Sally Morgan, *My Place*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1987

Breakaway tasks 5

Remembering

1 List five features of personal letters.

2 What are five features of autobiographies?

Understanding

3 Why do people write personal letters?

4 What is the purpose of an autobiography?

Analysing

5 With a partner, list the features of an autobiography included in the extract from *My Place*. Use the guide on the previous page.

Creating

6 Write an email letter to a family member or friend who lives somewhere else in Australia, in a neighbouring school or overseas. Write about family events and recent personal experiences that would interest them. Send your email letter and ask for a reply.

Strands in action

Core tasks

For one week, organise your home and class time to compose the following personal writing activities, and make a checklist of completed tasks as you finish them.

1. Write a personal recount of a key experience in your life so far (when young, or more recently). Write about 500 words.
2. Write at least five SMS text messages or emails to friends or family members.
3. With your family's permission, start your own blog site, or sign up to a Twitter, flickr, Facebook or Myspace site. Remember the important advice about privacy and strangers on the internet. Always proceed with caution when using the internet.
4. Write a diary entry for each day this week—with a word limit of 100 words a day.

Extra tasks

1. Use your library to locate an autobiography, biography or diary you would like to read. Read the book and research the writer using your internet research skills, and prepare a slide or digital story presentation to describe the main events and people in the book for others to see and read. Some recommended titles are:
   - *Zlata's Diary* by Zlata Filipovic—the dramatic diary of a young girl who lived through the experience of war in Sarajevo in the 1990s
   - *It's Not About the Bike* by Lance Armstrong—the amazing autobiography of a seven-times winner of the Tour de France who survived cancer
   - *My Place* by Sally Morgan—the award-winning autobiography of an Aboriginal girl growing up in Australia
   - *Chinese Cinderella* by Adeline Yen Mah—the story of an unwanted and unloved child growing up in China during the Second World War (1939–1945)
   - *Hana's Suitcase* by Karen Levine—the story of the way a suitcase belonging to a Nazi concentration camp child showed others the truth about the holocaust
   - *Lost Boy* by Dave Pelzer—the best-selling story of a boy growing up in a foster home where his only possessions were the old torn clothes he carried in a paper bag
   - *Belonging* by Sameem Ali—the story of a girl forced into marriage and the suffering she experienced when she tried to run away
   - *Pink Balloons* by Beverley McGregor—the story of a little girl born with AIDS who lives a courageous life
   - *Roy: Going for Broke* by Andrew Symonds—the life story of the famous zinc-lipped, dreadlocked Australian cricketer.
2. Write the opening chapter of your autobiography, describing:
   - where and when you were born
   - details of yourself as a baby
   - experiences you had when you were very young
   - family events that had an influence on your life and growing up
   - your first experiences at school
   - childhood games, foods and fun
   - scary, funny and embarrassing experiences when you were young.

   You might want to ask your parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts to give you more information before you begin your autobiography.
3. With a partner, conduct your own search of popular blogs and social networking sites.
   - **a** Which are the most popular topics on these sites?
   - **b** Make a list of twenty internet names people have given themselves, and choose your top three favourites.
   - **c** What are the most common features of the social networking sites you look at? Consider the use of words, images and links.
   - **d** What key features of the best social networking sites make them interesting and enjoyable to navigate?
   - **e** What are the important warnings you need to remember when using the internet?

2

Being creative



Human beings are amazingly creative creatures. Think of all the things they have invented, designed, painted, written, created and achieved: books, films, art, sports, technology, medicine, science, buildings and so much more. Human beings love to experiment with new ideas to discover and explore the unknown.

All the novels, plays, films, short stories and poems ever written in any language are a giant advertisement for people's creative power. You also have this power—to create written texts that will be enjoyed by others, perhaps for many years into the future!

Here are three creative micro stories written by high school students—stories written to be exactly 100 words long, not one word more or one word less—that demonstrate their creative writing talents and original ideas. Read each one and decide which you like the most, thinking of reasons for your choice.

1 MY STRANGE FRIEND—BASED ON A TRUE EXPERIENCE

By Darryl Plummer

The afternoon was warm. I was rummaging through my schoolbag for a snack. A man gets hungry after double PE. Oh man! I'd accidentally brought home my mate Bryce's sport shirt. Never mind, I could ring. Forgetting my guts, I dialled. An old woman answered. Bryce's granny, maybe. I asked for him.

Her shaky reply suddenly took the warmth out of the day.

'Bryce hasn't lived here for 120 years.'

My hair stood on end. Things clicked. Very weird things. Like the day after school he'd said 'Gotta go!' and I'd distinctly seen him jump the fence into the cemetery ...

2 THE TEST

By Rebecca Parkinson

The car swerved sharply to the right, mounting the kerb as it sped around the corner, sending a spray of garbage bins flying across the road. The car continued its path of destruction, demolishing young trees and frightening elderly pedestrians before coming to a halt.

It reversed down the street before nervous onlookers, and straight through a red light, narrowly avoiding disaster. The car moved at high speed towards the town quarry, coming to a sudden, tyre-screeching halt with centimetres to spare before the drop.

The driver turned to her slumped passenger with a sweet smile.

'Did I pass?'





3 SAVING PRIVATE BILL

By Ben Quin

'Help me, somebody help me!'

A lone soldier was besieged in an old house by six enemy soldiers. They had him surrounded. There was nowhere to hide. And no way to escape. He could hear them laughing. Either one of them had cracked a joke or they were laughing at his pathetic cry for help.

God, he thought. Why can't a man shelter in an old house without being attacked and besieged by six enemy soldiers hiding in the undergrowth?

And now he needed to pee. Great!

Suddenly he heard a yell.

'What are you lot doing?'

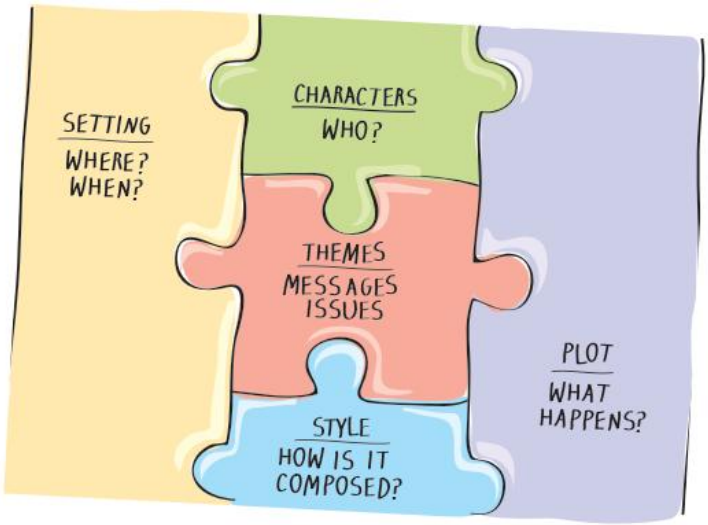
The cavalry. Mum.

Key elements of narrative texts

These micro story texts use a variety of creative techniques to capture a reader's attention and keep you reading until the end, such as:

- attention-grabbing openings
- short, sharp sentences
- suspense and mystery
- dramatic word pictures
- sudden changes of mood
- tension and excitement
- dramatic events and characters
- fast-moving action
- punctuation to dramatise events
- strongly descriptive words
- unexpected endings.

All of these micro stories include the key elements of narrative texts. These key elements fit together like a jigsaw puzzle to create original and creative stories that capture your attention and keep your interest right to the end. But what does each jigsaw piece really mean?



Setting

This is where and when the action takes place. Sometimes there is more than one setting in a novel, story, film or play. Being short, these micro stories, like many short stories, are limited to one setting.

Plot

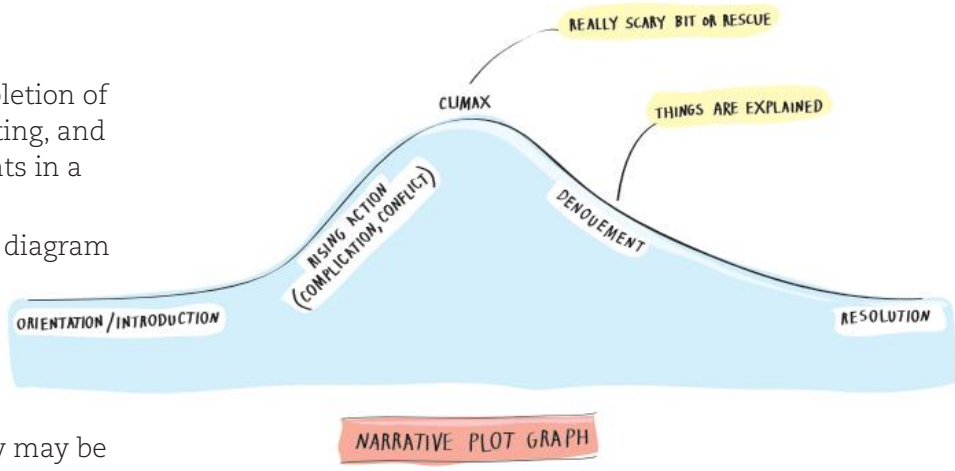
A plot is the series of events in a novel, story, play or film and the order in which these events happen. Plots often follow a pattern of beginning–middle–end, but sometimes writers begin part-way through or even at the end and work backwards, or have a series of flashbacks during the story, or even take time jumps to tell another part of the story. Some stories also include subplots, which means there are a number of other stories running within the story that also relate to the main plot. You often find this in television serials, films, plays and novels.

Many plots for narratives (stories) follow a well-known structure. They have:

- an orientation—the introduction or opening that gives the background to the plot, characters and setting
- a rising action—this includes events leading to a climax, and can involve conflicts between characters or about situations, or complications such as a character facing a challenge or problem
- a climax—this is the high point of the story, but there can be more than one climax as well. This may involve a sudden dramatic event such as a death or an important discovery
- a denouement (meaning 'unknotting')—this is where the climax, conflicts and complications are explained and the story begins to head towards a conclusion

- a resolution—this is the final completion of the story's plot, characters and setting, and the coming-together of all the events in a conclusion.

These elements can be placed on a diagram that shows how they work together from beginning to end in a narrative.



NARRATIVE PLOT GRAPH

Characters

Characters are the 'who' in a text. They may be people, animals (as in the film *Shrek*) or even strange creatures (as in the Harry Potter books). There may be major characters with large roles in a story, and minor characters with less important roles. Some characters are never seen but only spoken about by other characters.

Characters are developed in the following three ways.

- The author introduces characters and describes the way they look, act and think. In a play, the writer outlines characters in the stage notes.
- Characters reveal themselves through dialogue.
- Other characters talk about them and react to them.

Themes

Themes are the major messages or issues in the text. They are the main reason the author has created the text—in order to tell the reader or viewer something. For example, in the Harry Potter series, the key themes are loyalty, courage and making the right decisions.

Style

The style is the way in which the writer pesents the narrative. It includes:

- the language used—the words; the length of sentences and paragraphs; the descriptions of setting, character and action; the way in which characters speak
- the form used—how the text is presented, for example as a written narrative, film, play or poem
- the point of view—who is telling the story: a narrator, a character or different voices
- the tone of the story—the attitude of the author to the plot, characters and themes, for example funny, sad, serious, angry, suspicious or fearful.

Breakaway tasks 6

Remembering

1 Why do human beings like to be creative?

2 What are the key elements of narrative texts, and what does each key element mean?

Applying

3 Choose one micro story from the three on the previous two pages, and use the creative techniques list on the previous page to identify how many of those techniques are included in your selected micro story.

Analysing

4 Use the key elements diagram on the previous page and the notes that follow it to identify the key elements in the micro story you chose for Question 3.

5 In a small group, select a film or novel you have all seen or read. Create your own key elements diagram for your chosen text and prepare a poster or slide show presentation to share with the class. Include examples from the text to illustrate your presentation.

Creating

6 Write your own 100-word (exactly 100 words!) micro story. Your story should have a beginning, a middle and an end with a twist. Use ideas from school, holidays, home or sport to spark your plot.

Creating short stories

Here is a short story written by a teenage writer. Read the story and then complete the tasks that follow.

SWEET AS

By Brody Smith



'This new boat runs sweet as, mate,' said Robbo.

'Yeah, check out the wake it's making too. Can't wait to get out there,' I replied.

I was having a great day. I'd got my pay, and after a good day's work, I was out on my new ski boat with a couple of my best mates. There was very little wind, making the weir as flat as a dime. Although the weir was very low compared to previous years, you couldn't get much better conditions. Even though there were a lot of dead trees sticking out of the water, we just planned to steer clear of them.

'All right, who's goin' first?' Robbo asked.

He was one of my best mates. Nice bloke, but doesn't let anyone tell him what to do. Tall, 186 centimetres, pretty muscly. Nobody wants to get in his way.

'Yeah, I'll go,' Mick answered.

Mick was the kind of guy you just don't seem to notice in a room full of people. A quiet guy. But once you get to know him, you can't help but love him. He's got a way to make you laugh at the right moments. Mick was a smallish guy at 173 centimetres and 70 kilos. I guess you could say Robbo was his bodyguard.

Then there was me. Dave Goode, or Davo to most. Brown, wavy hair, 83 kilos, 191 centimetres tall, and one of the best wakeboarders in NSW. I'd won several state titles, and competed nationally as well.

'All right, what will ya take?' I said. 'The Jobe ski or my new Hyperlite 3000 series wakeboard?'

Mick replied, 'Yeah, chuck me the wakeboard, Davo. I'll show you how it's done,' he joked.

'Ha ha, good luck with that, mate.'

Mick wasn't a bad wakeboarder. He had been improving a heap since he started, and he was going all right. I think he's better at skiing personally, but he seems to agree with me that wakeboarding is a lot more fun. I mean, all you do in skiing is cut from side to side, but with wakeboarding you can clear the whole wake while doing a backflip. You can't get much better than that.

Mick was in the water and ready to go.

'Yep. Go!' he yelled.

I put down the throttle and it popped him straight up.

'This boat's got some power behind it, Davo,' said Robbo.

'Yeah, it should, it's got twin fuel-injected 115s on the back of it,' I replied.

'Whoah! Is that legal? Ha ha!'

'Let's hope so.'

Mick was going great. He was doing huge jumps across the wake, doing clean mutes and crail grabs. It was sweet. We were heading towards the dead trees sticking out of the water, so I decided to turn around and go back the way we'd come. I signalled to Mick we were turning round.

As the boat turned, it swung Mick out the side, and then I heard a SPLAT! Just the sound you don't want to hear when you're driving a boat, and the pain you don't want to feel when you're a boarder. I first thought he might have just dug the nose of the board in the water and face-planted. But I knew it was more than that by the look on Robbo's face.

'Hey! Turn around. Mick's down,' Robbo exclaimed.

Once I turned I could see Mick lying lifeless in the water. Robbo dived in and pulled Mick up towards the boat. He was still breathing, and he

had a cut in his forehead the size of your little toe. He was going to be okay. He was conscious and the cut didn't look too bad.

'He must've hit a tree or something underwater,' Robbo explained.

'Yeah, they gotta do something about this water level. It's shockin',' I said.

'C'mon mate, we need to get you to the hospital,' Robbo said to Mick.

We got back to the boat ramp as quick as we could, loaded the boat, and left. Mick was screaming in pain the whole way through. We drove him straight to hospital where the doctors put three stitches in his forehead. Apart from that, and his mild concussion, he was fine.

'I guess that global warming stuff is true, ay Mick? Ha ha!' I laughed.

'Yeah, well it doesn't hurt to look where you're driving.'

He smiled.

Breakaway tasks 7

Remembering

1 Who are the main characters in this story?

2 What is the setting of the story?

3 From whose point of view is the story told?

4 Who is driving the boat and who is injured in the accident?

Understanding

5 What are some main themes or messages in this story? How can you tell?

Applying

6 Use the plot diagram guide on the previous two pages to create your own plot diagram for this story.

Analysing

7 Use the notes on style on the previous two pages to answer these questions:

a How does this writer use language to show the different characters in his story?

b Why does the writer intentionally use slang in some of the dialogue used by the characters?

c What is the tone adopted by the narrator to show his attitude towards the other characters?

Evaluating

8 Find three examples of creative vocabulary used by the writer to create the atmosphere and mood of this story. Explain your choices.

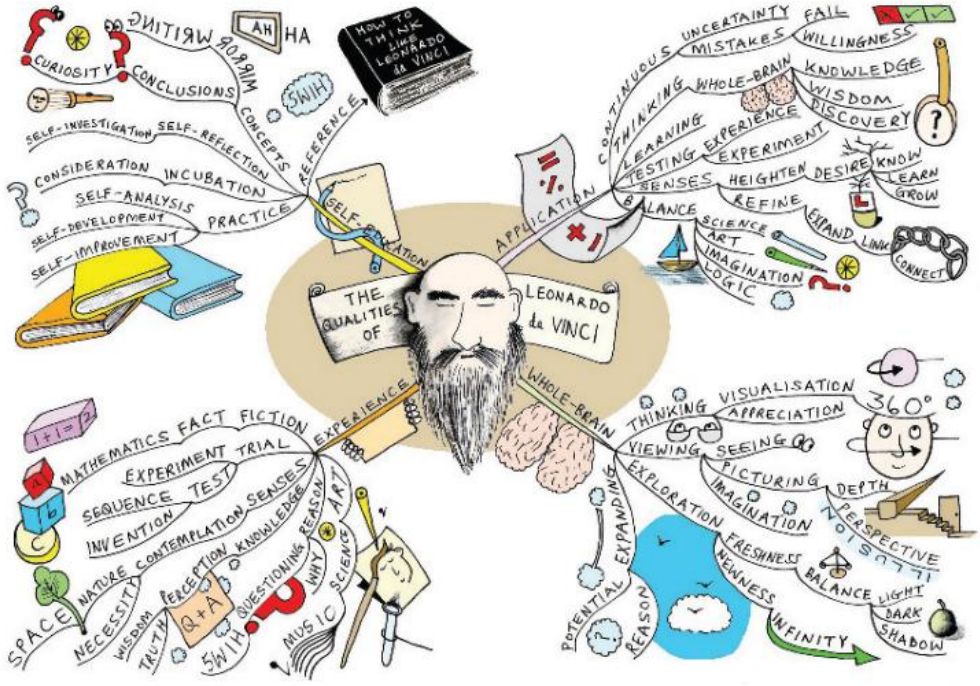
9 The writer uses some unconventional sentences in this story. Find two examples and explain how they add to the story's tone.

10 Language is constantly changing. Provide five or six new words the author could include in this story that would fit the voices of his characters. Give specific examples for specific characters.

11 Did you enjoy this story? What were the features that made you like or dislike it? Give reasons for your answers.

Creating

12 Create a new male character that would fit in with this group of friends on the boat. Describe your character, using the style of this story, and then write some dialogue for him to show his personality. Use this diagram to guide you:



Creative openings and creative characters

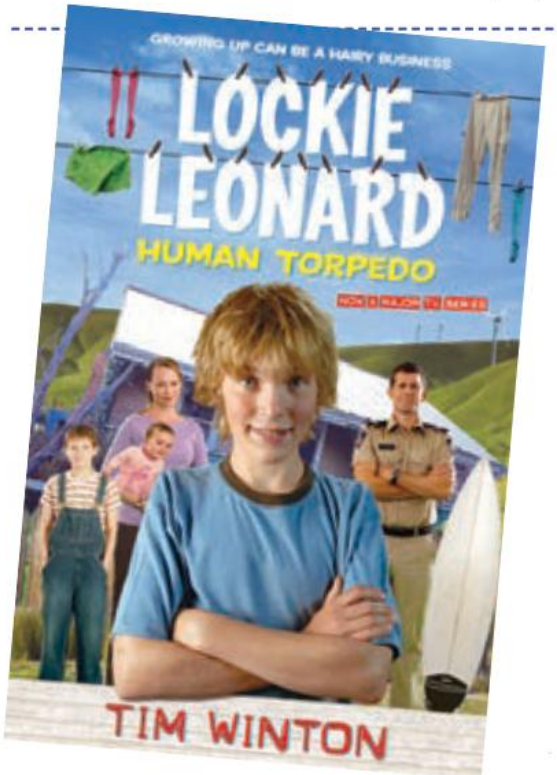
Look at these narrative text openings, which are intended to grab the reader's attention and introduce the plot, character and setting. Then complete the tasks that follow. The first two are from novels; the third is from a short story.

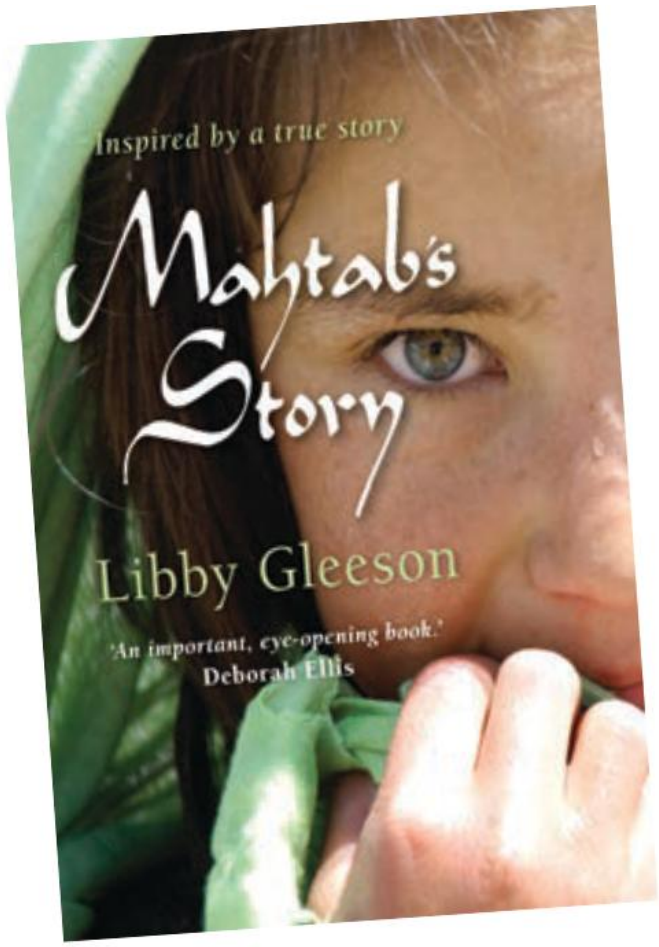
LOCKIE LEONARD: HUMAN TORPEDO

By Tim Winton

The first day Lockie Leonard saw this town it was raining. The old family Falcon had been loaded down like a refugee boat as they rolled into this little place fresh from the city. The whole family tried to be cheerful about it, but the place looked awful. The town was small and crummy-looking and when they saw the house the police force had organised for them, everyone in the car went quiet. Lockie's little brother looked at him, pegging off his nose with his fingers. His baby sister squirmed on the front seat. His dad left the motor running. His mum just started bawling.

Source: Tim Winton, *Lockie Leonard: Human Torpedo*, Penguin, 2003





MAHTAB'S STORY

by Libby Gleeson

Mahtab ached.

She rubbed her freezing hands together and pressed them into her mouth, sucking the life back into them. Kilometre after kilometre, the cold continued. Icy air seeped up from the floor of the truck and made its way through the layers of her cotton weave trousers. It slipped through the timber joins near her head and chilled her face, her neck and her shoulders. It brought with it a fine, pale powder that worked its way into her hair, her eyes and her nose. All she could taste was diesel and dust.

Mahtab wanted to leap up, to drum her heels against the floor, to fling her arms into the air and yell as if her heart and lungs would burst. But her throat was a closed and choking trapdoor. She was compelled and sentenced to silence.

Source: Libby Gleeson, *Mahtab's Story*, Allen & Unwin, 2008

TREASURE TIME

By Michael Pryor

Narrator tells the story in the first person.

We are immediately given the setting—the hot dusty road—and the two main characters, Toby and Nick.

Language—short sentences keep the pace of the story moving quickly.

It was hot. I was sweaty. I was angry. I was waiting on the side of the road, right where Toby told me to wait—and Toby was half an hour late.

When he appeared he was swinging up the road, holding a shovel and whistling, and that was when I knew he had another crazy scheme planned.

'Right, Nick,' he said with a broad grin. 'Are you ready to dig up some treasure?'

I got up and brushed myself down, making sure to get all the dust off my op shop jacket. 'Treasure,' I repeated, and sighed.

He pulled a large piece of paper out of his back pocket and flapped it at me. 'This is the sort of thing you find on a treasure map. Or so I understand.'

'You're joking. Let me see.'

From the creases, it was obvious the map had been folded in four. From the yellowish colour of the paper and the brownish colour of the ink, I knew it was old. And from the big words 'Treasure Map' at the top, I knew it was a treasure map, all right.

Source: Michael Pryor, 'Treasure Time' from *Picture This*, Pearson Australia, 2009

Our first glimpse of Toby is of a character who goes his own way.

Detail about op shop jacket creates a sense of a character who is a strong contrast to Toby.

Repetitive sentence structure builds humorous effect and predictable escalation to the final detail in this paragraph.



Breakaway tasks 8

Applying

1 With a partner, study the annotations of the story opening of 'Treasure Time'. Copy one of the other openings from the previous page into your notebook and create your own annotated diagram of its key features. You may use a computer or a poster to do this. Compare your annotations with those of other students.

Analysing

2 Locate one example of the following style features in the text openings you did not use for Question 1:

- a one short sentence that emphasises an idea
- b two descriptions that create a mental picture
- c three different words or phrases that are strong and memorable.

Evaluating

3 Which of these three openings did you like the best? Give reasons for your choice, then compare your answer with other students.

Creating

4 Create your own story opening of about 200 words. Focus on your setting, your character(s) and your language choice to create an opening that gets your reader interested and wanting to read more.

Creating poems

Poems use minimum words for maximum impact. How do they do this? Here's an example to show you. Instead of just telling a story about what happened, look at the ways Steven Herrick makes a funny event even funnier by creating a word picture in a very short poem.

The poet achieves maximum impact by choosing words carefully, arranging them on the page for a purpose, and letting us read between the lines to see what Beck is feeling, imagine what she has done, and enjoy the joke on her brother that she is sharing with us. All this in just one short sentence!



The title lets us know it is a girl speaking.

BECK TALKS

By Steven Herrick

POEM

My brother Craig,
he thinks he knows everything,
but
he doesn't know who let the dog
wee in his football boots …

I know.

Source: Steven Herrick, *A Place Like This*, University of Queensland Press, 1998

The word 'but' on its own lets us know there is an opposite idea coming.

The word 'let' changes everything—Beck could have stopped the dog, but chose not to.

The poet puts 'boots' and 'wee' in one line—concentrating the humour in one place.

The three dots (ellipsis) make us wonder what will happen next.

The poet leaves the punch line to the last line, and puts a gap there to make us wait for it—Beck has got even with her brother and has the last word.

One simple act has blown apart big, tough, know-it-all Craig, because everyone knows except him and we're laughing at him picking up his smelly footy boots.

The humour of Beck's message is funnier because it is so short and sharp.

Beck is letting us in on her secret, and Craig will never know.

The poet lets us imagine what Beck is describing—we create our own funny picture.

Special effects in poems

When you write poems it is great fun to put in special effects, just like in photos or films. There are many special effects that you can use in poems to create strong messages and enjoyable images.

- Imagery is the deliberate choice of words that creates a picture or sound you imagine when you read the poem, for example the smelly, damp footy boots in the poem 'Beck Talks'.
- Repetition can be used to emphasise a word, idea or image, for example 'the black, black cave'.
- Similes compare one thing or idea with another, using the words 'like' or 'as … as', for example 'as smooth as ice'.
- Metaphors go further than similes and describe an object or feeling as if it was actually

something else, for example 'My car is a rocket on a freeway.'

- Personification is a special type of metaphor that gives living qualities to non-living objects, for example 'The road creeps over the hill and slides into the tunnel.'
- Onomatopoeia is the name given to words that sound like the action they are suggesting, for example 'sizzle', 'crunch', 'splat', 'ooze', 'moan', 'mumble'.
- Alliteration is the use of words that begin with a particular sound, for example 'the lost, lonely, little light'.

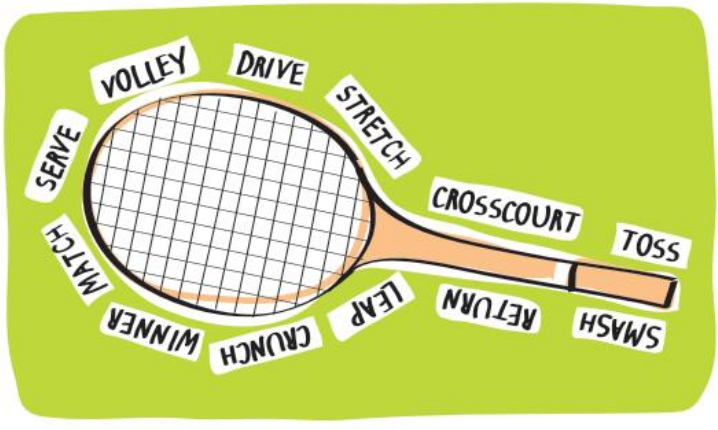
Creating poem shapes

The appearance of the following poems is part of their message. Take a look at how they work, and then you'll be able to experiment with your own poetry special effects to achieve maximum effect with minimum words.

- In acrostic poems, the first word of each line spells a word associated with the poem's ideas and images. For example:

  Really funny
  Over the top
  Bent double
  Entertains us all
  Remembers every joke
  Taps a funny, funny bone

- Concrete poems are crafted in the shape of an object to reflect the image or idea in the poem. For example:



- Shape poems are presented on the page to reflect the movement of the objects in the poem.

For example:

THE BIRD

By Paul Grover

POEM

He sweeps
low
and fast
then up
up
up
hangs on air
h o v e r i n g … and
f
a
l
l
s
a w a y
beyond blue
beyond sight
beyond …



Breakaway tasks 9

Remembering

1 How do poems use minimum words for maximum impact? Give one or two examples in your answer.

2 What are poetry special effects, and how do they work with words?

Understanding

3 What do you think is the purpose of poetry?

Applying

4 Pick four objects from around your home and create these poetry special effects for each object:

- personification, for example 'The monster mower chews up grass.'
- metaphor, for example 'My favourite books are time machines to other worlds.'
- simile, for example 'My pet mouse is as silent as the night.'
- repetition, for example 'Here goes another boring, boring brussels sprout.'
- alliteration, for example 'Down the hillside ripped the rich, red, raging flames of fire.'

Strands in action

Core tasks

1 Write your own original short story. Aim to write about 700 to 800 words. You might like to collect your class short stories and compile an online anthology (a collection) to share with others.

2 Create your own online poetry anthology. Follow these steps:

- **a** Select a topic or theme, such as sports, hobbies, travel, machines, colours, friends, family, love, fear, special places, favourite things.
- **b** Use your library and internet research tools to find at least eight poems you would like to include in your online anthology. Look for poems that include poetry special effects. Remember to include each poet's name with their poem and, where relevant, publication details.
- **c** Write at least one poem of your own to add to this collection. It can be in any form and style you choose.
- **d** Decide on the order of the poems in your anthology, and a title for the collection.
- **e** Add some visual and sound effects to your anthology if you wish.
- **f** Publish your anthology online using publication software.

Extra tasks

1 Create your own description of a setting you might include in a story. You can choose from one of the following ideas, or create an original setting of your own.

- a mysterious place
- a futuristic setting
- a desert setting
- a famous place
- a historic place
- a tropical setting
- a weird place
- an awesome place

2 As a class, or in a small group, sponsor a class, year or whole-school micro story contest.

- **a** Prepare entry forms (include sample micro stories and writing tips).
- **b** Organise advertising (advertise the contest, closing dates and prizes).
- **c** Arrange for judging (decide winners and highly commended micro stories).
- **d** Announce and publish the winners (prepare displays or put them online).

3 Create a concrete poem using a name or favourite object or hobby. Some ideas to start you thinking are:

- stars
- ice-creams
- football
- MP3 player
- sword
- pizza
- cricket bat
- cloud
- flower
- pet
- basketball
- sports car.

4 Write your own shape poem about an animal, person, object or machine so the shape of the poem on the page captures the way it moves and acts. For example, you might experiment with a racing car, a giraffe, a skateboarder, a bike, a plane, a juggler, a cat, a fish, a dinosaur, fire, blood or a volcano.

3

Writing to persuade and instruct

Persuasive texts don't just exist in the form of feature articles, editorials or satirical cartoons. You are bombarded by them from the moment you walk out the door. Have you noticed how many advertisements appear on public transport, social networking sites and even via SMS on your mobile? So you need to realise that persuasive texts take many forms, not just conventional media ones. However, to be successful they must always be written for a particular audience and purpose. They should also provide evidence for the viewpoint expressed.



Persuasive writing

Here are some common types of written persuasive texts you might need to compose:

- review
- advertisement
- sign or poster
- slogan.

All of these texts are created to persuade their audience to *do* something—whether it is to act or think in a particular way.

Breakaway tasks 10

Remembering

1 What is the aim of a persuasive text?

2 Make a list of five persuasive texts you see in everyday life.

Understanding

3 What do the terms 'audience' and 'purpose' mean?

4 Why is it important to know your audience and your purpose when writing a persuasive text?

5 What types of information might be useful as evidence in a persuasive text?

Analysing

6 How does the organ donor poster above try to persuade its audience to donate their organs?

How to write persuasively

Writing a persuasive text is easy if you break up the task into steps.

Persuasive techniques

Every persuasive text you write is aimed at persuading people to agree with you. This means you will be working hard to convince your audience to accept just one view. This also means persuasive texts are biased—if they weren't biased it would be much harder for them to be persuasive!



Bias is the favouring of one side of an argument or issue.

Written texts that are aiming to be persuasive include devices such as those in the following table.

Ten Steps for creating persuasive texts

1. Research the issue.
2. Decide your point of view.
3. List 3–5 major arguments with evidence to support them.
4. List opposing arguments and your replies to them.
5. Know the conventions of your chosen form.
6. Use persuasive techniques.
7. Plan and organise your arguments and evidence.
8. Use linking words to tighten your structure (for example, therefore, however, yet).
9. Edit your draft text.
10. Publish your persuasive text and consider responses.

Devices	This means using . . .	Examples
Persuasive language	Emotive words Negative words Positive words Colourful words Strong words and statements (especially at the beginning and end)	'hope he plays forever' 'unfair tackle' 'near-perfect pass' 'as low as a snake's belly' 'clearly, obviously, without doubt, absolutely, amazing' 'We must act now!'
Strong word images	Words that make you think of clear and powerful mental pictures—good or bad	'dead bodies piled high' 'A gazelle flashed by with the roar of the crowd ringing in her ears.'
Jargon	Words used by groups and cultures that sound strong and knowledgeable	'tube' 'backflip' 'shred the hill'
Rhetorical questions	Questions that don't need answers but aim to emphasise a point	'How can this team win?' 'Who doesn't accept that fact?' 'When will they wake up?'
Alliteration	Repetition of the same sound at the beginning of words to emphasise the idea	'Super Smith steals the show!' 'amazing acts of astounding acrobatics'
Statistics	Figures used as evidence for an argument	'99% of basketballers wear high-cut boots'
Facts	True statements that can be proven	'The government provides funds to support a variety of popular sports.'
Personal anecdotes and experiences	Short accounts that give evidence from personal experience	'This happened to me just the other day when . . .' 'Last week we had a great win. I was selected and . . .'

Breakaway tasks 11

Remembering

1 Copy the ten steps for creating persuasive texts from the previous page into your notebook.

2 Why are all persuasive texts biased?

3 Copy the five devices for writing persuasively from the table on the previous page that you know least about, including their explanations and examples, into your notebook.

Understanding

4 Why is it useful to use the persuasive devices on the previous page when writing persuasive texts?

Applying

5 Rank the three words in each line from the strongest to the weakest for a persuasive text:

Verbs

• leave	abandon	escape
• prohibit	forbid	outlaw
• conceal	hide	secrete
• decline	refuse	oppose
• halt	stop	cease
• accuse	ask	question

Adjectives

• innocent	unsuspecting	unfortunate
• despicable	evil	insidious
• greedy	hungry	keen
• cowardly	scared	frightened

6 Add two more examples to each category of strong to weak words in Question 5.

Analysing

7 Select the strongest words or phrases from those in brackets in the following letter:

Dear nearly ex-friend,

I was (upset, annoyed, devastated) when you told the whole class I think Alex is cool!! I am really (angry, furious, unhappy) and totally embarrassed. You now have a (problem, disaster, situation) to sort out—and soon please.

Don't really bother speaking to me until you (sincerely apologise, beg my forgiveness, say sorry) and really mean it!

M

Have your say—writing persuasive reviews

'That film was hopeless! I don't agree with the newspaper reviews at all.'

'No way! It was awesome. The reviews nailed it completely!'

'But did you see the special effects? They were pathetic! I'm going to blog my own review tonight.'

'OK, they weren't terrific, but in my opinion the story was amazing and the acting was really good.'

Every day when you are talking with family and friends, in class when you are working on more formal written responses, and online when you are blogging, emailing or giving feedback, you are reviewing what you see, hear and experience. A review is a personal opinion expressed in persuasive language. You write reviews to communicate your views about the things you see, hear and do.

You can find written reviews in newspapers, magazines, in books and on the internet. Written reviews cover a whole range of experiences that people want to give their opinions about, including:

- viewing films
- reading books
- watching sports events
- playing computer games
- viewing television programs
- going to holiday destinations
- listening to music
- going to restaurants
- seeing live shows.

A written review contains the following important features:

- a clear opinion about the subject being reviewed
- writing that is easy to read, well planned and suited to the audience
- a close look at key features in the subject being reviewed
- key terms and ideas in the specialist area being reviewed—for example, film terms or computer game terms

- persuasive language techniques to convince the reader about the subject being reviewed
- formal or informal language, depending on the audience and purpose of the review—for example, informal language in a personal blog entry about a film you've just seen, but formal language for a review of a new holiday resort for a national newspaper feature.

Every time a reviewer writes they have to decide who they are writing for (their audience) and what they want to communicate (their purpose). It would be unwise to use formal and complex language for an online blog review of a TV show to be read by friends and family, and it would be unwise to use very conversational language and teenage slang in an account of an excursion for your school's parent newsletter.

Read the following film review written by a teenager, and then complete the tasks that follow.

GALAXY QUEST

Anonymous

Author's comments about this article:

'This is a movie review that I wrote for my friend who had never seen the movie Galaxy Quest. *'*

'Never give up, never surrender!' This quote describes the underlying theme of *Galaxy Quest*. As I flew through space with Commander Taggart and his crew, I found the Sci Fi nerd in me glow as if I was ET himself. As amusing and humorous as *Galaxy Quest* was, it was really geared towards Sci Fi nerds like me. Since this movie was a spoof, someone unfamiliar with the Sci Fi genre might not appreciate some of the humour and sarcasm.

I laughed and cried along with Mathesar. I wanted to help the Commander fight Sarris and the piglizard. The cheesier the action, the more obnoxiously fake the effects became. I thought this made the film all the more superior. With the cornucopia of twists in the plot, the nerd in me exploded just like the piglizard.

The cleverness of the Omega 13 and the cute, evil blue creatures made me wish I could go back thirteen seconds in time to revisit the scenes again. As the voyage came to an end, I found myself wanting more and I was then fulfilled with an original, but always satisfying ending. With two love stories thrown into the mix, the plot never got old. Dean Parisot did a fantastic job of capturing the Sci Fi audience, which is what he was aiming for. Bravo Dean! Bravo! Live long and prosper!

Breakaway tasks 12

Remembering

1 Why did the reviewer write this review? What is the purpose?

Understanding

2 Who is the audience for this film review?

Applying

3 Is the language used formal or informal? Give three examples to support your answer.

4 Find five examples of persuasive language used in this film review. Use the guide on the previous two pages to help you.

Analysing

5 Does this film review give a personal opinion about the film? How can you tell?

6 Is this film review well planned and easy to read? Give reasons for your answer.

7 Determine a star quality rating for this film review—from one to five stars. Give reasons for your star rating.

Evaluating

8 Do you think the language this film reviewer uses is appropriate for the audience and purpose? Give reasons for your answer.

Creating

9 Select one of the following to review in just 200 words:
- a film you know well
- a book you have read recently
- a TV program you regularly watch
- a computer game you often play
- your favourite band or music style.

Writing instructions

Everywhere you go, no matter how young or old you are, you hear, see, read and write instructions all the time. Written instructions are important in today's complex world. Emergency resuscitation instructions on a poster can save a life, written exam instructions on the front of the paper enable students to avoid mistakes, and instruction booklets for a new TV or computer are useful when something will not work.

Instructions help you to get things right. Imagine how hard it would be if you arrived home from school and there was this message stuck on the fridge door:



Writing instructions is not always simple and easy. You need to develop skills to write clear and easy-to-follow instructions. There are three aspects to consider:

1 Audience—who are the instructions for? This will influence the way you write them. Think how differently you will write instructions if they are written for children, or elderly people or young employees.

2 Purpose—what are the instructions designed to get people to do? This will influence what you include in them. Think how differently they will look if instructions are designed to caution, or to educate, or to entertain, or to inform.

3 Place—where are the instructions to be located? This will influence how you present them. Think how differently instructions will look if they are on a poster at a youth club, on a wall in a hospital emergency room, on a sign at a zoo, or in a manual for a new mobile phone.

Instructional texts (sometimes called procedural texts) use language in a special way. You can tell a text is an instructional text if it includes the following:

- a list of specific items to use
- a clear and realistic description of these items
- words that tell you what to do (action words—verbs)
- steps that describe clearly and explain fully what you have to do.

Breakaway tasks 13

Remembering

1 Why are written instructions important?

2 What are the three main things to remember when writing instructions? Explain why each one is important.

Understanding

3 Make a list of ten typical places where you find written instructions in your everyday life, and for each one state the purpose of these instructions.

Applying

4 Rewrite the following instructions to make them clear and accurate—each one has been badly written. You can cut, add and rearrange words or create new sentences.

a Please select your ice-cream from the freezer cabinet then close the door and pay for it.

b Take one tablet three times a day but not at night and not after meals you swallow with water.

c Open the link with your mouse by hovering the mouse over the icon to open the link and then single right click the mouse while you are on the icon to open the link with the mouse.

Analysing

5 For each rewritten instruction in Question 4, state what its audience, purpose and place might be.

Strands in action

Core tasks

1 a Conduct a search at home to locate written instructions (in a leaflet, booklet or on disk) for a microwave, computer, DVD player/recorder, computer game console, MP3 player, mobile phone, television or other home electronic device.

b Bring one set of written instructions to class, and in a small group decide which instructions are the most effective and well written, and give your reasons. Present your findings to the class in a brief oral report.

2 a Create your own written instructions for one of these ideas: a favourite recipe, how to make a paper aeroplane, how to operate a model car, how to work an online game, how to saddle a horse, how to train a pet, or any other hobby or interest you have. Use the guides on the opposite page to assist you.

b Have a class presentation session where each person reads aloud their written instructions as they present to the class their live demonstration.

Extra tasks

1 Write a letter to your school principal to persuade them to change one thing in your school—to make your school a better place to live and learn as a student. Use all your persuasive powers (in words, structure and style) to convince your principal that this change is important, necessary and possible. Carefully consider your audience and your purpose, so your letter is convincing and effective. Your teacher can evaluate each letter and your persuasive power.

2 Write your own set of instructions for a brand-new invention—a personal robot servant for teenagers (called RobSerTeen). You will need to provide your robot servant with clear instructions to explain to them their tasks each day, how to avoid problems at home and at school, and what they need to do if they have difficulties. Your instructions for them must be very clearly written, very precise and presented in steps.

Prepare your personal instruction manual for your RobSerTeen robot with about twenty-five instructions that allow a teenager's daily life to be easier, better and more fun! Include diagrams and illustrations. Compare your instruction manual with those of others in the class. Who will have the best robot servant?

3 Following is a list of eight new products. In a small group, create an original slogan (a memorable phrase or expression) for each product that will persuade people to buy it. Once your slogans are complete, create a slide show presentation using appropriate fonts, sizes and styles to present your brand-new slogans to the class (you might include design ideas as well).

- ice-cream flavour
- deodorant for girls or boys
- computer for teenagers
- soft drink
- cat food
- mobile phone
- chip flavour
- backpack.

4 Write a 300-word book review on your favourite book (fiction or non-fiction) aiming to persuade a classmate who has not read this book to go and borrow it from a library straight away. Use all the persuasive language techniques you can to convince this classmate that this book is a must-read for them. Use the guides in the module to help you write this attention-grabbing review. Share these reviews in your class and vote to select the most persuasive.

5 With a partner, write a brief set of instructions for an emergency evacuation of your class from your classroom in the event of a school fire. Compare your instructions with those of another pair and discuss any differences. Which pair has the clearest and most effective instructions? Compare your instructions with the current school emergency evacuation instructions.

4

Aim to analyse and expect to explain

If you are asked to analyse an issue or topic, your purpose is to examine it closely and present a clear understanding to your audience. The best way to do this is to break down the topic or issue into its main parts, just like a car mechanic does with an engine.

Analyse this!

When you analyse an issue or topic, you aren't just explaining it to your audience, you are also analysing the way each part affects the whole issue or topic. For example, if you ask a mechanic to analyse an engine problem in the family car, they need to investigate how each part of the engine is working, and see how well or badly each part is affecting the smooth running of the motor. You do not want them just to explain how an engine works.

When you are writing an analytical piece of writing it is important to:

1. determine who the audience is that you are writing for and your purpose in writing
2. decide on the main parts to be analysed in the issue or topic
3. examine the features of each part and how each one affects the issue or topic
4. reach your conclusions about the whole issue or topic based on the role and influence of each part.



It is important to have a clear plan, separate sections for each part of your written analysis, and an overall explanation in your conclusion. You might be asked to analyse a character in a novel or film, the way technology is changing our lives, a famous event in history, the way sport is changing in Australia, or the way a poet or songwriter has communicated their ideas. No matter what the analytical writing task, a clear plan and a clear structure will give you the tools to write a successful analytical response.

Look closely at the following model of a written analysis and examine its structure and language style.

The issue: Analyse the misfiring problem in my car's engine

Analysis steps	Main parts analysed	Writing the analysis
1 Decide the audience and purpose (before you write)	• Audience is the owner of the car • Purpose is to report to the owner details of the problem and why it is happening	
2 Determine parts to be analysed	• The electrical system • The fuel system • The lubrication of key parts in the motor • Not gears or clutch or fan	The electrical system, the fuel system and the lubrication of the motor are the main parts to be analysed to identify the problem before you consider a solution.
3 Examine each part and how it affects the issue	• Electrical leads loose—not good connection • Spark plugs dirty and corroded, causing misfiring in engine	The electrical leads are not a good conductor of electricity in this motor because they are loose and not allowing a good connection. The dirty and corroded spark plugs are definitely one cause of the misfiring in this engine, but there are others.
	• Dirt in fuel tank, fuel line partly blocked, so spark plugs fire badly	The fuel system also has two problems adding to the misfiring issue. Firstly, the tank is dirty and so is contaminating the fuel going to the spark plugs. Secondly, the fuel lines are partly blocked so there is not enough fuel getting to the spark plugs. Both these problems are adding to the misfiring issue.
	• Lubrication working smoothly—no problem to engine	The lubrication of the motor is operating smoothly. The moving parts in the engine are not in danger from wear and tear due to overheating or metal-to-metal wear. This part of the engine is not contributing to the poor running of the motor.
4 Make conclusions based on all the parts to show understanding of the issue	• more than one part affecting engine running • electrical system affecting motor—especially spark plugs and loose leads • dirty fuel and blocked lines adding to problem • lubrication not part of issue	This motor misfires due to a combination of problems. Both the dirty spark plugs and loose electrical leads are contributing to bad engine performance. In addition, the dirty fuel tank and blocked fuel lines are adding to the misfiring problem, but the lubrication is not a factor in this engine's performance. Therefore, the electrical and fuel problems must be fixed to solve the misfiring problem in this engine and prevent it from getting worse.



How to analyse

There are three key steps to writing a successful analysis.

1 Brainstorm the issue or topic.
- Write down all the parts of the topic that need to be analysed.
- Look for connections between them and write notes and points to link them.
- Write questions about each part you need to research and answer.
- Highlight key points and ideas using highlighters, arrows and circles.

2 Create an analysis plan.
- Turn each part of the topic into a separate section for your analysis.
- Gather your research and ideas into dot points under each section heading.

- Include key evidence and quotations to support your analysis in each section.
- Make brief notes of your conclusions and your reasons for them.

3 Write your analysis response.
- Have a clear structure for your writing—introduction (introduce topic, explain key words, identify key parts), body paragraph for each section, and conclusion.
- Consider audience and purpose in deciding on the language to use and the form to write in.
- Use linking words, emphasis words, evidence words and conclusion words in each section and conclusion.
- Craft your overall conclusion to show your understanding of the topic and your explanations about each part of the topic.
- Edit and proofread your written analysis to polish your writing for the greatest impact on your audience—check sentence structures, spelling, word choices and punctuation.

Breakaway tasks 14

Remembering

1 What are you being asked to do when you analyse an issue or topic?

2 What are four key tasks to consider when preparing to write an analysis?

Understanding

3 Why is it important to have a clear plan or model when writing an analysis?

Applying

4 You have been asked to analyse the role of the police in Australia today. But of course you won't just describe the role of the police force in your analysis. In analysing this topic, you should break down the police force's roles into separate parts, for example managing traffic on roads, investigating crimes, protecting important visitors, managing crowds at major events, investigating terrorist threats, escorting criminals, enforcing laws on the streets, attending emergencies and advising the community.

In about 400 words, analyse how successfully these roles (and others you think of) are performed by the police force and present your conclusions.

Explain it to me!

Explanation texts (also called expository texts) allow you to explain what you think or feel about an issue, what you know about a particular topic, or why you believe something happened. When you write an explanation you aim to explain or explore a topic and increase a reader's understanding of and interest in your ideas. These are some of the purposes for written explanations.

When writing an explanation, you also need to consider your audience. Who are you writing your explanation for? This will affect the sort of language you use and your style of writing.

Writing an explanation for a teacher about why a chair broke will require very different language and style compared with writing an explanation for a well-known magazine about why some people mistreat pets. The first will be brief, in story form and use less formal language, while the second will be more developed, explore a number of ideas and examples and use more formal language.

Here is a model for expository writing that focuses on an explanation for a contemporary topic. This will help you when you are planning your own written explanation.

Step 1: Choose your explanation topic, for example why pets are mistreated in the community, how to reduce bullying in schools, why global warming is a problem, or how the human eye works.

Step 2: Make a list of reasons or key points about your topic. For example, on the topic of why pets are mistreated in the community:

- people go on holidays and neglect their pets
- people do not feed their pets the right food
- people do not allow their pets regular exercise
- people keep their pets locked in confined spaces
- people do not take care of their pet's health
- people are too harsh when training or punishing pets
- people abandon a pet when it grows up or becomes sick.

Number the points in the order you want to write about them. Will you use your strongest idea first or leave it to last?

Step 3: Make a paragraph plan like the one below.

- Opening paragraph: introduce the topic, explain what it means, state your views briefly, state which key points you will examine.
- Paragraph 2: Your first set of reasons and explanations for them (with evidence, opinions, examples).
- Paragraph 3: Your next set of reasons and explanations for them (with evidence, opinions, examples).
- Paragraph 4: Your conclusion, summing up your views and main reasons for them.

Step 4: Re-read the draft. Check that the explanations, examples and views are written accurately. Check they make sense and communicate to the audience clearly. Make any changes to expression, words or sentences you need to.

Step 5: Write your explanation in its final, polished format. Read the finished product aloud to check for errors.

What to include in written explanations

The type of information you will want to include in written explanations includes:

- personal and reported experiences
- factual events
- historical viewpoints
- personal opinions
- facts and figures
- recent developments
- observations
- insights and ideas
- expert opinions.

You will also include technical terms when they are needed to support your explanation (for example, when explaining how the eye works you would include terms like 'pupil', 'lens', 'iris' and 'membrane'). Your language style will generally be formal and impersonal in written explanations for schoolwork purposes, but more informal and personal in style in brief explanations for friends or family.

Breakaway tasks 15

Remembering

1 What is an explanation text?

2 When do you often need to write explanations?

Understanding

3 What are three purposes of a written explanation text?

4 Why does the audience for an explanation text affect the way it is written?

Applying

5 Write an explanation text of 300 to 400 words to explain why some people mistreat their pets. Use the guide on the previous page to help you.

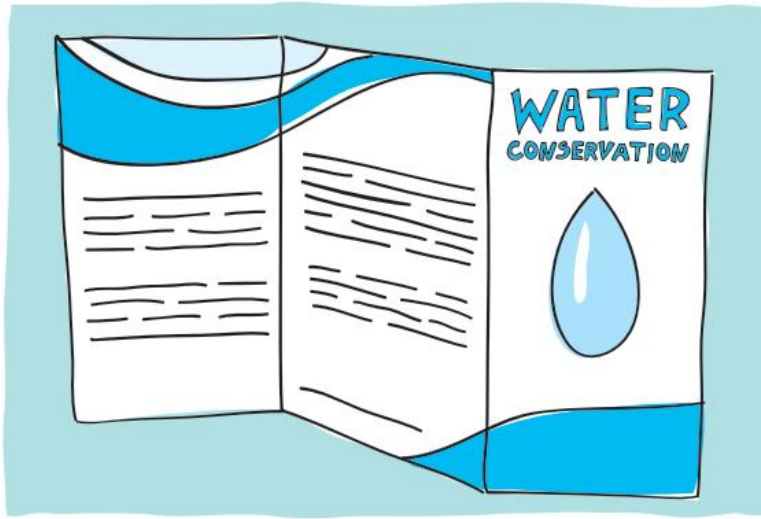
6 With a partner, make a list of five different types of written explanation texts you can expect to find being regularly used in the community, for example a brochure on water restrictions. Be careful not to include instructional texts.

Evaluating

7 Why are explanation texts valuable? Give three or four specific reasons and examples in your answer.

Creating

8 Prepare a written explanation text to explain why people have favourite hobbies and sports. Limit your explanation to about 300 words.



Strands in action

Core tasks

1 Select one very famous event in history, such as the dramatic sinking of the *Titanic*, the volcano disaster in Pompeii, the assassination of President John F. Kennedy or the amazing discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb. Use your internet research skills and school resources to prepare a written analysis of why this event occurred and how important it was. Limit yourself to a written analysis of about 500 to 700 words. Present your analysis of this world-famous event for publication on the internet as a digital story, a slide show presentation or an online analysis. You might include photo and audio information in your analysis.

2 Locate an explanation text about a specific topic that interests you in one of your school textbooks, such as geography, history, science or technology. Select one of about 400 words in length. Copy this explanation into your notebook (or scan the page and annotate electronically) and, using arrows and headings, annotate the text indicating the language features, structure and content that prove this is a written explanation text. Compare your annotated text with other students and then decide which explanations are the most effective, and why.

Extra tasks

1 With a partner, explain your views on the topic of the best and worst about sport in Australia. Plan, prepare, draft and present your written explanation, including your reasons for your views. Make sure that you use the guides in this module to assist your planning and research.

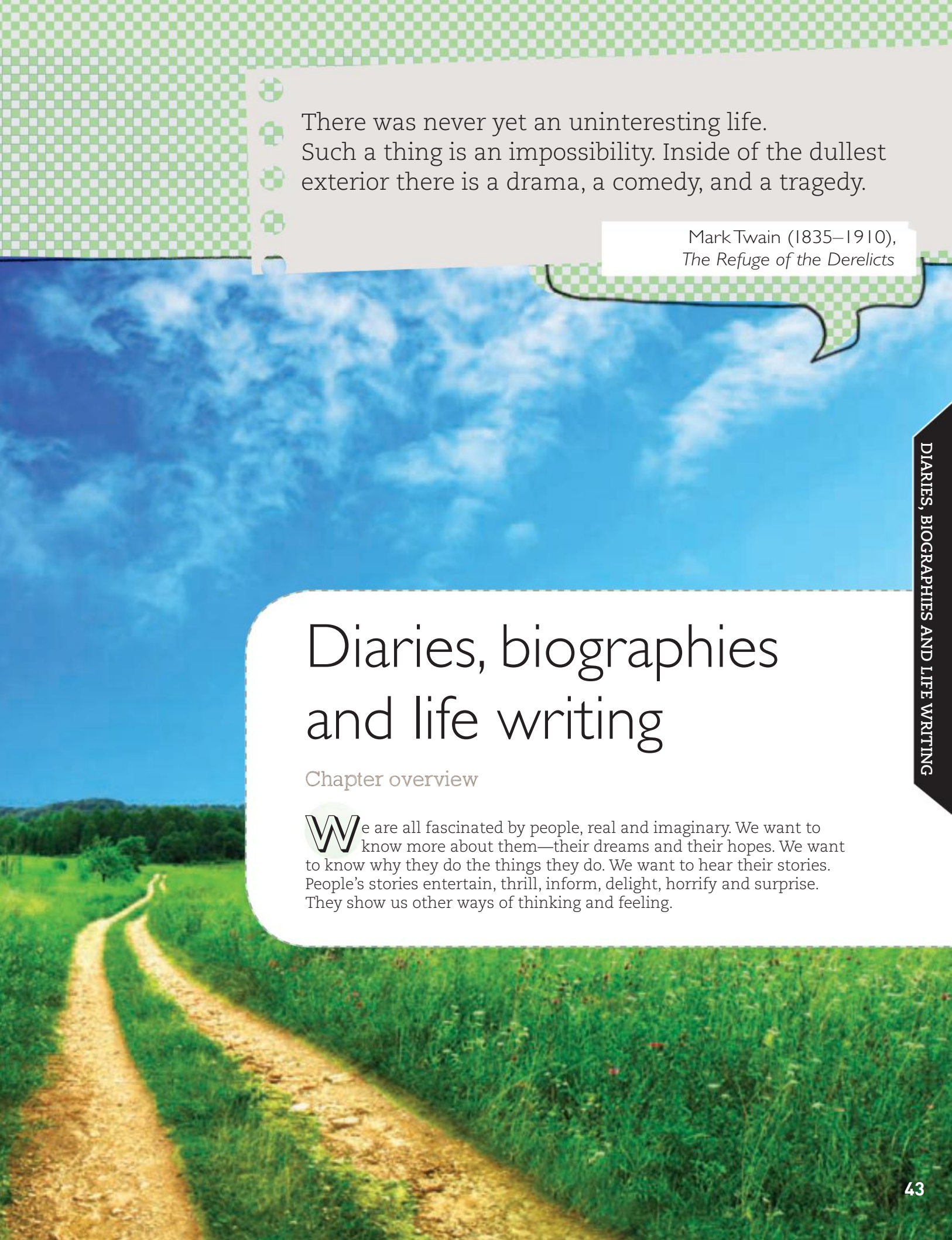
2 In a small group, prepare an analysis of the ways technology controls and influences teenagers' everyday lives. Consider from the moment you wake up, through the events of the day, to the last thing at night. Think about all the activities teenagers take part in every day at home, work and play. Write an analysis of the impact in about 500 words, and use appropriate technology to present your analytical report to the class.

3 In a small group, locate the meaning of each of the following key words. You might have a race to see who finds the definitions. Then you can create a class quiz to match these words and their meanings. They are all key words about writing.

orientation	climax	denouement
resolution	narrative	plot
theme	setting	tone
audience	purpose	autobiography
blog	recount	diary
Netspeak	netiquette	jargon
emoticons	formal language	informal language
metaphor	simile	imagery
personification	alliteration	onomatopoeia
persuade	rhetorical questions	analyse
explanation	tense	adverb

There was never yet an uninteresting life. Such a thing is an impossibility. Inside of the dullest exterior there is a drama, a comedy, and a tragedy.

Mark Twain (1835–1910), *The Refuge of the Derelicts*



Diaries, biographies and life writing

Chapter overview

We are all fascinated by people, real and imaginary. We want to know more about them—their dreams and their hopes. We want to know why they do the things they do. We want to hear their stories. People's stories entertain, thrill, inform, delight, horrify and surprise. They show us other ways of thinking and feeling.

1

Diaries and journals

A diary is a form of writing in which someone regularly notes things that happen in their life. Usually diaries are organised by date. Diaries are written for personal use and often include thoughts, observations and opinions. The audience for a diary is usually the writer of the diary. A journal is almost the same as a diary, but the audience for a journal is often more than just the writer.

Diaries and journals have been written for as long as people have been writing. Early examples are known from ancient Greece, Rome and China. These journals often detailed the daily events in a household—meals eaten, supplies used, cleaning done. Later, Roman diaries began to give accounts of what had happened in battles or expeditions. Ancient Chinese diaries recounted journeys through remote provinces and the ways in which managers organised businesses and government departments.

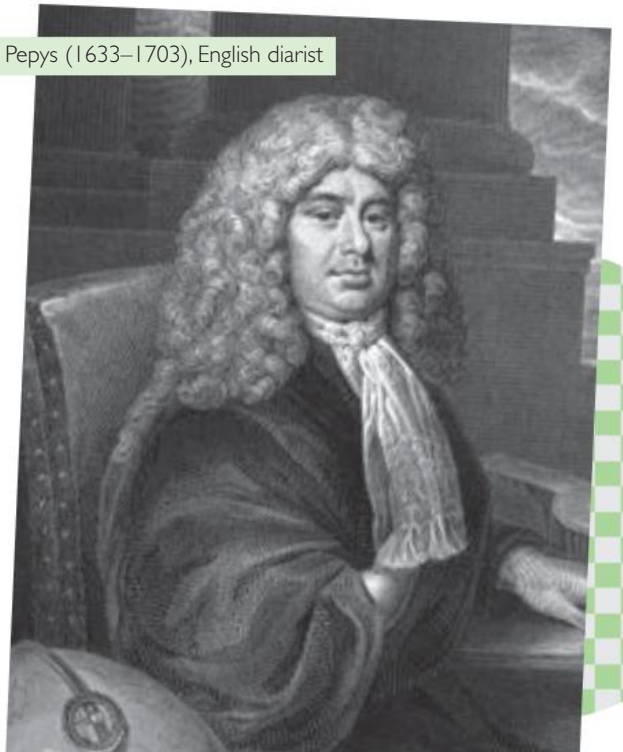
In the English-speaking world, diary writing as a pastime became extremely popular in the seventeenth century. This could have been because people were more educated, or simply because paper had become much cheaper, but people who'd never written diaries before—doctors, merchants, travellers, lawyers, priests, teachers, farmers and workers of all kinds—were suddenly writing all about their daily lives.

Today, diary and journal writing has become more popular than ever, thanks to blogging. Blogs (short for 'web logs') are online diaries or journals in which people share their lives, thoughts and opinions. Blogging software also lets readers comment on blog entries, which makes a blog much more of a two-way communication than a traditional paper diary.

DID YOU KNOW...

The longest diary ever written was by Robert Shields, an American minister and teacher. When he died in 2007, he left behind 37 million words about his life from 1972 until 1997, when he stopped because of a stroke. The notebooks fill ninety-one boxes.

The diary that was kept for the longest period of time was written by Colonel Ernest Loftus of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) from 1896 to 1987—that's ninety-one years!



Samuel Pepys (1633–1703), English diarist

Famous diaries

Probably the most famous English diary from the seventeenth century was written by Samuel Pepys (pronounced 'Peeps'). Pepys was a member of parliament and a government official, and from 1660 to 1669 he kept a detailed diary of his life and business. This diary is a rich source of information about life in England at that time. He wrote about food, clothing, transportation, street life in London and much, much more, including the Great Fire of London (1666) and the Black Death (1664–66).

One of the most famous diaries of the twentieth century is Anne Frank's diary.

DID YOU KNOW...

Go to the web destinations for extracts from Samuel Pepys's diary. The diary provides a fascinating look at how people lived in his time.

Web Destination

The diary of Anne Frank

Anne Frank was a German–Jewish girl who died during the Second World War (1939–45) at the age of sixteen. She and her family were living in Amsterdam in the Netherlands when the German army invaded in 1940. To avoid being caught by the Nazis, Anne and her family hid for two years in secret rooms in an old office building, along with their friends, the van Pels family. This secret hideaway was called 'the Annexe'.

They were eventually discovered and Anne was sent to Belsen concentration camp, where she died. Her father was the only one of their group to survive. He helped to publish a diary that Anne had kept from 1942 to 1944, covering the time of the war. Her diary became extremely popular and has been published in sixty-seven different languages. Before you read the extract, it is important to know the following information.

- Anne addressed many diary entries to 'Kitty', a fictional character from books by Cissy van Marxveldt.
- Margot was Anne's older sister.



Anne Frank

- Mr Kleiman was an employee of Anne's father, one of the few people who knew where the family was hiding.
- Anne used a pseudonym—'van Daan'—for the van Pels family. 'Madame' is Mrs van Daan.
- The events in this extract take place about two months after the Frank family first went into hiding.

When reading this extract, try to work out what sort of person Anne is, based on what she says and how she behaves.

THE DIARY OF A YOUNG GIRL

By Anne Frank

Monday, 21 September 1942

Dearest Kitty,

Today I'll tell you the general news here in the Annexe. A lamp has been mounted above my divan bed so that in the future, when I hear the guns going off, I'll be able to pull a cord and switch on the light. I can't use it at the moment because we're keeping our window open a little, day and night.

The male members of the van Daan contingent have built a very handy wood-stained food safe, with real screens. Up till now this glorious cupboard has been located in Peter's room, but in the interests of fresh air it's been moved to the attic. Where it once stood, there's now a shelf. I advised Peter to put his table underneath the shelf, add a nice rug and hang his own cupboard where the table now stands. That might make his little cubbyhole more comfy, though I certainly wouldn't like to sleep there.

Mrs van Daan is unbearable. I'm continually being scolded for my incessant chatter when I'm upstairs. I simply let the words bounce right off me! Madame now has a new trick up her sleeve: trying to get out of washing the pots and pans. If there's a bit of food left at the bottom of the pan, she leaves it to spoil instead of transferring it to a glass dish. Then in the afternoon when Margot is stuck with cleaning all the pots and pans, Madame exclaims, 'Oh, poor Margot, you have so much work to do!'

Every other week Mr Kleiman brings me a couple of books written for girls my age. I'm enthusiastic about the *Joop ter Heul* series. I've enjoyed all of Cissy van Marxveldt's books very much. I've read *The Zaniest Summer* four times, and the ludicrous situations still make me laugh.

Father and I are currently working on our family tree, and he tells me something about each person as we go along.

I've begun my schoolwork. I'm working hard at French, cramming five irregular verbs into my head every day. But I've forgotten much too much of what I learned in school.

Peter has taken up his English with great reluctance. A few schoolbooks have just arrived, and I brought a large supply of exercise-books, pencils, rubbers and labels from home. Pim (that's our pet name for Father) wants me to help him with his Dutch lessons. I'm perfectly willing to teach him in exchange for his assistance with French and other subjects. But he makes the most unbelievable mistakes!

I sometimes listen to the Dutch broadcasts from London. Prince Bernhard recently announced that Princess Juliana is expecting a baby in January, which I think is wonderful. No one here understands why I take such an interest in the Royal Family.

Source: Anne Frank, *The Diary of a Young Girl*, Doubleday and Company, 1952



Anne Frank's house

Breakaway tasks 1

Remembering

1 Where was the food safe before it was moved to the attic?

2 What is Anne's pet name for her father?

Understanding

3 Why can't Anne use her light at the moment?

4 Why does Anne suggest that Peter 'put his table underneath the shelf, add a nice rug and hang his own cupboard where the table now stands'?

Applying

5 Locate five to ten words that you found difficult to understand in the extract. Use a dictionary to find the meaning of these words. Write the words and their meanings.

6 What five questions would you like to ask Anne Frank?

Analysing

7 What parts of the text show that there is a war going on?

Evaluating

8 List five words to describe how you would feel if you had to live in a confined space with another family for two years.

9 What does Anne think of Peter? How have you come to that conclusion?

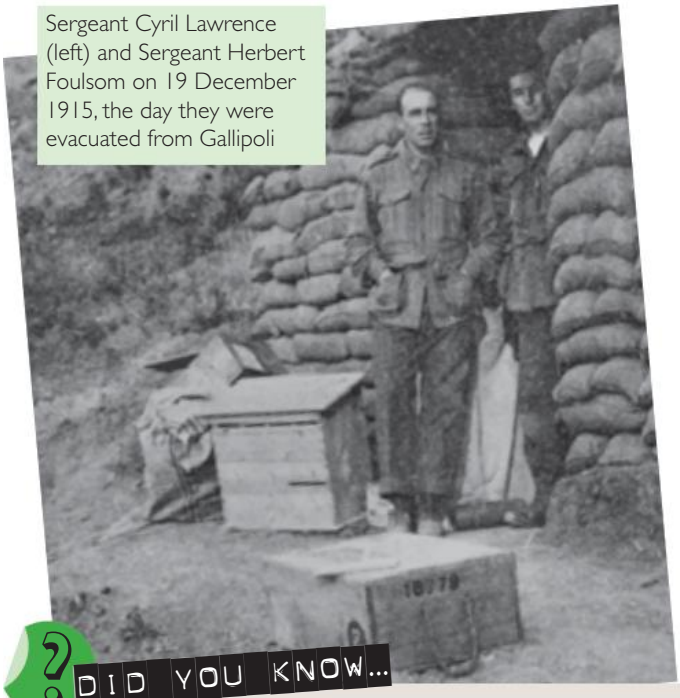
Creating

10 Write a letter from Peter's point of view, to his best friend about these same incidents.

The diary of Sergeant Cyril Lawrence

Sergeant Cyril Lawrence was one of many soldiers at Gallipoli in 1915, during the First World War. He was an engineer, responsible for digging tunnels and trenches to help the ANZAC forces in their battles against the Turks. He survived the horrors of that awful time and went on to serve in the Australian armed forces in the Second World War.

This diary is less personal than Anne Frank's. Cyril Lawrence wrote it as a record of his experiences as a soldier and it was meant to be shared with others, so it is actually more of a journal than a personal diary. He was much older than Anne (he was twenty-five years old) and he was a military man, so the writing style is very different. He was also writing thirty years before Anne Frank, so some of the language is different too.



Sergeant Cyril Lawrence (left) and Sergeant Herbert Foulsom on 19 December 1915, the day they were evacuated from Gallipoli

DID YOU KNOW...

Go to the web destinations to view Cyril Lawrence's diaries. You will also be able to see several other items, such as a bracelet he made for his sister Clarice while he was in Europe. It was made from the remains of a German artillery shell.

Web Destination



Gallipoli, 12 May 1915, looking towards Cape Helles

THE GALLIPOLI DIARY OF SERGEANT LAWRENCE

By Cyril Lawrence

Monday 14 June

Rose at 7.45 a.m. Weather very fine. Not much doing out of the ordinary, only rifle fire and a few shells. One went right through a man's chest whilst he was lying in the hospital wounded and waiting to go on the hospital ship. I was down there for a walk and saw it all. Ugh! Oh I forgot. Yesterday morning two cruisers came along and bombarded Gaba Tepe. The Turks are trying to mount a gun there. Gee, there were just acres of dirt in the air at once. General Walker came into our tunnel tonight and was telling us that when our reinforcements arrive we will have a charge. Golly, that will be the time. I feel quite bloodthirsty.

Tuesday 15 June

Up at 7.15 a.m. Weather still simply glorious. There is a furious bombardment on as I am writing this—shells everywhere. Down the coast there is a monitor firing at 'something' and I can see the earth flying up by the ton. Really these high explosive shells are terrific. Am going to have a little snooze.

Later—Went to work about 3.45 p.m. and found that the Turks had placed eighteen eight-inch shells all around our tunnel mouth. They must have tumbled that it is there. Later as we were having tea two shells passed just over our heads and burst just under the muzzle of Warren's gun. We were watching these when a man came up with a shell—a high explosive one—and asked for a hammer to open it up. I explained what a risk he was taking and gave him a hammer. He started to hammer away right amongst us. We immediately shooed him



A view of Gaba Tepe from Wilson's Lookout, December 1915

off and forgot all about him. By this time shells were bursting everywhere round us and all of a sudden a terrific explosion took place just a few yards from us. A great cloud of dust rose up and we all thought that we were shot, but as it subsided we saw sitting in the middle of it the man with the shell. He was black from head to foot and groaning. Running over, we found that he had blown his leg to pieces up near the thigh. Thank God he got away from us. His mate did the same thing for himself last week. Some of these men will never learn sense. About 11 p.m. tonight a Turk shoved his hand down the air hole in the drive just opposite me. It scared the wits out of us all. We could hear them crawling around above us all night. The men in the firing line evidently shot one, as we could hear him groaning just above us. This morning a sea-plane was about for a long time, evidently on the hunt for submarines. The enemy fired at her a great deal but did no good. This evening we could hear the machine gun or rifle fire from the Allies down at Achi Baba.

Wednesday 16 June

Up about 7.15 a.m. Bread today, also heaps of shrapnel from all sides. Have slept all the morning and am going to have another doze now. Shrapnel is bursting all around us a treat. I wonder what tonight will bring along. Last night was quite exciting. I even forgot that I had the toothache.

Later—not a single thing happened tonight except that we got caught in a perfect Hell of shrapnel on our way to work and had to take shelter under a bank. We did not know that two of our guns were just above us. They both went off at once and nearly blew us down the gully. We bolted from here across an open space to the trenches. Golly! Shells, bullets and dirt flying everywhere. I saw the reserve men being called up, so they evidently expected an attack. Anyhow it never came off.

Source: AWM, PR86/266 Papers of Cyril Oscar Lawrence (1915 diary)

Breakaway tasks 2

Remembering

1 At what time did Sergeant Lawrence get up on 14 June?

2 On which day did Sergeant Lawrence get some bread?

3 On which day did Sergeant Lawrence see a sea-plane?

Understanding

4 Find five words you don't know the meaning of, or you are unsure of. Research the meanings and create a slideshow to present them to the class.

5 With a partner, present a reading of one day from the diary. One person reads the diary entry while the other provides the sound effects.

Applying

6 Draw a picture based on one incident from the diary extract.

7 Create a sign that warns soldiers not to hammer high-explosive shells.

Analysing

8 How 'exciting' was it on the morning of 16 June? How do you know this?

9 Sergeant Lawrence uses language in a different style to the way language would be used in a modern diary. Identify three examples of language that would not be commonly used today. Provide a modern equivalent for each.

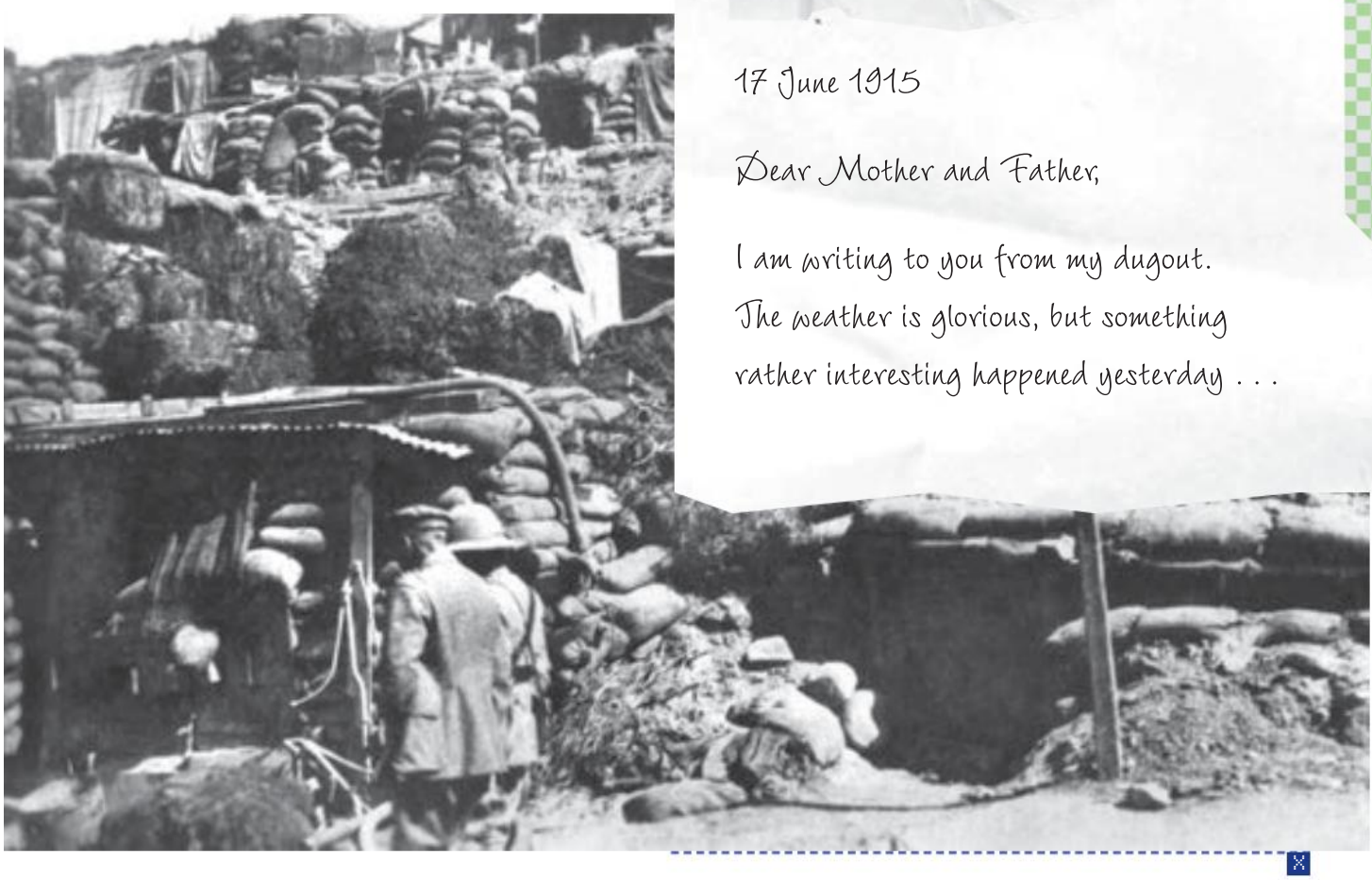
Evaluating

10 What three questions would you like to ask Sergeant Lawrence?

11 What sort of man do you think Sergeant Lawrence was? Why do you think so?

Creating

12 In other parts of the diary, Sergeant Lawrence mentions that he wrote to his family and was always hoping to get a letter back. Imagine that he wrote a letter to them after the events of 16 June. You are his brother or sister—write back to him.



17 June 1915

Dear Mother and Father,

I am writing to you from my dugout. The weather is glorious, but something rather interesting happened yesterday . . .

Zlata's Diary

Zlata Filipovic was an eleven-year-old girl living in Sarajevo in 1992, just as the Bosnian War began. Zlata and her family experienced the effects of the conflict daily, surviving bombing and raids, until they were forced to become refugees and flee to Paris for safety.

Zlata has been called 'the Anne Frank of Sarajevo' because, like Anne, her teenage diary became a record of the war that was going on around her. Zlata was inspired by Anne when she read her diaries because she was 'horrified ... that such suffering and injustice could happen to someone whose words had encouraged me to know and like her ...'

In 2003, Zlata reflected on the power of diaries to 'provide an immediate experience of events before the benefits of hindsight or tricks of memory can distort or influence an account'. One of the reasons that the diaries of people at war are so affecting is that they tell us what it is like to live through such a conflict.

Zlata called her diary 'Mimmy' and wrote as if writing a letter to a friend.

ZLATA'S DIARY

By Zlata Filipovic

Tuesday, 16 June, 1992

Dear Mimmy,

Our windows are broken. All of them except the ones in my room. That's the result of the revolting shells that fell again on Zoka's jewellery shop, across the way from us. I was alone in the house at the time. Mummy and Daddy were down in the yard, getting lunch ready, and I had gone upstairs to set the table. Suddenly I heard a terrible bang and glass breaking. I was terrified and ran towards the hall. That same moment, Mummy and Daddy were at the door. Out of breath, worried, sweating and pale they hugged me and we ran to the cellar, because the shells usually come one after the other. When I realised what had happened, I started to cry and shake. Everybody tried to calm me down, but I was very upset. I barely managed to pull myself together.

We returned to the flat to find the rooms full of glass and the windows broken. We cleared away the glass and put plastic sheeting over the windows. We had had a close shave with that shell and shrapnel. I picked up a piece of shrapnel and the tail end of a grenade, put them in a box and thanked God I had been in the kitchen, because I could have been hit ... HORRIBLE! I don't know how often I've written that word. HORRIBLE. We've had too much horror. The days here are full of horror. Maybe we in Sarajevo could rename the day and call it horror, because that's really what it's like.

Love,

Zlata.

Source: Zlata Filipovic, *Zlata's Diary*, Penguin, 1995

Breakaway tasks 3

Remembering

1 Write a summary of what happens when the bombs go off.

Understanding

2 Find words in the extracts to show that 'normal' life continues even during a war.

Analysing

3 What effect does the repetition of the words 'horrible' and 'horror' have on the reader?

4 How has the war affected Zlata?

5 Why do you think that both Zlata and Anne Frank write their diaries to a fictional friend? What effect do you think this has on the type of words they choose?

Evaluating

6 Why do you think the writing of their diaries was important to both Anne Frank and Zlata Filipovic?

Strands in action

Core tasks

1 Choose a well-known person. It could be:
- a celebrity
- a fictional character
- a historical figure.

2 Research your chosen person. Researching is an important skill that helps you to find useful information quickly and efficiently. Good research also helps you to decide whether or not you can trust the information you find.

DID YOU KNOW...

Go to the web destinations to access websites where you can read the biographies of historical figures from Australia and around the world.

Web Destination

3 Write diary entries for a single week in the life of your chosen person. Pretend they are published. Each diary entry should be long enough to tell your reader about a whole day, from getting up in the morning to going to bed at night. Aim to make the diary entries interesting and informative.

Include:
- descriptions of things you do in the day
- your thoughts and feelings about what you do in the day
- some snippets of conversation you have with other people
- the highlights of each day
- the low points of each day.

Avoid:
- using a set format for every diary entry ('got up, had breakfast, went shopping, came home, went to bed').

Extra tasks

1 Design the covers (front and back) of your best-selling diary. Include a title, a photo or an illustration (you can cut up a magazine) and the back cover blurb.

2 Write down the soundtrack/playlist for this week in the life of your famous person or character. What music would they listen to?

3 Create a graph of the amount of time your famous person or character spends on various tasks, for example shopping, practising a particular skill, sleeping, looking in the mirror, etc. Remember, there are only twenty-four hours in a day!

4 Imagine that your famous person or character is doing their best to publicise the new book. In pairs, perform an interview with the subject on a high-rating TV show.

Include:
- an introduction to the TV show
- an introduction to your guest
- a conclusion, in which you thank the guest and give the audience some idea of what is on next week's show.

5 In pairs, make a list of twenty questions and answers for a quiz about your diary. Aim for questions that are quirky and interesting. Then run a mock TV show for your class called 'Brain Power', with one of you as the quiz master and the other as a contestant whose special subject is the person featured in your diary.

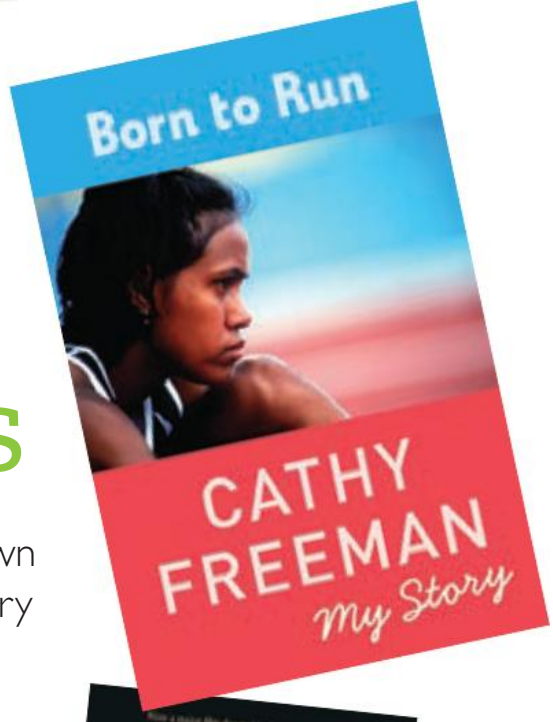
Writer's TOOLBOX

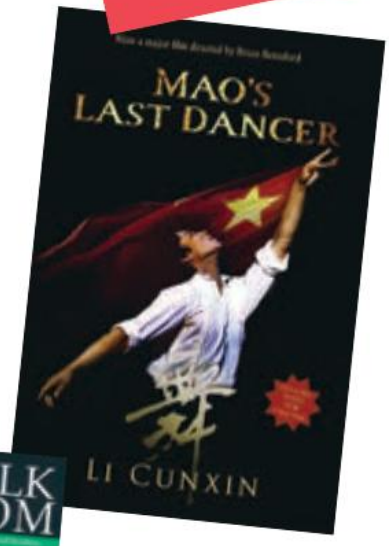
Blurbs

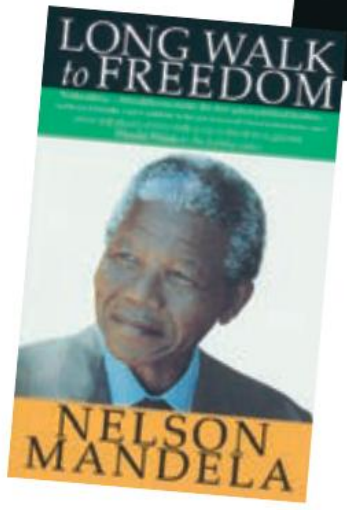
A **blurb** is a short description of a book. On paperback books the blurb is usually on the back cover, and on hardback books the blurb is usually on the inside front jacket flap. The purpose of a blurb is to let the reader know what the book is about and to make them want to read it. The blurb needs to make the book sound more interesting than all the other books a person might be looking at.

2

Autobiographies







When a person writes the story of his or her own life, the result is an autobiography. While a diary or journal is usually written very close to the time of the events it describes, an autobiography is usually written some time after. Many famous people have written autobiographies, including sportspeople, politicians, religious leaders, actors and soldiers.

Some autobiographies are simple accounts of the writer's life—places they travelled to or people they met. Others are more thoughtful, exploring personal and political issues or questions of social importance. For example, the Italian sculptor Benvenuto Cellini wrote an autobiography in the 1550s. In it he tells about his life, but also discusses his theories about art and what it means to humanity.

Toward the end of his life in 1882, Charles Darwin wrote an autobiography in which he described his childhood and family life, but also discussed how he came up with his revolutionary theory of evolution and natural selection.

Nelson Mandela called his autobiography *Long Walk to Freedom* (1995) because it detailed his struggle with the government of South Africa and his twenty-seven years of imprisonment before being freed and helping to free his people.

DID YOU KNOW...

The word 'autobiography' comes from three ancient Greek words: *auto* meaning 'self', *bios* meaning 'life' and *graphein* meaning 'to write'. So 'autobiography' can roughly translate as 'self-life writing'.

DID YOU KNOW...

The Boke of Margery Kempe is the oldest known autobiography in English. It was written in the 1430s and it provides details of the life of a middle-class woman in the Middle Ages.



Morris Gleitzman

Morris Gleitzman

Morris Gleitzman is one of Australia's best-selling authors for young people. He has written over thirty-two books, including *Once*, *Boy Overboard*, *Two Weeks with the Queen* and *Toad Rage*. He was born in England in 1953 and he has been, among other things, a Santa in a department store and a frozen chicken defroster. His first book was *The Other Facts of Life*, published in 1985.

In the extract *About Morris*, Morris Gleitzman does more than just list the things that have happened in his life.

ABOUT MORRIS

By Morris Gleitzman

I can't remember much of my childhood. Just the best bits (books, corned beef and scoring goals) and the worst bits (sties, rhubarb and a stiff hamster). And the birthday morning I ran joyfully into the living room, tripped over my presents and sprained my elbow.

The rest is blank pages. Family records (Mum's photo albums) tell me I was born in 1953 in Sleaford, Lincolnshire, England, and that we moved south when I was two. Later photos show I grew up normally with my younger brother and sister in the suburbs of London. Though one snap of me with a manic grin and a tea cosy on my head suggests that at some point I may have been kidnapped by alien spacecraft and experienced over-excitement and memory loss.

I read every book I could get my hands on. Classics, westerns, Enid Blyton, soccer star biographies, Richmal Crompton's 'William' series (my favourites) and recipe books (particularly the corned beef sections).

Then, in 1969, we emigrated to Australia. It was a big change. The heat, the flies and the completely different tinned meats. The shock was so great I stopped reading books for nearly a year. When I started again I found I wanted to write as well.

I also wanted to eat, so I did a course called Professional Writing. By the time I graduated I knew how to write everything from journalism to the jokes on the back of cornflakes packets. What I didn't know was how to write my own stories.

That came much later. Ten years later. Eighty million comedy scripts for TV later. When, slowly, I began to write a script that was quite different. A drama about a boy called Ben who sees the world differently to his family and friends and nearly drives them all bonkers.

While the film was being made, a publisher gave me the chance to convert the script into a book. I was terrified. What did I know about writing a book? But I cared too much about Ben to chicken out so I gave it a go and *The Other Facts of Life* was the result.

People seemed to like it. I certainly liked writing it. I discovered you can get closer to a character's thoughts and feelings in a book than in a film. I also discovered that, even though I couldn't remember much about my childhood, Ben's thoughts and feelings felt like they were also mine. I'd never, I was almost certain, shaved my head or chained myself to a tennis net or tried to set two thousand chickens free, but I knew exactly how Ben felt doing those things.

That's when I fell in love with writing books. Since then I've written another twenty-seven. And I've discovered that, for me, telling stories involves filling blank pages in more ways than one.

Source: Morris Gleitzman, 'About Morris', Morris Gleitzman website



Migrants arriving in Australia by ship in the 1950s.

Breakaway tasks 4

Remembering

1 When and where was Morris Gleitzman born?

2 What are the best bits that Morris Gleitzman remembers from his childhood?

3 What are the worst bits that Morris Gleitzman remembers from his childhood?

Applying

4 Design the front cover for an autobiography of Morris Gleitzman and call it *About Me*. In your cover image, include as many details from the article as you can.

5 Richmal Crompton's 'William' series were Morris Gleitzman's favourite books during childhood. What was your favourite book or book series from primary school? Why?

6 In fifty words or less, write a paragraph titled 'About me'. It should cover all of the important people and events in your life.

Analysing

7 Write down the verbs that appear in the following sentences taken from Morris Gleitzman's autobiography.

a 'I can't remember much of my childhood.'

b 'And the birthday morning I ran joyfully into the living room, tripped over my presents and sprained my elbow.'

c 'The rest is blank pages.'

d 'Later photos show I grew up normally with my younger brother and sister in the suburbs of London.'

e 'I read every book I could get my hands on.'

f 'Then, in 1969, we emigrated to Australia.'

g 'It was a big change.'

h 'That came much later.'

i 'I was terrified.'

j 'Since then I've written another twenty-seven.'



Verbs

Verbs are often called 'doing words', but that's only part of the story. Verbs can tell us what someone or something does, but they can also link to someone or something's state of being, or they can even help other verbs. For example:

Roscoe jumps.

Here, the word 'jumps' is a verb that indicates what Roscoe is doing.

Roscoe is very tall.

Here, the word 'is' is a verb that links to Roscoe's state of being—his tallness.

Roscoe has tripped on the fish.

Here, the verb 'has' is helping another verb, 'tripped'.

Evaluating

8 What do you think were the three most important things in Morris Gleitzman's childhood?

9 If you had to illustrate Morris Gleitzman's autobiography, what three things would you draw, paint or create?

Creating

10 Morris Gleitzman writes about moving from England to Australia. The differences—and his reaction to them—make for interesting writing.

Choose a place from the left-hand column in the table below and one from the right-hand column. Imagine you've had to move from one place to the other. Write a piece that includes:

- how you moved from one place to the other
- why you moved
- the favourite things you had to leave behind
- the things you were glad to leave behind
- the good things you discovered in the new place
- the not-so-good things you discovered about the new place
- a final paragraph that describes how you feel now about the old place and the new place.

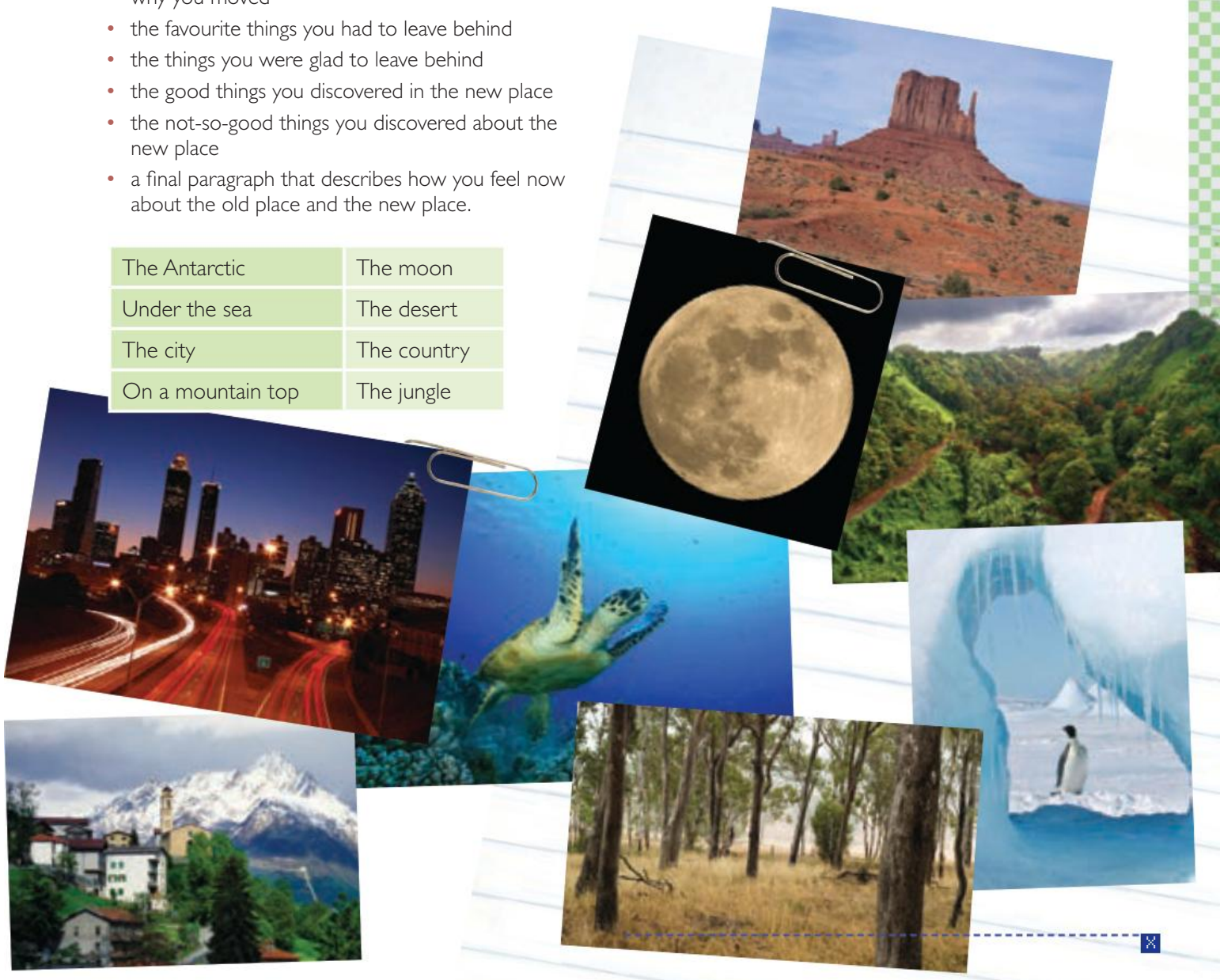
The Antarctic	The moon
Under the sea	The desert
The city	The country
On a mountain top	The jungle

If you get stuck, look at Morris Gleitzman's autobiography (especially the first half). Note how he does it. He:

- mentions the best bits of his old home
- mentions the worst bits about his old home
- tells his own life story—he uses 'I', 'me' and 'my' all the time
- shows us how shocked he was by change. He doesn't just say he was shocked—he notes how it stopped him from reading for a year. That's how shocked he was!

11 Present your story, together with the stories from the other members of your class, in one of these ways:

- printed and bound together as a book
- as a website
- as a blog
- as a series of posters.



David Beckham

David Beckham is one of the most famous sportspeople in the world. He began his soccer career playing for Manchester United in Britain at the age of seventeen. Since then he has played for teams in Britain, Spain, Italy and the United States of America. He is so well recognised that his image has been used to sell soft drinks, computers and designer clothing. This is an extract from his autobiography.



David Beckham

MY SIDE

By David Beckham

'Mrs Beckham? Can David come and have a game in the park?'

I spent a lot of time in Chase Lane Park. If I wasn't there with the bigger boys like Alan Smith, who lived two doors away on our road, I'd be there with my dad. We'd started by kicking a ball about in the back garden but I was murdering the flowerbeds so, after he got in from his job as a heating engineer, we'd go to the park together and just practise and practise for hours on end. All the strengths in my game are the ones Dad taught me in the park 20 years ago: we'd work on touch and striking the ball properly until it was too dark to see. He'd kick the ball up in the air as high as he could and get me to control it. Then it would be knocking it in with each foot, making sure I was doing it right. It was great, even if he did drive me mad sometimes. 'Why can't you just go in goal and let me take shots at you?' I'd be thinking. I suppose you could say he was pushing me along. You'd also have to say, though, that it was all I wanted to do and I was lucky Dad was so willing to do it with me.

My dad, Ted, played himself for a local team called Kingfisher in the Forest and District League, and I would go along with my mum Sandra, my older sister Lynne and baby Joanne to watch him play. He was a centre-forward; Mark Hughes, but rougher. He had trials for Leyton Orient and played semi-professional for a couple of years at Finchley Wingate. Dad was a good player, although he always used to get caught offside. It took me a long time to understand how that rule worked and I'm not sure Dad ever really got it sorted out. I loved watching him. I loved everything that went with the game, and I could tell how much playing meant to him as well. When he told me he was going to pack in playing regularly himself so he could concentrate on coaching me—I must have been eight or nine at the time—I knew exactly what that sacrifice meant even though he never talked about it in that way.

From the time I was seven, Dad was taking me to training with Kingfisher on midweek evenings down at a place called Wadham Lodge, just round the North Circular Road from us. I've got great memories of those nights, not just being with Dad and his mates, but of the ground itself. It was about ten minutes from the house in the car. We'd drive down this long street of terraced houses and pull in through a set of big, blue wooden gates, past the first car park and onto

the second car park, which was right next to the training ground. The pitch was orange-coloured gravel and cinder, with proper goalposts and nets, and there was a little bar, the social club, that overlooked it. Beyond that pitch, there were three or four others, including the best one which was reserved for cup games and special occasions. It had a little wall all around it and two dugouts. It seemed like a massive stadium to me at the time. I dreamt about playing on that pitch one day.

Wadham Lodge wasn't very well looked after back then. I remember the changing rooms were pure Sunday League: mud on the floor, really dingy lighting and the water dribbling out of cold showers. Then there was the smell of the liniment that players used to rub on their legs. It would hit you as soon as you walked in. There were floodlights—just six lamps on top of poles—but at least once every session they'd go out and somebody would have to run in and put coins in a meter that was in a cupboard just inside the changing room door.

As well as training with Kingfisher during the football season, we'd be back at Wadham Lodge in the summer holidays. Dad used to run, and also play for, a team in the summer league, so I'd come to games with him. We'd practise together before and after and then, while his match was taking place on the big pitch, I'd find some other boys to play with on the cinder next door. I've had most of my professional career at clubs with the best facilities and where everything's taken care of, but I'm glad I had the experience of a place like Wadham Lodge when I was a boy. I mean, if I'd not been there with my dad, I might have grown up never knowing about Soap on a Rope. More to the point, it was where I started taking free-kicks. After everybody else had finished and was in the social club, I'd stand on the edge of the penalty area and chip a dead ball towards goal. Every time I hit the bar was worth 50p extra pocket money from my dad that week. And, just as important, a pat on the back.

Source: David Beckham, *David Beckham: My Side*, HarperCollins, 2004



Adjectives

Adjectives are often called 'describing words', and for good reason. An adjective does just that—it describes something or someone, or it gives information about them. Adjectives usually work with nouns. Adding an adjective can help a reader or listener understand more about what you're writing or saying. For example:

Boutros owned a nervous penguin.

Here, the word 'nervous' is an adjective that gives some extra information about the penguin.

Angela saw four rockets.

Here, the word 'four' is an adjective that gives some extra information about the rockets. There wasn't one rocket, there were four.

Kurt wanted a big orange hat.

Here, the words 'big' and 'orange' are adjectives that give some extra information about the hat. Note how you can have more than one adjective working to give details about the noun.

Golda is intelligent.

Here, the word 'intelligent' is an adjective that gives some extra information about Golda. Note that the adjective here has come after the noun.



Research

One reason to read biographies or autobiographies is to learn about other people and other times. This extract is part of a longer book that was written by David Beckham with the help of Tom Watt, a sports journalist and broadcaster. David Beckham and Tom Watt don't explain everything. They take it for granted that the reader will understand. But some things that are familiar to them might be a puzzle to readers in other countries.

Sometimes you need to do some background work to understand the details that are mentioned in a text. This research helps to give you a fuller appreciation of the text, and can be done using a library or the internet.



Breakaway tasks 5

Remembering

1 How much money did David Beckham get from his father whenever he 'hit the bar'?

2 How old was David Beckham when his father started taking him to training with Kingfisher?

Understanding

3 Why did somebody 'have to run in and put coins in a meter' at training?

4 Why did David Beckham's father 'kick the ball up in the air as high as he could'?

Applying

5 Get a soccer ball and see how easy it is to hit the crossbar from the edge of the penalty area.

Analysing

6 Write down the adjectives that appear in these sentences from *David Beckham: My Side*. Be careful—some have more than one adjective.

- a I was lucky Dad was so willing to do it with me.
- b Dad was a good player.
- c We'd drive down this long street of terraced houses and pull in through a set of big, blue wooden gates, past the first car park and onto the second car park, which was right next to the training ground.
- d The pitch was orange-coloured gravel and cinder.
- e It seemed like a massive stadium to me at the time.
- f It had a little wall all around it and two dugouts.
- g Mud on the floor, really dingy lighting and the water dribbling out of cold showers.
- h I've had most of my professional career at clubs with the best facilities.

7 Read the Writer's toolbox about research on the previous page, then research the following topics. Find out at least three things about each.

- a the offside rule
- b Leyton Orient
- c Mark Hughes
- d Sunday league football

8 Now re-read the *David Beckham: My Side* extract. How has the research helped your understanding of the extract?

Evaluating

9 Compare the extract from David Beckham's autobiography with the diary extracts from Anne Frank, Cyril Lawrence and Zlata Filipovic. From which do you learn the most? How are they different? Choose five words to describe each one. You cannot use the same word twice.

Creating

10 Create a step-by-step guide to taking a penalty kick. It can be funny or serious. Use the model below as a guide.

Step 1: Place the ball on the penalty mark.

Step 2: Make sure the ball is steady. It should not be moving in any way.

Step 3: Check the area for lions, bears or other dangerous animals.

Step 4: See if you recognise the goalie. If you do, and you know that the goalie has a secret fear, make sure to take advantage of it. For example, if the goalie is afraid of snakes, throw a snake at him or her before you take your penalty kick.

And so on.

Persepolis—an autobiographical graphic novel

Persepolis is a graphic novel—a form of text that combines words and pictures. For centuries, illustrations have been drawn with words floating out of the mouths of people to show speech. In the nineteenth century, creators began to draw sequences of these illustrations to tell a story. This was the birth of what we call 'comics', which then grew into graphic novels. Graphic novels are long comics.

Persepolis was originally published in France in 2000. It was written and illustrated by Marjane Satrapi and has been made into an animated film. It details Marjane Satrapi's childhood in Iran during the 1980s.

DID YOU KNOW...

'Shah' was the name for the ruler of Iran. The last Shah was removed in the Iranian Revolution of 1979.

PERSEPOLIS

DID YOU KNOW...

Persepolis was the capital of the ancient land of Persia. Today, that region is called Iran.



Source: Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis*, Pantheon, 2004

Breakaway tasks 6

Remembering

1 What was Marjane's surprise?

2 Who took everything that Marjane's grandmother owned?

Understanding

3 Why did Marjane's grandmother pretend to cook?

4 What do the two heads in the title box represent? (Hint: Do some quick research on ancient Persia.)

Applying

5 A common mistake when creating a graphic novel is to try to pack in too many words. What is the average number of words in the speech balloons in *Persepolis*?

Analysing

Graphic novels have rules. You probably know these rules, whether you realise it or not. Read each question and choose the correct answer.

6 When you read a conventional graphic novel (not a manga!) you:
- a read from right to left across the page
- b read from left to right across the page.

7 The technical name for each picture box on the page is a:
- a panel
- b picture box
- c doodad.

8 In a graphic novel (or comic), each character's words are in:
- a a box at the top of the picture
- b a speech balloon or speech bubble
- c a jar on the shelf.

9 You read the balloons (if there are more than two) in a panel in the following order:
- a from left to right, then top to bottom
- b from bottom to top, then diagonally
- c from top to bottom, then left to right.

Evaluating

10 Which panel from *Persepolis* do you find most interesting? Why?

Creating

11 Anyone can create a graphic novel. As you saw from the quiz, you know the rules. Can't draw? Don't worry about it—just use stick figures!
- a Take two A4 pages. Divide each page into seven panels as shown in the *Persepolis* example. Draw three rows, with three panels in each of the top two rows and one large panel in the bottom row.
- b Think of a simple incident that has happened to you.
- c On one of the A4 pages, create a rough version of what happened, using stick figures. Keep the illustrations very simple. Use speech balloons, thought balloons and text panels as needed. You can use the *Persepolis* page as an example. See how Marjane Satrapi puts the speech bubbles in the corners of the panels so as not to obscure the picture too much. Note how she does not crowd too much text into each bubble. Watch how a conversation goes in order from left to right across the panel.
- d Look over your rough version and change it if necessary. Then make a good copy on the second sheet of paper. Don't forget to include a heading and your name.
- e Share your work with the class.
- f Photocopy your graphic novel. Cut up the panels and scan them on a computer. Use multimedia software to record the voices and add narration and background music. Share your stories!



DID YOU KNOW...

When you lay out comic strips, you should write the words, then draw the speech bubbles around them. If you do it the other way around, the bubbles are often the wrong size.

Strands in action

Core task

As you have seen, autobiographies can take different forms. The 'alphabiography' is a way of organising an autobiography around the letters of the alphabet. Each letter prompts you to write about something important from your life. Here is an example of one, for the letter K (knee).

> When I was eight I took my brother's skateboard, but he didn't know about it. I fell over on the footpath and cut my knee on a piece of glass. I had two stitches, but they didn't hurt because I had an injection which did hurt. Whenever I look down and see my tiny scar it reminds me of that day.

Write your own alphabiography using all twenty-six letters of the alphabet. Some letters will be easy, some letters will be hard. The letters could stand for:

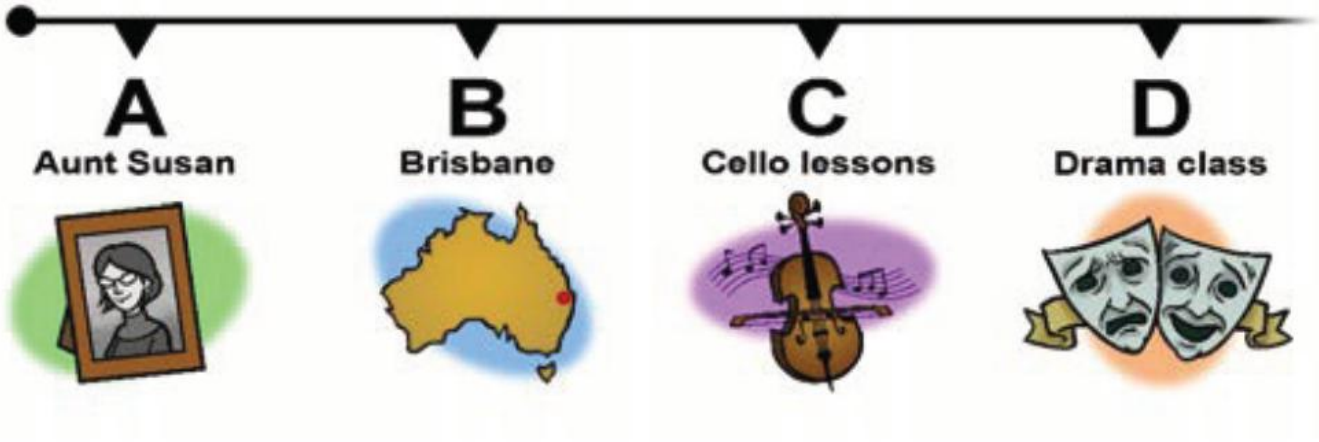
- names of people
- places you've been
- pets
- favourite foods
- things that have happened to you
- books you love
- favourite games
- words that describe you.

Be sure to include why that event or person or thing is important to you.

Extra tasks

1. Turn your alphabiography into a multimodal alphabiography. Use multimedia software to create a slideshow with voice-over narration and music. Use photos from home, voice clips from friends and family, or even video if you have it.
2. Bake a cake that represents one of the entries in your alphabiography.
3. Make your life into a board game. Take a large piece of cardboard and draw a curving path from 'start' to 'finish'. Divide the path into steps and label each step with instructions.
4. In groups of four, present a mock 'This is Your Life' TV show. One person will be the host, one person will be the subject of the show and the other two will be special guests who are brought out to surprise the subject.

   When you've finished one subject, change roles so everyone gets a turn as the subject.
5. Compile a playlist for your alphabiography. Choose twenty-six songs, one for each entry. Then say why you think each song is relevant or appropriate to the entry.



3

Biographies



William Shakespeare

A biography is an account of someone's life. Biographies are a very popular form of writing; library shelves are full of biographies of historical figures, famous celebrities and well-known sportspeople. Some very famous people might have more than one biography written about them at different times. For instance, more than 150 biographies have been written about William Shakespeare!

Writers who write biographies are called 'biographers'. Biographers need to research the life of their subject. If the subject is still alive, the biographer can talk to them. The biographer takes notes or records the interviews. Afterwards, the biographer checks the facts mentioned in the interview, because memory is not always perfect.

The biographer might then interview people who know (or knew) the subject, to get a different view of events. If possible, a biographer reads letters written by the subject because interesting details can sometimes be learnt from correspondence between people.



A basic biography

Oodgeroo Noonuccal was a famous and respected poet, and an important political and cultural leader.

The following extract about Oodgeroo Noonuccal is a basic biography. Its aim is to give an overview of the life of a famous person. It doesn't give all the details, but it does mention the highlights. It's a good starting point, but you'd need to do further research and reading for a comprehensive account of the life of Oodgeroo Noonuccal. When you read this biography you get the facts, but not much more than that.

DID YOU KNOW...

The longest biography ever written is of Winston Churchill, who was the prime minister of Britain during the Second World War (1939–45). The biography is twenty-four volumes in length, and it isn't finished yet! The publishers say there are likely to be at least seven more volumes.



Oodgeroo Noonuccal received international recognition for her poetry.

OODGEROO NOONUCCAL: POET, POLITICAL ACTIVIST AND EDUCATOR

By Alex Barlow and Marji Hill

Oodgeroo is the Aboriginal name of Kath Walker. She was a member of the Noonuccal people, who have lived on Stradbroke Island, near Brisbane, for centuries. Oodgeroo left school at the age of 13 and went to work as a maid. When she was 19 years old, she joined the Australian Women's Army.

By 1958, Oodgeroo was working for the rights of Indigenous people. She became a member of several Indigenous rights organisations, including the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI) and the National Tribal Council. She worked hard to bring about important changes to the Australian Constitution in 1967, allowing Indigenous people the right to be counted as Australian citizens.

First book published

In 1964, Oodgeroo published her first book of poetry, *We Are Going*. The book sold out in three days. It is thought to be the first book written by an Aboriginal woman and the first book of Indigenous literature widely available for non-Indigenous people to read.

Oodgeroo's poems describe her political views and how she felt about Indigenous culture. She expressed concern that her culture was dying and her belief that the future lay in the hands of young people. Her work appeared in many languages and she toured the world giving lectures.

Moongalba

In 1972, Oodgeroo set up an education and cultural centre on Stradbroke Island, to teach children about the culture of Indigenous people. She called the centre Moongalba, and thousands of children visited it.

After her death in 1993, a trust was set up to carry on Oodgeroo's work, with the aim of achieving reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

Fact file

Full name: Oodgeroo Noonuccal (born Kathleen Jean Mary Ruska)
People: Noonuccal, Stradbroke Island, Queensland
Born: 1920, Stradbroke Island
Died: 1993, Stradbroke Island
Occupation: poet, political activist, educator

Achievements

- Books published: *We Are Going*, 1964; *The Dawn Is at Hand*, 1966; *My People*, 1970; *A Kath Walker Collection*, 1970; *Stradbroke Dreamtime*, 1972; *Father Sky and Mother Earth*, 1981
- Member of several Indigenous rights organisations
- She worked to educate Australian school children about Aboriginal culture.

Awards

- Member of the Order of the British Empire, 1970
- Honorary doctorates from four Australian universities.

Source: Alex Barlow and Marji Hill, *Indigenous Heroes and Leaders*, Heinemann, 2003

Breakaway tasks 7

Remembering

1 How old was Oodgeroo Noonuccal when she left school?

2 When did she die?

3 What does FCAATSI stand for?

Understanding

4 In pairs, choose five events from Oodgeroo Noonuccal's biography. Write these on five separate slips of paper. Give the slips of paper to your partner and ask your partner to arrange the slips in the correct order, from earliest to most recent.

5 The subtitle of this extract, Oogeroo Noonuccal: 'Poet, Political Activist and Educator', is like a sneak preview of what is to come. Invent another subtitle that would give the reader a different sneak preview of the information.

Applying

6 List five questions that you would like to ask Oodgeroo Noonuccal.

Analysing

7 Construct a timeline of Oodgeroo Noonuccal's life using as many details from the biography as you can.

Evaluating

8 Which do you think was the most important of Oodgeroo Noonuccal's achievements? Why?

Creating

9 Create an award certificate for Oodgeroo Noonuccal that lists her most important achievements.

Interviewing the subject

When writing a biography of a living person, a biographer might have the opportunity to interview them. This, of course, is extremely helpful, as the biographer can discover many details directly from the person who should know best!

The following extract is a combination of biography and interview with Australian actor Isabel Lucas.

NEWSPAPER

ISABEL RINGS THE CHANGES

By Kylie Northover

From Summer Bay to *Transformers*, it's been a rapid and surprising ascent for Australian actor and environmentalist Isabel Lucas.

It's a long way from the breezy storylines of Summer Bay to the explosive action of Michael Bay, but former *Home and Away* star Isabel Lucas has traversed that distance in just a couple of years.

Logie winner Lucas, 24, has worked on several projects since she left the soapie in 2006, but the much-hyped Bay-directed blockbuster *Transformers—Revenge of the Fallen* is one hell of a Hollywood debut. Then again, she was recommended for the role by none other than Steven Spielberg, after her work for him on the miniseries *The Pacific*, shot in Melbourne and Queensland last year.

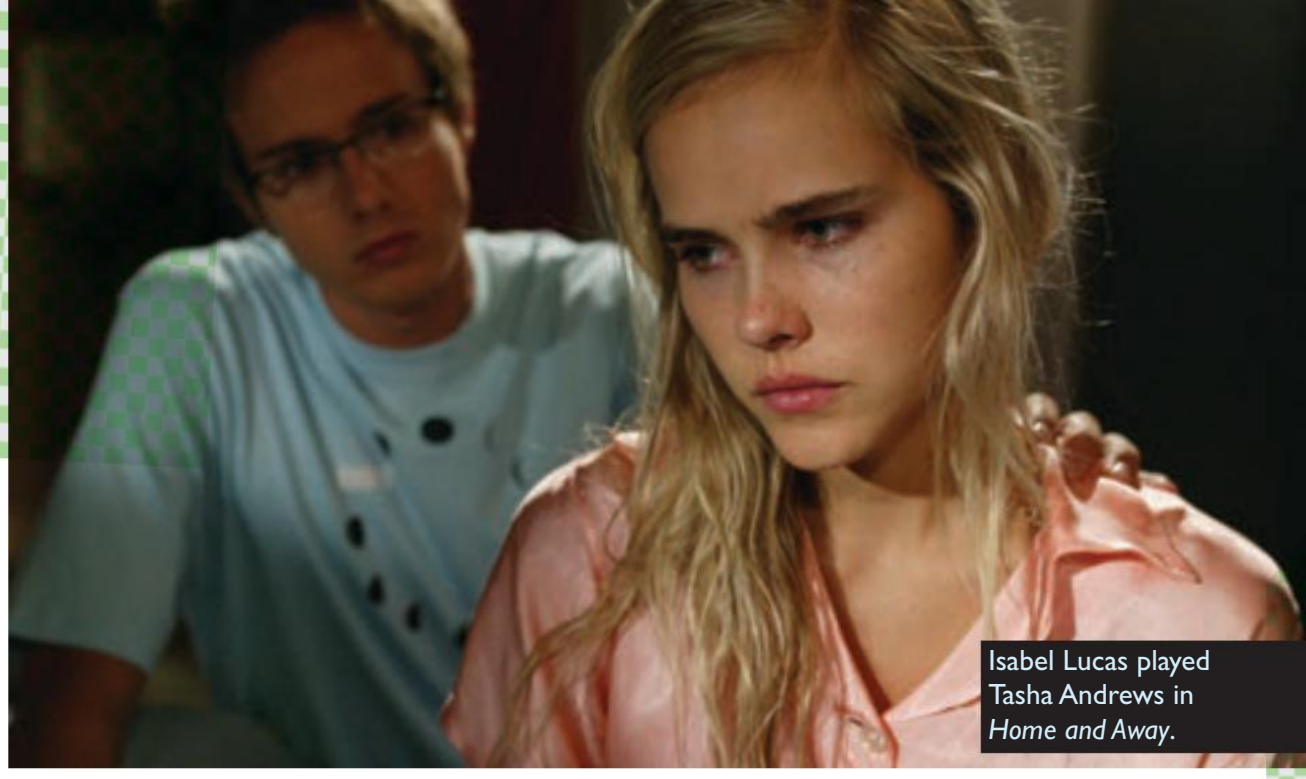
The sequel to the 2007 hit *Transformers* (which was based on the Japanese cartoon, which was based on the line of toys from the 1980s) is an orgy of visual special effects, action and, most importantly, massive explosions.

'We actually set a record for having the biggest explosion to ever be in any film,' says Lucas, in Melbourne to talk up the film ahead of this week's premiere. 'It's just mad.'

Being a little young—and possibly just a little too female—to remember the '80s cartoon series, Lucas wasn't familiar with the franchise, but says she was instantly taken when she watched the first film. 'I was blown away by the CGI, and in this film we've broken new ground again. The technology is revolutionary. Michael is one of the masters of this genre, and a visual genius. He's energetic and passionate and has a very clear vision of what he wants.'

Bay is also, she says, very protective of his storylines, which means we can give little away about Lucas' role. 'He's very supersleuth about that,' she says.

But Lucas is happy to talk about her experience of working with the computer-generated imagery in the film. 'Things had to be done very specifically, everything's very choreographed,' she says. 'There was one scene where Michael had a camera about a centimetre from my face so he could match up the CGI; I had to move my head in very specific ways. I had to have a 3-D digital body scan, and one of my face as well. It was all new to me.'



Isabel Lucas played Tasha Andrews in *Home and Away*.

Lucas' three-year stint as Tasha Andrews on sand-and-surf soapie *Home and Away* was her first acting gig; she was spotted by one of the show's producers in 2004 at a market in Port Douglas, in north Queensland, where she grew up.

After her time in Summer Bay, Lucas moved to Melbourne and enrolled at the Victorian College of the Arts, but scripts started rolling in so she divided her time between acting and activism, most notably with the anti-whaling group Sea Shepherd Conservation Society.

Her post-soapie CV is already impressive. As well as *The Pacific*, Lucas has starred in vampire thriller *Daybreakers* alongside Ethan Hawke and Willem Dafoe, Australian romance *The Waiting City* and US thriller *Girl with a Gun*, co-starring Christopher Walken.

While *Transformers* is her biggest project to date by some distance, Lucas concedes that it might seem at odds with her high-profile environmentalist/hippie image.

'I'm aware of that,' she says with a smile. 'I tried suggesting to Michael that perhaps we could create some hybrid cars in the film, like a Toyota Prius that turns into a Transformer. But he's not really that way inclined.'

The director did learn something from Lucas, though, when he flew her between states in the US on his private jet. 'After a flight I asked him if I could offset it. He was like, "What's offsetting?" He flies everywhere so I explained to him what it meant, and gave him a website to go to where he could learn about offsetting. That would be a move in the right direction.'

Transformers—Revenge of the Fallen had its world premiere in Tokyo, as a nod to the franchise's Japanese roots. That had potential to cause some problem for Lucas, since Japanese police issued a warrant for her arrest in 2007 after she took part in an anti-whaling protest in Wakayama. Lucas and a group of 30 activists had paddled out on surfboards to try to stop a whale hunt. But they were intercepted by a fishing boat and were forced to leave the country immediately to avoid arrest.

'I wasn't worried in Tokyo,' Lucas says. 'I thought any negative repercussions would be unlikely because it would draw so much attention away from the film. But yes, there was a warrant out for my arrest. I believe it was more of a scare tactic, though, to warn us not to come back.'

These days, Lucas lives in Los Angeles. That's another factor that seems at odds with her greenie image, although there are, she says, lots of vegetarian restaurants there. 'I'm kind of in denial about living there, even after a year and a half,' she says.

But her life there is not all industry-related, she says. 'I do get to spend a lot of time in nature in LA. There's a big national park behind where I live and I go on a lot of walks around Malibu Canyon.'

A nice balance, then, to starring in the most explosion-packed film of the year?

'Exactly! If you can seek it out, there are a lot of beautiful places to explore.'

Source: Kylie Northover, 'Isabel rings the changes', *The Age*, 24 June 2009

Breakaway tasks 8

Remembering

1 List three films that Isabel Lucas has appeared in.

2 Where does Isabel Lucas live now?

Understanding

3 Why did Isabel Lucas have to have a 3-D digital body scan?

4 Why did Isabel Lucas have to leave Japan in 2007?

Applying

5 Using the details about Isabel Lucas that are given in the article, draw a flow chart of her career.

Analysing

6 On a map of the world, draw Isabel Lucas's journey from the town where she grew up to her current home.

Evaluating

7 List each of Isabel Lucas's achievements in order, according to what you think are most important to least important. Compare your list with that of another student.

Creating

8 Imagine you were writing Isabel Lucas's biography. Create three possible titles for it, with subtitles.

Writing a radio script

A script for a radio show requires a special format. You will need to understand these conventions in order to complete the tasks on the opposite page. Here's how to set it out.

- Centre the title of the script at the top of the page.
- Give the name of the speaker in full to make sure each actor knows who is who.
- Use capital letters for the names of speakers to make them stand out.
- Number each part to make sure the running order is clear. This can be important for timing, and if there is more than one person speaking at once.
- Include music and sound effects in brackets.

RADIO SCRIPT

BORN TO DARE

[*Fade in music, three seconds. Grand, dramatic, lots of trumpets*]

1 ANNOUNCER 1: In a world where no one is king, one person dares to dream a dream.

2 WALTERS: [*sounds of cheering in background*] I don't know if I can do it, Coach.

3 COACH: [*more cheering in background*] If you can't, Walters, no one can. When things look bad, you have to look at yourself. And I don't mean just glancing sidelong, I mean a full-on eye-to-eye, no flinching stare-out. It's you, Walters! [*Cheering goes wild.*]

4 ANNOUNCER 1: If you see one movie this year, make it *Born to Dare*.

5 COACH: [*over the noise of a siren*] Walters! Walters! Oh no, what have I done?

6 ANNOUNCER 1: [*drumbeat music, marching*] Courage, drama, danger, hardship. A movie not for our time, but for all time. *Born to Dare* stars Sam Arbus as Walters, Julian Orville as the Coach, and, in his big screen debut, Shane Warne as the Chairman. *Born to Dare*—it's life, but life made real. [*Triumphant music swells to a fade.*]

7 ANNOUNCER 2: [*fast*] *Born to Dare* opens all cinemas nationally on December 4.



Strands in action

Biopics

A 'biopic' is a biographical film. It has been a very popular form of film ever since the silent era. The lives of hundreds of famous—and not so famous—people have been depicted in films. Many historical figures, such as Cleopatra, Julius Caesar and Ned Kelly, have had more than one film made about them. Entertainers are also popular subjects of biopics, including Johnny Cash, Bob Dylan and Tina Turner. Sports stars, too, are perfect for biopics, especially when they have overcome difficulties in their lives and ended up champions. Even Phar Lap, a racehorse, has had a biopic made about him!

Core tasks

1 Choose a famous person from history—someone who isn't alive today—as the subject for your biopic.

2 Create a set of documents to convince a film studio to make your biopic. They must include the following items:
- a one-page summary of the real life of your subject so that the studio executives know who you're talking about
- a one-page outline of the biopic from beginning to end, describing each of the main scenes
- a proposed cast list for your biopic showing who you would like to cast in each role
- a table similar to the one below, to make sure the studio executives understand your vision
- a list of similar films.

Character	Actor	The character is like…
King Henry VIII	Harrison Ford	Indiana Jones, but with a different hat
Anne Boleyn	Angelina Jolie	Lara Croft, but not as energetic

Extra tasks

1 Your biopic has now been filmed and has just opened in cinemas. Write a review, commenting on the acting, the script, the music and the special effects. End your review with a rating.

2 In pairs, present an episode of *The Movie Show*—a TV show in which two people discuss and analyse films. One person hates the biopic you created in your core task and the other loves it.

3 Create a merchandising give-away package for your biopic. What sorts of things could go in a bag to give to the lucky people at the premiere of your film?

4 Record a 30-second radio advertisement for your biopic. You must include:
- a catchy title for the film
- a quick summary of the plot (without giving too much away)
- the names of the stars
- the date that it's opening in cinemas.

See the page opposite for information on formatting the script for your advertisement.

5 Create the film poster for your biopic. You must include:
- a big illustration
- the title of the film
- the names of the stars, in order of importance
- a catchy slogan ('The way to win was the only way to lose').

DID YOU KNOW...

Go to the web destinations to read film reviews and see a movie review show online.

Web Destination

4

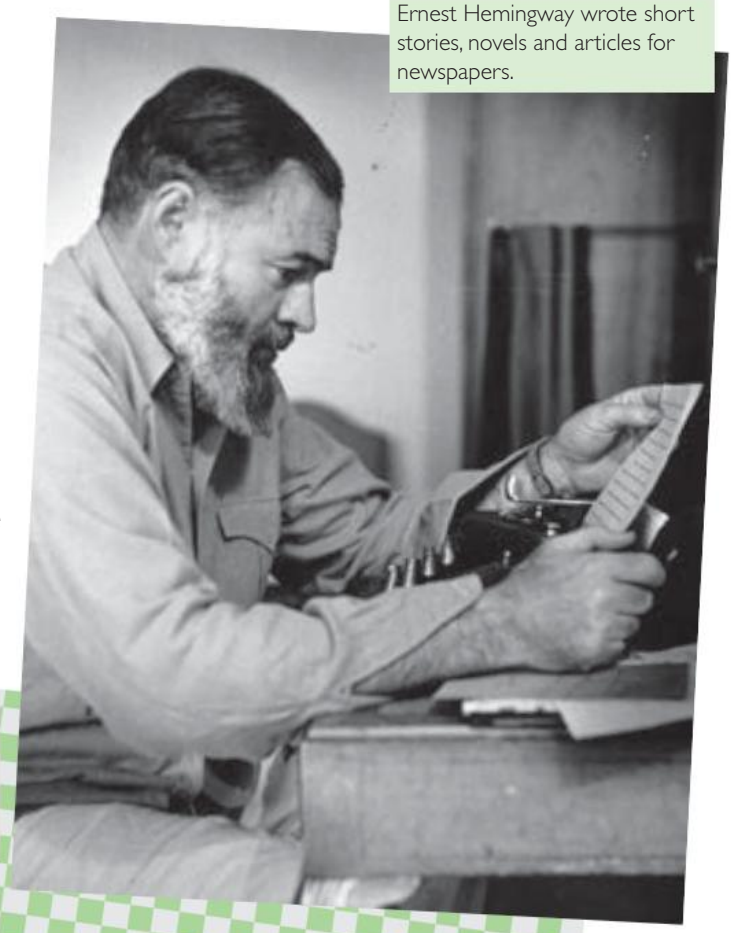
Personal writing



Writing about a particular moment, or incident, in someone's life is a common and popular form of writing. It's like taking a small part from an autobiography and concentrating on it alone. A writer can take a funny approach, a serious approach, a thoughtful approach—there are lots of different options. Some newspaper and online columns feature these regular accounts of everyday events, told in an entertaining way.

A writer might take something memorable, something that has stuck in their mind, and try to share it with their readers. It might be a memorable person—someone who was important in the writer's life. Or it might be a place they'll never forget—somewhere they were happy. Or it might be an incident—something funny, something shocking or simply something the writer hopes will be interesting. A piece of writing can combine many of these things, but if it gets too long it might end up being a full-length book.

Writing about incidents from your own life gives you an advantage, because you are an expert about things that have happened to you. You can include the sort of details that make for interesting, entertaining writing because you can remember them happening.



Ernest Hemingway wrote short stories, novels and articles for newspapers.

DID YOU KNOW...

American writer Ernest Hemingway (1899–1961) wrote a short, short story that was said to be his best ever work: 'For sale: baby shoes, never worn'.



Danny Katz



Danny Katz

Danny Katz writes the *Little Lunch* books. He also appears on radio and writes for the *Good Weekend* magazine in *The Age* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*. He often writes about quirky incidents from his everyday life. In the extract 'Bread', he manages to make an ordinary visit to the bread shop an entertaining piece of writing.

BREAD

By Danny Katz

One of my favourite places in the world is the bread shop; I love going in there and smelling all the fresh bread-smells, and looking at all the pretty loaves on the shelves, and having a taste of the little samples in the free taster plate even though it's always some weird bread thing that I'd never eat in a million years—like yoghurt and gherkin damper, or chicken liver and polenta twist, or snail pastries made out of real snails. Sometimes I wonder if those samples are actually baking accidents: maybe a baker accidentally spilled a bucket of anchovies on a carrot cake, and another baker yelled out 'Don't chuck it out, put it on the taster plate and call it a savoury log.'

Yeah bread shops are wonderful places, until you actually have to buy your bread—then they turn into BRUTAL CHAMBERS OF INTERROGATION. I was in a bread shop yesterday and I said to the lady 'Could I have a white loaf thanks?' and she said 'Seeds or no seeds?' and I didn't know what to say, she caught me off guard, I got all flustered, I mean, seeds are nice, but sometimes they get stuck in your teeth—I once got a caraway seed stuck in my tooth and I had to get it out with a sewing needle. And what kind of seeds does she mean? Mustard seed? Linseed? Birdseed? Finally I made up my mind; I was confident—I said to her 'SEEDS' and she said 'Sliced or not sliced?'

I was starting to sweat; this was a tough question, it had huge philosophical implications, do I want a bread that's a single entity unto itself, or a bread that's merely the sum of its parts? And if they don't slice it, I'll have to slice it myself, and I'm a terrible slicer, my slices always start off fine but they end up as big irregular slabs and I have to force them into the toaster with a hammer, better get them to slice it—so I said to her 'SLICED' and she said 'For toast or sandwich?'

The pressure was too much, I was panicking now, I mean, why do I have to commit to a single type of slice?—what if I wanted to use my bread for both toast AND sandwich, isn't that allowed? C'mon Danny, she's waiting for an answer, think think, OH GOD, I DON'T KNOW, couldn't she cut it for me in alternating slices, one toast, one sandwich? I suppose if I get toast slices, at least if someone wants a sandwich, they can have a toasted sandwich—so I said to her 'TOAST' and that was it, she took my bread away to the slicing machine, HOORAY, MY ORDEAL WAS OVER. I started looking around at all the other customers in the store, beaming with pride because I'd completed my bread exam and passed with honours. I leaned over to the guy standing next to me and whispered 'If she asks about the bread, it's seeds, sliced … and for toast.'

Then the lady came back with my bread but she still wouldn't let me have it; she said 'Carry bag or no carry bag?' and I just grabbed the thing and ran out of there. People who work in bread stores are like knot rolls—they're hard and they're twisted and you want to rip them into pieces.

Source: Danny Katz, *Dork Geek Jew*, Allen & Unwin, 2002

Breakaway tasks 9

Remembering

1 What are the three things Danny Katz would never eat in a million years?

2 How did Danny Katz get a caraway seed out of his teeth?

3 Did Danny Katz want his bread sliced for toast or sandwiches?

Understanding

4 Why did Danny Katz get all flustered?

5 Why did Danny Katz tell the man next to him, 'If she asks about the bread, it's seeds, sliced … and for toast'?

6 Why did Danny Katz run out of the shop at the end?

Applying

7 In what other sort of shops do you think Danny Katz might have trouble?

8 Danny Katz uses a simile right at the end of his story: 'People who work in bread stores are like knot rolls—they're hard and they're twisted and you want to rip them into pieces.'

Read the Writer's toolbox on the page opposite about similes and clichés, then complete these activities.

a Copy the table below into your notebook.

b Add the clichés (the commonly used expressions) in column 2.

c Invent new, fresh similes that you can use instead of the clichés, and write them in column 3.

Analysing

9 Why did Danny Katz put 'BRUTAL CHAMBERS OF INTERROGATION' in capital letters?

10 Read the Writer's toolbox about nouns, then write down the nouns in the following extracts from 'Bread'. Some may have more than one noun.

a 'Don't chuck it out, put it on the taster plate and call it a savoury log.'

b 'Could I have a white loaf thanks?'

c The pressure was too much.

d I said to the lady.

e 'Seeds or no seeds?'

f I had to get it out with a sewing needle.

g They can have a toasted sandwich.

h She took my bread away to the slicing machine.

i I leaned over to the guy standing next to me.

j People who work in bread stores are like knot rolls.

Evaluating

11 Give this story a mark out of ten for humour. (How funny was it?) Explain your mark.

Creating

12 Write a scene to go after the end of this story. What happens when Danny Katz gets home?

Simile	Cliché	New simile
As quiet as a		
As cunning as a		
As slippery as an		
As flat as a		
As busy as a		
As light as a		
As hungry as a		
As cold as		
As slow as a		
As quick as a		



Doug MacLeod

Doug MacLeod

Doug MacLeod is a writer and TV producer. He has written lots of books, including *Sister Madge's Book of Nuns* and *The Clockwork Forest*.

The piece of writing below has some of the elements of personal writing and some of the elements of biography. Doug MacLeod is writing about someone important from his own life—his grandfather.

PAPA

By Doug MacLeod

My grandfather was fiercely proud of his Scottish background, even though he had moved to Australia when he was a very young man. In the fifty or more years he spent in Australia, he never lost his broad Scottish accent, or the ability to speak Gaelic.

We had to take him at his word about the Gaelic. We never heard him speak this curious language with anyone else, only to himself. There weren't many Gaelic speakers in the suburb of Dennis in Melbourne, where my grandfather lived with Grandma, who was from Adelaide. In fact, Grandpa might have been the only Gaelic speaker for hundreds of kilometres around. His neighbours also spoke a second language, but it was Greek.

Writer's TOOLBOX

Similes

A **simile** is a way of making your writing more colourful and more interesting. It's where a writer compares one thing to another, often linking them with the words 'like' or 'as'. Most similes follow these patterns:

- ___ is like ___
- As ___ as a ___.

For example:

He's like a giant.
She's as brave as a lion.

Danny Katz uses a simile at the end of his story: 'People who work in bread stores are like knot rolls.'
But for extra comedy he adds a further explanation: 'they're hard and they're twisted and you want to rip them into pieces'.

Clichés

Many similes are so common and overused that they have become **clichés**. For example:

as dry as a bone
as hard as a rock
as white as snow

Good writers try to avoid clichés. They aim to invent new, interesting similes that will keep readers interested.

Nouns

Nouns are important words. You can't say much—or write much—if you don't use nouns. Being able to spot a noun in a sentence is useful, so you can make sure your sentences make sense.
Nouns are often called 'naming words'. That's because nouns actually identify people or things. They're like labels. If you don't have a label for something, it's really hard to talk about it. For example:

Zillah jumps.

Here, the word 'Zillah' is a noun that identifies a person.

The pumpkin was rolling around on the table.

Here, the word 'pumpkin' is a noun that labels the big orange vegetable. 'Table' is a noun that labels the thing with four legs that the pumpkin is rolling around on.

I rule.

Here, the word 'I' is a noun, indicating the person who thinks that he or she rules.

Not only did Grandpa speak in Gaelic, but he also sang in it. I think this irritated Grandma, which might be why he did it so often. You see, my grandfather was a bit of a ratbag. It was a word he would happily use to describe himself.

Mum and Dad called him 'the boss'. A lot of people did, even Grandma. My sisters and I called him 'Papa', and we adored him. He was short and stocky, with very bright grey-green eyes and white wispy hair. He laughed at the most curious things, which would make us children laugh, too. He was very fond of this riddle:

Q. What's the difference between a duck?

A. One of its legs is both the same.

It was a stupid riddle that made no sense. And yet Papa couldn't tell it without giggling. Grandma would roll her eyes, pretending to be annoyed. My parents were convinced that this was a riddle someone had told the boss, but that he'd heard it incorrectly. It became my favourite riddle, and years later I even used it in a book to represent the sort of riddle that a mad robot might find amusing. After the book was published I was surprised to find out that other people knew this riddle, too. It really was a proper riddle, not something silly that Papa had made up. One reader told me there was another 'duck' riddle that went like this:

Q. Why is a duck with a tin lip?

A. Because the higher they fly the fewer.

I wish that Papa had been alive when I learned that because I know he would have enjoyed it.

Source: Doug MacLeod, *When We Were Young*, Viking, 2007





Breakaway tasks 10

Remembering

1 Where did Doug MacLeod's grandfather live?

2 How long did Doug MacLeod's grandfather live in Australia?

Understanding

3 When Doug MacLeod's grandfather sang in Gaelic, it irritated Grandma, but he kept doing it. Why?

4 Why do you think many people called Doug MacLeod's grandfather 'the boss'?

Applying

5 Go to the web destinations to find a web-translating service, then translate the following phrases into Scottish Gaelic.

Web Destination

a What a party!

b Good morning.

c I want a cup of coffee.

d I like writing.

e What's your name?

f Where do you live?

g I live in Australia.

h Where are you going?

i What time is it?

j Thank you.

6 Read the Writer's toolbox on the next page about point of view, then rewrite 'Papa' in the third person. In some ways, this is similar to turning an autobiography into a biography. By doing this exercise you'll see the advantages and disadvantages of both.

Analysing

7 Compare Doug MacLeod's grandparents. List three words to describe his grandfather and three words to describe his grandmother.

Evaluating

8 What do you think Doug MacLeod liked best about his grandfather?

Creating

9 Writer's TOOLBOX

Point of view

'Papa' is written in a way that is called **first person writing**. This describes the point of view of the narrator—the person whose eyes the story is told through. A writer can choose to write from one of three points of view: **first person**, **second person** or **third person**.

- first person = I, me, my
- second person = you, your
- third person = he/she, him/her, his/her

A story can often be told from any of the points of view, but each approach has advantages and disadvantages.

DID YOU KNOW...

Gaelic is the language of the Gaels, a group of people who originated in Ireland. In modern times, it has evolved into Irish Gaelic, Scottish Gaelic and Manx Gaelic.



Person	Advantages	Disadvantages
First person *I am walking my dog down the street when it turns around and bites me.*	• The reader sees inside the mind of the narrator. • The reader gets to learn a great deal about the narrator.	• The reader only gets to experience what the narrator experiences. If something happens on the other side of town and the narrator isn't there, the reader misses out.
Second person *You are walking your dog down the street when it turns around and bites you.*	• The writer can make the reader into a character.	• It can get very repetitive.
Third person *She is walking her dog down the street when it turns around and bites her.*	• The writer can focus on different people in the story.	• The reader doesn't get as close to the characters. It's happening to someone else, not the narrator.

Strands in action

Personal writing: writing about school

There are two main ways to create an interesting piece of writing. The first way is to write about something interesting. The second way is to write about something in an interesting way. Of course, you can write about something interesting in an interesting way and get the best of both!

Choosing a topic that you know well is important for personal writing. One place that you all know well—because you've spent a large part of your life there—is school.

Over the years there have been many fictional school stories, usually based on the writer's own school days. Great nineteenth-century writers such as Charles Dickens and Charlotte Brontë featured schools and school events in their works. In 1857, one of the most famous school stories of all time was published: *Tom Brown's Schooldays.* In this novel, Thomas Hughes wrote about things that have now become central to most school stories: school bullies, trouble with teachers, sport and adventure.

More recently, Australian and other writers have written both funny and serious stories that explore the world of students and teachers. These authors include Michael Gerard Bauer, Natalie Jane Prior, Andy Griffiths, John Marsden, Margaret Clark and J. K. Rowling.

Core task

Choose one of the events below:

- your first day at school
- your best ever day at school
- a memorable sports day (good or bad)
- a play (good or bad)
- a special event at your school
- a special visitor to your school
- a school camp
- a memorable excursion
- the final day of school last year.

Write an extended piece, telling your reader what happened and how you felt about it. Appeal to your reader's memories of their own school days.

Extra tasks

1. Using construction blocks and a digital camera, turn your piece of personal writing into a photo story using multimedia software. Add background music to create a suitable soundtrack.
2. Turn your story into a comic strip.
3. Make your story into a talking book. Record it onto a CD, complete with CD cover.
4. Interview one of your primary school teachers. Ask them what they remember about you and your class. Record the interview.
5. In groups of four, stand in a line and tell one person's story one word at a time, passing along the line and then starting at the start again. This will require some preparation. Everyone in the group will need a copy of each person's story before you start. When you've completed one story, move on to the next.
6. In groups of four, mime the most important part of your story. No words!



A good novel tells us the truth about its hero; but a bad novel tells us the truth about its author.

Gilbert K. Chesterton (1874–1936), journalist, novelist and essayist

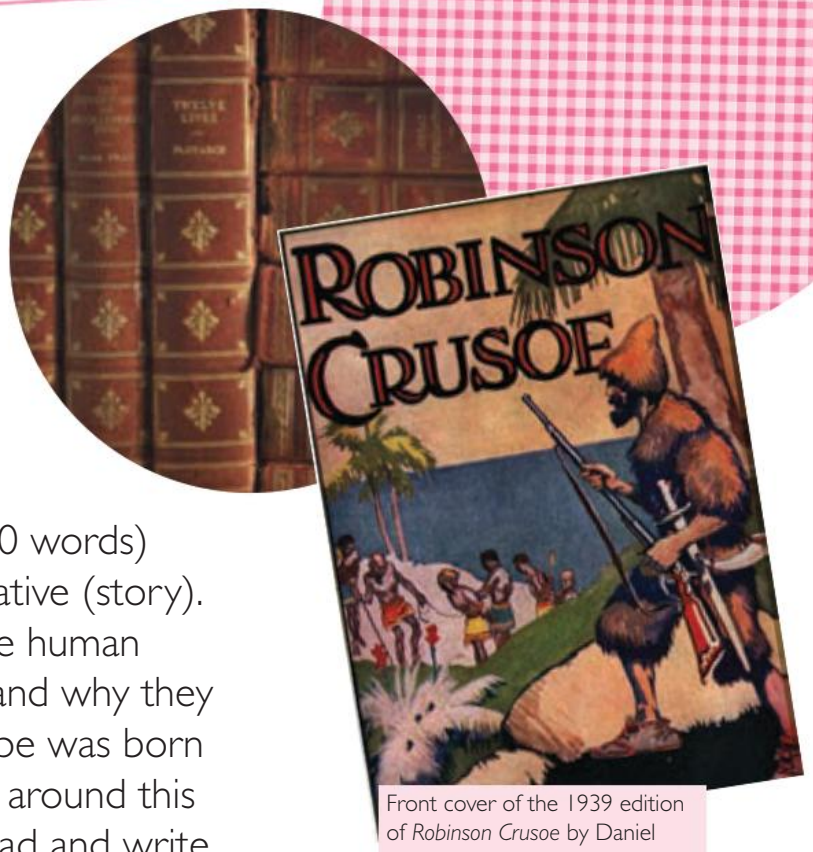
LITERATURE

Chapter overview

The beauty of the novel is in its ability to let us explore different places, times, cultures and events that we could not possibly ever really experience. Novels take us into the lives of extraordinary people and we get to know them, feel for them and care about them. Some novels can make us consider ideas that we may not have thought of before. They invite us to question why people behave the way they do, why things happen and how different people cope with different problems. There is nothing better than finding a really comfortable spot and a fantastic book and losing yourself for hours in the world of the novel. As novels are long texts, they are usually introduced to readers of about eleven years of age.

1

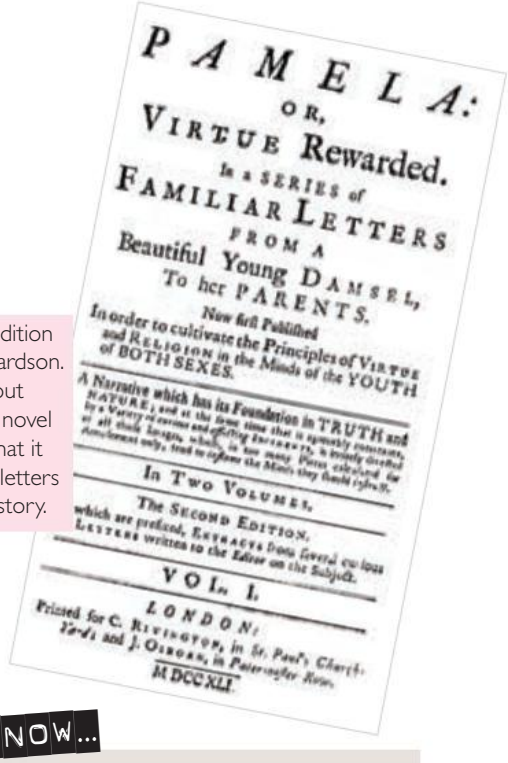
The novel



Front cover of the 1939 edition of *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe. By 1902 it was in its fiftieth edition, which tells you something of its popularity.

A novel is an extended (over 50 000 words) fictional (not fact, made-up) narrative (story). Novels are meant to focus on the human condition—that is, how humans behave and why they behave as they do. The novel as a text type was born in the eighteenth century. This is because around this time, many more people were able to read and write. Also, because they had more time to read, they were looking for something longer than the texts they were used to. Before the birth of the novel, people had to satisfy themselves with plays, poems, letters and other short texts.

There is enormous debate as to who wrote the first novel. Many think it is probably Daniel Defoe, who is considered the father of the English novel. His first novel was *Robinson Crusoe*, published in 1719. Others argue for Samuel Richardson, for his novel *Pamela*, which he wrote in 1740. Despite the time difference, the argument is about style. Defoe's novels involved a protagonist struggling through life, while Richardson's characters were more complicated.


PAMELA:
OR,
VIRTUE Rewarded.
In a SERIES of
FAMILIAR LETTERS
FROM A
Beautiful Young DAMSEL,
To her PARENTS.
Now first Published
In order to cultivate the Principles of VIRTUE and RELIGION in the Minds of the YOUTH of BOTH SEXES.
A Narrative which has its Foundation in TRUTH and NATURE; and at the same time that is equally contrasted, by a Variety of curious and affecting Incidents, is wholly divested of all those Images, which, in too many Pieces calculated for Amusement only, tend to inflame the Minds they should refine.
In Two VOLUMES.
The SECOND EDITION,
which are prefaced, EXTRACTS from several CRITICAL LETTERS written to the Editor on the Subject.
VOL. I.
LONDON:
Printed for C. RIVINGTON, in St. Paul's Church-Yard; and J. OSBORN, in Paternoster Row.
M DCC XLI.

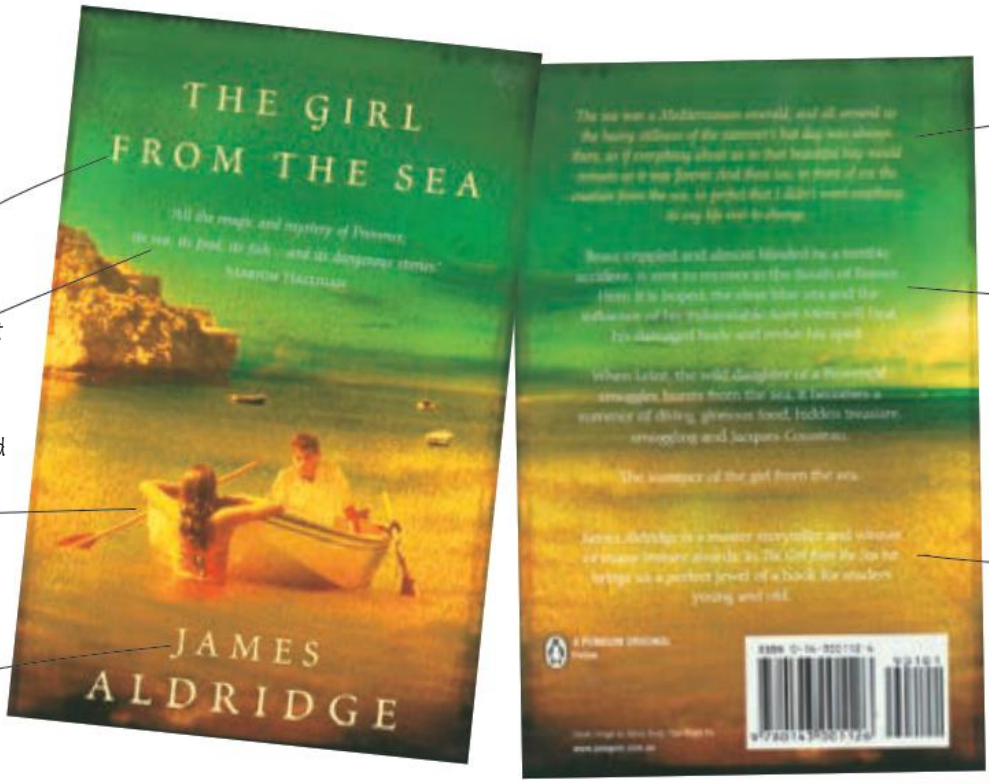
Front cover of the 1811 edition of *Pamela* by Samuel Richardson. Perhaps the argument about whether this was the first novel or not is due to the fact that it was written as a series of letters rather than as a narrated story.

Approaching the novel

A novel is long and some readers find it hard to just get started, particularly if they find reading difficult or they forget what they have just read. Sometimes people who find reading difficult don't actually know what good readers do. So, here are some of the things good readers do before, during and after they read.

DID YOU KNOW...

The word 'novel' did not exist in the English language until the eighteenth century, when it was adapted from the Italian word *novella*, which means 'short, compact tale'.



These are the usual features of a novel's front and back cover.

Before reading

Before reading, good readers look for clues about what it is they are going to read. Where are these clues?

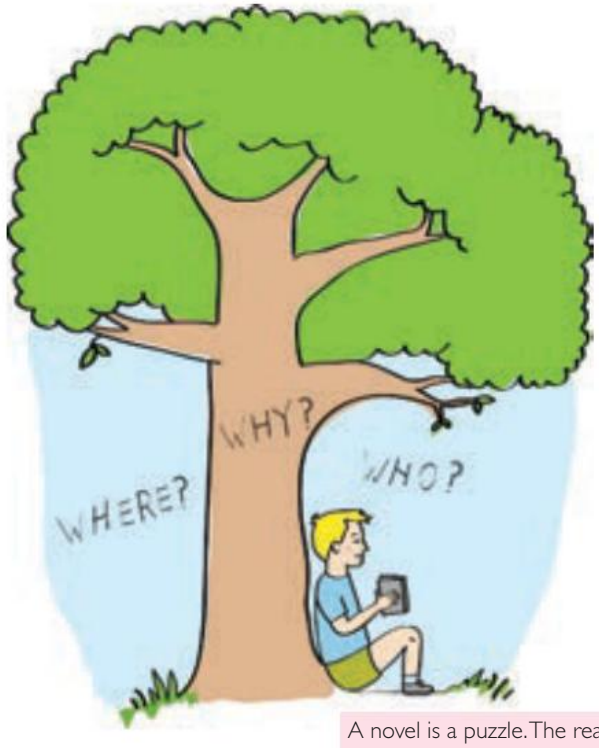
1. The title of the book is a good start. A book's title means something. What is the title and what might it mean? Think about the words and what those words mean.
2. Is there a picture on the front cover? What is the picture showing? What does it make you think of?
3. Read the 'blurb' on the back cover of the novel. It will give you a brief summary of the main theme or idea of the text and often identify the protagonist. It will not tell you how the novel concludes.
4. If you feel the need for more information, you could try an internet search for information on the novel itself but don't spoil it by finding out how it ends. Also on the internet, you might find information about the author and what they usually explore in their texts.

While reading

1. Good readers do not read every word. They skip words and phrases—even paragraphs—if they know what is happening. However, if they skip and find themselves unsure, they go back and read the section they skipped.
2. Good readers make predictions continually. What is likely to happen next? What is this character most likely to do in this kind of situation? What is that character likely to say?
3. Good readers undertake repair when they are lost. When they come across a word they don't understand they don't just ignore it, they deal with it. They read on to see if they can make sense of the word by the sentence around it (its context). If that doesn't work, they look it up to find out what it means. Then they use that dictionary definition in the sentence to see if that works. Only when they have understood do they move on. People who find reading difficult often don't take the time to repair what they have missed. Because of that they go on without the necessary information and get even more lost.

4 Good readers question what is happening. They might wonder why a character does what they do. They might wonder what a character means by something they have said. They might think about why the author moves from one thing to another. They might talk about it with others—ask others what they thought. That way the reading becomes interactive and, therefore, easier to remember.

5 Good readers stop as soon as they are lost. They will then go back over what they haven't understood until they reach the last point where they were clear about what was going on. Then they reread slowly and deliberately to make sure they understand it. Going on when lost is a certain way of not understanding what happened.



A novel is a puzzle. The reader has to uncover the truth.

After reading

1 Good readers think about what happened and make judgements about it.

2 Good readers talk about what happened with others.

3 Good readers ask the 'What if …' questions about the text. What if something didn't happen—what would the outcome be? What if something did happen—how would that character react?

4 Good readers do some research about what they have read to deepen their understanding of the novel. This becomes even more important at school as you move towards the senior years.



Try to take a strategic approach to reading.



As you learn more about yourself as a reader you will discover which reading strategy suits you best.

Breakaway tasks 1

Remembering

1 Name one of the things a good reader does before, during and after reading.

Understanding

2 What is meant by the word 'repair' in the activities that good readers do?

3 What is meant by being 'lost' in the text?

Applying

4 What kind of reader are you? How many of the activities listed above do you do?

5 Make up two more words to describe a reader to include between 'good' and 'struggling'. Take a survey of the class. What percentage think they are good readers? What percentage think they are 'struggling' readers? What percentage are in between?

6 What do you think could be done to make this outcome more positive?

Analysing

7 Why do you think it is important to complete activities before, during and after reading?

Evaluating

8 Are there any activities you think are more important than others? Which ones and why?

9 Are there any activities you think are irrelevant? Which ones and why?

10 Given the number of students in your class who consider themselves to be struggling readers, what do you think needs to be done to help them become 'good' readers?

Creating

11 Make up a bookmark with the top tips for reading on it, for your reference.

Tracking a novel

Because novels can be quite long, it is important to develop a system for keeping track of the elements in them. When you have finished reading a novel, you will need to complete tasks and activities on that novel so you have to have information about it ready. What kind of information do you need to keep track of and how is it best to do so? These are the most important:

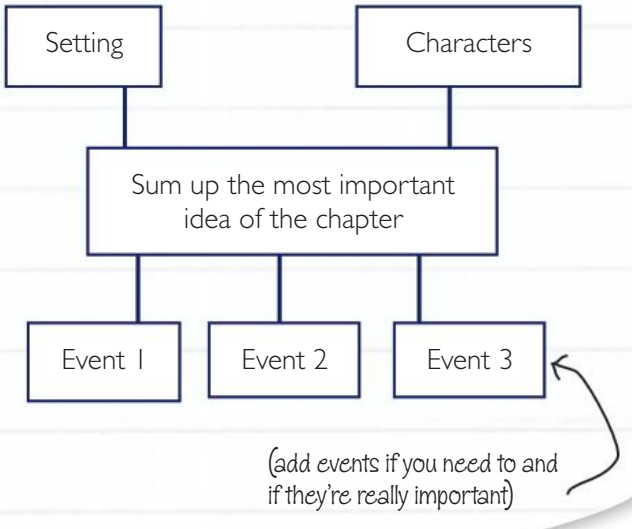
- the plot (what happens—the important events)
- the characters (who is in it, how they behave, why they do what they do)
- the theme (the ideas under the story—what you think the author is saying through the text).



Try one or more of the following strategies to keep track of a novel.

1 Construct a *story map* for each chapter. Give each chapter a title that sums up the most important idea of the chapter. If the chapter has a title, make up a different one.

Story map



2 Construct a *knowledge chart* for each chapter, like the one below, which will show what you already knew and what you have learnt during the reading.

Knowledge chart

Prior knowledge:	New knowledge:
1 Chris had a bad temper	1 Chris's bad temper started after the bullying began at school. Before then he was okay.
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

3 Construct a *knowledge organiser* of the important information you have learnt for each chapter.

Knowledge organiser

Who is the chapter/section talking about?	When did it happen?	Why did it happen?	Where did it happen? How did it happen?
What is the main idea?	Where did it happen?	How did it happen?	Who was involved?

4 Purchase a number of different coloured *sticky notes*. Give each colour a name—that could be a character's name, a theme or an important event. As you read, place the correct sticky note in the margin of the text. On the note write a very brief note or letter about what is on that page that is important.

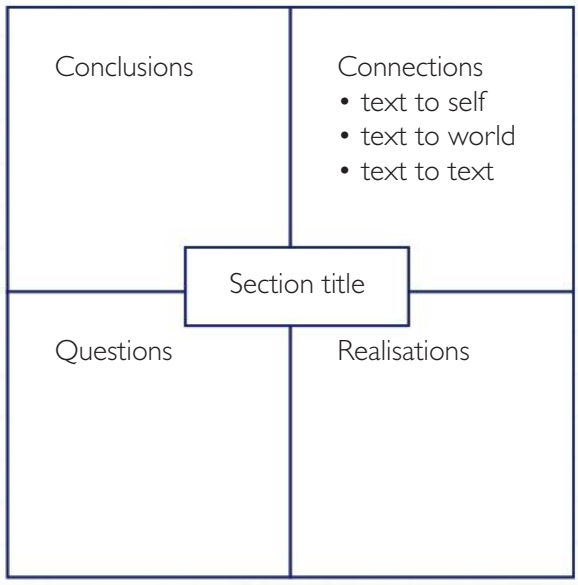
Knowledge organiser



Keep track of a number of features of the text at the same time.

5 Construct a *connections chart* for each chapter.

Connections chart



6 For each chapter:

- write a summary of what happened (100 words)
- write five questions you need to ask about the chapter
- predict what is going to happen in the next chapter
- with a partner, discuss the answers to your five questions and their five questions. Write down what you think the correct answers are.

7 Draw up a *Quote me chart* like the one below. As you read through the text, fill out the chart with quotes that sum up an idea (theme), character and event. Each quote needs to sum up all three areas at the same time.

Quote me chart

Quote	p. no.	Who said it?	To whom?	About what?	Its importance

8 Mind maps can be used to explore themes and issues. Draw up a mind map for each chapter, with the central idea of a chapter in the middle and each arm pointing to evidence from the chapter. The arms are characters and events. For each arm there should be quotes to support the beliefs you have of the chapter.

Mind map



Mind maps can be very colourful and can include images as well as words.

Narrative perspective

Many writers think long and hard about the narrative perspective they will take. There are three possible narrative perspectives: first person—written as 'I' (I think, I knew, I wished…) second person—written as 'you' (you think, you knew, you wished) and third person—written as 'he' or 'she' (she thinks, she knew, she wished). It is very rare to find stories written in the second person. The second person is used mainly in informative or instructional writing (you do this and then you do that).

All three perspectives have advantages and disadvantages. When writing as 'I', you cannot know what another character thinks because you cannot get into their head. You can only report what you see, hear and believe. In third person narrative you can pop from one head to another and you can know what everyone thinks. You don't have to let the reader know everything, but you can if you want to.

Strands in action



Core tasks

1. Think about yourself as a reader—how you have always approached a new reading task. How positive are you about your skills? Do you doubt your abilities? Write a 100–200-word letter to your teacher, telling them what you think your strengths and weaknesses are as a reader. You might include the strategies you already use to keep track of a text or ideas that you think might help you and, in addition, what more you think you can do to make yourself an even more competent reader.
2. Select a passage from one of your favourite novels or stories. What is the narrative perspective of that text? Rewrite two paragraphs of the text into another narrative perspective. For example, if it is in the third person, change it to the first. If it is in the first person, change it to the third. If you're really brave, try the second person. Show your revised text and its original to a partner and read their texts. What difference did the change in perspective make to your relationship with the text?

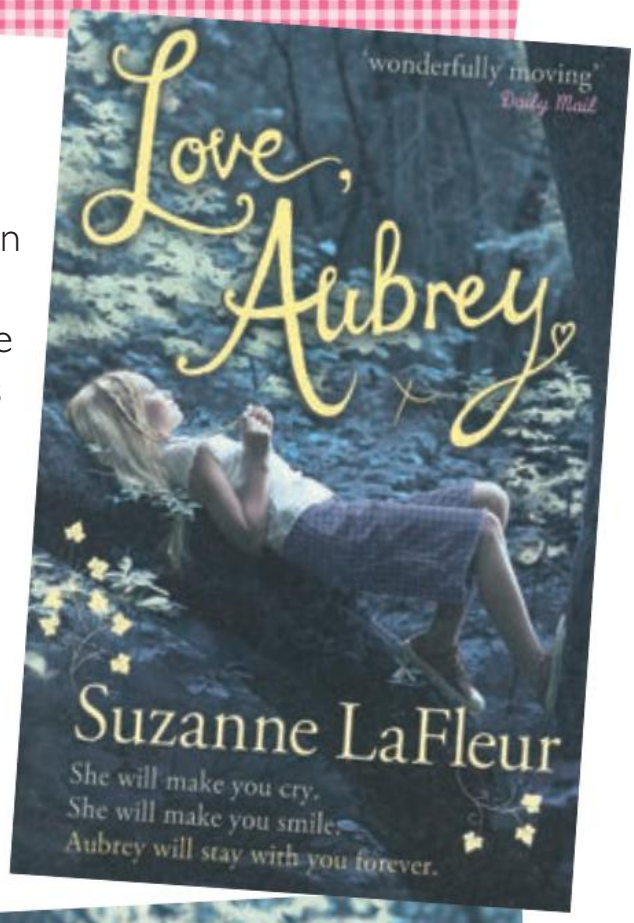
Extra tasks

1. Why do you think making predictions about what is going to happen might help you understand a text better?
2. Do you use any of these strategies already? If so, which ones? Where did you learn about them?
3. Why do you think all these strategies ask you to lift information out of a text and organise it in different ways? What benefit is there in moving information around?
4. Design a chart of these strategies for inclusion in your notebook. The chart has to have a section to allow you to indicate the times when you used the strategy and what you thought about it when you used it.
5. Do you think that being a 'good' reader is important in life? Why or why not?

2

Love, Aubrey

Suzanne LaFleur, author of *Love, Aubrey*, began writing stories when she was nine and entering the fourth grade. Her teacher gave her a blank book and told her to write five lines every day—from that moment it became five pages a day, which evolved into a novel. It was then that she announced that when she grew up she would write books for kids her age. She never lost that vision, finishing school and going to college (in the United States of America) to study History and English.





The title itself tells us something about LaFleur's belief in writing as a way to express feelings and emotions that are not easy to talk about. *Love, Aubrey* is the way you would sign off a letter—and for Aubrey, writing letters about the difficult situation she is in is essential to her healing. While there are very sad elements to this novel, *Love, Aubrey* has humour and love, and demonstrates how young people can make very good decisions in hard times.

Before reading

Let's start looking for clues about the novel by exploring what is on the cover.

Writer's TOOLBOX

When writing about subjects that are very sad, it is important not to allow the text to become too depressing, or it will turn readers off. It might even be too exhausting to read. LaFleur avoids this by ensuring that the sad events are not constantly the focus of the novel. When you write about sad events, try to avoid this too, to strengthen your stories.

Breakaway tasks 2

Remembering

1 What is the girl on the cover doing?

Understanding

2 Do you think the girl on the cover is Aubrey? What is her facial expression? What do you think this might indicate about the outcome of the novel?

Applying

3 Look at the setting of the novel. Have you ever done what 'Aubrey' is doing? How did you feel when you were doing this?

Analysing

4 The title of the novel is *Love, Aubrey*. What kind of text usually ends with 'Love,…'? What might you expect to find in the novel?

5 What can you see on the cover that reminds you of girls? (Think of colours, images and handwriting.)

Evaluating

6 Read the writing on the front and back covers. What do you learn about Aubrey?

7 What kind of person do you assume Aubrey's grandmother to be? Which of these images of a grandmother do you think would be appropriate for Aubrey's grandmother? Why?

8 Write a summary of what you think this novel is going to be about.

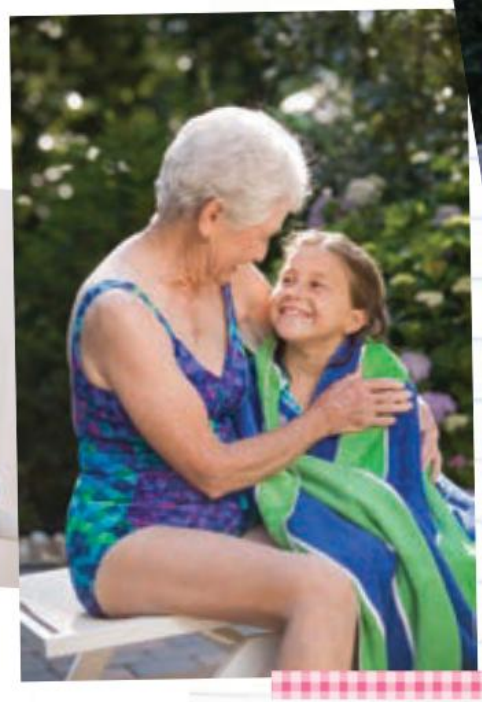
Creating

9 Predict the answer to the question on the back cover, '… can Aubrey begin to see that even though she's lost everything—all is not lost?' What clues are you using from the cover to answer that question? What other information, for example the audience of the novel, are you using?











While reading

You will need to use reading strategies to keep track of the novel. For each different section, choose a new reading strategy. At the end of each section, make some comments about how successful that strategy was for keeping track of events, characters and themes.

You need to track:

- the characters: Aubrey, Gram, Bridget, Mum (Lissie)
- the events: the significant moments in the text when we learn about the characters and their lives
- the themes of the text: belonging, grief and growing up.

At the end of each reading period, make sure you have finished the strategy so you are ready for the next reading session.

Stop-and-question moments

As you now know, good readers stop and question what's happening. The questions should include the following.

- Why did this happen?
- What have you learnt about a character, a group, or a theme through this happening?
- Why did the author choose to include this scene?
- What evidence (quotes) can you find here to support what you think?

Chapters 1 to 3: 'Virginia'



Virginia, USA

In this section we meet Aubrey and watch her, at age eleven, try to live on her own. We are also introduced to her grandmother, 'Gram', who realises, very quickly, what has happened and, also, that it is up to her to help her granddaughter, Aubrey.

Stop-and-question moments

- Savannah (page 4)
- Sammy (page 6)
- The house (page 9)
- Gram (pages 11–12)
- The truth (pages 14–15)
- Lissie (pages 18–19)
- Gram's decision (pages 23)
- The photo (pages 25–26)
- The ticket (pages 28)



What happened to Aubrey's once happy family?

Breakaway tasks 3

Remembering

1 What do you recall of daily life for Aubrey?

2 Who said that Aubrey was 'crazy as ants on a popsicle'?

3 What music reminds Aubrey of her father?

4 How long ago did 'the wreck' occur?

Understanding

5 Why does Gram put her head on the table and start shaking?

6 Why did Gram go to the bathroom?

7 What is the significance of the fact that the small green book was gone?

8 Why doesn't Aubrey have any friends any more?

9 When Aubrey says, 'I doubted it' (page 31), what is she talking about?

Applying

10 Have you ever been home alone over night? What was the experience like?



11 What would you do if you were Gram? Would you make Aubrey help you look for Lissie or not?

12 If you were Aubrey, how would you feel about your mother?

Analysing

13 How does the author manage to make you aware of Aubrey's pain and grief without ever mentioning it specifically? What, for example, is the difference between 'Savannah likes …' and 'Savannah had liked …'?

14 The section is titled 'Virginia'. Why is it called 'Virginia' and what might that tell us about what is going to happen?

15 What might the 'chocolate-ice-cream incident with Pennie Layne' have been? (page 21)



Evaluating

16 Why do you think Aubrey bought Sammy?

17 Why couldn't Aubrey tell her Gram about her mother not coming home?

18 Aubrey didn't know 'which would be worse' (page 18). Which do you think is worse and why?

19 What is the importance of the fact that 'you couldn't tear just one of us out of the picture without ripping someone else'?

Creating

20 Create a job advertisement for someone like Gram.



We know that good readers make predictions about what is going to happen. Some of these predictions are about what happens in the short term and some about what happens by the end of the novel. Make some long- and short-term predictions about *Love, Aubrey* from this first chapter. How helpful was this for you?

Moving on: 'Vermont', Chapters 4 to 9



Choose another reading strategy for this section. In these chapters, Aubrey arrives at Gram's house in Vermont and meets a girl, Bridget, who is the same age as she is. Bridget has been told what happened to Aubrey and we watch her try to help Aubrey come to terms with her losses gently and sensitively.

Stop-and-question moments

- Arrival (page 38)
- Letter to Jilly (page 45)
- Meeting Bridget (pages 48–50)
- Bridget's mum (pages 59–60)
- Note at school (pages 66–67)
- Frustration meets sadness (pages 76–78)
- Chasey (pages 8–84)

Breakaway tasks 4

Remembering

1 Describe Bridget.

2 What items can you recall from Gram's list of things to do?

Understanding

3 What are Gram's and Aubrey's reaction to arriving in Vermont? Why do you think they have this reaction?

4 Why does Aubrey want Mabel to play too? (page 49)

5 What does Aubrey learn about Bridget when she meets Bridget's mother?

6 Bridget gets cross with Aubrey in this section. Why?

7 Write a summary of what happened to Aubrey's family.



Applying

8 Draw Aubrey's room at Gram's house from her description.

9 What does Aubrey's third letter (page 62) tell you about her experience of grief? Why do you think the children acted the way they did to her?

10 What do you think of how Gram handles Aubrey's distress? (pages 84–86) How would you have handled it?

The scar tree



Analysing

11 What does the following question mean? 'Was that really from the train ride?' (page 39)

12 LaFleur uses italics a lot. What are those italics for? Do you think they work well? Why?

13 The first of Aubrey's letters appears in Chapter 4. Who is it to? What do you think of this technique by the author? Predict who will receive one of Aubrey's letters by the end of the novel.

14 What do you learn about Savannah's personality during this section?

15 What happens in the game of chasey that changes the world for Aubrey?

16 What clue is there in Aubrey's talk with Bridget about the wreck that explains why her mother has disappeared?

Evaluating

17 Why do you think Gram keeps giving Aubrey lists of things to do?

18 What does Aubrey's second letter tell you about her feelings for her mother? Do you think she has a right to feel that way? Why?

19 Why do you think Aubrey puts the letters in the scar tree?

20 Do you think Aubrey needs counselling? Why?

21 Why does Aubrey ask Gram about her mother? (page 69)

22 Which sentences in Aubrey's fourth letter and her fight with Bridget gives you a clue that Aubrey is starting to deal with her losses? (pages 70 and 78)

Creating

23 Create a picture of Bridget's scar tree, including the letters Aubrey has put in it.

24 Write a newspaper report of the accident in *The Virginia Times*.



Checking in

How did your predictions work out? Did you predict correctly or did the novel twist in some way you hadn't anticipated? What about your reading strategy? Did it work for you? Make some more predictions for the next section. Choose another reading strategy for this section.



In novels, as in life, there are always forks in the road—which way do we go?

Moving on: chapters 10–13

In this section, Aubrey begins attending school. She begins her counselling sessions with Amy, the school counsellor, although she doesn't really think they will help her at all. She reaches yet another crisis as she faces more about her past.

Stop-and-question moments

- Buying a present (pages 109–111)
- Meeting Savannah (pages 111–112)
- Aunt Janet's phone call (pages 118–121)
- Mum's phone call (page 127)
- Gram (page 139)

Breakaway tasks 5

Remembering

1 What is the date on which Aubrey returns to school?

2 How does Aubrey physically respond to bad or difficult news?

3 Where do Aubrey and Gram go to spend some meaningful time together?

Understanding

4 What is significant about the date on which Aubrey begins school?

5 What might be the significance of the line, 'I didn't have an alarm clock'?

6 Explain the difference between Aubrey's mother being 'okay' and 'safe'.

Applying

7 What would you do to mark the occasion that is the focus of the first day of school?

8 Has your teacher ever given you the 'My Summer Vacation' for a holiday assignment? What do you think of this assignment?

9 What would you have bought Savannah for her birthday?

10 What is your opinion of Amy's counselling style? Would it work for you? Why or why not?



Analysing

11 What does Gram mean when she says, 'You can't seal that day off forever. You need to keep living'?

12 What does Aubrey say and do that would lead you to think she is beginning to change her view on things?

13 Aubrey asks, 'Can you hear me, Mama? Can you hear what I am asking you?' What does she want?

Evaluating

14 Was Gram right to make Aubrey go to school? Why?

15 Why do you think Aubrey told Bridget about Jilly and her letter writing?

16 Explain why Aubrey recalls Savannah's birth at the end of Chapter 11.

17 Why was Aubrey going to run away and why doesn't she end up leaving?

Creating

18 Create a birthday card for Savannah from Aubrey.

Presents for Savannah. What do you think it meant to Gram and Aubrey to buy presents for Savannah?



Checking in

Review your chosen reading strategy and determine its strengths and weaknesses. Which features of the strategy might you choose to use again? Look back on your predictions—is the novel turning out how you thought it would? Choose a different reading strategy for the next section and, with a partner or a small group, make some predictions for Section 4.

Chapters 14–17

In this section Gram goes to visit her daughter and Uncle David comes to look after Aubrey. Aubrey's feelings about what happened to her become more intense and reach a high point at Thanksgiving. Aubrey reconnects with her father and reaches greater understanding about her mother.

Stop-and-question moments

- About mother (pages 143–148)
- Letter about mother (page 149)
- Marcus (pages 157–160)
- Thanksgiving dinner (pages 168–169)
- Letter to Daddy (pages 170–171)
- Christmas (pages 183–187)
- Letter to Baby Jesus (page 188)

Breakaway tasks 6

Remembering

1 How does Gram feel about flying?

2 How does Aubrey feel about the bus trip in the rain?

3 What were they looking for in the photograph of Lissie as a young person?

4 Who does Aubrey really want to talk to?



Understanding

5 How did Aubrey cope during the first week without her mother?

6 What do you learn about Marcus from this section? Which one of these images is most like Marcus for you?



7 Why is Christmas so important to Aubrey?

8 Where was Lissie going to be for Christmas and why?

Applying

9 Do you think it matters where you are when you want to have a serious talk? Where are you most comfortable talking?

10 Have you ever used writing to explore your feelings? Did writing about them change them?

Analysing

11 What happens in this section that leads you to think that Aubrey is improving?

12 What does the letter on page 161 tell you about Aubrey?

13 What do you learn about Aubrey from the letter on pages 170–171?

14 What is it about Aubrey's actions leading up to Christmas that makes her so pitiable?

15 What does the letter on page 188 tell you about Aubrey?

Evaluating

16 Why do you think that Aubrey doesn't want to talk about Thanksgiving?

17 Aubrey is able to remember her father and Savannah. Why does she still struggle with her mother, who is, of the three of them, still alive?

18 Do you think Aubrey's family noticed her waiting for her mother? How do you know?



How painful must it be for Aubrey to wait with such hope for her mother who doesn't come?

19 Aubrey claims, 'She was the parent. It was her job to try'. Is this always true? Is Lissie wrong?

Creating

20 Design a Christmas card from Lissie to Aubrey or Aubrey to Lissie.

21 Sometimes people make or purchase special Christmas ornaments to commemorate someone special that are hung each year on the Christmas tree. Draw the Christmas ornament you would make for either Savannah or Daddy if you were Aubrey.

Checking in

By the end of this section Aubrey has made great progress in her grieving over her father and sister but her resentment towards her mother is growing. What will happen next? What predictions can you make? Have any of your predictions been proven correct yet? How did that reading strategy work out? Is it one you would recommend to a friend? Why or why not?

Moving on: chapters 18 to 22

In this section Aubrey meets her mother again and we learn about what happened when her father and sister died. Aubrey is able to remember her sister without trauma. We learn the question that Aubrey was too afraid or sad to ask her mother and we confront possible futures. Here predictions are very important. What do you think is going to happen?



How difficult must it be for Aubrey's mother, but also for Aubrey, who sees her mother's pain?

Stop-and-question moments

- Mother arrives (pages 192–195)
- The first meeting (pages 198–199)
- The question (pages 204–205)
- Hospital (pages 213–217)
- Savannah (pages 220–221)
- The talk (pages 239–214)

Breakaway tasks 7

Remembering

1 At what time does Lissie arrive?

2 What fears does Aubrey have about her mother's arrival?

3 Why do they have to go to the hospital?



Understanding

4 Why does Aubrey's stomach start to hurt?

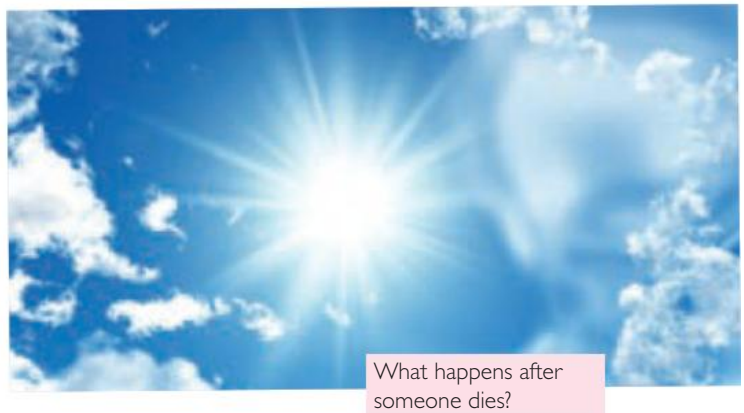
5 What is it that Aubrey thinks Gram doesn't understand about Lissie?

6 Why does Lissie believe she 'lost them for you. I lost them'?

Applying

7 Aubrey says that both she and her grandmother had resolutions but lied about not having any. What do you think those resolutions really were? Why would they have lied about it?

8 If you were Aubrey, would her mother's answer to her question satisfy you? Why?



What happens after someone dies?

9 Aubrey wonders what happens to Savannah after she dies (page 221). What do you think happens after death, if anything at all?

10 Aubrey observes, 'But, really, anybody could die any day, whether you were ready or not'. This is true. Have you ever thought about it? Would thinking about it make you live a better life or make you too sad?

Analysing

11 How do you know that not thinking about her mother was very difficult for Aubrey?

12 What signs are there that Lissie is getting better?

13 What was the question that Aubrey was so afraid to ask?

14 What do you learn about Aubrey from her recollection of her time in the hospital after the accident?

15 Aubrey comments that the brand 'Hoover' has become a word that means 'to vacuum.' Can you think of any other product brand names that have become actions?

16 What does the letter on page 245 tell you about Aubrey's thinking?



This is a Hoover. In some parts of America, this brand name has become the word to describe any vacuum cleaner.

Evaluating

17 Was Lissie right to demand to see Aubrey at night or was Gram right in telling her to wait for the morning?

18 Is it better to have been forgotten or left behind on purpose?

19 Create a list of advantages and disadvantages of Aubrey staying with her grandmother or leaving with her mother. What do you think she should do?

20 Do you think Lissie's choice of job is a good one for her?

21 Aubrey thinks that Bridget is being selfish when she is talking about going to live with her mother. Is she?

Creating

22 Create a birthday card for Aubrey from her mother.

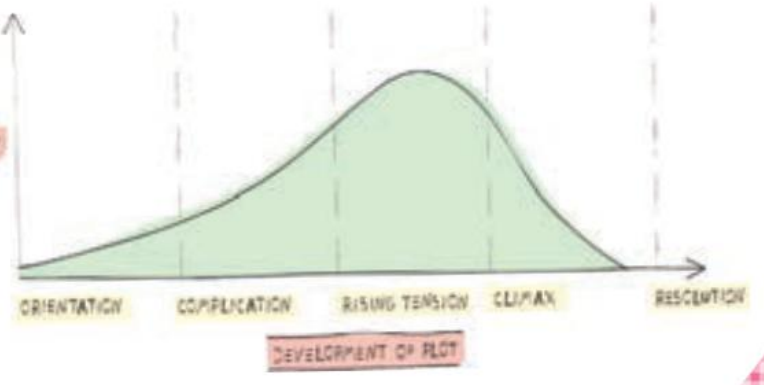
23 Design a birthday cake for Aubrey.

24 Can you think of a better birthday party than the one Aubrey came up with? What is it?

Checking in

The novel is reaching its climax—that moment when the complication that was established (Lissie leaving Aubrey on her own) is resolved. Is Aubrey going to live with Lissie or Gram?

Many predictions that you have been making since the start of the reading of this novel would have been proven or disproven but the last prediction, about where Aubrey is going to live, remains unanswered. What do you think is going to happen? Choose one last strategy for the final section of the text.



Any story or novel can be graphed like this. Notice how your interest rises as the novel progresses and is at its lowest at the start of a novel. This is why you should always give a novel 20 per cent of its length before you decide you don't like it. That means, for a 200-page novel, you need to read forty pages before you decide that it is not right for you.

Moving on: chapters 23 to 24

In this section the questions are answered. We find out what Aubrey's big decision is.

Stop-and-question moments

- Bridget (page 247)
- Amy (pages 248–249)
- Decision making (pages 251–252)
- The letter from Mama (pages 256–257)
- The chosen memory (pages 258–260)
- The letter to Mama (page 262)

Breakaway tasks 8

Remembering

1 What does Aubrey forget to think about while she is talking to Amy?

2 What's for lunch for Marcus?

Understanding

3 Why does Bridget cry on the bus?

Applying

4 Not everyone has the traditional family structure of mum, dad and kids. What are some of the different family structures that you know of?



There are lots of different kinds of families. What is your family like?

5 Aubrey says, 'I had thought we were gone forever, but it wasn't true'. Have you ever had a friend, family member or pet die or move far from you? Is Aubrey right?

Analysing

6 Examine Amy's logic on page 248. Based on her logic, what should Aubrey do?

7 Aubrey talks about a train station (page 252). What does this idea tell you about what she is thinking?

8 At the end of Chapter 23, LaFleur definitely leads you to expect one kind of conclusion to the novel. What is that expectation? Why would the author choose to do this?

9 How does Mama's letter make you feel about Aubrey's mother and what do you think Aubrey should do?

10 How does the memory Aubrey chooses show you how she can now remember her family without trauma? (pages 258–260)

Evaluating

11 Should Aubrey be asked to make this decision herself? Why?

12 Do you agree with Bridget that 'kids are supposed to be with their moms, if they can'?

13 The last chapter is called 'Home'. When you know Aubrey's decision, what do you think Aubrey would call home?

14 What does this line tell you about Aubrey's grieving process, 'I could feel the memories right there, close, but they weren't drawing me inside like they sometimes did'? (page 257)



Creating

15 Write an alternative ending to the novel.

16 Write Mama's letter to Aubrey after receiving Aubrey's decision.

Strands in action

Core tasks

1 Create an anthology of texts in response to *Love, Aubrey* about one of the following:

- family
- loss
- mental health
- fathers
- grandmothers
- love
- grief
- mothers
- sisters
- children.

The texts you create could include:

- poems
- images
- letters
- memoirs
- emails.
- lyrics
- very short stories
- journal/diary entries
- SMS exchanges

The presentation of your anthology is important—it can be illustrated, decorated and bound for greatest effect. Remember that all these features, even the colour of the paper, reflect your thinking about the text and its issues.

2 You are a reporter for a TV station in the place in which *Love, Aubrey* is set. You can be an on-the-spot reporter, a TV anchorperson or a current affairs presenter who is doing a background exposé of the events. You have to write the report that is suited to your particular type of reporting on the two events you choose to be the most important. You will need to choose locations for your reports that are appropriate for the kind of report you are choosing to make. You will need to use some friends to be eye-witnesses, participants or even as townspeople who may not have seen what happened, but have something to say about the situation in their town. Film your reports. If you can, use the computer to edit your work so that it runs smoothly. Present your reports to the class.

Extra tasks

1 Write a biography of one character's experiences through the text. For each experience, explain how your character reacted and why you think they did so.

2 Find an image or piece of music that you think sums up the character you chose in question one. Explain why you have chosen the art or music you have.

3 Working with a partner, dramatise a scene in which we learn something about both of the characters that you and your partner have explored.

4 Examine a number of photos of trees on the internet or go outside and take photos of trees. Explain the significance of this element to the story and to us as a culture generally.

5 A production company is hoping to make a film version of *Love, Aubrey*. They want to shoot it somewhere in Australia that is relevant and contemporary. You are keen to become the co-director of this film with a partner. In order to sell them your ideas, you need to create a storyboard for each of the two events you think will sell them on it. You will need to find a suitable location for filming that has a background you think is relevant. Your storyboard must include a series of eight images from the event using a variety of camera shots to emphasise different aspects of the image. You must include a caption for each image that sums up the importance of the image to the story that is being told. You also need to choose a piece of music that would be the soundtrack to that moment in the film.

6 Select passages from *Love, Aubrey* that highlight for you what the novel is saying about its themes. Read the passages to the class. At the end of each reading, stop and explain the significance of the passage. What does that passage highlight about one of the themes that is so important? What did you learn from that passage?

7 Create a pamphlet on each of the novel's themes for students who will study the text in future years. Use a computer to create these pamphlets. Each pamphlet has to have the theme, your statement on what it is saying and evidence from the text. It must also be visually appealing and easy to follow.

8 Of all the reading strategies you tried, were there any that worked for you? Which one(s)? Why do you think it suited you? Survey the class for the best reading strategies.

3

Interrogating texts



So, you get to the end of a text and you have 'work' to do on the text. The work on a text is always about showing how well you have understood it. There are three levels on which you can have an understanding of a text and the second and third are both dependent on the first:

- literal
- inferential
- interpretative.

Literal understanding

Literal interpretation is the most fundamental level of understanding of a text. It means you can outline the *who*, *what*, *where*, *why*, *when* and *how* of what has occurred in the text. The answers are right there on the page for you to find. They are most often the remembering and understanding questions in a series of comprehension questions. Let's have a look below.

And the answers are all easily located in the text by scanning the text for the key words in the question—the who, what, where, why, when and how of these questions. Or you can skim the text looking for the answers. Skimming means you are only looking to get the basics and you can skip words as you go if they are not relevant to what you are looking for.

Literal questions look like this:

- Who is the main character in this text?
- What was his favourite pastime?
- Where did Jonas like to read?
- When did Jonas read?
- Why wouldn't his mother call him when he was reading?
- How might others view Jonas?

Who was the main character in this text? Jonas

Jonas was a gentle boy whose sole delight in life was reading. He wasn't a boy interested in sports or TV or computers—just books. If his mother needed him, she knew there was no point trying to call him because when he was immersed in a book, he didn't hear the world around him. He was lost in the book he was reading. Some might say that made him boring, but when other kids were trying to kick an inflated piece of pig-skin through a couple of upright sticks, he was taking on pirates on the high seas, adventuring into unknown worlds, meeting famous people and visiting times long past or not yet possible. His was a fascinating world. Just one great big comfortable chair in a corner became a playground of infinite possibilities. Maybe he liked books so much because the worlds they gave him were much more interesting than going to school or staring at a screen watching other people have great times. Whenever he wasn't needed elsewhere you would find Jonas lost in a book.

What was his favourite pastime? Reading

Why wouldn't his mother call him when he was reading? He didn't hear the world around him when he was reading.

How might others view Jonas? Some might view him as boring.

Where did Jonas like to read? In one particular chair.

When did Jonas like to read? Whenever he wasn't needed elsewhere.



Writer's TOOLBOX

When answering reading questions you should always do so in full sentences (unless it is a quiz) so that you link the text and the question. For example: When did Jonas like to read? 'Jonas liked to read when he wasn't needed elsewhere'. This is a much better response than: 'When he wasn't needed elsewhere'.

Inferential understanding

To infer something is to develop a conclusion that is based on a text but that is not directly stated in the text. This is usually done by putting two or more pieces of evidence from the text together to show that this conclusion is valid. So, it is in the text but not directly stated in the text.

The literal answers are easy:

The umpire blew his whistle and the game commenced. Rain fell on the thirty-six men who struggled against the icy conditions to try to get the ball through the goals. It was going to be a gruelling four quarters for them, but for me? I couldn't wait—nor could the near 100,000-strong fans who could hardly keep their seats on this, the final day of the season. Where else would you be than Melbourne on a day like today?

What? A ball game

Who? The narrator and almost 100 000 other fans

How were they feeling? Excited

When? The final day of the season

Why? To watch the game

Where? Melbourne

Using inferential understanding we can conclude that this passage is about the AFL Grand Final at the MCG, but nobody mentioned the MCG or what kind of game was being played. So, how did we know this? Because we put two or more pieces of information together to draw a conclusion. What are the clues?

Very few sport have thirty-six players—eighteen per side.

This is not a sport we associate with women.

More evidence that this is a winter sport

A game played over four quarters—lots of sports have two halves

The fans of this sport are really vocal and physical in their support of their teams

Evidence that this is a winter sport

A physically demanding game—not darts!

A stadium large enough to seat almost 100 000 people—has to be the MCG given we are about to be told it is in Melbourne

It's the last game of the season—usually this is a grand final

The umpire blew his whistle and the game commenced. Rain fell on the thirty-six men who struggled against the icy conditions to try to get the ball through the goals. It was going to be a gruelling four quarters for them, but for me? I couldn't wait—nor could the near 100,000-strong fans who could hardly keep their seats on this, the final day of the season. Where else would you be than Melbourne on a day like today?

So draw an educated conclusion from these clues:

- a winter sport
- thirty-six players on the field at any time
- generally associated with men
- a four-quartered game
- being played at a huge stadium in Melbourne
- the last game of the season
- really outspoken fans.

All those clues together allow us to make an educated conclusion—infer—that this is the Grand Final of the AFL at the MCG in Melbourne, the last Saturday in September.

Interpretative understanding

When you are asked your opinion on a text—what you think the author is trying to say through the text—you are being asked for your interpretation of the text. It is similar to inferential understanding in that the text has to support your belief, but the clues are not as clear as they are in inferential understanding and must cover the entire text (which could be a short story or a novel or film).

In interpretative understanding you look through the clues on the page to what you think the whole text is saying about a particular idea. It is in this level of understanding that you find the greatest difference of opinion but, in the end, the text itself—the evidence from the text—will prove an interpretation to be correct or incorrect.

Interpretive questions on a text are always broad and ask for you to find your own opinion. For example: '*Love, Aubrey* tells us that young people are more capable of handling grief than adults. Do you think this is true?'

There is no place in the novel that you can locate that says this is true (literal understanding). There is no one passage you can interrogate to prove this is true or otherwise (inferential understanding). You, as the reader and analyst, must search your understanding of the novel to formulate your opinion of this question (interpretative understanding). So, how do you do this?

Any question has key words. Instead of trying to handle everything about a novel at once, the key words limit what you are looking at. Here, the key words are:

- capable
- grief
- young people
- adults
- more.

Now you have to define those key words—but that's not just a matter of looking up a dictionary.

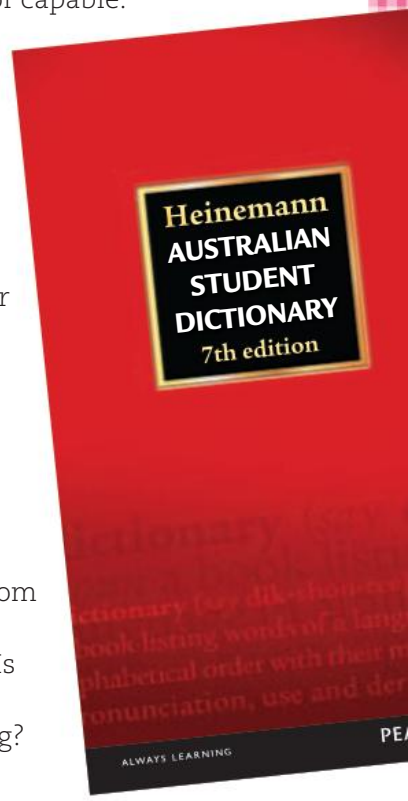
Have you ever looked up a word in a dictionary and found it had *lots* of meanings? Have you ever wondered which of those meanings is right? The right meaning for a word is when it meets the context in which you use the word. For example: power. What does 'power' mean?

Context	Meaning
mathematics	multiplying by itself
politics	authority to control others
science	source of energy
religion	spiritual activation
sport	physical capability

Every word has a context that gives it meaning and you need to contextualise a word to make it make sense. In this essay question example, we have to define those key words in order to use them. If the word is unfamiliar to you, look it up in the dictionary. However, the word has to be defined in the context of the novel itself—what that word means in the novel. Let's take 'capable' as the example:

Dictionary definitions of capable:

1 having room for
2 roomy
3 comprehensive
4 open to, susceptible
5 having fitness or power for
6 having legal capacity or qualification



Which one is right? Interpret the word in the context of the novel. Do some questioning: What is it to be capable in the novel? Is it to have room? The grandmother made room in her house for Aubrey? Is it about accommodation? Is it to be open to something or susceptible to something? There are terrible things that happen to Aubrey but she's still open to ideas and susceptible to being hurt—particularly by her mother. Is it about being fit or powerful? Aubrey spends most of the novel feeling powerless in her own life but she is really quite powerful—she looks after herself and makes decisions all the time? Is anyone in this novel a lawyer? Nope … this one isn't useful.

Once you have done the questioning, you need to define 'capable' in the context of the novel. Here are some examples of contextualised definitions of 'capable' in *Love, Aubrey*:

- Capable in *Love, Aubrey* is to be able to deal with your situation rather than running away from it.
- Capable in *Love, Aubrey* is to get over your grief and resume a new kind of normal life.
- Capable in *Love, Aubrey* is to just survive grief.
- Capable in *Love, Aubrey* is to be able to say goodbye to those you have lost.
- Capable in *Love, Aubrey* is to allow yourself to feel your grief.

The next key word is 'grief'. What is the contextualised definition of 'grief' in the novel? Again, do some questioning. Is grief the death of Dad and Savannah or is it something more? How many kinds of grief are there in the novel?

- the loss of the family
- the mental breakdown of the mother
- the abandonment of Aubrey
- the guilt over the deaths
- the loss of a husband
- the loss of a sister
- the loss of a grandchild/son-in-law
- the loss of friends (Remember Aubrey tells us that her friends decided she was 'crazy as ants on a popsicle' and stopped playing with her.)

So, what is your contextualised definition of grief? In short, the feelings over the loss of people you love.

The next key word is 'adults'. Who are the adults in this novel? And which ones are suffering grief?

- grandmother
- mother

They are the only ones we are interested in. This is how key terms allow you to limit your focus on the text because not all adults in the book are involved in grief.

The next key word is 'children'. Who are the children in the novel that are dealing with grief? They're the only ones we need to bother with.

- Aubrey

The next key word is 'more'. What does 'more' here mean? It suggests that one is better at something than another.

With all these definitions, go back to the question and unpack it.

Love, Aubrey tells us that young people are more capable of handling grief than adults. Do you think this is true?

Becomes:

The novel tells the reader that Aubrey was able to get over her loss and resume a new normal life better than her mother and grandmother did.

Now comes the interpretation: is this true?

DID YOU KNOW...

Discussing interpretative and inferential questions is often a very helpful way of refining what you think. If your interpretation cannot stand up to someone's questioning, then it probably needs some adjustment.

Think about the novel—look through the individual incidents to find a pattern—that's where the interpretation becomes solid.

- What do you know about how Aubrey deals with her loss?
- What do you know about how her mother deals with her loss?
- What do you know about how her grandmother deals with her loss?

Only through answering these questions can you formulate an interpretation. For example:

How do these characters deal with their loss?



Aubrey	Mother	Grandmother
hides from the world	acts erratically—one day normal, the next lost	cries for her granddaughter and starts the search for her daughter
cries for her losses	runs away, abandoning her child	sets about healing her granddaughter and, through this, herself
feels her grief and accepts her loss	stays away from her remaining daughter for birthday and Christmas in an effort to overcome her grief	celebrates her grandchildren's birthdays, supports her daughter
is still hurt by the loss of her mother	visits but remains aloof	helps Aubrey come to terms with her loss
comes to understand her mother's behaviour	sends letters about how much better she is and asks Aubrey to return to her	visits her daughter and enables Aubrey to make decisions about her future
accepts her mother and her new life		accepts Aubrey's decision to stay

On the basis of this, is it true that Aubrey coped with her losses better than her mother and her grandmother? This is where interpretation happens. Discussing your interpretations with others can really sort out what you think, because you will have to defend your opinion and this means using evidence from the text to do it. Questioning is vital here.

All three characters resume a new kind of life and they all come to terms with their grief. Does Aubrey do it better? Is hiding better than running away? Who, in the end, deals with grief best or do they all deal with it equally well? Does the grandmother deal with it best because she helps her grandchild and daughter to cope? Has she lost as much as her daughter did?

Only you can decide. Once you have decided, then you argue it.

Breakaway tasks 9

Remembering

1 What was the name of the boy who liked to read?

2 List three inferential clues that were used to identify the event in passage two.

Understanding

3 Why are both inferential and interpretative understandings reliant on literal understanding?

Applying

4 Have you ever developed a full interpretation of a text? What was the text? What was your opinion? How did you formulate that opinion? Was your interpretation the same as the example above?

5 What can you now do/understand better than you could before?

Analysing

6 What is your literal understanding of the novel *Love, Aubrey*?

7 Why would a teacher demand more of you than just that understanding?

Evaluating

8 Do you think that using essays that demand an interpretation of a novel or film should be used as a way of grading students in Year 12 exams? Why or why not?

Creating

9 For the next group of Year 7 students, create a flowchart to help them formulate interpretative understandings of texts.

Now prove it

Only when you use evidence from the text can your interpretation or inference be proved to be true. There are two kinds of textual evidence:

- direct
- indirect.

They are both very important in proving your findings to be true.

Direct evidence

Direct evidence is when you use a quote (words) straight from the text in your own work. This is not as simple as it seems. The best direct evidence is very well chosen. This means that the quote is between one and twelve words long and is full of important information. These are what we call the 'quotable quotes' of a text and being able to find them is a real skill.

For example, you are trying to prove how important Aubrey's mother coming to see her at Christmas is to Aubrey. Here are some quotes from the text:

Christmas Eve always seems like the longest day of the year.

Out of breath, I searched every room downstairs, but she wasn't there.

She would come tomorrow. She had to.

Using your skills in inferential understanding, look at the words in the quotes for what they might mean.

Christmas Eve always seems like the longest day of the year.

In this quote the word 'always' tells us that there is nothing new here; that this is the way she felt every year so it doesn't tell us how important *this* one is to her because her mother might be there.

Out of breath, I searched every room downstairs, but she wasn't there.

In this quote, the phrase 'out of breath' might tell us about her emotional state (that she's so excited she's run out of breath) or her physical state (she's been searching every room downstairs so she's been running down stairs and into rooms, which would leave you breathless). However, the word 'searched' suggests a sense of a real determination to find her. The comma before 'but' emphasises it, which tells us of her disappointment. So this quote does indicate something of the importance of her mother's visit.

She would come tomorrow. She had to.

In this quote the two short, sharp sentences do indicate her desperation. 'She had to' sounds like a plea rather than a statement. Therefore, this is the most 'quotable quote' for the purpose of proving how important her mother's visit was to her.

Indirect evidence

Indirect evidence is when you cite an example from the text but you don't quote it directly. So much can happen in a text that it may be impossible to find a quote for all of it, so using indirect evidence is a handy way of showing that you know where the evidence is without the need for a quote.

For example, you are trying to prove that Bridget is a really good friend to Aubrey. Here are some examples from the text:

- Bridget asks Aubrey over to her house.
- Bridget cries and tells Aubrey she believes her and gives her a hug after Aubrey tells her what happened to her.
- Bridget tells Aubrey that everything will be OK and that she's still her best friend even if she returns to her mother to live.

Again, it is the inferential skills that tell you which is the most valuable as evidence.

Bridget asks Aubrey over to her house.

This example is from early in the novel and it's a simple invitation which might be made by any little girl to another when they meet. There is no developed friendship here, which is what the question is about.

Bridget cries and tells Aubrey she believes her and gives her a hug after Aubrey tells her what happened to her.

In this evidence, the word 'believe' is important because a friend believes what you say. The fact that Bridget also hugs her, tells us that their relationship has developed beyond just two children living next door to each other.

Bridget tells Aubrey that everything will be OK and that she's still her best friend even if she returns to her mother to live.

In this evidence—Bridget's reminder that they're still best friends even if they are separated—we come to see that Bridget is putting Aubrey's needs before her own, which is the mark of a true friend.

Both the second and third pieces of indirect evidence would be good, but the most impressive is the third because of what it says about her. It is about choosing the best evidence, not just any evidence.

Now use it

You have found some good evidence to support your opinions, but how do you actually include it so that it sounds good? Beginning writers tend to put the evidence in as a separate sentence and link it to their own writing, which sounds clunky. For example:

This is a very common phrase, but an overused one. Avoid it at all times.

Aubrey desperately wants to see her mother and this is most apparent at Christmas. A classic example of this is when she says that 'Out of breath, I searched every room downstairs, but she wasn't there'. This shows that she was desperately looking for her mother. Another example is when she is going to her room and she says, 'She would come tomorrow. She had to'. This shows she could not bear to think she might stay away, with the emphasis on 'had to', as though life would not be the same if she did not come.

When you use the term 'example' this way, you set the evidence apart from your own argument.

A better way is to insert the evidence into your own sentences. This makes your writing more mature and sophisticated—because it's not clunky.

Aubrey desperately wants to see her mother and this is most apparent at Christmas. The reader sees Aubrey 'out of breath' as she 'searched every room downstairs, but she wasn't there', and hears how desperately she is looking for her mother. As she goes to her room, her final thoughts are that 'she would come tomorrow. She had to.' as though Aubrey could not bear to think her mother might stay away. The emphasis is on 'had to', as though life would not be the same if she did not come.

Making it work

You will notice with the first piece of direct textual evidence that the sentence is broken up. In order to make the quote work with the sentence, it is sometimes necessary to remove words (or even sometimes add simple words). When you remove words, you replace the missing words with an ellipsis (...) and when you add words, you put the added words into square brackets.

For example, Anthony was mowing the lawns and was doing a fantastic job, even though he found it boring.

When quoted could be:

Anthony finds '...mowing the lawns...boring.'

I wanted him to know that '[he] was doing a fantastic job...'

Sometimes it is necessary to change the form of a word, most often the tenses change. Because all essays are written in the present tense, anything written in the past or future tense can be changed into the present tense. These changes, too, are indicated by putting only the changed part of the word into square brackets.

For example, 'Bridget wrapped her arms round me and hugged', when quoted could be: Bridget demonstrates her long-lasting friendship with Aubrey by '...wrap[ping] her arms around [her] and hug[ging].'

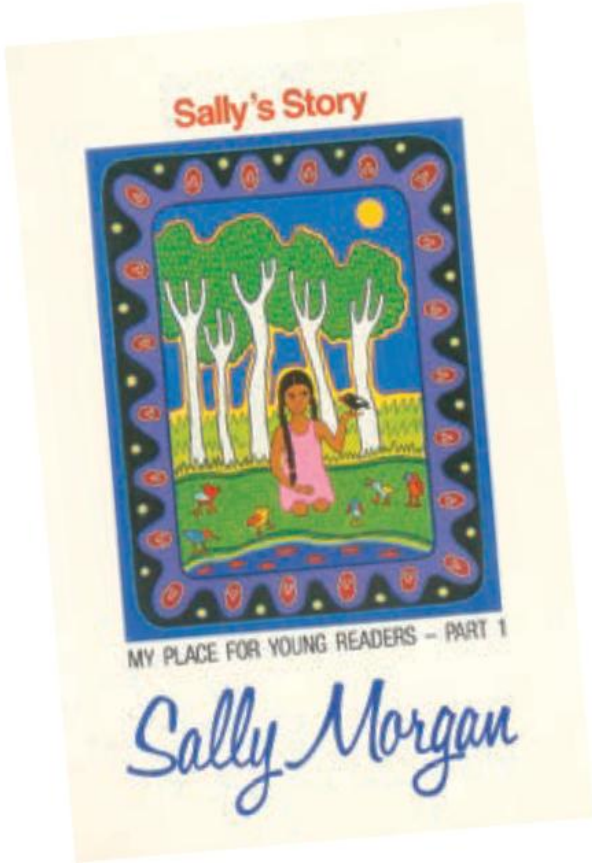
It looks a little odd, but it tells the person reading your work that you understand that the quote is different to the original and it also enables them to read your work smoothly.

All three levels, all at once

Read the following text and answer the questions that follow. Make sure you discuss your findings with at least one classmate to make sure you can defend your position.

SALLY'S STORY: MY PLACE FOR YOUNG READERS

By Sally Morgan



'We'll never know for sure,' Jill said one night. 'Mum will never tell us.'

'Hmmmn, I might start pestering her again. We're older now, we've got a right to know.'

'What does Paul think?'

'When I asked him whether he thought Nan was Aboriginal, he just laughed and said, "Isn't it obvious. Of course she is."' Paul, of course, had been brought up with Aboriginal people.

'I don't think we can really decide until we hear Mum admit it from her own lips.'

'That'll be the day.'

A few weeks later, Mum popped in for her usual visit, laden with cakes and eager to tell me about the latest bargain she'd bought at auction. I'd been to too many auctions with Mum in the past; I knew that many items that looked like bargains at first glance turned out to be a total waste of money on closer inspection. The auctioneers had become so used to Mum buying things no one else would buy that they often knocked things down to her without taking any bids from the floor.

'One-o-four will have it,' they'd shout, as a hammer without a handle or a duplicating machine that didn't duplicate came up for grabs. 'You'll have it, won't you, one-o-four, you buy anything for a dollar.' One-o-four was Mum's permanent bidding number.

'Come out to the car and see what I've bought,' Mum said excitedly. 'You won't believe it.'

As she opened up the back of the car, she said generously, 'You can have whatever you like, there's plenty here.' Mum always bought in bulk.

Apart from the usual assortment of rusty tools and various other odds and ends, Mum had, in fact, actually bought something useful: a box of Indian cheesecloth shirts. There were another seven boxes that had to be picked up later. Approximately 140 shirts in all.

'I'll sell what we can't use at Trash and Treasure,' Mum said. That wasn't a good suggestion—Mum always came home from those markets with more than she had taken.

'Aargh! I don't even want to think about it. Let's go and eat that cake you brought.'

We settled down in the kitchen and I made a cup of tea. Mum was soon in a relaxed and talkative mood. After a while there was a lull in the conversation, so I said very casually, 'We're Aboriginal, aren't we, Mum?'

'Yes, dear,' she replied, without thinking.

'Do you realise what you just said?' I grinned triumphantly.

Mum put her cake back onto her plate and looked as though she was going to be sick.

'Don't you back down now!' I said quickly. 'There've been too many skeletons in our family closet. It's time things came out in the open.'

After a few minutes' strained silence, Mum said, 'Why shouldn't you kids know now? It's not as though you're little any more. Besides, it's different now.'

'All those years, Mum,' I said. 'How could you have lied to us all those years?'

'It was only a little white lie,' she replied sadly.

I couldn't help laughing at her unintentional humour. In no time at all, we were both giggling uncontrollably. It was as if a wall that had been between us suddenly crumbled away. I felt closer to Mum then than I had for years.

Source: Sally Morgan, *My Place for Young Readers: Sally's Story*, Fremantle Press, 1990

Breakaway tasks 10

Remembering

1 What has Mum bought at auctions? (literal understanding)

2 How much would Mum pay for anything? (literal understanding)

Understanding

3 Why wasn't the narrator happy that her mum was going to the trash and treasure market to sell the shirts? (literal understanding)

4 What did the girls need from their mother? (literal understanding)

Analysing

5 How does Mum feel about telling her girls the truth about their Aboriginality? What words/phrases tell you so? (inferential understanding)

6 What clues tell you that the situation for Aboriginal people has changed? What would it have been and what is it now? (inferential understanding)

7 How do you know the lie had kept them distant from each other? (inferential understanding)

Evaluating

8 Write a paragraph that argues your interpretation of each of the following statements about the passage. Be sure to follow the steps to establish your opinions, and use both direct and indirect evidence.

a Honesty is vital for good relationships.

b The family is going to be closer in the future.

c Mum's deception is unforgivable.

(interpretative understanding)

Strands in action

Core task

For years you will be answering questions about texts. How about you get to ask some? Choose a short story or a passage from a novel that is widely available. For the text you have chosen create an 'Understanding My Text' worksheet. On this worksheet:

- write a 50–100 word summary of the text you have chosen
- write ten literal understanding questions that cover the who, what, where, why, when and how questions for the text
- write five inferential understanding questions that will require your 'student' to find two or more pieces of evidence from the text that enables them to draw conclusions
- write two interpretative statements about the text that will require your 'student' to give an opinion and defend it.

Like all good worksheets, it needs to have an answer sheet—so you'll have to provide that too. For the literal understanding questions, underline and identify where the answers are (like the example on the second page of this module). Write a list (like the example on the third page of this module) of the 'clues' provided in the text that would enable a student to draw a conclusion. For the interpretative questions, outline as many opinions as you can think of that might be valid (provable with the text) and identify the one you think is most correct.

Extra tasks

1 With inferential understanding you have to interrogate a passage for the meanings of words. Slang presents really excellent opportunities for seeing the difference between the literal meaning and the intended meaning.

Expression	Literal meaning	Intended meaning
His *blood is worth bottling*.	His blood is so good he should preserve it in jars.	He is an excellent man.
She's got *a few kangaroos loose in the top paddock*.	There are wild kangaroos hopping around in a paddock some distance away.	
That wasn't a game—*that was a massacre*!		
He *cracked me up*!		
Now *the flood-gates are open*, I can't get her to stop!		
It was *sold lock, stock and barrel*.		
She's got *ants in her pants*.		
His *heart broke*.		
She's as *sharp as a tack*!		
He talks *a mile a minute*.		

2 Find two quotable quotes from *Love, Aubrey* that would be effective evidence to prove each of the following statements to be true. Then explain your choices.

- **a** Aubrey's mother was trying hard to reconnect with her daughter.
- **b** Aubrey's grandmother was deliberately finding ways to help Aubrey heal.
- **c** Bridget's mother was important in Aubrey overcoming her grief.
- **d** Aubrey is going to be alright.
- **e** Aubrey loved her family very much.
- **f** Aubrey's father was a great dad.

3 Literal understanding is considered to be the most basic form of understanding, inferential understanding is considered higher and interpretative the highest. What do you think of this ordering? Why would interpretative understanding be the most complex?

4 Using the passage you chose for the Core Task, write a paragraph on one of the interpretative questions you wrote. You must use at least three examples of direct evidence and one of indirect evidence to support your interpretation.



Some stories are true that never happened.

Elie Wiesel (b. 1928),
writer, professor and political activist

Fantastic worlds

Chapter overview

The world is full of fantastic stories. Human beings were telling stories long before they could ever read or write. Amazing myths, strange legends, fearless folktales, fascinating fables, twisted fairytales and modern fantasy stories are everywhere. Inside these stories you will discover strange characters, exciting events and new ways to create worlds that challenge you to explore your own.

1

A taste of myths and legends



Long before the World Wide Web, TV or even books, people told stories to entertain and to teach. Many of these stories explained how the world was made and why people existed. Over many generations, people around the globe have told stories to pass on beliefs and ideas about their world.

Many people can remember when they were young being told stories about Santa Claus bringing presents for them if they were good. Some people might have been told that thunder and lightning were signs of a god's anger, or the tooth fairy would leave money if a tooth was left under a pillow at night.

These are examples of modern myths, traditional stories explaining events that happen in our world. Childhood myths are very real in the imagination of young children because they help children to make sense of the world around them. Stories like these have existed for thousands of years in every culture around the globe.

Myths and legends from around the world live on in modern books, movies and TV shows, which include many traditional stories and characters.

DID YOU KNOW...

Many families have different versions of stories about Santa Claus, the Easter bunny or the tooth fairy that have been passed down the generations. Does your family have different childhood stories about special characters or events?

Exploring ancient creation myths

People have always been curious about our world and why we live here. Long ago, people wanted answers to questions about the world and themselves, so they often told stories based on traditional beliefs. Remember, they didn't have the scientific knowledge we have today to help us understand our world and ourselves. Some of the questions they asked were:

- How was the Earth made?
- Why are there floods and fires?
- What causes earthquakes and volcanoes?
- Where do rain, thunder, clouds, stars and lightning come from?
- Who created the sun and the moon?

People in different countries retold favourite stories to answer these questions. These stories became their myths, and were passed down from generation to generation. Myths were an explanation of how things were created and why things happened in the natural world. On the following pages are some ancient myths from different cultures that explain how parts of our universe were created.



Myths and legends

A **myth** is a traditional story and usually involves supernatural human or non-human beings, such as gods, strange beasts, hideous monsters, giant serpents or other amazing creatures. Myths explain how some things in our world came to exist, as well as traditional beliefs and customs.

A **legend** is a traditional story explaining the actions or achievements of a popular character or historical figure. A legend may be a mixture of true and imagined events, with some larger-than-life ingredients.

MĀORI CREATION MYTH

Long ago, the Sky Father, called Ranginui, and the Earth Mother, called Papatūānuku, were husband and wife, and they lived together. Ranginui and Papatūānuku had many children, but these children lived in complete darkness because their parents were so closely united.

When these children grew up, they talked about what it would be like to live in a place where there was light and not always darkness.

Tūmatauenga, the most angry and aggressive of the children, said: 'We should join together and kill our parents, because then we could all enjoy living in the light.'

But Tāne Mahuta, his brother, strongly disagreed. 'We do not need to kill them. We just need to push them apart, because then our Sky Father can look down on us and protect us, and our Earth Mother can live with us and look after us.'

All the other children agreed with this plan except Tāwhirimātea, the son in charge of the wind and the storms. He was very worried that his parents would be forced apart.

So all the children except Tāwhirimātea tried to push their parents apart. First Rongomātāne, the god of crops, tried; then Tangaroa, the god of the sea; then his brother Haumia-tiketike, the god of food which grows in the wild, joined with him to try to force their parents apart.

Although the brothers tried very hard to separate them, the Sky Father and Earth Mother remained close together and did not separate.

Finally, Tāne Mahuta, who was god of forests and insects, tried. His idea was very different to the other children's. They had tried to stand up and push their parents apart. Instead, he lay on his back and pushed up with his powerful feet. Using every part of his body, Tāne pushed and pushed until, to his parents shock and sadness, they were gradually forced apart.

Tāwhirimātea was very upset when he heard his father's cries and his mother's screams. He created huge storms and powerful winds, and he promised all his brothers they would forever have to face his anger in this way. He joined his father in the sky, and today he still releases storms and winds upon the Earth.

Ranginui and Papatūānuku still grieve over their forced separation. Ranginui's tears fall onto the Earth as rain to show his sorrow at being separated from his beloved wife. Papatūānuku sometimes heaves and strains, nearly tearing herself apart, to try to reach her loving husband in the sky. This is the cause of earthquakes and tremors. And when the mists and clouds cover the forests, you are seeing Papatūānuku's sighs as she dreams of Ranginui.



CHINESE CREATION MYTH

In the beginning, the universe was a black egg and the heaven and earth were mixed together. Inside this egg was Pangu. He felt suffocated, so he cracked the egg with a broad axe, and the light, clear part of the egg floated up to form Heaven while the yellow, heavy part sank down to form the Earth.

When Pangu died his breath became the wind and clouds, his voice the rolling thunder, his eyes the sun and the moon, and his hair and beard the stars in the sky. The flowers and trees were formed from his skin, the marrow in his bones became jade and pearls, and his sweat became the good rain that nurtured the Earth. That was how the heaven and Earth were created.

JAPANESE MYTH ABOUT THE SUN AND THE MOON

The god Izanagi, mourning over the death of his beloved wife, Izanami, followed her into the underworld. When he saw her decaying body he ran away. Because he felt dirty from his journey into the underworld he washed himself in the sea.

He decided to wash every part of his body individually. He removed his left eye and washed it carefully in the water. By doing this the sun was born, and the sun became a goddess called Amaterasu.

Next he removed his right eye and also washed it in the water. This eye became the moon, and the moon became a goddess called Tsukiyomi.

DID YOU KNOW...

Amaterasu is pronounced *ah-mar-tair-a-soo* and Tsukiyomi is pronounced *tsoo-key-yo-me*.

Breakaway tasks 1

Remembering

1 In the Māori creation myth, why were the Sky Father and Earth Mother separated by their children?

2 In the Chinese story, how did Pangu escape the egg?

3 Which parts of the god Izanagi became the sun and the moon in the Japanese story?

Understanding

4 In the Māori creation myth, how do the stories of the children's actions explain the following common New Zealand features?

- fierce winds and storms
- earthquakes
- mist
- rain.

5 In the Chinese story, why was Pangu so important?

6 Why did the god Izanagi follow his wife into the underworld in the Japanese sun and moon story?

Applying

7 Using the Māori creation myth, make a list of natural features that have been included in this ancient story about the creation of New Zealand.

Creating

8 In a group of two or three, use your imagination to write a 'mini-myth' story of about 100 words for people living in ancient times so they can answer two of the following questions:

- What causes earthquakes?
- Why is fire hot and red?
- Where do rain, snow and ice come from?
- Why does the moon change shape all the time?
- How were clouds first created?

Legends from other times and places

This classic legend from ancient Greece includes all the ingredients of a great legend: heroic people, brave deeds, amazing events and exciting storytelling.

THE TROJAN HORSE

Paris was the Prince of Troy, and he fell in love with Helen, a Greek woman. Now Paris was thought to be the most handsome man in the world, and Helen the most beautiful woman. Helen was already married to a Greek man, the King of Sparta, named Menelaus, so Paris and Helen decided to run away together. They travelled back from Sparta to the city of Troy, taking with them many of the treasures from the palace of Menelaus. This began a great war between the Greeks and the Trojans (the people of Troy).

This war went on for ten years. The Greeks circled the city of Troy and blockaded it, but they just couldn't break through the huge walls that surrounded the city. They were determined to capture the city and take back Helen and the treasure for Menelaus, but there was only one way in, through the main city gates of Troy.

The Greeks decided on a plan to trick the Trojans into opening the city gates. They built a huge wooden horse, but made it hollow inside so it could hold many soldiers. They filled the horse with Greek soldiers and left it outside the city of Troy. Then the Greek troops sailed off to a nearby island. They also left one Greek soldier, named Sinon, dressed in tattered clothes and with his arms tied together. He was to tell the Trojans that he had escaped from the Greeks because they wanted to sacrifice him, and that the huge wooden horse had been built by the Greeks for their goddess Athena, to seek forgiveness for making her angry.

To support Sinon's story they had placed this inscription on the side of the wooden horse: 'For their return home the Greeks dedicate this offering to Athena.'

Sinon then explained that if the Trojans took the wooden horse inside their city this would mean the Trojans would be able to invade Greek cities and win the war. Some Trojans were suspicious but the citizens of Troy decided to push the wooden horse through their gates and into the city. That night they celebrated the departure of the Greeks and their future victory in this long war.

During the night, when everything was quiet, Sinon sneaked out and opened a door in the side of the wooden horse. The Greek soldiers climbed out, opened the front gate to the city of Troy, and let in the Greek army that had sailed back to Troy. The Trojans were taken by surprise and were completely defeated by the Greeks. Menelaus captured Helen and the treasure and returned to Sparta victorious.



Trojan Horse

Breakaway tasks 2

Remembering

1 Who was the Prince of Troy?

Understanding

2 Why did the Greeks sail away?

Applying

3 How might a person trick someone today using the idea of a 'wooden horse' trap?

Analysing

4 Turn this story into a set of ten to twelve steps. The first step is done for you:

Paris falls in love with Helen.

When you have finished, cut up the steps and have a competition with a partner to see who is fastest at putting them in the correct order.

Evaluating

5 What would you say is the main message of the legend of the wooden horse? Summarise the message in one sentence.

DID YOU KNOW...

Menelaus is pronounced *men-e-lay-us*.

The legend of King Arthur

Legends were often passed on by word of mouth, and many were sung because that made them easier to remember. These sung legends were known as ballads. 'The Ballad of the Loathly Lady' below is set in the time of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. This legendary King Arthur ruled England over 1000 years ago when there were good and evil knights, wicked witches and terrible dragons.

King Arthur and his Queen Guinevere lived in a magical world of castles and chivalry in a place called Camelot. Arthur possessed a magic sword, Excalibur, which protected him from everything except one woman. This woman had once been a beautiful princess, but had been turned into a hideous old woman by the curse of a wicked witch. Read this ballad aloud to hear the rhythm and the rhyme of this story in song.

THE BALLAD OF THE LOATHLY LADY

By Amanda Swaney

SONG

Into the deep dank woods King Arthur strayed
And by a black armour'd knight was waylaid,
'Arthur,' he challenged, 'will you fight?
Prove to me your reputation for might.'

To his scabbard Arthur's hand flew,
But 'twas not Excalibur he drew
But it was alas, only cold, clear air
'It's left at Camelot,' he moaned in despair.

The Black Knight cried with mighty glee,
'I have you now Arthur, but let me see
To kill you now would be too swift,
A chance I'll give you, a little gift.'

'Bring me the answer to this riddle noble sire,
What is it that women do most desire?
The answer I want in three days' time
If not, Death, and your crown will be mine.

King Arthur puzzled as homeward he rode.
What was the answer? His brow deeply furrowed,
For every lady he asked had the answer of course
But it varied for each, according to source.

No decision he reached, and so by day three
Trudged his way to the Black Knight's territory.
But as he drew near, a lady loudly called out,
'My lord come near, I've the solution you've sought.'





She lifted her head and Arthur drew back,
For indeed she was the most hideous hag.
'Come hither my lord, be not startled or dismayed
For I've the answer to the challenge that's been laid.

'But you must promise to grant me one wish.'
'Anything,' exulted Arthur, 'once this deed I finish.'
When Arthur learnt the answer, he grinned and turned,
'No, wait,' growled the hag, 'for I'll not be spurned!'



That night poor Arthur was downcast and distressed,
'What ails you my lord, what makes you depressed?'
Asked Gawain and Guinevere, so worried to view
Their king with a complexion of such a pale hue.

'My honour's at stake,' sighed the king, 'but I cannot think
How to do as I'm bound, it makes my heart sink.'
'Why I'll defend your honour,' cried gallant Gawain;
'And in that way I'll show my love for you plain.'



'In exchange for a way clear, she asked me to pledge
A young knight from my court to whom she could be wed.
Be warned good Sir Gawain, this lady looks foul,
Life wed to her would be an endless trial.'

'Fear not!' spake Sir Gawain, 'I'm not concerned with beauty
For to serve my lord is my desire and duty.
Come let us ride to collect my darling wife
With whom I'm now pledged to spend all my life.'

A cloak of scarlet hid the hag,
Still and silent upon the log she sat
Brave and bold the band of knights drew near,
Sir Gawain approached, his heart filled with fear.

And lo the lady turned her head,
Her face so foul, and fearsome and ill-bred
Great gasps of horror from all assembled,
And to a man they turned and trembled.



'My lady I will be thine if you'll be mine
Our two lives I wish to entwine.'
'My lord,' said she, 'that's all I desire.
My heart is filled with passion and fire.'

'My lord I beg you now look around.'
Gawain was drawn by the attractive sound.
He turned, so bewitched was he by the voice
And what he saw made his heart rejoice.

A lady of rare beauty he now perceived,
Did his eyes deceive, could he now believe?
This delicate damsel toward him drew near
His heart lifted, now full of hope and cheer.

'I am your wife,' she kissed him sweetly
And placed a slender hand on his so lightly,
'You've now half released me from the spell
And of the remaining curse I'll now tell.

'You must decide which of these you would like
To have beauty by day, and me ugly at night
Or ugly by day, and beauty only in your sight.
Which of these my lord would give most delight?'

Sir Gawain stood still and pondered deep
Whichever choice appeared to make her weep.
At last in sheer and utter despair
He said, 'Lady you choose what you think fair.'

'My lord,' she cried, and her arms around him flung
'The spell you've broken and now we've won,
For you've given me what we women most desire,
The thing to which we all plot and aspire.

'And that, my lord and now listen well,
For with your words you've broken the spell,
What every woman wishes each and every day
Is to have her own, her very own way!'



Source: Amanda Swaney, *Sharing Poetry with Children*, Ashton Scholastic, 1991



Rhythm and Rhyme

Rhythm is the musical flow or pattern of beats in words, created by the pauses and stresses in the words.

Rhyme is the pattern created when sounds at the end of words are alike. Rhyme is often used at the end of lines in poems and songs.

Breakaway tasks 3

Remembering

1 What was the name of King Arthur's magic sword?

2 Who challenged King Arthur to solve the riddle or face death?

Understanding

3 Why did Sir Gawain decide to marry the hag?

4 How did Sir Gawain succeed in releasing the lady from the curse?

Applying

5 With a partner, complete a table like the one below using your own ideas and a dictionary.

Key word in the poem	Your own idea about the meaning of the word	A dictionary meaning of the word
dank		
waylaid		
furrowed		
exulted		
hideous		
spurned		
downcast		
pledge		
fearsome		
bewitched		
damsel		
despair		

Analysing

6 Make a list of ten words from the ballad that suggests this story is set in the medieval world of knights and castles.

Evaluating

7 This ballad presents stereotypes of men and women. It presents images of how men and women were expected to live and act in the medieval world. Three stereotypes it presents are:

- a man's bravery and heroism are his most important qualities
- a woman's beauty is her most important quality
- a woman always wants to have her own way.

Are these stereotypes of men and women still appropriate for today's society? Why or why not?

Creating

8 Imagine you are creating a TV advertisement to show how young men and women should live and act in our society. Complete these one-sentence slogans for the advertisement:

- A real guy today should …
- A real girl today should …

Urban legends

There are thousands of urban legends about all sorts of topics, including food, sports, movies, wars, holidays, cars, medicine, recent world events and even historical events such as the sinking of the *Titanic*. There are internet sites devoted to keeping track of the latest, and how they change. Urban legends take you to other worlds, feed your imagination and challenge you to decide what is true and what is not.



Story ingredients

Stories, including urban legends, include the following narrative or story ingredients:

- **characters**—the main people in the story
- **settings**—the main places and times for events
- **conflicts**—the main problems that occur
- **action**—the way characters behave and react
- **resolution**—the outcome or result at the end of the story.

DREADING THE DREADLOCKS

By Paul Grover

There was this cool guy with huge dreadlocks you might have seen walking round the streets. He had big dreadlocks on each side of his head. Just the other day he decided to get them cut off. So he went to a hairdresser in the local shopping centre, and of course they couldn't get the clippers through his hair, so out came the biggest pair of scissors you have ever seen.

They started to hack into the dreads and got about halfway through when he started yelling and ran out of the hairdressers. His girlfriend found him dead in their flat the next day.

When the police investigated they discovered a nest of red-back spiders had made their home in his hair. They had bitten him to death when the scissors cut their nest to pieces.

Source: Paul Grover, *Heinemann English Project: Urban Legends*, Pearson, 2006



DID YOU KNOW...

Many urban legends play on our fears of being alone, in the dark, with strangers or in strange places.

Strands in action

Core tasks

Modern urban legends don't travel by word of mouth as much as by emails, websites, newspapers and magazines. They are called urban legends because they have grown across cities and countries. Some are funny, some are weird and some are amazing. They are called legends because they contain classic legend ingredients—exaggerated characters and far-fetched events. After reading the urban legend 'Dreading the dreadlocks' on the previous page, answer the following questions.

1 **a** Which two parts of the dreadlocks story make you suspicious than it is an urban legend rather than a true story?

b Which parts of the story are the most believable and could easily have happened in real life? An urban legend often uses everyday events or people to make the legend more believable.

2 Create your own urban legend! Choose one item from each of the columns below and use these ingredients to create a new urban legend of about 150 words.

Location	Situation	Object
cemetery	storm brewing	spade
hot air balloon	blackout	pot plant
cruise boat	fire	drink can
school at night	lost sports shorts	spider
shopping centre	injured person	mobile phone
car park	broken watch	football

3 Share your urban legends with others.

a Create a class blog of these urban legends.

b Have a contest to decide the funniest, the scariest, the weirdest and the most believable urban legends.

Extra tasks

1 There are many modern legendary people and events. The story of the bushranger Ned Kelly has become a modern legend in Australia. The story of the sinking of the *Titanic* and the discovery of the tomb of the young Egyptian pharaoh Tutankhamun have also been turned into modern legends. These real events have become so famous that parts of the story have become exaggerated and new events added.

Choose one of these famous events:

- the story of Ned Kelly
- the sinking of the *Titanic*
- the story of Phar Lap
- the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb.

Use your library and internet research skills to explore your topic and locate some of the amazing events, exaggerated stories or strange ingredients that have been told about this famous event. Present your findings to one student who has researched a different event, and then to a small group.





2 Use the library and the internet to find a myth or legend about:

- the adventures of Robin Hood
- Theseus and the Minotaur
- Odysseus and the Cyclops
- Perseus and Medusa
- Icarus and Daedalus
- Jason and the Argonauts
- the heroes of Asgard
- a myth or legend from a culture in Asia or the Pacific.

For your chosen myth or legend, answer the following questions:

a Is this story a myth or a legend? How can you tell?

b What is the main event of the story? Why is this event important?

c Why might the people who first heard this myth or legend believe it was important for them to know?

d Give two reasons why we should continue to read and explore the myths and legends of other cultures and countries.

3 **a** Choose a group of people from the following list, then find one of their important myths, legends or traditional stories.

- Native Americans
- Indigenous Australians
- Polynesians
- Aztecs
- Indonesians
- Chinese
- Vietnamese
- Japanese
- Germans
- Scandinavians
- Indians
- a people of your own choice.

b Select one of the following ways to present your chosen story.

- Create a children's picture book for a Year 1 or Year 2 student.
- Form a small group and create a mini-play or short movie to retell the story.
- 'Interview' the main characters in the story about their experiences.
- Give a live dramatic reading or create a podcast.
- Create a digital story using this myth, legend or traditional story.
- Create a poster version of this story for exhibition.

4 Use your internet research skills to locate other urban legends. Select one and make some of the following changes.

- Change the gender of one of the main characters (you might have to change the name as well).
- Change the age of one or more of the main characters.
- Turn some of the characters into different creatures, for example dogs into horses or humans into cats.
- Change the location, for example try a different place or a different country.
- Change part of the setting, for example the time of day or the season.
- Change some of the objects featured, for example weapons, clothing, cars or other things people use.

Read your new version to a small group and see how many people can work out what changes you made. Discuss in your group how the changes altered the meaning or interest level.

DID YOU KNOW...

The idea of urban legends has existed for a long time. 'Playground stories', 'pub yarns' and 'old wives' tales' are all names for urban legends.

2

Fables, fairytales and twisted tales



Ever since we were little children we have read, seen and been told fables and fairytales. There are hundreds of books and films in which fables and fairytales from around the world are retold in their original form, or changed to suit an audience in the twenty-first century.

In our globalised world, many people from different cultures are familiar with characters such as Cinderella, the Three Little Pigs, the Seven Dwarves, Pinocchio and the Gingerbread Man. In past centuries, fables and fairytales were passed down to teach lessons, give warnings or offer wise advice to people, long before reading and writing were widespread. Different countries and cultures developed their own fables and fairytales, and travellers often adapted and retold stories they heard to create new versions of old fables and fairytales.

Many of these stories are hundreds or even thousands of years old, and today twisted tales continue to entertain us. Think about these very popular modern fables and fairytales: *Shrek*, *The Princess Bride*, *Toy Story*, Roald Dahl's *Revolting Rhymes* and *The Wizard of Oz*. Classic and modern fables, fairytales and twisted tales take us into worlds beyond our own, but teach us about the world we live in.

DID YOU KNOW...

Famous collections of fairytales include the *Tales of the Arabian Nights*, and the European fables collected by Hans Christian Anderson and the brothers Grimm.

Fables—foxes, lions, mice and elephants

Some of the most famous fables were those told by a Greek man in ancient times, about 2500 years ago. His name was Aesop, and one legend explains how Aesop gained his freedom from slavery by telling his fables to King Croesus. A fable is a brief story, and usually includes animal characters. Each fable will include a moral or a lesson that emphasises the good or bad qualities in a person's character or actions. One famous Aesop's fable you might already know is the story of the hare and the tortoise. Following is another Aesop's fable.



THE FOX AND THE GOAT

By Aesop

A fox had the bad luck to fall into a well, and no matter how much he tried, he just couldn't get out. Just as he was beginning to worry that he would never escape, a goat came along to drink from the well.

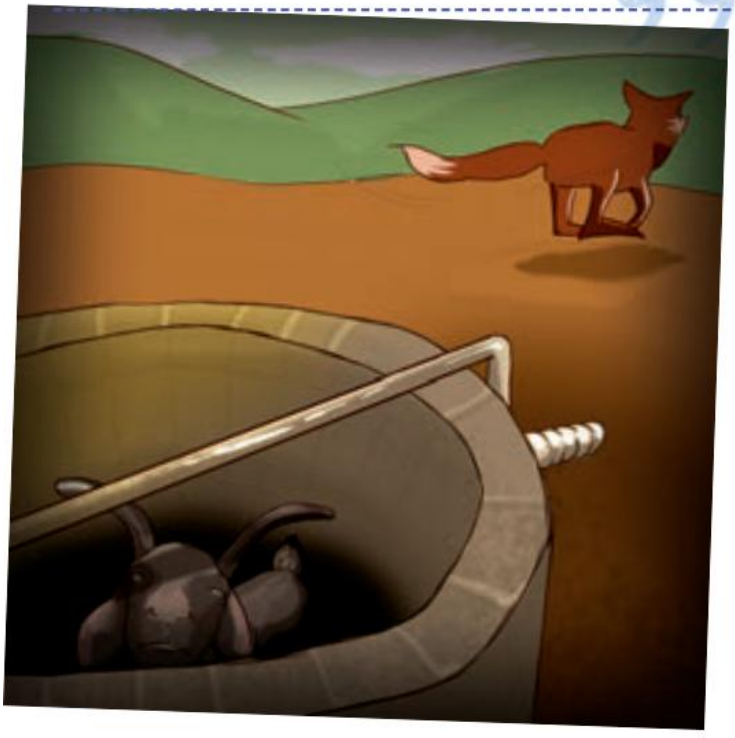
'Why, dear fox, what are you doing down there?' he exclaimed.

'What, haven't you heard about the terrible drought, my good friend?' the fox replied. 'When I heard I rushed to this well and jumped straight down. The water down here is cool and the best I have ever tasted. There is so much down here you should jump down and join me.'

When the goat heard all this he didn't hesitate. He leapt down into the well to where the fox was waiting. Immediately the fox jumped on the goat's back, climbed up his long horns, and then hauled his way out of the well. The goat was left confused at the bottom. The fox looked back down at the unhappy goat, and said,

'Next time, friend, be sure to look before you leap.'

Moral: it is not safe to trust the advice of a person in difficulty.



Breakaway tasks 4

Understanding

1 Why do you think Aesop chose a goat and a fox for this story?

Applying

2 Describe two situations when you know it is always better to 'look before you leap'.

Analysing

3 How did the fox trick the goat and why did the goat fall for the trick?

4 How is this story typical of a fable?

Evaluating

5 Explain what each of the following expressions or sayings from Aesop's other fables mean:
- a wolf in sheep's clothing
- sour grapes
- a dog in a manger.

Creating

6 Certain human qualities are often associated with particular animals. A parent might call their mischievous child 'a little monkey', or a journalist might describe a runner as being 'as swift as a gazelle'. Choose three more animals and create your own similes or metaphors to describe the way a person might act or perform, and then turn one of these into your own 100-word fable.

Writer's TOOLBOX

SIMILES AND METAPHORS

A **simile** is a comparison of two objects or ideas to make a point. A simile always uses the words 'like' or 'as' in the comparison. For example, 'He was as cool as a cucumber'.

A **metaphor** is a direct comparison between two objects to emphasise the quality of one of them. For example, 'The moon is a silver coin'.

Fairytales

Fairytales are the earliest forms of fantasy stories, and were often told to teach people how to live in a world filled with good and evil. Today, fairytales are often retold in different ways for small children.

Fairytales are stories about the fortunes and misfortunes of a hero or heroine. They go on adventures and often have magical experiences, but end by living happily ever after. 'Any Prince to Any Princess' is a modern poem written in the form of a letter from a fairytale prince to a princess. In this letter, the prince talks about different fairytale characters, objects and events. Read the poem and then answer the questions that follow.

ANY PRINCE TO ANY PRINCESS

By Adrian Henri

POEM

August is coming
and the goose, I'm afraid,
is getting fat.
There have been
no golden eggs for some months now.
Straw has fallen well below market price
despite my frantic spinning
and the sedge is,
as you rightly point out,
withered.



I can't imagine how the pea
got under your mattress.
I apologise humbly.
The chambermaid has, of course, been sacked.
As has the frog footman.
I understand that, during my recent fact-finding
tour of the Golden River,
despite your nightly unavailing efforts,
he remained obstinately
froggish.

I hope that the Three Wishes granted by the
General Assembly
will go some way towards redressing
this unfortunate recent sequence of events.
The fall in output from the shoe-factory, for
example:
no one could have foreseen the work-to-rule
by the National Union of Elves. Not to mention
the fact
that the court has been fast asleep
for the last six and a half years.
The matter of the poisoned apple has been taken
up by the Board of Trade: I think I can assure
you the incident will not be repeated.
I can quite understand, in the circumstances,
your reluctance to let down
your golden tresses. However
I feel I must point out
that the weather isn't getting any better
and I already have a nasty chill
from waiting at the base
of the White Tower. You must see
the absurdity of the situation.
Some of the courtiers are beginning to talk,
not to mention the humble villagers.
It's been three weeks now, and not even
a word.





Princess,
a cold, black wind
howls through our empty palace.
Dead leaves litter the bedchamber;
the mirror on the wall hasn't said a thing
since you left. I can only ask,
bearing all this in mind,
that you think again,

let your hair down,

reconsider.



Source: Adrian Henri, *The Loveless Motel*, Jonathon Cape, 1980



Breakaway tasks 5

Understanding

1 What was one reason why people originally told fairytales?

Applying

2 Use a dictionary to explain the meaning of these words from the poem:
- sedge (clue: you might need a large or online dictionary because this is an old word)
- unavailing (clue: look up avail first)
- obstinately (clue: obstinate)
- redressing (clue: redress)
- foreseen (clue: foresee)
- reluctance (clue: reluctant)
- absurdity (clue: absurd)
- reconsider (clue: consider).

Analysing

3 a Which fairytales is the prince referring to in his letter when he mentions the following?
- a goose and golden eggs
- spinning straw
- a pea under a mattress
- three wishes
- elves who make shoes
- a poisoned apple
- a princess letting down her hair
- a mirror that talks

b Select two of the fairytales the prince refers to and, in about fifty words, tell the traditional story.

Creating

4 With a partner, interview one of the characters from a famous fairytale to humorously show the other side of the story from a modern viewpoint. Present a two-minute interview live to the class, or as a podcast or digital story. Here are some character ideas:
- 'The pigs are liars' (Mr Wolf about the three little pigs)
- 'I was betrayed' (The Giant of beanstalk fame)
- 'The truth about my sister Cinderell.' (An Ugly Stepsister)
- 'She wasn't as nice as you think. (one of the dwarves of Seven Dwarves fame)
- 'No one understands me' (Mr Dragon, Mr Troll or Mr Ogre).

Twisted tales—funny stories with a modern twist

Here is a well-known fairytale that has been 'twisted'. This means a modern writer has taken an old story and played around with some of the story's ingredients to give a new message or idea for today.

THE LITTLE GIRL AND THE WOLF

By James Thurber

One afternoon a big wolf waited in a dark forest for a little girl to come along carrying a basket of food to her grandmother. Finally a little girl did come along and she was carrying a basket of food.

'Are you carrying that basket to your grandmother?' asked the wolf.

The little girl said yes, she was. So the wolf asked her where her grandmother lived and the little girl told him and he disappeared into the wood.

When the little girl opened the door of her grandmother's house she saw that there was somebody in bed with a nightcap and nightgown on. She had approached no nearer than twenty-five feet from the bed when she saw that it was not her grandmother but the wolf, for even in a nightcap a wolf does not look any more like your grandmother than the Metro-Goldwyn lion [the lion of movie studio fame] looks like Calvin Coolidge [the American President in the 1920s]. So the little girl took an automatic out of her basket and shot the wolf dead.

Moral: It is not so easy to fool little girls nowadays as it used to be.

Source: James Thurber, *The Thurber Carnival*, Harper and Row, 1945



Breakaway tasks 6

Remembering

1 Make a list of all the elements in the previous story that are exactly the same as the traditional Little Red Riding Hood story.

Understanding

2 Why is this new Little Red Riding Hood so different from the traditional one?

Applying

3 What do you think might have been the moral or lesson of the original story?

Analysing

4 Do you think this new version is designed for children or for older people? How can you tell?

Evaluating

5 Do you agree with the new moral of the story? Give some reasons for your answer.



Adjectives

Writers and storytellers use **adjectives** because they help create interesting characters, unusual creatures and magical places. This is because adjectives are describing words for people, creatures, places, tastes, smells, feelings, sights and sounds. If you describe a witch as 'an evil, ugly, hunchbacked, old and dangerous hag', you are using adjectives to describe her. These adjectives tell us a great deal about the witch.

Adjectives also come in different sizes and strengths. For example, a magic wand might be a powerful wand, a more powerful wand or the most powerful magic wand in the world. You can decide how much or to what extent the quality applies to the character or the object. There are three degrees of adjectives, and they are called **positive**, **comparative** and **superlative**.

Strands in action

Core task

In a small group, draw up a table like the one on the right, and have a race with another group to think of three adjectives that would suit a traditional fairytale stereotype for each character. An example is given to show you what to do.

Character	Adjective 1	Adjective 2	Adjective 3
dragon	fierce	ferocious	terrifying
unicorn			
wizard			
giant			
ogre			
prince			
elf			
wolf			
spell			
castle			
forest			

Extra tasks

1 Use the table below to guide you as you create some powerful, more powerful and most powerful adjectives to describe the world of fables, fairytales and twisted tales. There are a few examples to start you off.

Positive adjective	Comparative adjective	Superlative adjective
evil	more evil	most evil
slimy	slimier	slimiest
magical		
		greediest
good	better	
	larger	
small		
		happiest
beautiful		
bad		
		kindest
cruel		
	more wicked	
dark		
	luckier	

2 In a small group, select one of Roald Dahl's revolting rhymes. Prepare a dramatic reading or a performance of this twisted fairytale and be prepared to talk about its messages and characters with the class.

3 **a** Form a small investigation team with one or two other students. Select which type of story you would like to investigate—fables or fairytales.

b Collect fables or fairytales from as many different countries and cultures as you can in one visit to the library or one internet search session.

c Take a close look at the fables or fairytales and see if there are any that have similarities. They might have similar characters, settings, messages or storylines. Select two that are similar to share with the class.

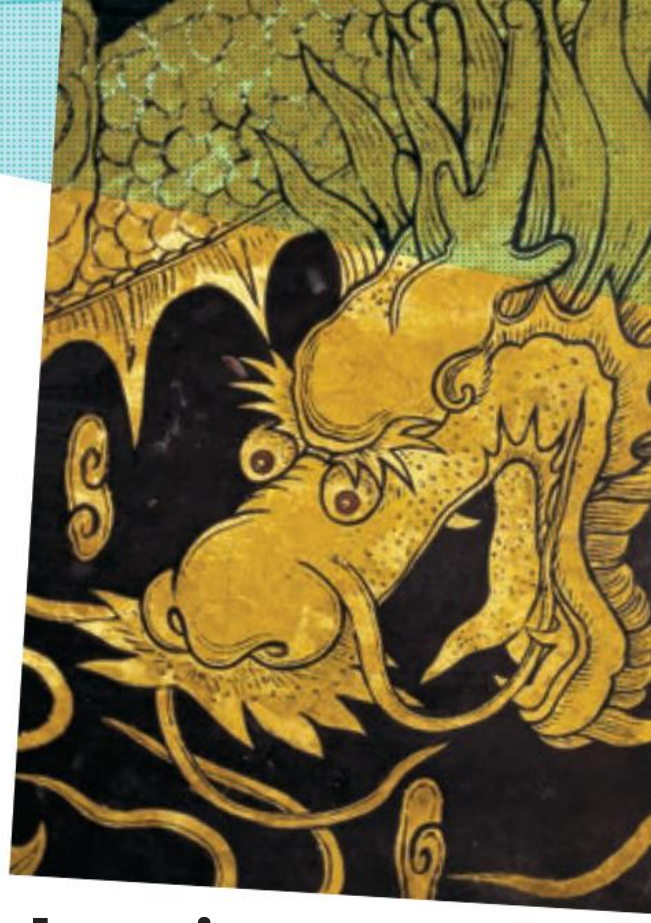
d Select your favourite fable or fairytale. Be prepared to explain what makes it your favourite above all the others.

4 Now you are going to write your own twisted fairytale. It should be about 300 words and use some of the ingredients in the table below. Try to mix and match in ways that create a weird, funny, unusual, horrible or amazing twisted fairytale.

Character ideas	Magic ideas	Plot ideas	Setting ideas	Theme ideas
dragon	rings	trapped	dark forests	good versus evil
wizard	swords	escape	magic castles	greed is punished
fairy godmother	spells	survival	strange towns	kindness is rewarded
wicked witch	curses	a happy future	secret passages	bullies are punished
good witch	lucky charms	a tragic end	cold corridors	courage is rewarded
prince	unlucky charms	an awful fate	empty rooms	looks can be deceiving
princess	cloaks	saved	busy streets	learn from your mistakes
ogre	mirrors	buried alive	pirate ships	luck shapes your destiny
elf	shoes	exiled	lonely seas	
troll	wands	journey		
cat	broomsticks			
frog	magic stones			
dwarf	magic powder			
king	magic books			
unicorn	magic numbers			
wolf				

3

Ancient tales and epic sagas



The earliest folktales and epic sagas were told to pass on traditional beliefs and customs. They were later written down, about 10 000 years ago, in the form of long tales of heroic adventures and brave deeds by legendary figures.

These early tales told of gods who could change their shape or form, talking snakes or huge natural disasters such as plagues and floods. They were first spoken as epic poems or stories many thousands of years ago in early civilisations in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Only much later were they written down on tablets of stone, painted on walls or recorded in parchments that we can still look at today.

Many of these ancient tales have now been retold in modern films and books, with characters and settings changed to suit an audience in the twenty-first century. Blockbuster movies of heroes and villains, dangerous adventures and courageous actions are often inspired by these ancient tales. Even modern superheroes such as Spiderman, Superman and Wonderwoman can be traced back to these ancient heroes.

An early epic

Ancient tales and sagas are the ancestors of modern fantasy stories such as the tales of Harry Potter, *The Lord of the Rings* or *The Chronicles of Narnia*. One of the most famous early examples is the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, from the ancient kingdom of Babylon.



The *Epic of Gilgamesh* on an ancient stone tablet

THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH

Gilgamesh was the king of the ancient city of Uruk. He was two-thirds a god and one-third a man, but he was also a tyrant who treated his subjects cruelly and selfishly lived in great wealth and pleasure. The other gods created Enkidu, who became a friend to Gilgamesh. He helped change Gilgamesh into a more kindly and friendly individual, and together they had many heroic and brave adventures. When Enkidu died, Gilgamesh was left alone and became deeply unhappy, and he began to think only of his own death. He decided to find the immortal one, Utnapishtim, and so discover the secret of eternal life …



Breakaway tasks 7

Remembering

1 What is an epic saga?
2 When were the first epic sagas created?
3 What were the main topics of these earliest tales?
4 Who was Gilgamesh?

Understanding

5 Why did early civilisations create epic sagas?
6 Why did Gilgamesh want to discover the secret of eternal life?

Analysing

7 Use your research and internet skills to locate an early epic saga from ancient Sumer, Assyria, China, India or Egypt. What does your chosen saga have in common with the earliest epics and sagas described in this section?

Tales of ancient Greece and Rome

Following the earliest epic tales came two huge and powerful civilisations that dominated large parts of the known western world—the ancient Greeks, followed by the ancient Romans. They also created stories to explain the origins of the world they knew, and to explain their own place in the world around them. These classic stories became the Greek and Roman myths and legends we know today.

Their great tales included stories about the world of the gods becoming involved in the lives of mortals on Earth, as well as heroes and heroines having mighty adventures and undertaking supernatural deeds. Well-known classic stories of this era include the following tales.

The Iliad by Homer (Greek)

In this collection of ancient Greek classic tales you'll find famous stories about legendary Greek heroes such as Achilles, Hector, Odysseus, Agamemnon, Priam and Paris, as well as stories about the gods and goddesses—Zeus, Athena, Poseidon and Apollo.



Poseidon, the god of the sea

The Odyssey by Homer (Greek)

The Odyssey presents more classic tales by Homer, including those of the Cyclops, as well as more about the gods, goddesses and legendary heroes.



The one-eyed mighty Cyclops with his sheep near his cave

The plays and poems of Sophocles (Greek)

These explore the world of the gods and famous heroes and heroines such as Antigone, Ajax, Electra and Oedipus.

Plays and poems by Euripides (Greek)

In this collection you'll find classic tales about heroic figures such as Medea, Electra and the Bacchae.

Histories by Livy (Roman)

Among Livy's early stories is the legend about the founding of Rome by Romulus and Remus, as well as stories about the hero Hercules, the god Jupiter and many others.

The Aeneid by Virgil (Roman)

In this Roman collection of great tales you will find stories about gods and goddesses such as Jupiter, Venus, Ulysses, Mercury, Diana and Cupid, as well as stories of Aeneas and other legendary Roman heroes.

Here is a classic Roman legend about how the mighty city of Rome began.

ROMULUS AND REMUS

The goddess Rhea was married to Mars, the Roman god of war. Rhea had two sons, they were twins, and she called them Romulus and Remus. She loved her boys, but some of the other gods and goddesses began to hatch evil plots to harm her father, herself, her husband and her children. To protect her twin boys, she set them adrift on the river, hoping someone would find them and save them from danger.

They floated to the bank of the river and there they were found by a she-wolf. This she-wolf fed them and cared for them for some time. Then a shepherd and his wife found the twins and adopted them.

As the twins grew older, they decided they did not want to stay at this shepherd's farm and take care of sheep. They wanted to be kings. They decided to build a city on the shores of the River Tiber. But they both wanted to be the only king. This began many quarrels between them, and they fought bitterly. In a fit of rage, Romulus picked up a rock, killed his brother and made himself king.

And that is how the mighty city of Rome began.



The brothers Romulus and Remus being fed by the she-wolf

Breakaway tasks 8

Remembering

1 Why did the ancient Greeks and Romans create their own classic tales?

2 Name four famous Greek gods, goddesses or heroes.

3 Name four famous Roman gods, goddesses or heroes.

4 Who are two famous Greek writers?

5 Who are two famous Roman writers?

Understanding

6 Livy called his legend about the beginning of Rome a 'history'. What might make you think his view of history is different from our view of history?

Applying

7 Why might the ancient Romans want the story of their great city to include the gods?

Analysing

8 Why do you think the ancient Romans might have wanted their capital city, Rome, to be founded by a boy who killed his brother? (Clue: Who was his father?)

Evaluating

9 What does the story of Romulus and Remus tell you about what the ancient Romans believed were the most important qualities and values in their world?

Creating

10 Write your own tale that involves 'modern' gods and goddesses founding your own town or suburb. Use clues from local street names or other landmarks in your area to tell a mythical story about how and why your area was first settled. You should write a maximum of 200 words.

Medieval classic tales

Many of the medieval tales included individual heroes battling against evil forces—sometimes human and sometimes supernatural. Some stories of the Middle Ages retold religious stories, with fantasy ingredients. Many of these medieval stories involved dragons, magic and monsters. Read the following extract about a great warrior hero, Beowulf.

THE STORY OF BEOWULF, AN EARLY ENGLISH MEDIEVAL TALE

Beowulf was a great warrior. He sailed to Denmark to save his relative King Hrothgar from a terrible monster, a swamp demon called Grendel. There was a huge battle, and Beowulf tore off Grendel's arm. Grendel fled from the battle and quickly sped home. But it was too late, and he bled to death.

Beowulf was a hero. But the next night Grendel's mother came to get revenge against Beowulf for killing her son. She attacked King Hrothgar's hall, so Beowulf fought and then killed her with a magic sword. Beowulf was again a hero and received many rewards from the King. Beowulf went on to have many more heroic adventures. He helped repel a Viking raid on Frisia led by King Hygelac. Eventually he became King of the Geats, and he ruled the Geats for over fifty years, until he was an old man.

Then he heard about a new monster that was scaring everybody, but this time it was a dragon. Even though he was very old, Beowulf was still a hero, so he went out and after a mighty battle finally killed the dragon. But the dragon had succeeded in fatally wounding Beowulf, and he died.



Beowulf finally kills the evil Grendel's mother.

Breakaway tasks 9

Remembering

1 Who was Beowulf?

2 What was the name of the swamp monster Beowulf defeated?

3 How did Beowulf die?

Understanding

4 Why was Beowulf honoured as a hero?

5 Why would Beowulf's achievements have been so important to his people?

Creating

6 Draw or create your own design for the swamp demon Grendel. You could do an internet search on Grendel images to help you.

DID YOU KNOW...

Beowulf is pronounced *Bay-oh-wolf* and Grendel is pronounced *Grenn-dell.*



Enter the dragon

Dragons have been part of myths and legends since ancient times. There were dragons in stories from ancient Greece and India, as well as ancient China and Japan.

It was in medieval times that the figure of the dragon really became popular in European countries, but these dragons were a little different to Asian dragons.

Dragons are now a big part of the modern fantasy world. Just think of the different dragons in *Shrek*, *The Lord of the Rings*, the Harry Potter series, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *The Wizard of Earthsea* and *The Neverending Story*. On the following page is a poem that explores the evidence for dragons still existing in our world. By looking at the pointers beside the poem you will also see how the descriptive power of poetry creates images of dragons right before our eyes.

EVIDENCE

By Nick Toczek

Dragon in computer games.
Places bearing dragon names.
Dragon used as skin tattoo.
Ship to carry Viking crew.
Sleeping now, but when it wakes,
starts up storms and makes earthquakes.

Dragon drawn on early maps.
Gardens where the dragon snaps.
Ponds controlled by dragonflies.
Dragon donning human guise.
Serpent circling the globe.
Dragon on a Chinese robe.

Dragon flown as paper kite.
Effigy in tribal rite.
Dragon as a kids' cartoon.
Origin of word 'dragoon'.
Dragon that the hero slew.
Biggest thing that ever flew.

Dragon landing on your roof.
You still saying: 'Bring me proof!'

Source: Nick Toczek, *Dragons!*, Macmillan Children's Books, London, 2005

Rhyme: the poem is written in a pattern of six-line verses with each pair of lines rhyming (called couplets—linked to the word 'couple'), except for the last two lines that stand alone. This rhyming pattern gives a flowing and regular rhythm that makes us want to listen.

Unusual sentences: many of the lines have a full stop but the line is not a complete sentence. This pattern creates a large and varied list of quick dragon images, reinforcing the idea that the evidence for dragons is everywhere.

Alliteration: repeating the beginning sounds of words. 'Starts up storms' has the 'st' sound to reinforce the sudden, sharp and fierce power of the dragon.

Pun: 'dragon snaps' is a play on the word 'snapdragon', the name of a common garden flower which is thought to resemble a dragon as it opens and closes its mouth.

Repetition: repeating the word 'dragon' so many times emphasises the power and presence of the dragon. We are continuously reminded how well-known and ever-present different types of dragons really are.

Contrast: there are many contrasting images of dragons in the poem—from beasts circling the globe, to tiny insects, to designs on kites and cartoon characters. This emphasises how popular and universal the idea of the dragon really is.

Last two lines: these are separate from the rest of the poem because they draw the reader's attention to the poem's main argument—even a dragon landing on their own roof won't be enough proof for some people, when there is plenty of proof around the world.





Breakaway tasks 10

Understanding

1 How many times is the word 'dragon' used in the poem?

2 List five very different images of dragons the poem presents.

Applying

3 With a partner, find the word in the poem that means:

- a permanent design on the body
- European traders and pirates who attacked by sea and raided towns
- a plant with brightly coloured flowers
- harmless insects with long bodies and wings
- putting on clothes or costumes
- an appearance that is put on for an effect
- an image or likeness of a person
- a formal and solemn ceremony
- a cavalry soldier trained to fight on foot
- slaughtered or killed.

4 How do you think the meaning of 'dragoon' might be linked with dragons?

5 With a partner, explain the following examples of alliteration in the poem:

- 'Dragon donning'
- 'Serpent circling …'

Analysing

6 Why does the word 'dragon' exist in different English words such as 'dragonfly', 'snapdragon' and 'komodo dragon'?

Evaluating

7 Do you agree with the poet's key message in the last two lines of the poem?

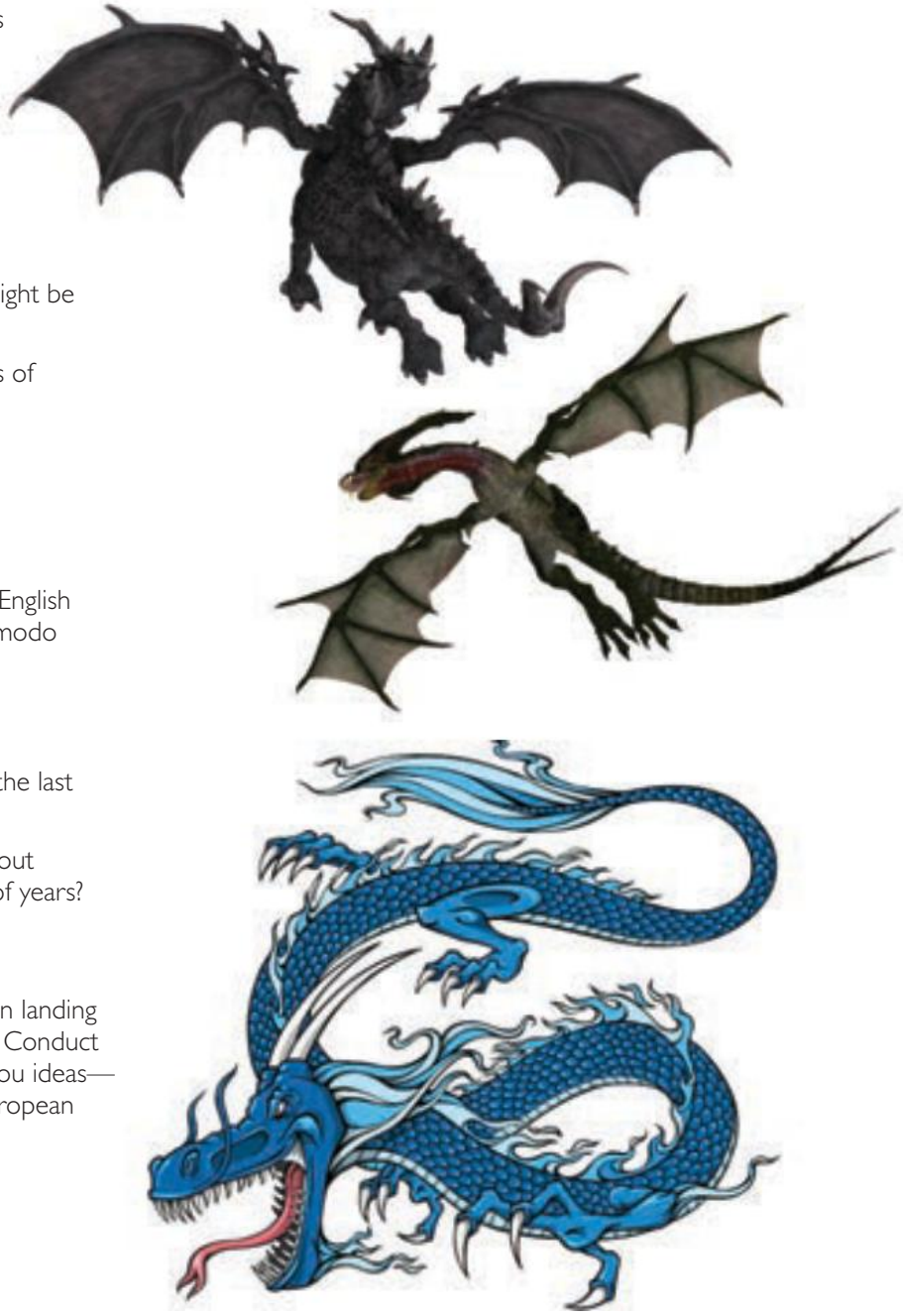
8 Why do you think images, films and stories about dragons have been so popular for thousands of years?

Creating

9 Sketch or paint your own picture of the dragon landing on the roof in the final two lines of the poem. Conduct an internet search for dragon images to give you ideas—look at the interesting differences between European and Asian dragons.

10 Create your own rhyming couplet poem about dragons—describing the legendary powers of dragons, their unique appearance and how they live. Use the images of dragons on these pages to give you ideas, and the rhyming words below to start you thinking:

- wings/brings
- flames/claims
- claws/roars
- scales/tails
- treasure/pleasure
- fly/cry
- death/breath



Strands in action

Core task

Classic tales and stories often include magical creatures and fearsome monsters. Use your research skills to locate information about one of the following classic creatures:

- unicorns
- Cyclops
- bunyips
- the Minotaur
- Pegasus
- trolls
- Titans
- hydra
- Chinese dragon
- leviathan
- the Kraken
- goblins
- elves
- ogres
- gorgons
- fairies
- pixies
- nymphs
- centaurs
- satyrs
- gnomes
- fauns.

For your chosen classic creature, create six to eight slides for a slide show to present to the class. Include:

- what your creature looks like—size, shape, physical features and colours
- the time and place your creature existed
- your creature's powers and abilities
- important stories about your creature.

Alternatively, you could create a podcast or digital story with sound effects.



Extra tasks

1 Flying fantasy creatures have been an important part of many famous myths, legends and fantasy stories. Select one of the following flying fantasy creatures and create a six- to eight-panel comic strip on paper or in a slide show presentation to show a Year 3 or 4 student the story of this creature, what it looks like and its powers. Use your internet research skills and library resources to learn more about:

- the Firebird
- the Garuda
- the Phoenix
- the Gryphon
- harpies.

2 Use your imagination to design and draw or make a model of a new fantasy creature. Make sure you include the following items:

- a list or description of its powers
- details of its colours and physical features
- information about its food, living place and daily habits
- one story of 100 words about the life of your fantasy creature.

4

Modern fantasy



Think about the blockbuster films of recent times. Many of them have used the world of fantasy fiction to create great stories, such as *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Chronicles of Narnia* and the Harry Potter series. Even though we live in a high-tech world, we still love to experience the power of stories that take us into worlds beyond our own.

The modern world of fantasy stories is a world still filled with imaginary creatures such as ogres, fairies, elves, dragons, wizards, goblins and humans with supernatural powers. But the modern fantasy worlds we see created through films, books, computer games and TV also reflect the fears, hopes, dreams and beliefs of the world we live in.



THE MAGICIAN'S NEPHEW

by CS Lewis

'The last great battle,' said the Queen, 'raged for three days here in Charn itself. For three days I looked down upon it from this very spot. I did not use my power till the last of my soldiers had fallen, and the accursed woman, my sister, at the head of her rebels was halfway up those great stairs that lead up from the city to the terrace. Then I waited till we were so close that we could see one another's faces. She flashed her horrible, wicked eyes upon me and said, "Victory". "Yes," said I, "Victory, but not yours." Then I spoke the Deplorable Word. A moment later I was the only living thing beneath the sun.'

'But the people?' gasped Digory.

'What people, boy?' asked the Queen.

'All the ordinary people,' said Polly, 'who'd never done you any harm. And the women, and the children, and the animals.'

'Don't you understand?' said the Queen (still speaking to Digory). 'I was the Queen. They were all *my* people. What else were they there for but to do my will?'

'It was rather hard luck on them, all the same,' said he.



The Pevensie children enter Narnia

'I had forgotten you are only a common boy. How should you understand reasons of State? You must learn, child, that what would be wrong for you or for any of the common people is not wrong in a great Queen such as I. The weight of the world is on our shoulders. We must be freed from all rules. Ours is a high and lonely destiny.'

…

'And what did you do then?' said Digory.

'I had already cast strong spells on the hall where the images of my ancestors sit. And the force of those spells was that I should sleep among them, like an image myself, and need neither food nor fire, though it were a thousand years, till one came and struck the bell and awoke me.'

'Was it the Deplorable Word that made the sun like that?' asked Digory.

'Like what?' said Jadis.

'So big, so red, and so cold.'

'It has always been so,' said Jadis. 'At least, for hundreds of thousands of years. Have you seen a different sort of sun in your world?'

'Yes, it's smaller and yellower. And it gives a good deal more heat.'

The Queen gave a long drawn 'A-a-ah!' And Digory saw on her face that same hungry and greedy look which he had lately seen on Uncle Andrew's. 'So,' she said, 'yours is a younger world.'

She paused for a moment to look once more at the deserted city—and if she felt sorry for all the evil she had done there, she certainly didn't show it—and then said:

'Now, let us be going. It is cold here at the end of all the ages.'

'Going where?' asked both the children.

'Where?' repeated Jadis in surprise. 'To your world, of course.'

Source: C. S. Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew*, The Bodley Head, 1955



Breakaway tasks 11

Remembering

1 How did the Queen defeat her sister and the rebels in the great battle?

Understanding

2 Why are Digory and Polly shocked by what the Queen tells them?

Applying

3 Make a list of five differences between this fantasy world and our own world.

Analysing

4 Why do you think the Queen cast strong spells to make herself sleep for many years until someone came and struck the bell to wake her?

Evaluating

5 Why does the Queen decide to travel to the ordinary world of Digory and Polly?

LORD OF THE RINGS

By JRR Tolkien

Down the face of a precipice, sheer and almost smooth it seemed in the pale moonlight, a small black shape was moving with its thin limbs splayed out. Maybe its soft clinging hands and toes were finding crevices and holds that no hobbit could ever have seen or used, but it looked as if it was just creeping down on sticky pads, like some large prowling thing of insect-kind. And it was coming down head first, as if it was smelling its way. Now and again it lifted its head slowly, turning it right back on its long skinny neck, and the hobbits caught a glimpse of two pale gleaming lights, its eyes that blinked at the moon for a moment and then were quickly lidded again.

'Do you think he can see us?' said Sam.

'I don't know,' said Frodo quietly, 'but I think not. It is hard even for friendly eyes to see these elven-cloaks: I cannot see you in the shadow even at a few paces. And I've heard that he doesn't like Sun or Moon.'

'Then why is he coming down just here?' asked Sam.

'Quietly, Sam!' said Frodo. 'He can smell us, perhaps. And he can hear as keen as Elves, I believe. I think he has heard something now: our voices probably. We did a lot of shouting way back there; and we were talking far too loudly until a minute ago.'

'Well, I'm sick of him,' said Sam. 'He's coming once too often for me, and I'm going to have a word with him, if I can. I don't suppose we could give him the slip now anyway.' Drawing his grey hood well over his face, Sam crept stealthily towards the cliff.

'Careful!' whispered Frodo coming behind. 'Don't alarm him! He's much more dangerous than he looks.'…

They could hear him snuffling, and now and again there was a harsh hiss of breath that sounded like a curse. He lifted his head, and they thought they heard him spit. Then he moved again. Now they could hear his voice creaking and whistling.

'Acg, sss! Cautious, my precious! More haste less speed. We musstn't rissk our neck, musst we, precious? No precious—*gollum*!' He lifted his head again, blinked at the moon, and quickly shut his eyes. 'We hate it,' he hissed. 'Nassty, nassty shivery light it is—sss—it spies on us, precious—it hurts our eyes.'

He was getting lower now and the hisses became sharper and clearer. 'Where iss it, where iss it: my Precious, my Precious? It's ours, it is, and we wants it. The thieves, the thieves, the filthy little thieves. Where are they with my Precious? Curse them! We hates them.'

'It doesn't sound as if he knew we were here, does it?' whispered Sam. 'And what's his Precious? Does he mean the——'

'Hsh!' breathed Frodo. 'He's getting near now, near enough to hear a whisper.'

Indeed Gollum had suddenly paused again, and his large head on its scrawny neck was lolling from side to side as if he was listening. His pale eyes were half unlidded.

Source: J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Lord of The Rings*, HarperCollins, 1968



Gollum approaches the hobbits Sam and Frodo

Breakaway tasks 12

Remembering

1 How does Gollum know Sam and Frodo are there, according to Frodo?

Understanding

2 How does the writer, J. R. R. Tolkien, show us the character of Gollum in this extract?

Applying

3 Make a list of Gollum's words and actions that appear threatening to Sam and Frodo.

Evaluating

4 How might Sam and Frodo escape Gollum without getting hurt?

Creating

5 Create another three lines of dialogue for Gollum, using his way of speaking to explain what he thinks of elves, hobbits and outsiders.

6 Using the description in this extract and an internet search on Gollum images, design and draw your own representation of Gollum.

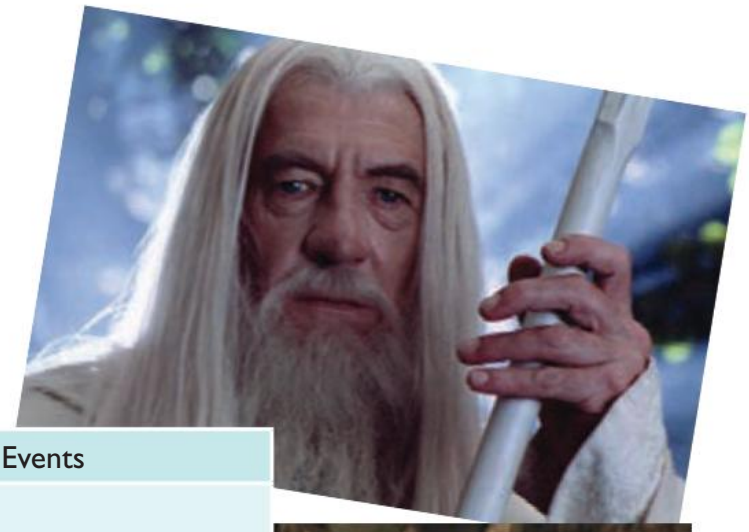
Inside modern fantasy worlds

Inside the modern fantasy world you will usually find archetypes. An archetype is an original model, or prototype, of a creature who represents the most typical features we expect to see. For example, Voldemort in the Harry Potter series is the typical archetype of a villain, someone who fights against good and tries to win using evil powers. There are actually hundreds of archetypes in fantasy texts, and you will recognise them as you look at different fantasy films, play varieties of fantasy computer games or read a wide range of fantasy books and stories. When we meet archetypes in these texts, we expect them to act in a certain way, and to reflect the beliefs and behaviour of the archetype they represent.

Breakaway tasks 13

Analysing

The table below outlines some common archetypes. Form a small group and see if you can think of other characters and events from fantasy books, games or films to complete this table. Use your internet research tools to help you. Some examples of each archetype are given to start you off.









Archetype	Characters	Events
The Innocent One This character is honest, vulnerable and good.	• Neville Longbottom (in the Harry Potter series) • Liane (in *Galax-Arena*) • Mowgli (in *The Jungle Book*) • •	
The Hero This character possesses powers beyond the ordinary and can perform great deeds and achieve great fame.	• Luke Skywalker (in *Star Wars*) • Indiana Jones • Hua Mulan (in *Mulan*) • Superman • Harry Potter • •	
The Wise One This character is a source of great knowledge and wisdom, and often gives good advice and guidance to younger characters.	• Dumbledore (in the Harry Potter series) • Gandalf (in *The Lord of the Rings*) • Merlin (in *King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table*) • •	
The Jester or Fool This character thinks it is funny to play tricks on others and often lacks responsibility, but can often see things clearly and speak the truth.	• Donkey (in *Shrek*) • Ron Weasley (in the Harry Potter series) • Dory (in *Finding Nemo*) • •	
The Villain This character is the opposite of the hero. Villains have powers, but they are used for evil and to fight against the hero and other good characters.	• Voldemort (in the Harry Potter series) • Lord Farquaad (in *Shrek*) • The White Witch (in *The Chronicles of Narnia*) • •	



Donkey, Shrek, Princess Fiona and Lord Farquaad—the main characters in *Shrek*

DID YOU KNOW...

The character of Shrek was drawn and redrawn over fifty times before the film makers were happy with the way he looked. It is hard to make an ogre look ugly and friendly at the same time!

Shrek and fantasy

In the films *Shrek*, *Shrek 2*, *Shrek the Third* and *Shrek Forever After*, the creators have played with many typical archetypes, sometimes turning them into the opposite of our expectations for a humorous effect. For example, Princess Fiona first appears to be the archetypal damsel in distress, waiting to be rescued by the hero. But we soon find out she is quite capable of defeating a whole gang of attackers by herself. Shrek himself is an ogre and should be a villain, but he turns out to be a good person and a reluctant hero.

Breakaway tasks 14

Analysing

After viewing *Shrek 2*, use your knowledge to complete the following table, showing the way the creators of *Shrek* have played with the typical archetypes people expect in the fantasy genre in order to communicate new messages to a modern audience. The first one is done for you.

Shrek character	Traditional archetype character	Modern archetype character
Shrek	ogre—evil, dangerous, ugly, angry, selfish	Shrek is badly misunderstood. He really has a good heart, courage, honesty, loyalty and a caring nature. The message is not to judge someone on appearances.
Princess Fiona	damsel in distress	
Prince Charming	handsome prince	
Fairy Godmother	woman with special powers	

Strands in action

Core task

Films are a very popular way of showing the world of fantasy because they allow the film maker to use very creative set designs and special effects to visually create the fantasy world. If the film has been created from an original fantasy book, then the film maker has the special challenge of creating characters and settings that have already taken shape in the imagination of the readers. For example, many readers of the *Harry Potter* series already have in their mind what Harry, Ron and Hermione look like, and also how such places as the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry might appear.

Below is a poster from the popular fantasy film series *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Use this and one other, or another two fantasy films (approved by your teacher), and then in a small group create a podcast, an electronic slideshow or a mini-movie to compare and explain the following film features in your two nominated fantasy films:

- fantasy settings
- fantasy characters
- fantasy special effects
- modern fantasy messages.



Extra tasks

1 Fantasy texts often focus on important themes, messages or issues, and through the heroes' adventures teach strong lessons or important truths. For example:

- Harry Potter teaches us that good will triumph over evil if we show courage, loyalty and determination.
- Shrek teaches us that we should always look beyond first impressions, and test a person's true character by their actions and beliefs.

Use your own knowledge of two other fantasy books, games or films to explain how some of the following themes, messages or issues are revealed in them.

- Courage is important in life.
- Loyalty shows a person's true character.
- Truth and honesty are important qualities.
- Luck shapes your destiny.
- Good will triumph over evil.
- True friendship survives the biggest tests.
- A quest teaches important lessons.
- We should always learn from our mistakes.
- It is important to discover your true self.

2 Visit your library and look for fantasy fiction. Working with a partner, do the following tasks.

a Choose the two books with the most eye-catching titles. Give reasons why you made these choices.

b Choose the two books with the most interesting cover illustrations. Give reasons why you made these choices.

c Which two blurbs are the most interesting? Copy out the blurbs and give reasons for your selection.

d Which two books have the most attention-grabbing beginning? Copy out the two beginnings and give reasons for your selection.

e With your partner, prepare a live, two-minute presentation for the class to promote and advertise two of the books you selected. You might choose to focus on titles, covers, blurbs or beginnings, or a mixture of these fantasy features. 'Sell' your two books to the class in just two minutes so they will want to know more!



Poetry is the music of the soul.

Voltaire (1694–1778), writer, philospher and historian



Poetry

Chapter overview

People love to put their thoughts and feelings down on paper to try to make sense of the world around them. This is exactly what poetry is all about. It is an expression of how people see the world. In this chapter you will explore different poetic genres. You will examine classic poems, contemporary poems and song lyrics while learning the basics of poetic deconstruction; that is, the ways in which we analyse and discuss poetry.

In the past, poets used their poems to communicate their ideas and comment on social and political happenings of their time. These people were important recorders of the way people thought about, imagined, spoke about and understood their world. Many poets were also lyricists, who communicated their views of the world through song.

There are many similarities between poetry and song lyrics, although they are not the same thing. Poems are designed to be read aloud, whereas lyrics are designed to be sung. However, the ways in which they create images in your mind, use words and communicate a message are the same.

1

A world of poetry



Poetry can be found everywhere—in dusty old textbooks, in advertisements on TV and radio, on the internet, in children's books and in song lyrics. You will find poetry in every culture around the world, although the types of poetry vary from place to place.

You have probably been studying poetry—the sounds of words and their rhythms—all your life without even knowing it. As young children you might have been exposed to poetry through nursery rhymes told to you by adults. This is where you get your first taste of how the rhyme and rhythm of words work. Think about some of the nursery rhymes you may have heard as a child. Think about what made them fun. Was it the rhyme, was it the way they were told, or was it the language used?

You may be accustomed to poems rhyming but this isn't always the case with poetry. Some of the most interesting poetry is an expression of thoughts and feelings that cannot be rhymed.

Poetry can be serious and reflective or fun and imaginative, like the following excerpt from *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll.

THE MOCK TURTLE'S SONG

By Lewis Carroll

POEM

'Will you walk a little faster?' said a whiting to a snail.
'There's a porpoise close behind us, and he's treading on my tail.'
See how eagerly the lobsters and the turtles all advance!
They are waiting on the shingle—will you come and join the dance?

Source: Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Macmillan, 1865



Writer's TOOLBOX

In a **nonsense poem**, the poet scrambles ideas, words or even lines, so that they don't make sense. This makes the poem fun and imaginative, as the reader has to work it out.

Writer's TOOLBOX

Rhyme is the repetition of similar or identical sounds.

Rhythm is any regular pattern of strong and weak beats.

Poetic devices

A poetic device is the way a poet uses words in a poem for effect. The main poetic devices that you will learn about are:

- simile
- metaphor
- personification
- onomatopoeia
- alliteration.

Simile

A simile is another name for a comparison. When you compare objects you might say:

Ella is tall but Alexa is small.

You could add descriptive words in the form of similes to make it a little more interesting.

Ella is tall like a giraffe but Alexa is as small as a mouse.

These descriptive phrases (using the words 'like' or 'as') are called similes. They compare two or more things using the words 'like' or 'as'.

Read the poem 'Since Hanna Moved Away'. This poem uses similes to compare things that are not alike. See if you can find the similes as you read.





SINCE HANNA MOVED AWAY

By Judith Viorst

POEM

The tires on my bike are flat.
The sky is grouchy gray.
At least it sure feels like that
Since Hanna moved away.

Chocolate ice cream tastes like prunes.
December's come to stay.
They've taken back the Mays and Junes
Since Hanna moved away.

Flowers smell like halibut.
Velvet feels like hay.
Every handsome dog's a mutt
Since Hanna moved away.

Nothing's fun to laugh about.
Nothing's fun to play.
They call me, but I won't come out
Since Hanna moved away.

Source: Judith Viorst, *If I Were in Charge of the World and Other Worries*, Lescher & Lescher, 1981



A **simile** is a 'figure of speech'. It is used to compare two things.

Breakaway tasks 1

Understanding

1 What do you think the poet's intention, or purpose, was in writing the poem 'Since Hanna Moved Away'?

Analysing

2 Provide a series of illustrations for the similes in this poem. Include captions to demonstrate your understanding of the figure of speech.

Applying

3 Write your own poem about your best friend, or about a family member you admire using similes.

Metaphor

A metaphor is also a comparison between two things, but while a simile says one object is 'like' another or is 'as' something as another, the metaphor omits 'like' and 'as'. For example:

Lawson is a clown.

Jim is a speeding bullet.

These sentences simply say that one thing *is* the other. The first example does not say that Lawson is like a clown or as funny as a clown, rather that he *is* a clown. The same can be said with the example about Jim: he *is* the bullet, he is not just 'like' it or 'as fast as' it.

DREAMS

By Langston Hughes

POEM

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.
Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.

Source: Langston Hughes, *The Collected Poems of Lanston Hughes*, Alfred A. Knopf/Vintage, 1994

Breakaway tasks 2

Understanding

1 Read the poem 'Dreams'. How does the poet intend you to feel about life when it is compared to a barren field?

Analysing

2 What evidence can you find that the poem is about the dreams associated with life goals and not the dreams associated with sleep?

Applying

3 What is the last dream that you can remember? Use one of the images from your dream to write a metaphor. You could choose a scary scene from a nightmare to write a metaphor comparing it to a horror movie.

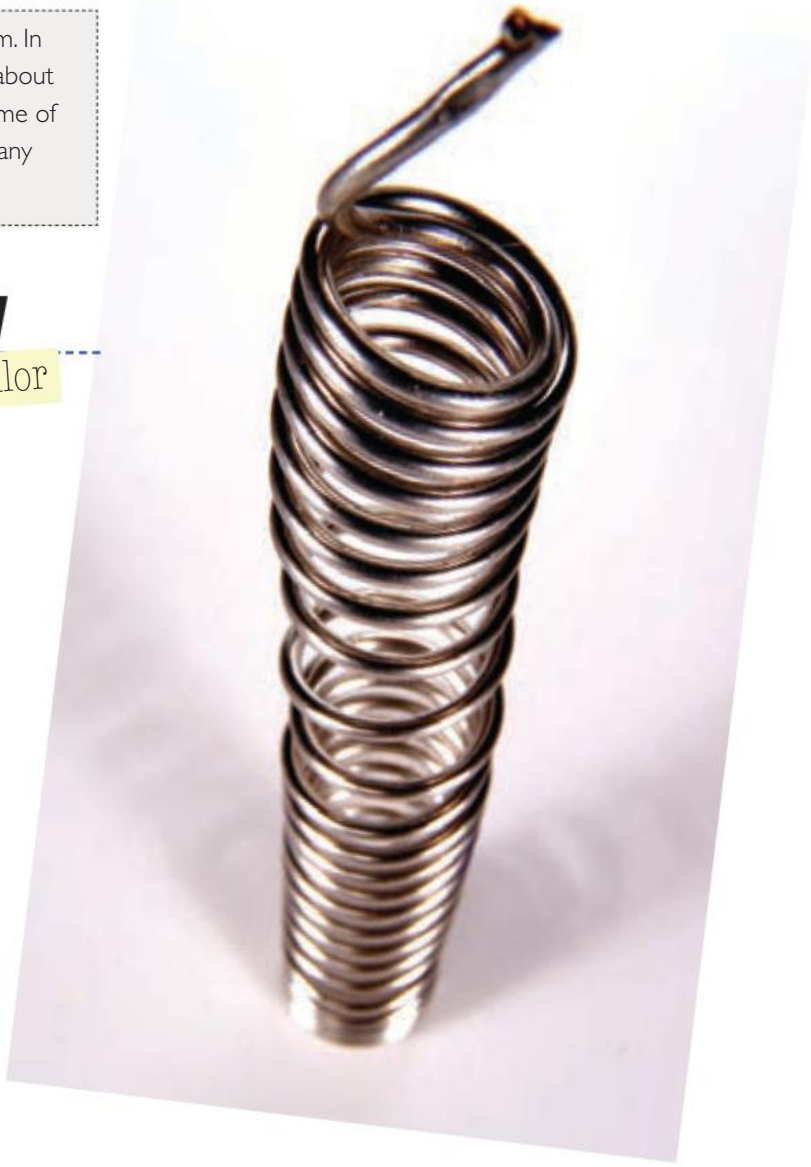
4 As a class, brainstorm other examples of metaphors then break into groups. Select the best in each group and place them on poster paper around the room.

Creating

5 Create your own metaphor poem. Plan your stanzas and your use of metaphors. After you have worked out your subject matter, brainstorm a list of words that you could use in the poem.

6 Read the following poem, 'I Told a Lie Today'. In a short paragraph, explain to a friend who does not know very much about poetry how the metaphor of a coiled spring is used in this poem.





Writer's TOOLBOX

A **stanza** is like a verse in a poem. In many rhyming poems a stanza is about four lines and has a rhyming scheme of ABAB. A stanza can also refer to any complete verse in a poem.

I TOLD A LIE TODAY

By Robin Mellor

POEM

I told a lie today
and it curled up inside me
like a steel hard spring

It was quite a clever lie,
no one guessed the truth,
they believed me.

But I've carried the twist of it
at the centre of my body, all day,
and I think it's expanding,
filling me up,
making my eyes feel red.

Perhaps it's going to uncoil suddenly
and burst me open,
showing everyone what I'm really like.

I think I had better confess,
before I'm completely unwound.

Source: Robin Mellor, from *Wicked Poems* edited by Roger McGough, Bloomsbury Children's Books, 2002

Personification

When you use personification you attribute human characteristics to objects. For example, smiling is something that humans can do. When you use personification, you might say that the sun is smiling, even though the sun cannot smile the way a human does. This creates an image of twinkling, bright rays of sunlight or the happiness of the sun, maybe even a sun with a smiling face. Or you might say that a dark cloud is shedding tears. Can a cloud cry? Not really, but if you liken rain to tears, you give the cloud human qualities.

Personification is another way in which you can play around with the way words sound and create great imaginative phrases for the reader.

WIND

By Amy Lowell

POEM

He shouts in the sails of the ships at sea,
He steals the down from the honeybee,
He makes the forest trees rustle and sing,
He twirls my kite till it breaks its string
Laughing, dancing, sunny wind,
Whistling, howling, rainy wind,
North, South, East and West,
Each is the wind I like the best.

He calls up the fog and hides the hills,
He whirls the wings of the great windmills
The weathercocks love him and turn to discover
His whereabouts—but he's gone, the rover!
Laughing, dancing, sunny wind,
Whistling, howling, rainy wind,
North, South, East and West,
Each is the wind I like best.

The pine trees toss him their cones with glee,
The flowers bend low in courtesy,
Each wave flings up a shower of pearls,
The flag in front of the school unfurls.
Laughing, dancing, sunny wind,
Whistling, howling, rainy wind
North, South, East and West
Each is the wind I like best.

Source: Amy Lowell, *A Dome of Many-Coloured Glass: verses for children*, Macmillan, 1915

Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is the term used for words and noises that sound the same; that is, words that name the sound that they make, such as 'crash', 'bang' or 'boom'.

ONOMATOPOEIA

By Eve Merriam

POEM

The rusty spigot
sputters,
utters
a splutter,
spatters a smattering of drops,
gashes wider;
slash,
splatters,
scatters,
spurts,
finally stops sputtering
and plash!
gushes rushes splashes
clear water dashes.

Source: Eve Merriam, from *A Sky Full of Poems*, 1964, used by permission of Marian Reiner



Breakaway tasks 3

Understanding

1 Make a list of the ways in which Amy Lowell personified the wind.

2 How does the wind interact with nature?

3 How does the wind interact with human-made objects?

Applying

4 Write your own onomatopoeic poem using musical instruments as your inspiration.

5 Using the internet, find information about farm or factory machinery. Develop a list of words that relate to the images you see or the descriptions you find. Use this information to write your own onomatopoetic poem, complete with illustrations.

Creating

6 Develop your own animal poem using personification.

7 Shel Silverstein was an American poet, author and illustrator as well as being a renowned playwright, screen writer and song writer. Go to the web destinations to view Shel Silverstein's website, where you may find inspiration that will help you develop an onomatopoetic poem. Alternatively, use another web-based animation as inspiration.

Web Destination

8 Develop an animation based on a poem that uses onomatopoeia.

9 Re-read the poem 'Onomatopoeia' by Eve Merriam. Draw the rusty spigot as you imagine it would look. Annotate your drawing with words from the poem showing what the spigot is doing.

10 Write an onomatopoeic poem about a machine.



Alliteration

Alliteration is the term used to describe the repetition of the same sound in a line, stanza or sometimes a poem. Silly or nonsense rhymes commonly use alliteration. For example:

She sells sea shells on the sea shore

See how many times you can say that quickly (or time it in pairs).

The image of Lazy Jane illustrates perfectly the alliteration in the poem 'Lazy Jane' by Shel Silverstein.

POEM

LAZY JANE

By Shel Silverstein

Lazy
lazy
lazy
lazy
lazy
Jane,
she
wants
a
drink
of
water
so
she
waits
and
waits
and
waits
and
waits
and
waits
for
it
to
rain.



Source: Shel Silverstein, *Where the Sidewalk Ends*, Harper and Row, 1974



S...S...SNAKE

By Jill McDougall

POEM

S...s...snake is very slippery,
S...s...snake is very quiet,
Silent as a sliding shadow,
S...s...snake is out tonight.

S...s...snake is coming closer
S...s...snake is smooth as ice,
Slipping down the silvery sandhill,
S...s...snake is out tonight.

Down the sandhill, through the bushes,
Hunting frogs and hopping mice,
SNAP! She's found her slippery supper,
S...s...snake is out tonight.

Source: Jill McDougall, from *100 Australian Poems for Children*, edited by Clare Scott–Mitchell and Kathlyn Griffith, Random House Australia 2002

Breakaway tasks 4

Remembering

1 What is it that Jane wants?

Understanding

2 Why does Silverstein call Jane lazy?

Analysing

3 In his poem, Silverstein repeats the word 'lazy' six times at the beginning of the poem. What effect does this have on the mood of the poem?

4 Look closely at the first stanza of McDougall's poem. What words in it help to convey the idea that there is something sinister about the snake's actions?

5 Re-read the poem, this time, however, instead of reading 's...s...snake' simply say the word 'snake'. How does this change affect the way that the poem sounds?

6 The third line in each of the first two stanzas use alliteration to create soft sounds about the snake. What image of the snake is being created in the first eight lines of the poem?

7 In the third stanza, the pace of the poem speeds up as the snake readies itself for attack. How does the poet achieve this change of pace?

8 Copy out the following poem. As you write out the lines, decide which of the poetic devices—onomatopoeia, rhyme, alliteration, personification etc.—are being used throughout and mark these on your sheet.

THINGS THAT GO SQUARK

By Peter Wesley-Smith

POEM

There are things that go squark in the day-time
There are things that go garkling at dawn;
There are things that gruffoon
In the late afternoon
Or whenever the curtains are drawn.
There are things that go swoosh in the morning,
There are things that enfooble and fight;
Ev'ry ev'ning at dusk
There are things quite grotusque,
There are things that go bump in the night.
There are things that go squelch in the spring-time,
There are things that go flark in the fall—
But the worst of the breed
Is a terror indeed:
It's a thing that goes nothing at all...

Source: Peter Wesley-Smith, from *Petrifying Poems*, edited by Jane Covernton, Omnibus Books © 1986. Used by permission of the author.

Creating

9 Take a clean sheet of paper and down the left-hand side of the paper write down all the consonant letters of the alphabet (i.e. no vowels). Select one of the following themes:

- the jungle
- at my school
- morning at the beach.

Now develop interesting alliterative sentences for each consonant letter. For example:

Melanie monkey munched on her muesli

The seagulls swooped and soared above the salty sea.

Strands in action

Core tasks

1 For each of the poetic devices described in this module, develop an interesting and original sentence that uses the poetic device in each segment.

2 Break into small groups of four or five and sit in a circle. Each person takes a clean sheet of paper. Place an interesting heading on your paper. This will become the title of the poem your group will construct.

Write the first line of your poem using a simile. When you have finished, pass it to the person on your right. They read your first line and try to add to your poem using alliteration. Continue passing the paper around the group, trying to develop interesting and engaging sentences.

Follow this formula to spice up the sentences: simile—alliteration—metaphor—personification—onomatopoeia—simile—etc.

3 Create a storybook for younger children using a poem as the basis of your story.

Extra tasks

1 Choose a poem or song lyrics that you like and find examples of the poetic devices that you have studied in this chapter. Underline and annotate them. Write a paragraph explaining how the poet creates meaning in the poem by using these poetic devices.

2 Use the internet or children's books to investigate nursery rhymes or silly sayings that repeat a vowel sound. Explain why nursery rhymes for young children might do this.

3 Find the book *Don't Bump the Glump!* by Shel Silverstein. Look at the language patterns in the book and explain which poetic devices Silverstein uses.

4 How clever can you be? Write a poem about how to write a poem! Use as many devices as you can to engage your reader.

5 You have been asked to write a poem that helps beginning readers to learn the alphabet. Design a book that could be used at primary school to help young children to learn to read using sentences based on the same letter.

2

Types of poetry



There are many different types of poetry from all around the world. Some types of poems don't rhyme, some do. They are all dependent on the type of poetry style the author chooses to use.

This module examines different types, or styles, of poetry. Some of these styles have their origins in countries such as Japan, the United States, England and Ireland. Other styles of poem in this module might not originate in a particular country but have been used to shape poetry from a particular culture. An example of this is the 'ballad'. While it did not originate in Australia, the Australian bush ballad is an excellent example of this style of poetry.

In this module you will also examine some song lyrics. While song lyrics are quite different from poetry—poems are meant to be read and song lyrics are designed to be sung with a tune or melody—some of the qualities overlap.

Shape poetry

Shape poetry is an interesting way of putting your ideas about an object or emotion into the shape of the object you are writing about. For example, you might like to write a poem about a Christmas tree. You could write the poem so that the words form the shape of the tree.



POEM

CHRISTMAS TREE

By Yvette McAlister

A
Christmas tree.
So bright and beautiful
Large baubles hang
From your wispy branches
Tinsel, ornaments, decorations
Angels, lollies, stars, dolls and lights
I wonder what delights you will hold
Underneath
Your
Branches
Tonight

Breakaway tasks 5

Applying

1 Write a poem about a house in the shape of a house, a flower in the shape of a flower, or a racing car in the shape of a racing car.

2 Use your imagination to recreate the following poem, 'How Doth the Little Crocodile' by Lewis Carroll into a shape poem.

HOW DOTH THE LITTLE CROCODILE

By Lewis Carroll

POEM

How doth the little crocodile
Improve his shining tail,
And pour the waters of the Nile
On every golden scale!

How cheerfully he seems to grin,
How neatly spreads his claws,
And welcomes little fishes in
With gently smiling jaws!

Source: Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Macmillan, 1865



Haiku

One of the most famous types of non-rhyming poem is the haiku. This type of poem comes from Japan and is characterised by the structure of the lines. Most haiku poems focus on the natural world.

The modern-day haiku is written with a pattern of three lines of five, seven and five syllables consecutively. Haiku is now written in many languages by people from all over the world.

By Kijo Murakami

First autumn morning:
the mirror I stare into
shows my father's face.

Source: Kijo Murakami, *Autumn*, 1917

By Matsuo Basho

Won't you come and see
loneliness? Just one leaf
from the kiri tree.

Source: Matsuo Basho, circa 1600

Breakaway tasks 6

Remembering

1 What topics are explored in the haiku poems above?

2 Count the syllables in each line of the haiku poems above. Do they fit the haiku format?

Applying

3 Go outside and choose a quiet place to sit and observe nature. Jot down all the natural things you can see and jot down a few words about each one. Write your own haiku from your observations.

Creating

4 Provide an illustration for each haiku poem in this section.

Sonnets: Shakespeare and the love story

The sonnet is a form of lyric poetry. The word has its origins in Italy and comes from the Italian word *sonetto*, which means 'little song'. The most famous sonnets were written by the English playwright William Shakespeare. These consist of fourteen lines of ten syllables each. This structure has come to distinguish the sonnet from other lyrical poetic forms.

The sonnet has a specific rhyming scheme, which follows a pattern of ABAB CDCD EFEF GG. The last two lines of the sonnet are a rhyming couplet.

SONNET 18

By William Shakespeare

Shall I compare thee to a Summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:

Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed,
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course untrimmed:

But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st,

So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

thee, thou, thy = you

in the Northern Hemisphere, May falls in spring

fair = beauty

chance = accident

ow'st = what you own

so long lives this poem

Breakaway tasks 7

Remembering

1 Mark the rhyming pattern of the sonnet.

2 Count the number of syllables in each line. What do you notice?

Understanding

3 What do you think the main ideas of the poem are? Look closely at each stanza (paragraph). What do you notice about the way the language is used in each stanza?

Analysing

4 Who might Shakespeare have written this poem for? What makes you think this?

5 Even if you aren't able to translate each word of the poem into modern English, is it possible to get the general sense of each line? What is it about?

6 Why do you think that the last stanza is shorter than the others?

7 Try translating the sonnet into modern English.



Lyric poetry is a form of poetry that has been written to enable it to be put to music.

Ballads

A ballad is a poetic form that tells a story. Although all poems tell stories in one form or another, a ballad is different in that it is very similar to a folk tale, reflecting the culture, music and heritage of a particular place. Australia has some wonderful ballads that reflect European settlement. Famous Australian poets such as Henry Lawson and Banjo Paterson were some of the many poets who wrote ballads.



CLANCY OF THE OVERFLOW

By AB 'Banjo' Paterson

BALLAD

I had written him a letter which I had, for want of better
Knowledge, sent to where I met him down the Lachlan, years ago,
He was shearing when I knew him, so I sent the letter to him,
Just 'on spec', addressed as follows: 'Clancy, of The Overflow'.

And an answer came directed in a writing unexpected,
(And I think the same was written in a thumbnail dipped in tar)
'Twas his shearing mate who wrote it, and verbatim I will quote it:
'Clancy's gone to Queensland droving, and we don't know where he are.'

In my wild erratic fancy visions come to me of Clancy
Gone a-droving 'down the Cooper' where the western drovers go;
As the stock are slowly stringing, Clancy rides behind them singing,
For the drover's life has pleasures that the townsfolk never know.

And the bush hath friends to meet him, and their kindly voices greet him
In the murmur of the breezes and the river on its bars,
And he sees the vision splendid of the sunlit plains extended,
And at night the wondrous glory of the everlasting stars.

I am sitting in my dingy little office, where a stingy
Ray of sunlight struggles feebly down between the houses tall,
And the foetid air and gritty of the dusty, dirty city
Through the open window floating, spreads its foulness over all.

And in place of lowing cattle, I can hear the fiendish rattle
Of the tramways and the buses making hurry down the street,
And the language uninviting of the gutter children fighting,
Comes fitfully and faintly through the ceaseless tramp of feet.

And the hurrying people daunt me, and their pallid faces haunt me
As they shoulder one another in their rush and nervous haste,
With their eager eyes and greedy, and their stunted forms and weedy,
For townsfolk have no time to grow, they have no time to waste.

And I somehow rather fancy that I'd like to change with Clancy,
Like to take a turn at droving where the seasons come and go,
While he faced the round eternal of the cashbook and the journal—
But I doubt he'd suit the office, Clancy, of 'The Overflow'.

Source: *The Bulletin*, 21 December 1889

Breakaway tasks 8

Remembering

1 What does Clancy do for a living? What does the narrator of the poem do for a living?

Understanding

2 Where does the narrator send the letter? Who replies to the letter?

3 What sort of activities does the narrator imagine Clancy is engaged in?

Analysing

4 Banjo Paterson compares life in the bush with life in the city. How do we know which one he prefers?

Applying

5 Find other poems by Banjo Paterson. What similarities do you notice between 'Clancy of the Overflow' and these other poems?

Creating

6 Try writing your own ballad. Use the image of the bush to write a modern day ballad.

Lyrics

Ballads are not the only form of poetry that are written to be sung. Song lyrics are a more popular form in which people engage with poetic forms. Many song lyrics use devices of poetry such as similes, metaphors, personification and alliteration. The use of rhyme is common, as is the vital expression of ideas, thoughts and feelings. Think of some of your favourite songs. Look up the lyrics and see if you can also recognise the devices used. Examine the lyrics of the song 'The Last Day on Earth' by Australian singer Kate Miller-Heidke.

SONG

THE LAST DAY ON EARTH

By Kate Miller-Heidke

Look down the ground below is crumbling
Look up the stars are all exploding

It's the last day on earth
In my dreams
It's the end of the world
And you've come back to me
In my dreams

Between the dust and the debris
There's a light surrounding you and me

It's the last day on earth
In my dreams
It's the end of the world
And you've come back to me
In my dreams

And you hold me closer than I can ever remember being held.
I'm not afraid to sleep now, if we can stay like this until

It's the last day on earth
In my dreams
It's the end of the world
And you've come back to me

In my head I replay our conversations
Over and over til they feel like hallucinations
You know me? I love to lose my mind
And every time anybody speaks your name I still feel the same
I ache, I ache, I ache inside.

Source: Sony/ATV Music Publishing, written by Kate Miller-Heidke and Keir Nuttal, performed by Kate Miller-Heidke, from the album *Curiouser*, 2009

Breakaway tasks 9

Applying

1 Rewrite the lyrics from the perspective of the other character in the story.

Analysing

2 Look for examples of alliteration in the lyrics. What effect do they have on you as a reader?

3 Why might these lyrics use rhyme?

Creating

4 Create a collage to represent the first two lines of the song, using the words as inspiration.

Free verse

Some of the most interesting poetry has little to do with rhyme, rhythm or structure, but more to do with the expression of ideas. A free verse poem can rhyme, but doesn't have to. It can follow patterns, but not regularly. The term 'free verse' comes from the French phrase *vers libre*, which literally means 'free verse' or verse with varying line length and following no specific metrical pattern.

FREE VERSE

EMUS

By Chris Wallace-Crabbe

It is
particularly
the particular way
they come
stepping
warily
along the path
in dark
wrinkled
stockings
and shabby
mini fur coats,
their weaving
Donald Duck
heads
ready
to dip
and snatch
your ice cream
that appeals;
that,
and the way
they browse dumbly brown
in cattle-paddocks.

Source: Chris Wallace-Crabbe, from *First Australian Poetry Book*, published by Oxford University Press, 1983. Used by permission of the author.



Experimenting with poetry

Alfred, Lord Tennyson's poem 'The Kraken' uses one object and immortalises it with images that stimulate the imagination. It has inspired a children's book by Gary Crew and even the sea monster in the film *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest*.

DID YOU KNOW...

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809–1892) was a Poet Laureate; that is, a poet for the royal family. Many lines from his poems have been famously quoted, such as 'Better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all', and 'Theirs not to reason why, Theirs but to do and die'.

THE KRAKEN

By Lord Alfred Tennyson

POEM

Below the thunders of the upper deep;
Far, far beneath in the abysmal sea,
His ancient, dreamless, uninvaded sleep
The Kraken sleepeth: faintest sunlights flee
About his shadowy sides: above him swell
Huge sponges of millennial growth and height;
And far away into the sickly light,
From many a wondrous grot and secret cell
Unnumber'd and enormous polypi
Winnow with giant arms the slumbering green.
There hath he lain for ages, and will lie
Battening upon huge seaworms in his sleep,
Until the latter fire shall heat the deep;
Then once by man and angels to be seen,
In roaring he shall rise and on the surface die

Source: Alfred Tennyson, *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical*, Effingham Wilson, 1830

Breakaway tasks 10

Remembering

1 Chris Wallace-Crabbe describes the emus as wearing clothes. What items are they wearing?

2 Where does the Kraken live?

Understanding

3 Underline the key words in Tennyson's poem that create a sense of mystery about the Kraken.

Analysing

4 Compare the words that Wallace-Crabbe uses to describe the emu with Tennyson's kraken. How do both poets create a sense of admiration for their animals?

5 Find a copy of Gary Crew's book *The Kraken*. As a class, read the poem and then the book. In table form, outline the similarities and differences you can find between the two versions of the story.

6 Find images and scenes of krakens. How are they similar to or different from the story and the poem?

Applying

7 Brainstorm topics for a free verse poem. Write your own.

8 Edit and recreate a classmate's poem to make it rhyme.

Strands in action

Core task

Australian bush verse has been written since European settlement of Australia. Iconic writers such as Banjo Paterson and Henry Lawson typify the unique Australian experience and identity. These stories pay homage to the sheep industry, outback life, the herding of cattle and even a yarn at the pub.

Your task is to write a bush ballad of at least eight stanzas, capturing the spirit of the Australian bush.

To complete this task at the standard, you will need to work through the following tasks.

- From your initial brainstorming, decide on an 'Australian experience'.
- Decide on a suitable setting and create a personality profile of the possible characters.
- Have a logical set of events that take place during the ballad. In your plan, be certain to set a theme for each stanza of your bush ballad.
- Remember that meaningful and relevant rhyme is at the heart of any bush poem. Concentrate on choosing rhyming words at the end of each line. You will construct a ballad with an AABB rhyme scheme, like 'Clancy of the Overflow'.
- Include some poetic devices, such as alliteration.
- Write four rhyming lines per stanza. Write a minimum of eight stanzas for your bush ballad.

Extra tasks

1 Choose a poem from this chapter and write music for it so that it could be presented as a song.

2 Recite to your class a ballad you have found that demonstrates Australian bush poetry.

3 Use *Alice in Wonderland* as a basis for creating a series of nonsense poems that tell a bigger story of your own. You may also like to illustrate this.

4 Create a book of your ten favourite poems. Produce illustrations and a rationale for each page. The rationale should be at least one paragraph, outlining your reasons for including the poem in your collection.

Drama is life with the dull bits cut out.

Alfred Hitchcock (1899–1980), film maker and producer



Out in front

Chapter overview

Not everyone wants to be the famous actor, out the front of the stage making the long speech and taking the third bow to thunderous applause. At some stage of our lives, however, most of us will have to make a speech to thank a colleague or farewell a friend and for those moments it is best to be prepared! The reason great actors can be so skilled in what they do is that they have learnt the basics of their craft and practised them until they are second nature to them.

As students of English you will be called up to perform in a number of contexts and often in subjects other than English. Formal and informal speeches, short plays, debates, seminars and evaluations of films and plays all require an understanding of performance skills.

You may not end up on the stage accepting an AFI Award or an Oscar but, after completing this unit, you will have the skills to wow the audience with a great speech if you have to!

1

Speaking Out



Survey results indicate that the general population is more afraid of speaking publicly than of dying. Why is this so? What is it about public speaking that is so terrifying?

You might experience fear before making a speech or giving a presentation because you, the speaker, are on display and are being judged. This is not a comfortable place to be.

When you submit a written assignment or project you are assessed and marked, but this doesn't usually cause as much stress as public speaking. Submitting assignments is private; your classmates won't see your work or your grade unless you choose to show them. In written work you can't publicly crash and burn, but you certainly can when standing up on your own, speaking or giving a presentation.

So how can you avoid that horrible, squeamish moment when you just can't think of a thing to say and it's all going wrong? PREPARATION. Yes, the 'P' words 'preparation' and 'practice' are the key to making a great presentation.

Common types of speeches

We speak in public for many different reasons and to many different kinds of audiences. The following table outlines the types of speeches that are commonly made, the key features of that type of speech and the kinds of audiences you might have to address.

DID YOU KNOW...

The symptoms of **stage fright** can include: dry mouth, tight throat, sweaty hands, cold hands, shaky hands, nausea, rapid pulse, shaky legs and trembling lips.

Common ways to deal with stage fright include looking slightly above the heads of the audience, picking one audience member and speaking to him or her; imagining that you are talking to a group of close friends, or taking deep soothing breaths before you begin speaking, and pausing to do it again whenever you need to.

Writer's TOOLBOX

Formal language—language that is grammatically correct and does not use casual terms, contractions or slang.
Contention—your main argument or 'big idea'. It is backed up by **supporting arguments**.
Informal language—casual or familiar language that we might use every day.
Jargon—the special language of a particular skill, group or profession.
Anecdote—a short story, often personal, told to illustrate a particular point.

Type of speech	Key elements	Common audiences
Formal persuasive speech	Formal language Clear contention and arguments Persuasive techniques such as statistics, expert opinion, emotional appeals, generalisations and cause-and-effect arguments	Teachers and classmates Workmates and colleagues Conferences and seminars
Informal persuasive speech	Informal language Clear contention and arguments Persuasive techniques such as statistics, expert opinion, emotional appeals, generalisations and cause-and-effect arguments	Teachers and classmates Workplace audiences (including your boss)
Informative speech	Formal language Jargon or specialist language Clearly and logically organised Accurate facts and data	Teachers and classmates Workmates and colleagues News conferences or reporting Conferences and seminars
Entertaining or emotional	Formal or informal language Explanation or communication of the appropriate emotion for the occasion Clear focus and easy to follow May include short funny stories (anecdotes)	Friends and relatives at social events such as weddings, parties, funerals, etc.



Applying

1 Form small groups and select one of these topics:
- endangered species
- school uniforms
- homework
- holding a party
- global warming
- curfews.

For your chosen topic, decide whether you will make a speech to inform, instruct or persuade your audience.

Writing your speech

Whether you want to inform, instruct or persuade your audience, the techniques used to prepare your speech are the same. Once you are clear about your purpose in speaking, the primary aims are that you make your speech clear, logical and easy for the listener to follow.

Before you begin to write your speech:
- isolate the subject—what is your speech about?
- isolate the purpose—what do you want your speech to achieve?
- isolate the audience—who is your speech for?

Research

You need to understand your subject so that you know what you are talking about, which is the only way that you are going to be able to explain it clearly and logically to your listeners. Use a variety of sources to gain information—the internet, library resources such as books and reference materials, and local and international media all make useful research avenues.

Structure

Like an essay, a speech needs to use an appropriate structure. It should have:
- an introduction in which you explain the topic and what you are going to say about it. This section should include your contention.

- paragraphs that have a specific angle or focus on the topic. They should explore that particular aspect and offer supporting evidence for it.
- a conclusion in which you sum up your argument.

You might like to use the following speech plan to help you structure your speech.

Subject/topic:

Purpose:

Audience:

Contention:

Introduction:

Paragraph 1 topic sentence:

Paragraph 2 topic sentence:

Paragraph 3 topic sentence:

Paragraph 4 topic sentence:

Paragraph 5 topic sentence:

Conclusion:



2 Choose one of the topics in question one and write a speech. Deliver the speech to the class. Your teacher will tell you the time limit for your speech.

Evaluating

3 Review the speech delivered by one of your classmates as they deliver it and provide constructive feedback to the class. Did the speaker:

a make clear what the speech was about?

b have a clear purpose for the speech, which they then followed through with?

c target their speech to the appropriate audience?

d use appropriate language for both the subject and the audience?

e use the appropriate structure for the speech?

Delivering the speech

When you give the speech there are 'tricks of the trade' that you can use to make it more effective. While the content is incredibly important, a speech is very much about how it is performed and how that performance makes the audience react. Therefore it is important to 'sell' your ideas so that your audience doesn't have time to think—they are swept along by you and your ability to reach them.

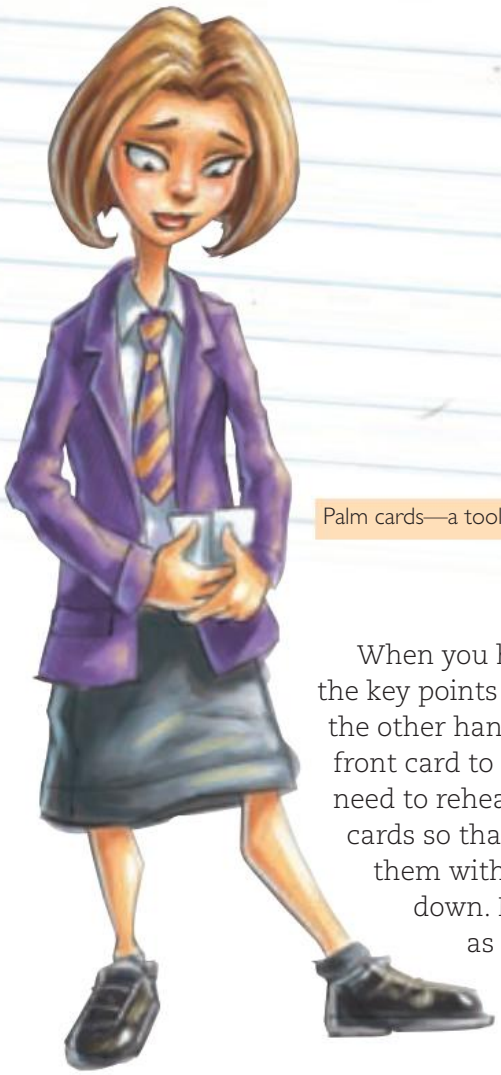
Palm cards

The first thing to do is make sure that your speech is on palm cards. This is especially important for formal speeches that you do at school, where you most likely won't have a lectern to rest your speech on (and hide behind).

Palm cards are small cards, often made of stiff cardboard, that fit inside your hands. They shouldn't be obvious to the audience.

Written on these cards are the key points of your speech. The writing should be large enough so that you can see it when they are held at waist height.

Palm cards are to help you remember the sequence of your speech as well as important points, quotes or facts. They only hold topic sentences or key points. The whole speech is *not* written on the cards. Not even in tiny writing!



Palm cards—a tool, not a focus

When you have glanced at the key points on one card, use the other hand to move the front card to the back. You need to rehearse with your cards so that you can move them without looking down. Keep it as simple as possible; you should only ever have a few palm cards.

Pause, pace and pitch

In written language we use adjectives, verbs and adverbs to colour our writing. Speech has pause, pace and pitch.

Pause

When we speak we take pauses—we wait a little before we say the next word. Pauses add meaning and emphasis to our words. Punctuation can be used as a guide as to where and when to pause.

You can also choose to create pauses purely for effect. We call these 'dramatic pauses' because they can add to the sense of drama or theatre in the speech. When used properly, a dramatic pause will ensure that the audience are hanging on your next word or thought. However, if you use too many you become predictable and hard to listen to.

Pace

Pace is the speed at which you speak. When you get nervous you might begin to speak more quickly. When you speed up too much you can lose your emphasis and risk losing the audience's attention. You can also race through four minutes of carefully practised material in two minutes and not make the length of time allocated for the speech. It can be very embarrassing when you are left standing there with nothing left to say. So slow down and take a deep breath whenever you become aware that you are racing through your speech.

By varying the pace with which you deliver your speech you can ensure that your speech:

- is kept interesting because the audience doesn't get bored
- emphasises key points or areas of interest that you want the audience to pay attention to
- is neither too short nor too long.

Pitch

Pitch refers to the 'notes' in your voice. Varying these notes is another way to make your speech interesting. If you speak in a single tone of voice (monotone), your audience will eventually stop paying attention and, in some cases, drift off to sleep. A monotone sounds flat, robotic and uninteresting.

When speaking naturally, your pitch changes without you even thinking about it—when you ask a question, for example, your voice is naturally higher at the end of the sentence than it is at the beginning. This lets the person you are speaking to know that you require an answer.

When you get nervous, your pitch variation can somehow become lost. You might speak faster because you just want to get to the end as quickly as possible or you might end up simply reading your speech without any emphasis. The trick is to know your speech well and be comfortable delivering it so that you can play with the sound of your own voice.

Breakaway tasks 2

Understanding

1 Why do we use palm cards?
2 What should be on the palm cards?
3 What do pauses add to our speeches?
4 What does the word 'pitch' refer to?
5 What is 'pace'?

Applying

6 Create palm cards for the following minor speech.

> Sadly, youth has always been wasted on the young. Those glorious days when your most pressing responsibility is homework, a few minor chores and being home for meals, are wished away by the young, who see youth as a time of restriction and boundaries.
>
> As we get older, we begin to yearn for those years. Despite the fact that young people see adults as being in control, answering to no-one, adults are not free. We no longer have to obey our parents' orders, but instead answer to bosses, rules, laws, legislation and social expectations. Children are free to be unconcerned about big-picture issues but adults have to think about politics, taxes, finance, ecology and global harmony.
>
> Finally, as we age, we become aware of our physical mortality. The young believe themselves to be invincible but we adults know they are not. We hold our breath as we watch our children take incredible risks—and survive.
>
> We are fearful for their safety and jealous of their assumption that all will be well. The old would be young, and the young, old.

How many palm cards do you have at the end of the exercise? Does everyone else have the same number? What might account for the differences?

7 In small groups, read the following speech extract. First read it aloud in unison (at the same time) without taking any pauses. Then read it again, inserting pauses as the punctuation indicates.

> The end is nigh! Well, perhaps not literally, but in terms of the history of the planet it is. What do I mean? The Earth is dying slowly but surely—and the disease from which it is suffering? Humans! Yes, the human race's catalogue of destruction: the salinity of our waterways, deforestation, greenhouse gases, melting polar ice-caps, extinction of animal species and disruption to the food chain, and the fact that half the world's population is starving. If we want to save the Earth, we must act now!

If you were in the audience, which version of this speech would be more interesting to listen to?

Evaluating

8 In small groups, re-examine question 7. Discuss where you would put a dramatic pause (only one). When you have decided, have one representative read the piece to the class with the pause. Did every group put the dramatic pause in the same place? Were some more effective than others? If so, why?

Strands in action

Core task

In groups of five, read the following act from a play. Each of you takes a part and each of those parts has a particular style of speaking:

PAULINE *speaks in a monotone*
CARLOS *speaks without pauses*
JENNA *speaks too quickly*
IVAN *speaks too slowly*
VITO *speaks at a normal pace*

PAULINE: Come on, Vito. I know what's holding you back but you can't tell me you don't even want to try—just to see if you can make it?

VITO: You haven't got a clue about me or my situation!

JENNA: What are you talking about?

CARLOS: The try-outs for the basketball team. Vito's got a real chance but he says he's not even going to try.

IVAN: God, if I had your talent I'd be dribbling already!

JENNA: Gross!

IVAN: Grow up—don't be such a sook!

PAULINE: No, really guys, leave it alone—he's got his reasons.

CARLOS: You know your moves are as good, if not better, than anyone else on the team.

JENNA: Yeah, come on—what have you got to lose?

VITO: Look, just let it go will you? There's nothing to talk about! [*Storms off*]

IVAN: What's with him?

PAULINE: Too far, guys, too far. Don't you know anything? Basketball's out of school hours and Vito's parents rely on him to work with them after school. He can't do both and he doesn't want to let them down—so he's not trying out.

IVAN: That's terrible. Can't someone talk to the coach?

JENNA: But basketball's his dream. Why doesn't he just tell his parents he can't work after school? They can't be that selfish can they?

CARLOS: Talk about selfish—you suck, Jenna! His parents aren't selfish—just overworked.

JENNA: Touchy!

IVAN: Sure would be a hell of a waste—poor guy!

Take turns to present your reading to the class or another group. As you are listening to each group, jot down some notes about how it makes you feel as an audience member. Then as a class, discuss the limitations of speaking in a way that is not varied or natural.

Extra tasks

1 Working in pairs, read the acceptance speech below. One person should read it aloud very quickly, and the other at a normal pace.

> Thank you for all our votes. As your class captain I will try to do what I promised to do during my campaign. I have not forgotten my pledge to increase recess and lunchtimes, decrease homework and get rid of uniforms. So my work to achieve these goals begins today!

As a listener, could you follow the normally paced version better?

2 Working in pairs, look over the acceptance speech again. Decide where you might choose to speak more quickly or slowly to make your speech sound varied and interesting for your audience. Underline places where you could speed up in red, and places where you could slow down in blue.

Re-read the speech, adjusting your pace as your markings dictate. Decide, as a pair, if the pace works and change it if necessary. When you're ready, read the speech to the class. Compare your changes of pace. Were they different for each pair?

3 In pairs, consider the following sentences. Say them to each other, alternating the speaker. As you listen, open your ears to the variation in pitch that happens naturally. In public speaking you need to retain that pitch variation.

- Oh, why can't you just stop whining!
- Where's your brother?
- I can't find my keys!
- I don't want any, thanks.
- Where do you get off, speaking to me in that way?
- It would be nice if, just once, you'd ask me how my day was.

2 Experimenting with drama



Engaging in drama requires a positive attitude and a willingness to cooperate with your fellow students. If you get anxious, breathe slowly and calm your nerves by focusing on the passage of your breath. Even famous, experienced actors get nervous, but performing involves learning to control both your body and your mind. Communicating effectively to an audience requires confidence. Enhancing your body movement, voice and characterisation skills and remembering the actor's secret weapon—rehearsal, rehearsal, rehearsal—will help you to achieve this.

DID YOU KNOW...

Performance anxiety is felt by many famous actors. The best way to handle it is through positive self-talk. Instead of telling yourself that you can't complete an activity, replace the thought with a positive statement and try.

Body talk

Our bodies say a lot about what we are thinking, often unconsciously. Body language can be as subtle as narrowing your eyes with suspicion to jumping from a shock. Body language experts have become part of our daily lives and are employed in business, police investigation and television shows but, in reality, we all have some expertise in reading body language. Common facial expressions such as smiles and frowns are understood across the globe and transcend language and cultural barriers.

Body language speaks volumes about people. An actor's posture or the degree to which they relax and hunch over can tell an audience how they feel about themselves. Both an actor and a public speaker need to maintain a degree of balance and tension to ensure that the passage of breath is unimpeded. Slouched shoulders, while helpful in conveying a character's attitude can, unless controlled, prevent the performer from breathing deeply by restricting the rib cage. Managing the body is very important to any performer.

Masks

Masks have been used since ancient times to symbolise gods, hunted animals and characters in plays. Many cultures have long used masks as a tool to understanding and exploring spirituality. In rituals, masks remove the person from the performance and the character and qualities assigned to that character take over. Movement can become more simplified and exaggerated when a mask is used and somehow creates a totally different dramatic effect. People are so often aware of their reflection and rely on their facial expression to communicate their thoughts, that the use of a mask can help them become more aware of their body as a tool for communication.

Consider some basic emotions and how you can identify them. How do people express anger, joy, sadness or love? Understanding ways to express emotion, not only through facial expressions and voice, but also through body movements and gestures is the first step to building a character. Eliminating the face as a means of communication means you must think more creatively. Your body—your stance, the position of your head, your hands, your shoulders, even your feet—can communicate a message.

Often characters are complex, and it can be difficult for an actor to portray the inner thoughts and feelings that a role requires. Masks are an important acting tool as they can help the actor strip away the public face of the character and focus solely on body movements and voice to communicate the more private face of a character to the audience. In this way masks can be both physical and symbolic.



As a writer you need to craft your characters. Let the audience see what other characters see but also let them hear the character's inner voice. To play this role an actor does not have to physically wear a mask in order to hide aspects of the character from the audience. Instead they may suppress certain emotions by masking them.

Breakaway tasks 3

Remembering

1 You will participate in a large number of performances as you work through this chapter. Copy the following table and complete it in your notebook. At the end of the chapter, remember all the different roles you have performed, and the variety of purposes, audiences and settings, and write a journal entry reflecting on what you have learnt about performing.

2 a Make a paper plate mask from a white plate and tie it to your head with string, or use a neutral white mask, which is available at two-dollar shops. When you stand still with your head held high and in a neutral position with arms by your side and legs slightly apart, you are like a blank canvas.

b The class should separate into two groups. One group stands at one end of the classroom, school hall or school theatre if you have one. The rest of the class watches as the students display emotions called out by the teacher. Look particularly at how shoulders and hands express emotion, and the effect students create by dropping or raising their heads. What do you observe about the size of the movements used—are they big or small and subtle? Discuss your observations about the most effective movements as a class.

Role as performer	Intended audience	Form of performance	Purpose	Setting
Masked actor	Other students	Mimed action	To communicate a variety of emotions	Classroom, school hall or theatre
Sharing masks of novel characters	Small group	Informal discussion	To analyse the difference between how characters are seen by an audience and how they see themselves	Classroom
Mime artist	Other students	Short improvised mime of characters from posters	To explore the body language associated with different emotions	According to given mimed scenario

Understanding

3 a Taking on a character in a drama is a bit like wearing a mask—the role you play disguises who you are. Read the quotes below. In a short paragraph, explain what you think each speaker means.

> There's a kind of magic in masks. Masks conceal one face, but they reveal another. The one that only comes out in darkness. I bet you could do just what you liked, behind a mask.
>
> Source: Mr Salzella, in Terry Pratchett, *Maskerade*, Victor Gollancz, 1995

> 'We all wear a mask of one sort or another', she said to the damp air. 'No sense in upsetting things now, eh …'
>
> Source: Granny Weatherwax, in Terry Pratchett, *Maskerade*, Victor Gollancz, 1995

b When might you wear a mask, real or figuratively speaking?



Figuratively speaking means not literally. It means using a **metaphor** for something else.

4 Look at the masks in the photographs below and write five adjectives that you think describe the character that each mask represents.



Applying

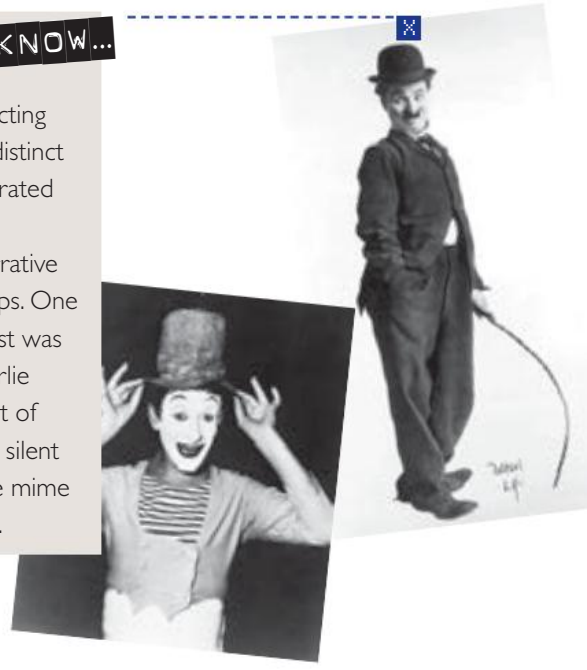
5 a Think of the character in a novel or story you have read recently. On the front of a blank mask, draw or glue words and pictures that represent how other characters perceive the nature and personality of your chosen character.

b On the inside of the mask put images and words which represent the inner voice of your character. Are they shy, lonely, happy, discontented or frustrated?

c Put the title of the book and the name of the character somewhere on the mask. Share it with five other students.



Mime is a non-verbal acting technique which uses distinct and sometimes exaggerated movement to convey character, mood or narrative without the use of props. One very famous mime artist was Marcelle Marceau. Charlie Chaplain also used a lot of mime techniques in his silent movies. You can still see mime artists in street theatre.



Mime

When attempting to mime an action or scene, there are a few important points to keep in mind:

- use your whole body and face to communicate your message
- imagine that the object you are encountering or using is real—the more real it appears to you, the clearer the message will be for the audience. Practise encountering objects such as a door, a ladder or a ball
- give the object some perspective. For example, if miming climbing a ladder, try to look up or down occasionally to remind the audience of height; or round out the shape and weight of an imaginary bowling ball before using it in your mime
- add comedy to your mime. For example, when eating a bowl of spaghetti you could work in amusing facial expressions, or slip on a banana peel after eating the banana.

Breakaway tasks 4

Remembering

1 Role-play a story with the class about an occasion when what someone was saying to you differed from what their body language was telling you.

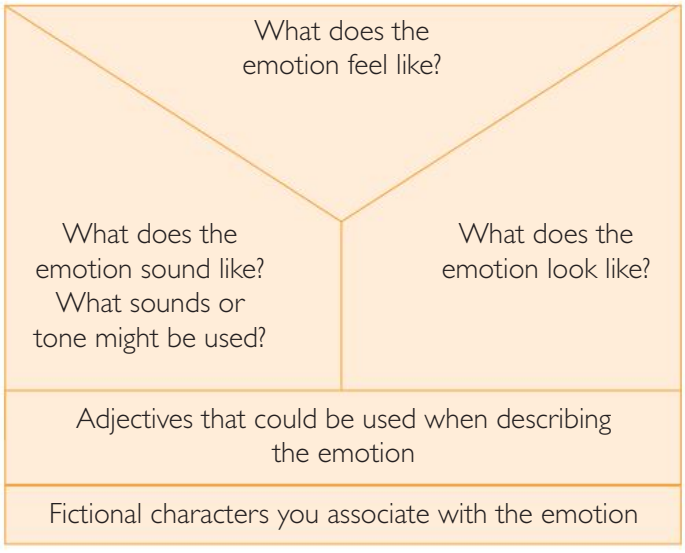
Applying

2 Stand in a circle and pass a non-verbal message around and see if it alters by the time it reaches the beginning again.

3 Standing in the same circle, pass a big balloon from one to another. Your teacher will call out a range of objects. You must then mime passing each new object called, remembering that the weight and size will change the way you use your body. You need to listen and watch carefully. An extension of this activity is to play ball across the circle with different sorts of imaginary balls.

4 Find a space in the classroom and imagine that you are getting on a bus. The last seat has been taken and you have to stand. Mime taking your place and then standing on a moving bus. Think about how you can remain steady, who you will hold eye contact with and how you respond as the bus becomes fuller over time. How would your body react to people invading your personal space? Your teacher will call out emotions to you. See if the emotion changes your body language as you ride on this imaginary bus. Be ready to discuss this with the class.

5 After completing Question 7, choose an emotion from the posters you have just made. Look at all of the images carefully and the body language used in them. Draw the chart below in your notebook and complete it based upon the emotion you have chosen.



Analysing

6 Write a reflection on what you have learned about miming different emotions. Did you draw on your own experience or on your observations of other people?

Creating

7 Choose an emotion or attitude and create a collage on a piece of butcher's paper, using pictures from old magazines and newspapers. Use cut-out letters to make a title naming the emotion. Make sure that you do not just focus on facial expression but also how the people use the space around them. Share these posters with the class.

8 a Form groups of three, choose one scenario from the suggestions on this page, and act out a two-minute mime based on the scenario. You will need to think about what emotion your character might be feeling and why they feel this way before you start. Don't tell the others in your group what your character is like and see if they can identify the emotion.

Asking for your parent's permission to go out with friends

Telling a teacher that you haven't done your homework

Buying a coffee

Apologising for having broken something of value

Meeting someone at the airport

b Write a profile for your character.

Name:

Age:

Family background:

Fears:

Hopes:

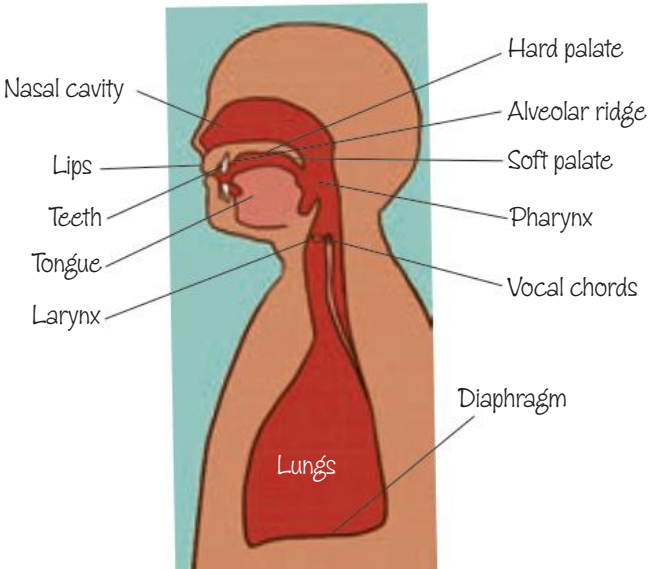
Delivering dialogue

Body language is a very important part of communication, but there are many other elements that help to create drama and character. The use of voice is an effective tool if used properly. Tone of voice, pace of speech, pitch, use of pauses, volume and emphasis convey many messages to an audience. The way you speak tells an audience about your level of self-confidence, your attitude to those you are talking to, your feelings and your location.

Another important element in any performance with dialogue is voice projection and vocal clarity. Controlling the passage of breath is a skill all actors and public speakers need to develop. The expelled breath carries the note from its source in the larynx (or vocal chords), up through the throat and pharynx into both the oral and nasal cavity where the sound resonates and becomes amplified. The sound is then shaped by the lips and teeth, and placement of the tongue on the alveolar ridge behind the teeth.

The pitch you use is also important. Anyone who has ever been in trouble with their parents knows that it is serious when they speak with a low pitch. That deep sound is far more effective than a high-pitched loud yell.

The pace you use when speaking also conveys a number of emotions to your audience. Think again about being reprimanded. The chances are that the person doing the speaking spoke very slowly, enunciating every word clearly. Pace can also be slowed to such an extent that the words that come both before and after the pause are emphasised. Imagine someone calling your full name in a stern voice and pausing between each word; the pause emphasises that you may be in trouble.





DID YOU KNOW...

When you are asked by teachers and parents to **enunciate**, they are asking you to form your words more clearly so that you can be heard and easily understood. How clearly you speak depends on how well you shape the sounds with your lips, teeth and tongue.

Writer's TOOLBOX

To **enunciate** is to say words clearly, making all the correct sounds in a word.

When we communicate we always have an audience, even if that audience is ourselves. Most of us talk to ourselves and rehearse conversations we plan to have with others to help us work out what to say. However, most of our communicating happens directly with an audience. The sorts of stories we tell and tone we use change to suit our purpose and audience.

Breakaway tasks 5

Remembering

1 There are many reasons for speaking. List some of the reasons that motivate you to speak in public.

Understanding

2 a Write an email to a friend about your experience of secondary school. Highlight all of the words and phrases you would not use if writing to your principal about the same experience. Rewrite the email so that it would be suitable to send to the principal.

b What did the email activity demonstrate about the way audiences alter the way you communicate?

Applying

3 In pairs, take turns to explore the way the following locations can affect how the words 'I'm here' are delivered:
- calling out across a football field
- claiming ownership of a seat at a table
- whispering in a dark house
- arriving home.

4 In pairs, take turns to see how many different ways you can say the following phrases:
- 'I don't understand.'
- 'Help me.'
- 'But you told me.'
- 'I did tell you.'
- 'It is done.'
- 'I laughed so hard, I cried.'

5 In pairs, write two short scenes where you use one phrase of your choice in two different contexts.

Creating

6 In groups of five, use the performance scenarios provided and experiment with different characters, places and objectives. Each improvisation should take no more than two minutes and must establish who you are and what your objective is. Change the location in the first few rounds and see how that affects how your character moves, speaks and responds. Remember to alter your modulation, pitch, pace, pause, emphasis and volume to suit your character, the situation and your objective.

Person	Location	Objective
Nurse	Hospital	To get back to her patient
Sports star	At a game	To get the focus of attention
Journalist	On a scene of murder	To find out as much detail as possible
Child	At the park	To find mummy
Policeman/ woman	Undercover in a surveillance vehicle	To catch the criminal but not blow the case

You must think about who your character is, where they are and how they are going to get what they want. Be prepared to discuss your observations with the class.

Strands in action

Core tasks

Consider all you have learned about performance skills, especially use of the body, masks, mime and voice. In pairs, choose one area and complete the following tasks.

1 Research your chosen skill area on the internet or in the library. Take notes on how to refine and practise techniques to improve skill levels in this area.

2 Plan, draft and write a five-minute lesson (which you will perform to the class) on how to improve your acting skills in the chosen area. Be sure to include explanations about techniques before providing clear examples of use. Use props and costumes to enhance the lesson.

3 Write an evaluation sheet, which you will hand to five random members of the class, to provide you with feedback on your lesson. Include details of specific ratings and content to assess, such as the relevance of information supplied, examples used, props/costumes/ other enhancements used and the entertainment value of the performance.

4 Rehearse the lesson with your partner before performing it, or teaching it, to the class. Hand out your evaluation sheets to be completed by five audience members. Ask your teacher to tape the performances with a video camera.

5 Once you have viewed the tape of your performance, complete a written self-evaluation about your lesson on acting skills. Include an honest appraisal of what went well and what needed improvement, drawing on your viewing of the lesson and the feedback received on your evaluation sheets.

Extra tasks

1 As a class, discuss the new information learnt about acting skills from the lessons/performances. Assess which were the most effective techniques used, and why.

2 In small groups, decide upon the five most important tips for performing. Write your tips in large, clear letters onto a poster and include illustrations or diagrams. Present your poster to the class as a group and place the posters up around the classroom to remind you of ways to improve future performances.

3

Performance poetry

Now that you have had some time to explore how you can use your voice to communicate and to create characters, mood and tension, you need to see how these skills can apply to different forms of speaking activities. Poetry performances demand the same techniques as playing a scripted character. The audience needs to be moved or entertained by the performance and so the performer has to be very deliberate about the way they use their voice to build mood and tension.

DID YOU KNOW...

Dramatic tension keeps audiences interested. Tension comes in many forms. There is the tension of suspense, anxiety, surprise, intimacy and conflict.

Writer's TOOLBOX

Alliteration is an effect created by repeating the same or similar letters in a series of words, such as in 'Pam's perfectly practised performance'.

Use of voice

Poets use a variety of techniques to entertain their audience and to create an atmosphere or mood pertinent to their subject matter. They paint a picture with words by manipulating the length of each line, the sound of each carefully selected word and the structure of the poem as a whole.

Some poets repeat words or phrases to create rhythm, or use alliteration to emphasise sounds and themes. When reciting poetry, it is important to recognise the tools used by the poet and to adapt your voice accordingly. Experiment with the volume, pitch and pace of your voice. Consider whether a short pause would create a dramatic effect. Overall, try to stay true to the message of the poem when presenting it to an audience.



Oodgeroo Noonuccal's poem 'Corroboree' conjures up images of traditional Indigenous dance.

CORROBOREE

By Oodgeroo Noonuccal

'Day dies' and 'cook ... comes' are examples of alliteration which help to set the rhythm.

Hot day dies, cook time comes.
Now between the sunset and the sleep-time
Time of play about.
The hunters paint black bodies by firelight with
designs of meaning
To dance corroboree.
Now didgeridoo compels with haunting drone
eager feet to stamp,
Click-sticks click in rhythm to swaying bodies
Dancing corroboree.

Think about the effect of the sound in 'spirit things in'.

Like spirit things in from the great surrounding
dark
Ghost-gums dimly seen stand at the edge of light
Watching corroboree.

Experiment with this repetition in these two lines by using one or more voices as a contrast to one another.

Eerie the scene in leaping firelight,
Eerie the sounds in that wild setting
As naked dancers weave stories of the tribe
Into corroboree.

Source: Oodgeroo of the Noonuccal clan (formerly Kath Walker), *My People*, The Jacaranda Press, 1970



Breakaway tasks 6

Remembering

1 What is the poem about?

Understanding

2 How does the reader know that the poem is set in the early evening?

Applying

3 In pairs, read the poem 'Corroboree' aloud in unison. Discuss how you can make sure that you speak at the same time.

Look at the way Oodgeroo Noonuccal uses alliteration and repetition in the poem. Consider how you might like to emphasise these techniques.

Analysing

4 How does the reader know that the poet is a spiritual person?

5 What words indicate that the narrator is Aboriginal?

6 What words indicate that the poem is about an Aboriginal community?

Creating

7 a You have been asked by a local primary school to write a poem suitable for a Year 3 class that can be performed by many voices at the upcoming parent's night. Using the poem 'The Pickety Fence' on the next page as a model, in small groups write a short poem using repetition and alliteration on a topic of your choice. Identify how many sets of voices you would like to use and then highlight the lines accordingly. Make sure that you discuss:

- the location where the performance will take place and how that affects the performance
- the intended audience and how the students will make the poem come alive, for example using voice and movement
- how the age of the intended audience affects your choice of theme for your poem.

b Rehearse and perform your poem for your class.

THE PICKETY FENCE

By David McCord

POEM

The pickety fence (group 1)
The pickety fence (group 1 and 2)
Give it a lick it's (group 3)
The pickety fence (group 2 and 3)
Give it a lick it's (group 1)
The clickety fence (group 1)
Give it a lick it's (group 2 and 3)
A lickety fence (group 2 and 3)
Give it a lick (group 1)
Give it a lick (group 1 and 2)
Give it a lick (group 1, 2 and 3)
With a rickety stick (group1, 2 and 3)
Pickety (group 1, 2 and 3)
Pickety (group 2)
Pick (group 1)



Source: David McCord, *Every Time I Climb a Tree*, by permission of Little, Brown & Company, 1980

Let me tell you

The form of performance that you are probably most familiar with is the oral presentation or speech. We generally manage informal speeches such as introducing people to one another quite well, but we often become anxious when we are asked to give thanks to someone in front of a group or make an impromptu speech. The following activities will help you to build your confidence and skills.

Breakaway tasks 7

Remembering

1 Pair up with a partner you have not worked with before. You are to speak for one minute each about absolutely anything. For example:

- My favourite food is …
- I really don't like going to …
- My last holiday was …

You will need a watch to time each other and a pen and paper to tally how many 'ums' and 'ahs' you use. The person who uses the least 'ums' and 'ahs' wins.

Understanding

2 Why is it important to eradicate 'ums' and 'ahs' from your speech when speaking publically?

Applying

3 As a class, brainstorm a list of crazy topics, for example 'All horses should be dyed blue' or 'Cooking should be abolished'. Students will take it in turns to be given a topic by the teacher and have thirty seconds to plan a one-minute speech. Remember that your speech needs an opening contention, some evidence to support that opinion, and a concluding sentence. The more impromptu speeches you make, the more easily you will complete them.

Evaluating

4 a Watch other students in your class present their speeches and evaluate the importance of facial expression and body language to the impact of their performance.

b Listen to the use of pitch, pace and pauses by other students. What comments would you make or what advice would you give?

Creating

5 You have been commissioned by your school's public speaking coordinator to make a brochure for students new to public speaking competitions. Make sure that you explain what skills are needed and provide some steps to help students prepare for the competitions. Include tips for impromptu speeches.

6 Write and present a speech based on the topic, 'The lessons I learnt from watching television'. You could link your speech to your favourite television show, introduce humour by citing lessons from television on etiquette, or explain what you have learnt about life from watching television.



DID YOU KNOW...

People often feel embarrassed when speaking in front of a group of people. A good technique to use to avoid feeling self-conscious is to look just above the audience's head or between their eyes. They will think you are looking directly at them but you will be in a visually neutral place and be better able to focus.

Writer's TOOLBOX

All speeches need to be organised and perhaps the best organising tool is to introduce the reason for the speech (**the contention**), provide **supporting arguments** and then end with a strong **concluding statement** or question. Remember, it is crucial to understand your **purpose** and **audience** when writing a speech.

DID YOU KNOW...

Slowing your breathing and delivery gives your brain more time to construct sentences, allows you to breathe more deeply and makes you sound more confident.

Step into script

Play scripts differ in a number of ways from other forms of fiction or text. They provide actors with not only their words but also stage directions that help to keep the integrity of the play as it was written. That is not to say that plays cannot be interpreted by the director, but the script provides a framework. The setting is often defined at the start of each scene and appears in italics. The characters' names are normally in capital letters and frequently in bold print so that the actors can see who owns the lines.



Following directions

In the novel *Blabbermouth*, Morris Gleitzman examines the difficulties people have in relating to people with disabilities. Mary Morris has transformed this popular novel into a play. While the extract has two female characters, the roles could be played by males with name changes. Rowena could become Rowan and Amanda could become Arnie.

In this scene, the main character Rowena is unable to speak to the other characters but is able to speak to the audience. As you silently read through this scene, consider how difficult it might be to communicate and make friends if you lost the power of speech. Once you have read the scene, form pairs and complete the tasks that follow.

Writer's TOOLBOX

Stage directions are used to indicate:

- the placement of an actor on stage or in a setting, for example [*Enter Charlie stage left*]
- the movement of a character, for example [*He races towards the last hotdog, snatches it*]
- the delivery of dialogue, for example [*Shouts, excitedly*] 'Woohoo!'.

DID YOU KNOW...

When a character in a play or film speaks their thoughts aloud, it is called a **soliloquy**.

BLABBERMOUTH

By Mary Morris, adapted from the novel of the same name by Morris Gleitzman

Stage directions appear in italics.

Characters' names are written in capitals so that you know who is speaking.

Image of girl as totally transparent.

School yard. ROWENA *slinks in.*

ROWENA: I'm invisible. [*To the audience*] Yes I am. Humiliation can make people invisible.

A kid enters. ROWENA *shuts her eyes. The kid looks at her, then runs off.* ROWENA *opens her eyes.*

See? Told you.

AMANDA *enters.* ROWENA *shuts her eyes tight.*

I'm invisible, I'm invisible.

AMANDA *stops in front of* ROWENA *and taps her. She opens one eye.* AMANDA *signs.*

[*To the audience*] Huh?

AMANDA *signs slowly and painstakingly.*

[*To the audience*] The flies are shocking today.

She brushes away an imaginary fly. AMANDA *signs again.*

Nice turtle. Did she say nice turtle?

More signs.

Good aircrash? I know! I'm suffering delayed sunstroke.

AMANDA *tries again.*

Good race. She's telling me I ran a good race. She's talking to me!

ROWENA *signs back in a huge rush, asking her where she learned it.*

AMANDA: Hey, slow down. I'm not that good—yet.

ROWENA *signs again slowly.*

I learnt it last year. At a community service camp. I was scared to try it before in case you laughed at me.

ROWENA *signs at her to do more.*

Okay, Um …

She signs. ROWENA *reads the signs.*

ROWENA: She doesn't like racing much, her parrot makes her do it. Mmm, interesting.

ROWENA *makes the sign for parrot to* AMANDA. AMANDA *flaps her hands in frustration and tries again.*

Oh, her father makes her do it.

More signs from AMANDA.

Glue? [*She signs it again.*] Twin?

AMANDA *keeps signing.*

Friend. Friend! But what if I'm wrong!

ROWENA *signs to* AMANDA *to say it.*

AMANDA: You want me to say it out loud?

ROWENA *nods and crosses her fingers.*

Will you be my friend?

ROWENA *signs to* AMANDA, *inviting her home.*

After school?

ROWENA *signs.*

Slow down! Yeah that'll be great. As long as I can phone my mum from your place and let her know I'll be late.

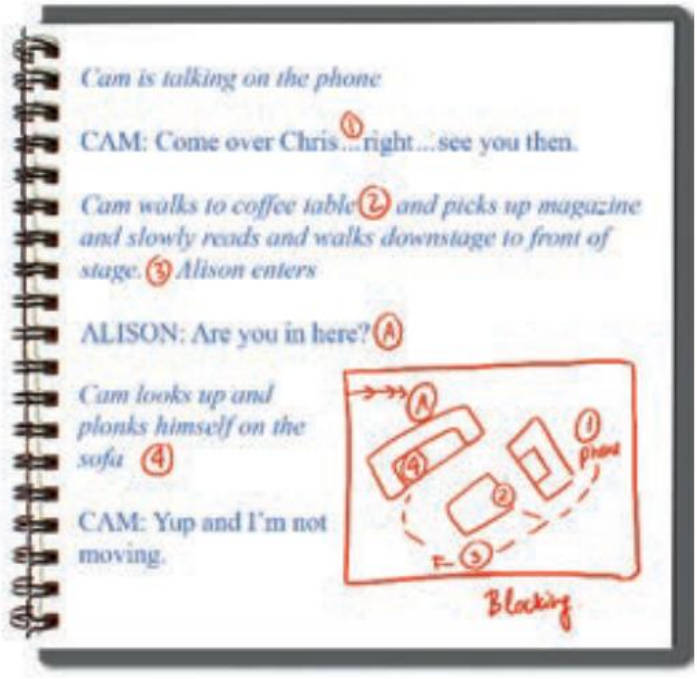
They exit. ROWENA *ducks back.*

ROWENA: [*to the audience*] This is the best day of my life!

Source: Mary Morris, *Blabbermouth*, in Tony Woollams, *Scenes for Young Actors*, Currency Press Pty Ltd, 1999



The movement and placement of characters on the stage is called blocking. Each movement is choreographed so that the dialogue and movement suit one another. When an actor blocks their movement on the stage, they must make sure that they do not obscure other actors from the audience. Directors and actors also need to pay attention to how interesting the placement of actors on the stage appears. This is why you will often see actors in a variety of positions, some standing while others sit or crouch.



Breakaway tasks 8

Remembering

1 How does an actor know where the scene is set?

2 In *Blabbermouth*, how does Rowena attempt to hide her humiliation?

3 How does Amanda establish that she wants to be Rowena's friend?

4 Identify one stage direction in the scene relating to setting, one relating to movement, and one that refers to the delivery of dialogue.

Understanding

5 What do you learn about Rowena's character from this extract?

6 What do you learn about Amanda's character from this extract?

Applying

7 In pairs, choose a character each and discuss how you as an actor can convey these characteristics in a polished reading of the extract. Consider the body language each character might adopt and the tone and inflections that they might use.

Analysing

8 What issues do you think arise for non-verbal people when it comes to making friends?

Evaluating

9 When you are planning a performance it is a good idea to have someone critique your work. This allows for new ideas and suggestions to be introduced. In pairs, prepare a performance of the extract. View another group's rehearsal or performance and evaluate it in terms of the following criteria:

- audibility—how well you can hear each of the actors
- movement—how the actors move on the stage and the reasons for the way they move
- blocking—how the actors make sure that the audience can see and hear them clearly
- believability—how believable the characters are.

10 Join with another group and discuss what you learnt about acting from working on this extract.

Creating

11 Create a film of your group's performance of the extract and present your scene to the class as a work in progress. After watching the video, discuss what you learnt about your skills with the rest of the class and suggest ways you can improve your performance.

Building a character through dialogue

Morris Gleitzman's novel *Two Weeks with the Queen* is a humorous look at how teenagers can perceive the world. Colin's brother Luke is very ill and Colin believes he can make him better. Mary Morris has transformed this popular novel into a play.

The scene is set in England and, while it is played by two male characters, the roles can be performed by males or females. As you read, pay attention to which character dominates the scene. Look at the clues that are provided within the script and be prepared to discuss them after your reading.

TWO WEEKS WITH THE QUEEN

By Mary Morris, adapted from the novel of the same name by Morris Gleitzman



ALISTAIR: Colin?

COLIN: What?

ALISTAIR: Have you really ridden a trail bike, or were you pulling my leg?

COLIN: Straight up. Yamaha 250. Twin exhaust, cross-country gear ratios.

ALISTAIR: Brill.

COLIN: Yeah, it was all right till the brakes failed and I went over the cliff.

Colin appears to enjoy embellishing/exaggerating stories about himself.

ALISTAIR: You went over a cliff?

COLIN: Yeah. But it's okay, the ocean was underneath, broke my fall.

Colin feels safe to continue exaggerating because Alistair appears easily fooled.

ALISTAIR: The Pacific Ocean?

COLIN: Yeah. The surf wasn't so high, often 15 metres or so.

ALISTAIR: Brill.

COLIN: Course the sharks are a problem.

By seemingly understating the sharks, Colin makes himself seem very brave and exotic.

ALISTAIR: Sharks!

COLIN: White pointers. There were a couple of them. Reminded me of the time I had to fight crocs off in the Territory.

ALISTAIR: Crocodiles?

COLIN: Twenty-footers. I gave them a wrestle for their money, but.

ALISTAIR: Do you know Crocodile Dundee?

COLIN: He's a mate of mine, gave me a few tips. See, a croc's got no brains. You can outsmart 'em. Not like sharks. Only way with sharks is to out-swim them.

Alistair's willingness to believe Colin knows Crocodile Dundee rather than the actor Paul Hogan tells us a number of things about both him and Colin. Alistair is gullible and doesn't know any better and Colin can tell stories with a straight face, which indicates that he does so often.

ALISTAIR: You can out-swim sharks?

COLIN: All Australians can. Wouldn't be any of us left if we couldn't. Alistair, don't you ever get bored?

ALISTAIR: No. Well a bit. Sometimes.

The punctuation helps the actor to work out how to deliver this line to the audience. Alistair goes from a flat denial to a grudging agreement.

COLIN: How would you like to help me save Luke's life?

ALISTAIR: I'm not allowed to give blood!

COLIN: You don't have to give blood. Listen, do you reckon the Queen's doctor would be the best doctor in the world?

ALISTAIR: Yes, pretty good, 'specially 'cos he'd have to do it without looking.

COLIN: Eh?

ALISTAIR: Well, he would wouldn't he? I mean if the Queen was sick he couldn't just say: 'Take your frock off, Your Majesty, and let me look at your, er ... your ... you know'. Could he? I mean, not to the Queen. Nobody could, could they? He'd have to guess what's wrong. He'd have to be good.

COLIN: Er ... yeah. Anyway, I wrote to her and asked her to let me get in touch with him, and she didn't write back.

ALISTAIR: When did you write to her?

COLIN: Nearly a week ago.

ALISTAIR: Well, there you are then. It'll be months before she gets around to it.

COLIN: She's a bit slack?

ALISTAIR: No, not her. But hundreds of people write to her. She gets sackfuls of letters every day. Special vans full of letters for her.

COLIN: I've seen them. They've got Royal Mail written on them.

ALISTAIR: Er, yeah. Takes a bit of time to answer all them letters.

COLIN: Well, I haven't got time. I'm going to have to get into the Palace and talk to her myself. And you're gonna help me.

ALISTAIR: You want me to help you break into Buckingham Palace?

COLIN: Someone has to give me a leg up.

ALISTAIR: Mum doesn't let me go into town by myself.

Colin believes in his ability to save his brother because he doesn't want to face the reality of losing him.

Alistair's response shows that he is not a risk taker.

We see Colin's innocence in his expectation that a letter to the Queen will provide a possible cure for his brother.

Humour provides comic relief in an otherwise serious situation.

Alistair is quick to make excuses so that he doesn't need to face challenges.

COLIN: You won't be by yourself, you'll be with me.

ALISTAIR: But you can't just climb into the Palace, there'll be alarms and dogs and stuff.

COLIN: No there won't, well only corgis and they'll be asleep on the Queen's bed.

Colin's innocence is further supported by his belief that the Queen only has corgis protecting her.

ALISTAIR: How do you know?

COLIN: It was in our papers at home. A few years ago, a bloke got into Buckingham Palace at night and next morning, when the Queen woke up, he was sitting on the end of her bed, looking at her. He didn't have a single dog bite on him.

ALISTAIR: I remember that.

COLIN: If he can do it, we can.

ALISTAIR: They put him in a loony bin.

COLIN: All right then! I'll do it myself.

ALISTAIR: I'll come.

COLIN: Okay, we'll set the alarm tonight for three-thirty in the morning.

When it becomes immediate, fear steps in.

ALISTAIR: I'll stay.

COLIN: Don't be a wimp.

ALISTAIR: What if you get shot?

COLIN: Okay, stay then!

ALISTAIR: I'll come.

Colin loses patience and this compels Alistair to agree to Colin's plan.

COLIN: Good one. Three-thirty then. Let's go and buy a rope.

Source: Mary Morris, *Two Weeks with the Queen*, in Tony Woollams, *Scenes for Young Actors*, Currency Press Pty Ltd, 1999

Breakaway tasks 9

Remembering

1 How do you know that Alistair and Colin don't know each other very well?

2 How do you know that Colin and Alistair are still quite young?

Understanding

3 Describe Colin's opinion of himself based on the evidence in this extract.

4 Is Colin right to believe that the Queen's doctor can cure his brother Luke? Explain your answer.

5 Why do you think Alistair is reluctant to help Colin? Provide evidence to support your answer.

Applying

6 Through your reading and participation in the activities so far, you will have begun to form a view of Alistair. Imagine that you are Alistair. Write a short soliloquy in which Alistair explains how he sees Colin, how he sees himself in relation to Colin and how he really feels about Colin's plan. Remember, a soliloquy is a character's thoughts spoken for the audience. You may be asked to share Alistair's thoughts with the class. Be prepared to give a polished performance in which you use Alistair's voice, even if you read the dialogue.

Analysing

7 Even though the reason for Colin's plan is a serious one, the playwright has used humour in this scene.

Identify one exchange between the characters where humour is evident and rehearse it. Why do you think the playwright uses humour in this part of the script?

Evaluating

8 How likely is it that Colin's plan to storm the palace will succeed?

9 How reliable do you think Alistair will be as an accomplice? Use the text to support your view.

Creating

10 Design a poster to advertise your version of the play based on the extract and the soliloquy you have written. Make sure that you decide on the mood you want to convey to a possible audience and choose colours and images appropriate to that mood.

Establishing relationships and character traits

The scene from *Blabbermouth* is played by people of the same sex. While there is some tension, it is mostly the tension of uncertainty as Rowena tries to establish what Amanda wants and the tension associated with taking personal risks as Amanda extends her friendship to Rowena. In the scene below from *Away*, another form of tension becomes apparent. This scene is played out by a male and a female and this is essential in order for the tension to emerge.

This play is set in the 1960s at a time when there were many changes taking place in society. Women were moving away from the tradition of getting married and having children straight after school to considering university education and careers. Increasing numbers of people migrated from Europe to make new lives in Australia, and the Vietnam War was constantly on the news—the first major conflict to enter the homes of ordinary people through television.

It is against this backdrop that three families go away on holiday. The play explores their experiences as they share a beach camping ground. In the following extract the scene is set backstage at the school play on the last day of school before the holidays begin. As you read the extract for the first time, look carefully at the clues within the script that reveal the characters' personalities. Pay particular attention to the tension between Tom and Meg.

PLAY

AWAY

By Michael Gow

SCENE TWO

Backstage. TOM *and* MEG

TOM: You going away tomorrow?

MEG: We're leaving really early.

TOM: Well … have a good time.

MEG: Where are you going?

TOM: Up the coast. Some beach.

MEG: Have a good time.

TOM: Bound to.

MEG: See you.

TOM: Yeah … see you in pictures.

MEG: You too.

TOM: No thanks.

MEG: You were really good in the play.

TOM: Bull.

MEG: You were!

TOM: Cut it out. I'll get a fat head.

MEG: My olds are waiting.

TOM: Anyway, I got this for you. As a memento of the play.

MEG: Thanks.

TOM: It was a real laugh being in a play with you.

MEG: No-o…

TOM: It was! So I got you something as a token of my appreciation.

MEG: What is it?

TOM: If you open it up you might find out. It's a piece of junk, actually. Actually I nicked it. But it's the thought that counts.

MEG: You nicked it?

TOM: Actually, I got a night job and slogged me guts out for ten years to pay for it.

MEG: A brooch.

TOM: A mere bauble.

MEG: It's really nice. That's really nice of you.

TOM: Oh, stop before you start sobbing.

MEG: I really like it.

TOM: It's from the bottom of my heart, actually.

MEG: I wish I'd got you something.

TOM: I have some beautiful memories.

MEG: Oh yuck.

TOM: Sick, eh?

MEG: It was good fun, though. Pity it was only for one night. Fancy doing it night after night like in America. Plays go on for years there. London too. Wouldn't you get sick of it?

TOM: Depends who else was in it. Be great if you hated everyone's guts.

MEG: But then it'd only be the same as a proper job.

TOM: What are you going to be when you grow up?

MEG: An engine driver. You?

TOM: I'll wait and see.

MEG: I'd better be going. Thanks for the brooch.

TOM: It matches your eyes.

MEG: Yellow?

TOM: Joke.

MEG: Ha ha.

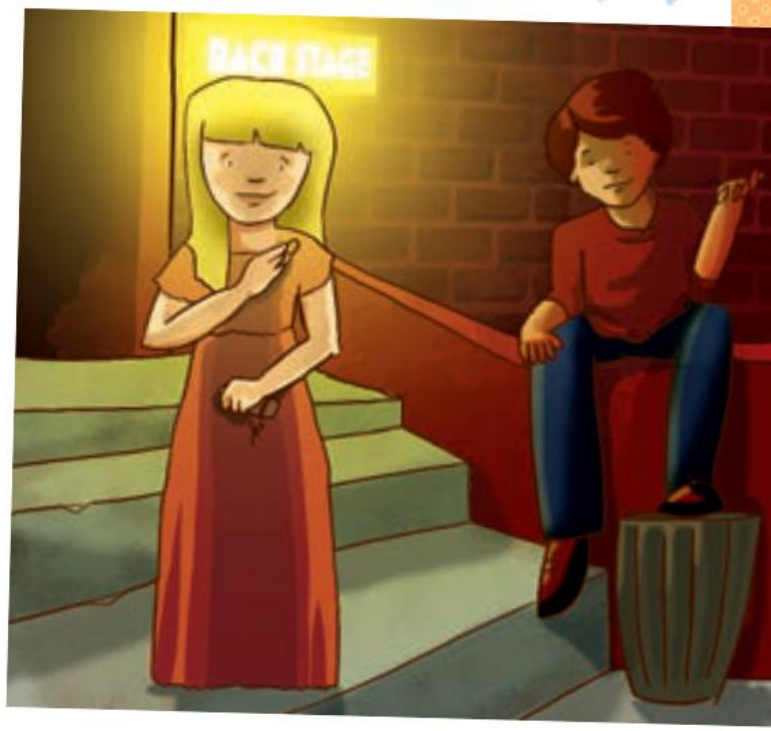
TOM: Sorry.

MEG: Well…

TOM: The olds.

MEG: Have a good Christmas.

Source: Michael Gow, *Away*, Currency Press Pty Ltd, 1986



DID YOU KNOW…

Improvisation is a very important acting technique. When you improvise, you make up both the action and the dialogue of a character at the time of performance without any rehearsal.

Breakaway tasks 10

Remembering

1 What words indicate that the characters are young?

2 How does the script show that the characters feel awkward?

Understanding

3 Having read the extract, put your scripts down, get into pairs and improvise the scene as best you can. Pay attention to what it feels like to be your chosen character and if you have a mind blank, work through it as best you can based on your knowledge of the character and the scene. Perhaps look away until the idea comes back but always stay in role. Once you have improvised as one character, swap roles. It doesn't matter if the character is a different gender to you; think about what you might have to do to portray a role that does not come naturally without slipping into comic stereotypes.

4 What does the dialogue tell you about Tom's character? Complete the following table in your books.

Tom's character trait	Line from the text that supports this view	How might this character trait affect the way he moves?	How might this character trait affect the way he speaks?

Applying

5 What could the actors playing Meg and Tom do to convey their awkwardness?

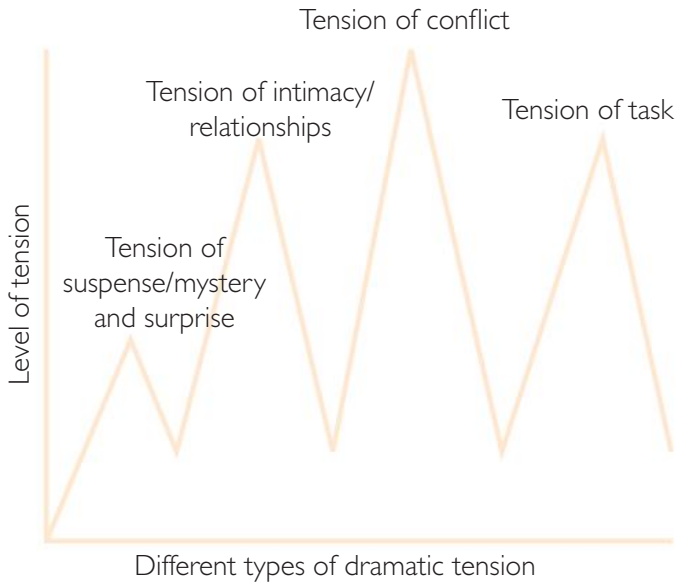
6 This extract has very few stage directions to guide the actors. Imagine that your friends are performing this scene in an eisteddfod and have asked you to be their director. Insert some set details and thoughtful stage directions to help guide them. Look at *Blabbermouth* to see how set and stage directions are used.

Analysing

7 Imagine that Tom has a very different character. How might an actor use body language to demonstrate a different attitude to the situation?

8 Why do you think Michael Gow, the playwright, did not include many stage directions or set descriptions?

9 There are a number of different types of tension in drama.



Which type of tension applies in this scene and where in the script is this most obvious?

10 A lot of the dialogue is written in short sentences. What does this reveal about the characters to the audience?

Evaluating

11 How would the scene from *Away* change if it was set today?

12 How does the status/power of the characters influence the scene?

Creating

13 Write a scene exploring tension and conflict in one of the following relationships:

- parent–child
- boss–employee
- friend–friend
- teacher–student
- doctor–patient.

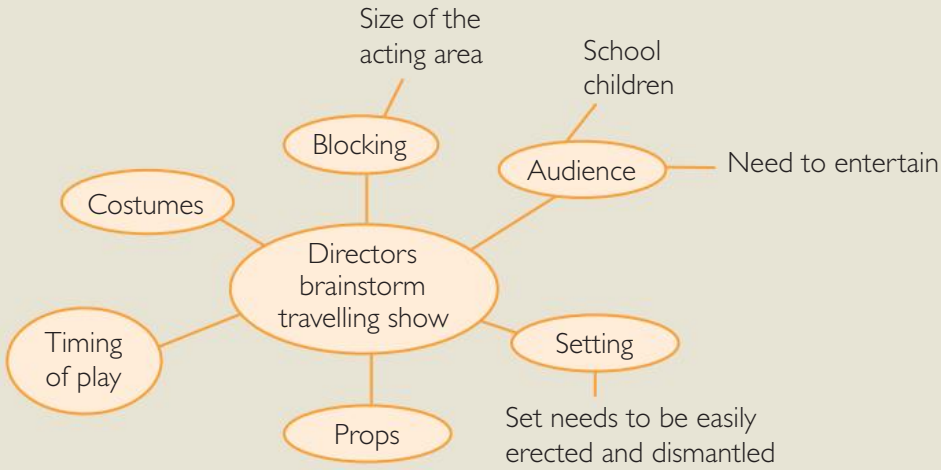
Strands in action

Core tasks

1 When reading 'Corroboree', you experienced poetry recital with two voices speaking at the same time. Now work in groups of three to create a more dramatic reading. Vary the pitch and pace. Perhaps create an undercurrent of sound vocally that will give the poem a distinct rhythm. You can use one or more voices and sound effects, such as a didgeridoo or click-sticks (also known as clap-sticks). You might also like to create some movement based on the poem to accompany the reading.

2 Imagine you are the director of the scene from *Blabbermouth* and are preparing to take the show on the road to visit schools. You have to consider a number of aspects of staging when preparing a performance, most importantly a simplified set that could be easily dismantled. Draw a mind map like the one provided and make notes or drawings to identify all those things a director needs to consider for a production, such as the set, costumes, blocking and a possible backdrop.

3 In groups of three, decide how Colin and Alistair's expedition to Buckingham Palace will end and write the scene where they attempt to meet the Queen. Make sure that you write the scene in the same format as the extract. Consider the tension that might develop between the two characters. Then use a video camera to film your new scene. Naturally you will not have the real palace, but you can use still images to set the location and have small details that suggest the royal setting. You will need two actors and one camera operator. Show your short films to the class.



Extra tasks

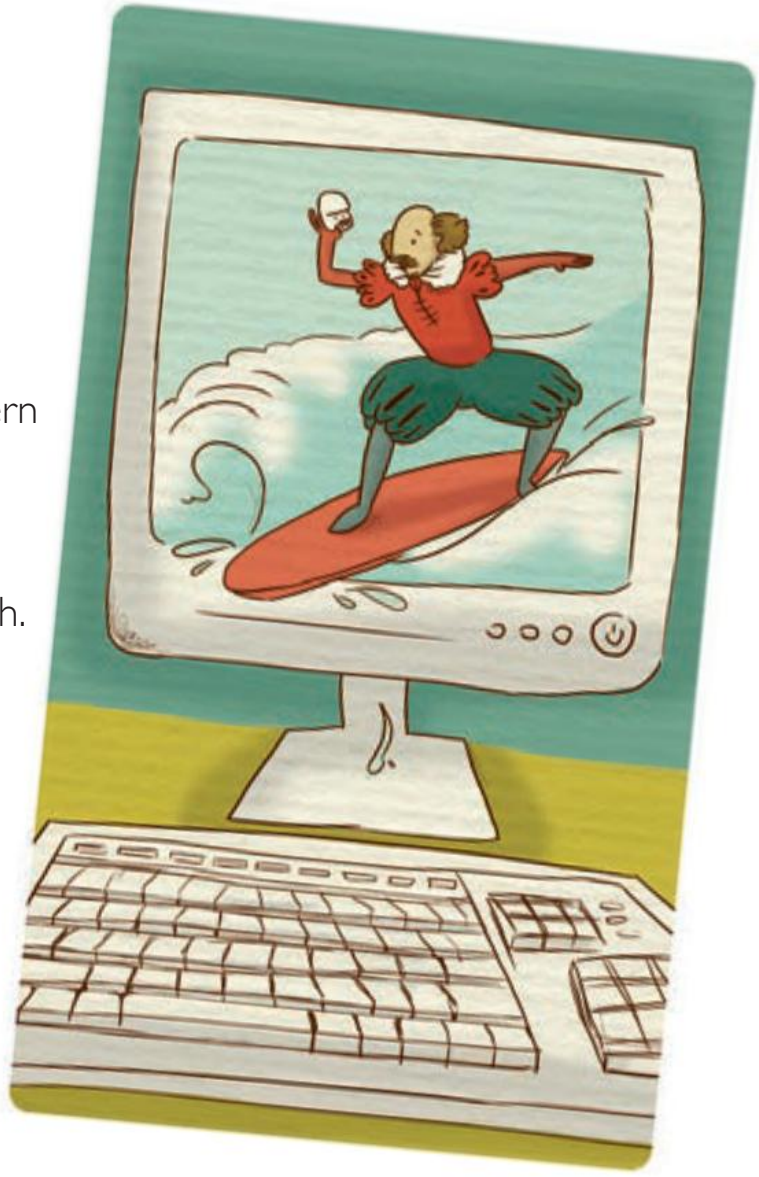
1 Choose an issue that is important to you and carefully prepare a formal speech of no longer than three minutes. Organise your speech and make your contention clear. In such a short speech you will probably only present two or three points.

2 Listen to another student's speech and evaluate its impact on you, rating it on a scale of one to ten with ten being the best result. You should consider the following questions.

- Was it convincing?
- If so, why was it convincing? If not, why not?
- What impact did the speaker's presence and energy have on the message of the speech?
- How clearly and slowly did they deliver their speech?
- What can you learn and apply to your own public speaking from watching others perform?

4

Surfing with Shakespeare



It is one thing to learn how to read a modern script and gain confidence in your ability to present information to an audience. There is a whole other skill set required when faced with a historical play and Shakespearean English. Understanding the era in which the play was written as well as the language being used is fundamental to your ability to interpret the text. Once you have been introduced to the timeless themes and characters used by Shakespeare in his plays, you will have a much greater appreciation and understanding of how to portray them on stage.

Understanding Shakespeare

William Shakespeare is arguably one of the most influential people in the development of the English language. More than 500 years after his death, his plays are still performed, his poetry is still recited and his storylines are still being adapted for television and cinema. It is estimated that he introduced more than 2000 words into the English lexicon and many of the words and phrases that we still use today were invented by him.



Lexicon—the vocabulary of a particular language.

It is, however, for his plays that Shakespeare is best known.

Macbeth

Macbeth tells the story of a Scotsman who plots the death of the Scottish King. Shortly after a battle in which Macbeth has been recognised as a war hero, some witches appear to him and prophesise that he will one day be king. This sows an evil seed in Macbeth's mind and he begins to plot the death of the King.

In the following scene, the three witches stand before a cauldron brewing a concoction. The chief witch, Hecate, is supervising the spell.

MACBETH
ACT 4, SCENE 1

By William Shakespeare

PLAY

A cavern. In the middle, a boiling cauldron.

cauldron: a large pot

Thunder.

FIRST WITCH: Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.

brinded: striped or patchy

SECOND WITCH: Thrice and once the hedge-pig whined.

hedge-pig: hedgehog

THIRD WITCH: Harpier cries—'tis time, 'tis time.

Harpier: the name of the third witch's spirit friend

FIRST WITCH: Round about the cauldron go;
In the poison'd entrails throw.
Toad, that under cold stone
Days and nights has thirty-one
Swelter'd venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charmed pot.

entrails: the intestines of an animal

ALL: Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

SECOND WITCH: Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg and howlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

fenny: boggy, marshy

adder: a snake

blind-worm: a lizard

howlet: owlet, a small or young owl

ALL: Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

THIRD WITCH: Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witches' mummy, maw and gulf
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark,
Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark,
Liver of blaspheming Jew,
Gall of goat, and slips of yew
Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse,
Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,
Finger of birth-strangled babe
Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,
Make the gruel thick and slab:
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,
For the ingredients of our cauldron.

maw: mouth

ravine: a deep chasm in an ocean

hemlock: a poisonous herb

slip: a piece cut from a plant

yew: an evergreen tree

Tartar: a person from Mongolia who helped Genghis Khan overrun Asia and parts of Europe in the Middle Ages

drab: a dirty, untidy woman

chaudron: intestine

ALL: Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

SECOND WITCH: Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

Enter HECATE and the other three Witches

HECATE: O well done! I commend your pains;
And every one shall share i' the gains;
And now about the cauldron sing,
Like elves and fairies in a ring,
Enchanting all that you put in.

HECATE retires

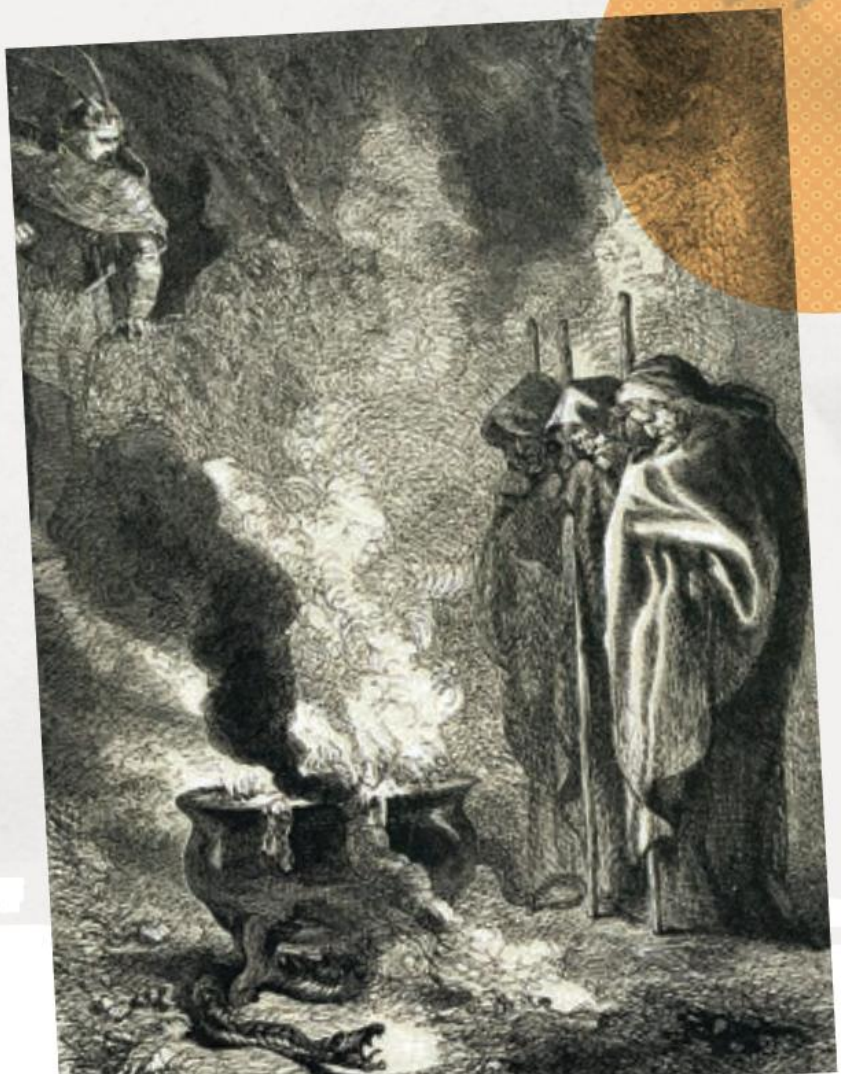
SECOND WITCH: By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes.
Open, locks,
Whoever knocks!

pricking: tingling

Enter MACBETH

MACBETH: How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!
What is't you do?

ALL: A deed without a name.



Breakaway tasks 11

Remembering

1 Where does this scene take place?

2 Make a list of all the animal parts that the witches use into the potion.

Understanding

3 Each of the ingredients that is added to the pot is associated with sinister or dangerous things. Why do you think that the witches are adding these ingredients to the brew?

4 Shakespeare lived at a time when it was common to be intolerant and fearful of people from different backgrounds and cultures. What examples of racism can you find in this text?

Applying

5 Form groups of four. Allocate a role from the scene to each member of the group. Look for clues in the text for the sorts of actions ('Round about the cauldron go') and props ('Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf') that your group might need. Rehearse your presentation and perform it for the class. Vote for the group that handles the play the best.

6 Shakespeare did more than give the world wonderful plays and poetry, he is thought to have contributed between 2000 and 3000 words and phrases to the English vocabulary. Here are instructions to play Shake-em-up Shakespeare.

a Form groups of five and write the following words, which have been attributed to Shakespeare, onto flashcards.

accused	addiction	advertising
amazement	assassination	bandit
bedroom	beached	bedroom
birthplace	blanket	bump
cater	champion	countless
dawn	dew-drop	downstairs
epileptic	eyeball	fairy land
farmhouse	fixture	flawed
flea-bitten	football	fortune-teller
generous	glow	green-eyed
hint	horn-book	hot-blooded
lady-bird	lonely	long-legged
love-letter	luggage	mimic
moonbeam	mountaineer	negotiate
obscene	pale-faced	premeditated
puppy-dog	rant	schoolboy
shooting star	summit	torture
upstairs	varied	watch-dog
worm hole	worthless	zany

b Nominate one group member to be the keeper of the cards. The keeper sits away from the rest of the group and is responsible for showing the word to one other member of the group.

c Without speaking, the group member who has been shown the word draws symbols or pictures, or mimes actions to help their team guess the word. Each drawing or mime can only take two minutes.

d Your teacher will be the time keeper. The team to correctly guess the most words in fifteen minutes wins Shake-em-up Shakespeare.

Analysing

7 Make a list of the rhyming patterns. Are there any examples in the list of ingredients where a true rhyme doesn't exist? Why do you think this might be the case?

8 Shakespeare's actors probably only had one hand-written script between them to learn their lines. How do you think that the rhyming might have helped them to learn their lines?

9 Each two lines that rhyme is called a couplet. One of the other clever things that Shakespeare does with this piece of writing is that he makes sure that there are the same number of beats or syllables in each line of the couplet. For example:

Scale/of/dra/gon,/tooth/of/wolf, /(7 syllables or beats)

Witch/es'/mum/my,/maw/and/gulf/(7 syllables or beats)

Mark in pencil the syllables in this extract. Does Shakespeare maintain this same beat throughout the piece? If so, what effect do you think this has? If not, what effect does this change in pattern have on the piece?

Creating

10 You have been asked to stage a modern adaptation of the play. Using modern language, develop your own potion for the witches to chant as they throw the ingredients in. See if you can make it rhyme and use a consistent beat throughout.

Strands in action

Core tasks

1 Shakespeare's plays are called classics because their plot and message remain relevant despite hundreds of years passing. There are many examples of Shakespeare's plays being altered and modernised. In English you are often asked to transform one sort of text to another to demonstrate your understanding of the characters, the conflict involved and possible alternative solutions to the problems that the characters face.

a Your task is to rework the extract from *Macbeth* and put it into a modern context. The scene is set at a park across the road from school.



b Complete a read through of your modernised adaptation and make any editorial changes, then swap your script with another student. Critically evaluate the new script constructively by looking at the detail in the stage directions, consistency in characterisation, clarity of the dialogue and the management of tension.

2 Imagine you are one of the witches. Chances are you would be using your mobiles or MSN to hold the same conversation.

a Use a network chat program available at school, a mobile or your notebook to rewrite these events in SMS text language. You must use modern English, abbreviations and emoticons to convey your message.

b How many texts does it take to get to the end of the scene?

Extra tasks

1 Use the internet to research the life and work of Shakespeare. Prepare an oral presentation on an aspect of his life from the list below. Using the knowledge and skills you have learnt in this chapter, produce a formal presentation on a play or Shakespeare's life.

- The Tragedies: *Romeo and Juliet, King Lear, Hamlet*
- The Comedies: *Much Ado About Nothing, A Midsummer Night's Dream*
- The Histories: *Henry V*
- A specific play: Any others that are not already on the list
- James I
- Elizabeth I
- Anne Hathaway
- The Globe Theatre
- The Rose Theatre

2 Shakespeare wrote many famous speeches over the years. Use the internet to find some of the more well known ones. With a partner, rehearse the speech and deliver it to the class. You may even be able to find a full modern version of it online. Have a partner present these lines and decide which one you like best.

3 Select one random page from any of the plays. In small groups, see if you can translate the scene to a modern setting. Try reading it with different accents or by emphasising specific words in the delivery. When you are ready, perform the piece for the class.



Then, rising with Aurora's light,
The Muse invoked, sit down to write;
Blot out, correct, insert, refine,
Enlarge, diminish, interline.

Jonathan Swift (1667–1745), writer, poet and priest

Focus on language

Chapter overview

The importance of writing can never be underestimated. From the time humankind first learnt to mark walls and record information, writing has evolved into a dynamic, fluid practice. Whether you are scribbling a shopping list, writing instructions for how to make your favourite cake or penning the first draft of an award-winning novel, you begin with a blank page and an idea.

Like Jonathan Swift, you must learn to be critical of your writing to ensure that you get the best words, for the best expression, to achieve the best result you can.

The ability to transmit your message in writing and to make yourself understood is one of the most important skills you will ever learn. In fact, language may be the most powerful tool you will ever use. Whether you want to persuade your boss to give you a promotion, write a love letter or simply email your friends to tell them about your holiday, you need to make sure that you can use the right words in the right manner. Remember that to get what you want, you have to be able to express it clearly … and that means knowing the rules of writing!

DID YOU KNOW…

Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* has not been out of print since it was first published in 1726. In this story, Gulliver, a surgeon and a captain of a ship, visits many mythical lands, including Lilliput, where the people are only 15 centimetres tall!

1

Punctuation

Punctuation is important because it helps your reader to understand your intended meaning. Think of punctuation as road rules that help you navigate the world of reading and writing.

When you use the correct punctuation, you help your reader reach your intended destination safely. When you use the wrong punctuation, you may end up sending your reader the wrong way.



Use punctuation to point your reader in the right direction.

Finding your way

Look at the following paragraph. How hard is it to read?

melissa hurried into the schoolyard certain that yet again she would be late for homeroom her teacher hated her she knew it she knew it with the same certainty that she knew that her friend laurel would be chewing gum this morning and that her mother would ring at exactly five minutes past four this afternoon to make certain that melissa was home alone and ready to do her chores she peered cautiously through the glass in the classroom door yep there she was old mean shrivelled and with breath from hell melissa could smell it from behind her clear glass shield from inside the room she heard the usual shrill discordant sound of her morning greeting get in here right now or you can go straight to the principals office

Melissa's story might be quite interesting or it might not. We will never know because we won't bother wading through such a mish-mash. The opportunity to tell the story is lost because the author has ignored the rules of punctuation and it is hard to work out what the story means—it is just a jumble of words.

Punctuation marks

So what are these punctuation marks? And what do they do? What makes them just as important as the words we write?

In the table on the following page, the most common punctuation marks are listed, along with the purpose of each and an example of how they are used. Study the table carefully; you will need to be able to use these directions for the rest of your life.

DID YOU KNOW...

The rules of grammar and punctuation have changed over time. Originally, punctuation marks were written ways of showing how something sounded when it was read aloud and the marks indicated where, and for how long, a pause should take place.

Writer's TOOLBOX

Only three punctuation marks are appropriate to use as sentence endings—the **full stop**, the **question mark** and the **exclamation mark**.

Punctuation mark	What it looks like	What it does	Example of use
Full stop	.	• Ends a complete sentence	• I have finished the book.
		• Ends an abbreviation	• etcetera = etc.
Exclamation mark	!	• Emphasises a strong feeling or emotion	• Eureka! I have found it!
Question mark	?	• Placed at the end of a sentence to show that a question is being asked	• What would you like for breakfast?
Comma	,	• Separates additional information in a sentence or list	• The horse broke through the stable door, raced across the field, hurdled the hedge, bolted down the street and leapt into the river. • Mr Zomer, the man with the camera by his side, is our next-door neighbour.
		• Separates words spoken in direct speech from the speaker	• Kerry said, 'This will be the last time that I lend you my CDs'.
		• Separates an introductory phrase, clause or word that comes before the main clause	• After paying for his meal, Omar left the restaurant.
		• Comma plus a conjunction connects two independent clauses	• They lost the battle, but won the war.
Semi-colon	;	• Shows the connection between two statements.	• Teresa had spaghetti for dinner; Charles had steak.
		• Especially used before 'transition' words such as 'therefore', 'moreover', 'however', 'in fact' or 'consequently'	• Daniel bought a couch; however, he did not have a room to put it in.
Colon	:	• Introduces a list	• Mr Oscopy put the following items in his hospital bag: toothbrush, pyjamas, books and deodorant.
		• Introduces a summary or contrast	• The elephants' worst enemy is obvious: humans.
		• Introduces the second part of a sentence that elaborates on the ideas in the first part of the sentence	• The school camp was exactly as I expected: tiring, hilarious and exciting.
Apostrophe	'	• Indicates a contraction—shows letters have been removed	• You have = You've • Who is = Who's • He is = He's
		• Indicates possession—denotes ownership	• Belongs to John = John's • Belongs to the girls = the girls'
Quotation marks	"	• Show direct speech	• 'I don't want to go to the gym,' said Joel.
		• Emphasise specific words	• It is not 'cool' to smoke.
		• Show a short quote	• The famous English author Emily Brontë wrote the line, 'No coward soul is mine'.
Brackets	( )	• Include extra information in a sentence	• The two girls (who both had dark hair) sat silently side by side.
Hyphen	-	• Joins two words or parts of a word together, no spaces either side of it	• brother-in-law • self-directed learning

DID YOU KNOW...

In Greek, the word *komma* means 'a piece cut off' and refers to a line of verse that can stand alone.

Capital letters

Capital letters are used in the following circumstances.

- at the start of a sentence:
  - It was a dark and stormy night.
- for people's names and titles:
  - Mr Mark Dupont
  - Ms Eleanor Smith
  - Sir Donald Bradman
- for the days of the week and months of the year:
  - Tuesday
  - June
- to identify geographical locations:
  - Bondi
  - Taiwan
- for the opening salutation of a letter or email:
  - Dear Ms Wright
  - My dearest beloved
- for the closing of a letter or email:
  - Yours sincerely
  - Yours truly
- for the titles of books and films (except articles, conjunctions and prepositions):
  - *Great Expectations*
  - *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*
- for the personal pronoun 'I'
- at the start of the first word of a conversation:
  - She said, 'Can I ask you a question?'
- for the names of organisations, teams, institutions and government bodies:
  - Western Bulldogs Football Club
  - Ministry of Defence
- for the names of historical events, eras, special events and holidays:
  - Christmas
  - Bronze Age
  - Russian Revolution
- for the names of specific examples of transportation:
  - Boeing 747
  - The Ghan [train]

  This last rule applies only to forms of transport that have been given 'names'.



The **Look, Cover, Write, Say, Check method** of learning words involves you looking at the word, then covering it, writing the word down, repeating it to yourself or another person, and then checking that you have remembered it correctly.

Breakaway tasks 1

Remembering

1 Use the Look, Cover, Write, Say, Check method of remembering information to help you remember all the different types of punctuation marks. Repeat this exercise until you can repeat them (and write them out) without looking.

2 Make a set of posters for your classroom that show the punctuation marks clearly and explain, in your own words, the purpose of each.

Understanding

3 What are the two uses of an apostrophe?

4 Write a sentence explaining how and why you might use a semi-colon.

Applying

5 Add commas to the following sentences.

a I like to eat a sandwich an apple a piece of cheese and a slice of cake for lunch.

b After the baby eats his hands and his face should be washed.

c What you should do about this Mr Smith is very important.

d The bully the one with the tattoo and the earring is not from around here.

e Good workers are needed in the following occupations: nursing teaching bricklaying aromatherapy and medicine.

6 Place apostrophes in the following sentences.

a The mans coat hung on the hook.

b Davids bike was parked outside the shop.

c I borrowed my sisters dress without asking permission.

d Theyre lucky to have so many friends to help them in their time of need.

e Shes finally dumped him so now hes sulking and wont talk to anyone.

7 Rewrite each sentence with the required capital letters and punctuation marks.

a what kind of accident did alex have sue asked the ambulance driver

b charles dickens wrote oliver twist great expectations and a tale of two cities

c ouch who said that inoculations weren't meant to hurt

d the dentist sadly explained you will need all your fillings removed and replaced with false teeth

e on the lefthand side of the street is the gallery on the right is the war memorial

8 Rewrite the following passage using capital letters and punctuation marks where appropriate.

penelope waited every day for odysseus to return and as she waited she weaved the suitors who had come to live at the palace became more and more badly behaved they believed odysseus was dead and that one day soon penelope would have to marry one of them marrying penelope was considered a great thing among the suitors for not only was she beautiful she was also a queen if you married penelope you became king of ithaca a most prestigious role for any man penelope agreed that she would marry one of the suitors when she had finished weaving the cloth she was occupied with on her loom she knew the suitors were only after her title and so every night while they slept she undid all her weaving this meant that she never finished making the piece of cloth and she never had to decide who to marry for she did not believe that odysseus was really dead

9 Rewrite the story of Melissa on the first page of this chapter using appropriate capital letters and punctuation marks.



A **suitor** is a man who tries to convince a woman to marry him.
A **loom** is a tool for weaving yarn or thread into fabric.

Strands in action

Core task

In 1843, Charles Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol.* It tells the story of Ebenezer Scrooge, who has lost the 'spirit of Christmas' and has become a mean, bitter man. One Christmas Eve, three ghosts—the Ghost of Christmas Past, the Ghost of Christmas Present and the Ghost of Christmas Future—come to visit him and each of them shows him a festive season.

In preparation for the Christmas holidays, the publishers have decided to print a new edition of Dickens' famous *A Christmas Carol.* Unfortunately, the new edition has become horribly confused on the editor's computer and there are now two or more punctuation marks where there should only be one. As the leading punctuation expert, you have been called in to help.

Your job is to choose which of the given options is the right choice. You will need to use your knowledge of punctuation to make the correct decision. Copy the text below, using the correct punctuation.

Tthe Phantom slowly**;,** gravely**,;** silently approached. When it came near him**,: Ss**crooge bent down upon his knee**;,** for in the very air through which this Spirit moved it seemed to scatter gloom and mystery**.,?**

It was shrouded in a deep black garment**,;** which concealed its head**.,** its face**.,** its form**.,;** and left nothing of it visible save one outstretched hand. But for this it would have been difficult to detach its figure from the night**,,!** and separate it from the darkness by which it was surrounded**?.**

He felt that it was tall and stately when it came beside him**,:** and that its mysterious presence filled him with a solemn dread. He knew no more**,:** for the **Ss**pirit neither spoke nor moved.

'I am in the presence of the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come?' said Scrooge.

The Spirit answered not**,;** but pointed onward with its hand**.?**

'You are about to show me shadows of the things that have not happened, but will happen in the time before us**!,**' Scrooge pursued. 'Is that so**!,** Spirit**?!**'

The upper portion of the garment was contracted for an instant in its folds, as if the Spirit had inclined its head**.!**

That was the only answer he received**;.**

Extra tasks

1 Film scripts use punctuation and formatting in a very specific way. Read *The Breakfast Club* extract. What comments can you make about the way punctuation is used in the dialogue?

FILM SCRIPT

THE BREAKFAST CLUB

By John Hughes

6. INT. LIBRARY—DAY

There are six tables in two rows of three.

Claire is sitting at the front table. Brian comes in and sits at the table behind her.

Andrew comes in and points at the chair next to Claire at the front table. She shrugs and he sits there.

In walks Bender, he touches everything on the checkout desk and takes a few things in the process.

He walks over to where Brian is sitting and points to the table on the opposite side of the library. Brian reluctantly gets up and moves.

Bender sits at the table where Brian was and puts his feet up.

Allison walks in. She walks all the way around the library and sits in the back corner table, just behind Brian.

Andrew and Claire look at each other and snicker.

Brian looks at her in confusion and then turns away.

Enter RICHARD VERNON, a teacher. He holds a stack of papers in his left hand. He addresses the group with such disrespect it makes you wonder how he ever got the job.

VERNON
Well… well. Here we are! I want to congratulate you for being on time…

Claire raises her hand.

CLAIRE
Excuse me, sir? I think there's been a mistake. I know it's detention, but… um… I don't think I belong in here…

Vernon doesn't care. He just continues to talk.

VERNON
It is now seven-oh-six. You have exactly eight hours and fifty-four minutes to think about why you're here. To ponder the error of your ways…

Bender spits into the air and catches the spit in his mouth again.

Claire looks like she is going to gag.

VERNON
…and you may not talk. You will not move from these seats.

He glances up at Bender and points at him.

VERNON
…and you…

Vernon pulls the chair out from under Bender's feet.

VERNON
…will not sleep. Alright people, we're gonna try something a little different today. We are going to write an essay—of no less than a thousand words—describing to me who you think you are.

BENDER
Is this a test?

Vernon passes out paper and pencils and takes no notice of Bender.

VERNON
And when I say essay…I mean essay. I do not mean a single word repeated a thousand times. Is that clear Mr. Bender?

Bender looks up.

BENDER
Crystal…

VERNON
Good. Maybe you'll learn a little something about yourself. Maybe you'll even decide whether or not you care to return.

Brian raises his hand and then stands.

BRIAN
You know, I can answer that right now sir… That'd be 'No', no for me. 'cause…

VERNON
Sit down Johnson…

BRIAN
Thank you sir…

He sits.

VERNON
My office…

Vernon points.

VERNON
…is right across that hall. Any monkey business is ill-advised…

He looks around at them.

VERNON
…any questions?

BENDER
Yeah… I got a question.

Vernon looks at him suspiciously.

BENDER
Does Barry Manilow know you raid his wardrobe?

VERNON
I'll give you the answer to that question, Mr. Bender, next Saturday. Don't mess with the bull young man, you'll get the horns.

Vernon leaves.

BENDER
That man… is a brownie hound…

Everyone tries to get comfortable and we hear a loud snapping sound. Brian turns and looks and it is Allison, biting her nails.

Bender's eyes widen as he turns to look. Everyone is looking now. Allison notices them looking at her.

BENDER
You keep eating your hand and you're not gonna be hungry for lunch…

Allison spits part of her nail at Bender.

BENDER
I've seen you before, you know…

We see Vernon look out from his office.

We see Brian playing with his pen.

BRIAN
(quietly to himself)

Who do I think I am? Who are you? Who are you?

He attaches the pen to his bottom lip and puts the top under his upper lip.

BRIAN
I am a walrus…

Bender looks at him in utter confusion.

Source: *The Breakfast Club*, Universal Studios, 1985, Courtesy of Universal Studios Licencing LLLP

2 Rewrite the scene as either a descriptive narrative (that is, a story) or as one of the character's diary entries. You will need to make sure that you use correct or appropriate punctuation to reflect the change in form and intended audience.

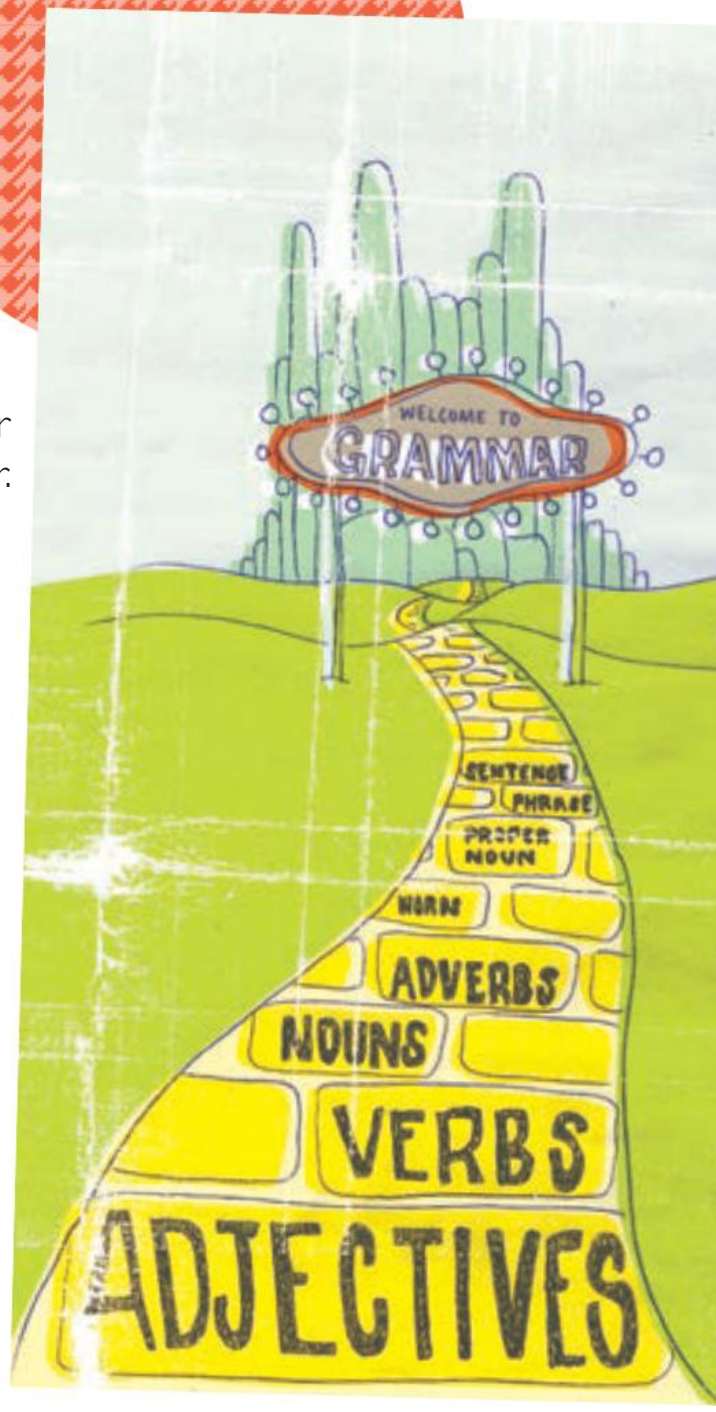
3 The following book titles have lost their punctuation. Rewrite the titles correctly, putting in the correct punctuation.

a brideshead revisited
b the oxford dictionary of quotations
c masterpieces of the vatican
d key moments in cinema the history of film and film makers
e the penguin australian do it yourself manual the complete guide to home repairs and improvements
f the encyclopedia of mythology
g historys greatest scandals shocking stories of powerful people
h pompeii the city that was buried in 79 bce
i 1001 songs the great songs of all time and the artists stories and secrets behind them
j van gogh the complete paintings



An **ellipsis** (…) shows where words have been left out, there is a break in thought or speech trails off.

2 Grammar



Right! Now that you can use punctuation effectively, it's time to move on to the other great building block of language—grammar. Your teachers talk about this all the time; your parents tell you that you should be able to use it correctly; and your grandparents swear that they learnt all about it 'in their day'. But what actually is grammar? And why does everyone insist that you need to know it?

Grammar is the science or study of words and their relationships in the language. In English, we use the term 'grammar' to refer to the set of rules that govern the composition of sentences, phrases, and words. Each correct sentence is another clear road or path that your reader travels along. A clear sentence leads to another and together they form a paragraph that, ultimately, leads your reader to understanding.

DID YOU KNOW...

English grammar is the set of rules about the language, and an English Grammar is a book written about those rules.

Nouns

Nouns are naming words. They name people, places, animals, objects, feelings and ideas. They are the most common words in the English language. Nouns are usually single words, but sometimes they might consist of more than one word, such as the term 'Southern Hemisphere'. There are five types of nouns and each one performs a specific function.

- **Common nouns** name a kind or type of people, animal, place or object.
- **Proper nouns** always begin with a capital letter and name particular people, places or things.
- **Collective nouns** name groups of people, animals or things.
- **Concrete nouns** name any tangible person, place or thing that you can detect by using your senses (sight, touch, smell, hearing, taste).
- **Abstract nouns** name intangible ideas, feelings and qualities that are unable to be detected by the senses.

Verbs

Verbs are words that express an action or a state of being. Every sentence, even the shortest, contains a verb. They are commonly called 'doing words'.

Don *ran* towards his boss with her morning coffee.

Booth *drew* his gun and *shouted*, 'Stop!'

'Where *is* my file?' *wondered* John.

Brennan *wrote* a book about crime.

Adjectives

Adjectives describe nouns. They tell you more about the noun and help to make your writing interesting.

Adjectives can tell you a range of things about the noun.

- They tell how many there are:

There were *twenty* children in the classroom.

- They tell what it is like:

It was a *small*, *blue* pebble.

Adjectives are also useful for making comparisons between things. An adjective in its simplest form is said to be positive. For example:

He had a *small* piece of pizza.

When we compare two things, we use the comparative form, usually by adding '–er' to the adjective. For example:

He had a *smaller* piece of pizza.

When we compare three or more things we use the superlative form of the adjective, usually by adding '–est' to the adjective. For example:

He had the *smallest* piece of pizza.

When an adjective has more than two syllables, rather than adding '–er' or '–est', we add the words 'more' and 'most' to make the comparative and superlative forms of the adjective. For example, for the adjective 'impressive':

It was a *more impressive* performance.
(Comparative)

It was the *most impressive* performance.
(Superlative)

Adverbs

An adverb modifies a verb; that is, it adds something to the verb in some way. It creates more meaning about the verb by telling us something extra.

Adverbs tell us more about verbs by indicating one of the following:

Type of adverb	What adverb shows	Key words	Examples
time	when something happened	immediately, never, occasionally, often, sometimes, soon, then, today, tomorrow, usually, yesterday	She *usually* goes to the gym in the morning.
place	where something happened	above, away, below, down, far, here, in, outside, there, up, within	The children ran *ahead of* their parents.
manner	how something happened	rapidly, swiftly, slowly, quickly, aggressively, greedily, suddenly, well, silently, noisily	He *tenderly* woke the sleeping baby. The girl ran *quickly* up the stairs to her classroom.
degree	to what extent something happened	almost, nearly, quite, just, too, enough, hardly, scarcely, completely, extremely, too, very, enough	I could *hardly* hear him. She ran *very* fast.

When you are trying to decide whether a word is an adverb or not, ask yourself the following questions. Is it modifying a verb? When is the verb occurring? Where is the verb occurring? How is the verb occurring? To what extent is the verb occurring?

Tense

Tense means time. The tense of a verb tells us when an action occurs. In English, there are three simple tenses: past, present and future.

When an action has already taken place, we use the *past* tense form of the verb. For example:

Michael *worked* for the Department of Defence.

The past tense of a verb usually ends in '–ed' or '–d'. The use of the word 'was' or 'were' indicates past continuous tense. In these situations, the verb has '–ing' added to it. For example:

Michael *was working* for the Department of Defence.

For an action that is happening now, we use the *present* tense form of the verb. For example:

Michael *works* for the Department of Defence.

The present continuous tense indicates that an action is ongoing. For example:

Michael *is working* for the Department of Defence.

The use of the *future* tense of a verb indicates that something is yet to happen or will happen in the future. For example:

Michael *will work* for the Department of Defence.

The future tense of a verb can be identified by the presence of the words 'will', 'shall' or 'is going to'.

The verb 'to be'

The form of the verb 'to be' changes according to the tense that is being used and according to whether you are talking about one person or thing (the *singular* form of the word) or more than one person or thing (the *plural* form of the word).

Look at the ways in which the verb 'to be' changes in the chart below.

Tense	Singular	Plural
Present	I am You are He, she, it is	We are You are They are
Past	I was You were He, she, it was	We were You were They were
Future	I will be You will be He, she, it will be	We will be You will be They will be

This is called 'conjugating the verb'.

Breakaway tasks 2

Applying

1 Place each of the nouns below in the table under its correct heading.

bird	kindness	justice	bouquet
Herald Sun	swarm	wisdom	India
eggs	ladder	congregation	clock
Mount Isa	honesty	Diet Coke	coffee
herd	kiosk	frustration	Wales
whales	peg	Peggy	bullet

Common nouns	Proper nouns	Collective nouns	Abstract nouns

2 Match the occupation with the verb that describes what it does.

Occupation	Activity
angler	cobbles
ballerina	dances
barber	decides
comedian	fishes
judge	jokes
priest	operates
shoemaker	preaches
surgeon	shaves

3 For each letter of the alphabet, find an occupation and a verb that describes the work. For example, an actor performs.

4 Complete the following table by filling in the comparative and superlative versions of the adjectives.

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
soon		
brief		
early		
clear		
long		
bad		
ill		
quick		

5 A proverb is a popular saying. Each of the proverbs below has lost its adjective. Insert the correct adjective from the list provided. Then underline the nouns in each of the proverbs.

new	dirty	early	every	silver	black

a The _____ bird catches the worm.
b A _____ broom sweeps clean.
c There is a _____ sheep in every flock.
d _____ cloud has a _____ lining.
e Don't wash your _____ linen in public.

6 In the sentences below, circle the verbs and underline the adverbs.
a The actress smiled ruefully at the probing questions from the interviewer.
b The pirate viciously flogged his captive until he begged for mercy.
c The naughty cat left suddenly as his owners came home.
d Veronica's parents shouted frantically at her as the ladder began to fall away beneath her feet.
e Sometimes it was easier simply to let her brother win the game.
f The netball player thrust the ball aggressively towards the umpire's face.
g Once the curtain lifted, the audience was entranced with the action on stage.
h The gale-force winds that were expected tomorrow actually arrived earlier today.
i Weeping bitterly, Susan swept from the room in a torrent of tears.
j Even though his finger was only slightly cut, Malcolm's pride had suffered an extreme battering.

7 For each of the sentences below, decide whether it tells something that has happened already (past tense), something that is happening now (present tense) or something that will happen (future tense). Fill in the correct version of the verb to complete the sentence.
a Harry _____ (to try) to swim the English Channel last year in record time.
b Melissa's snoring _____ (to keep) the whole camp site awake last night.
c I will _____ (to choose) which dress I will _____ (to wear) closer to the night of the party.
d Peter sits on the barge, _____ (to strum) his guitar and _____ (to look) into the setting sun.
e Rowena will _____ (to ride) her bike to school next year.

8 Change the following verbs from the present tense into the past tense.

eat	know	buy	do	knit	give
swim	wind	ams	trike	hurry	bandage

9 Change the following verbs from the past tense into the future tense.

slept	drank	threw	took	reached	said
melted	shot	froze	worked	annoyed	



3

Making your writing interesting

Good drivers know how to handle all conditions—they know when to speed up, slow down, proceed with caution and deliver their passengers safely. Good writers, likewise, know how to follow the rules, but they also know how to make the journey enjoyable. A bad driver might take a wrong turn, disobey road rules or cause their passengers to feel uncomfortable by using poor driving technique. A good driver, on the other hand, will confidently navigate the best possible route to reach their destination. Similarly, if you want to be a good writer, you need to choose the best words, phrases and literary devices to take your audience through a story to the desired outcome.

You can use description to give your writing detail; you can use similes and metaphors to put images in your readers' minds. But make sure that you use the right word or expression to convey exactly what you want to say. There's nothing worse than being trapped in a story that is overwritten and bores you to tears!

Writing techniques

One of the great challenges in writing is to make your writing interesting for your readers. Description is one of the most important ways that this can be achieved. It helps to bring your writing to life and allows readers to form clear pictures in their heads.

Each of the following writing techniques allows you to move from *telling* your reader what has happened to *showing* them.



Make your readers' journey as comfortable as possible.

Writing technique	What it does	Example
Simile	Comparison of one thing with another. Similes provide useful comparisons because they help the reader to imagine what is being described.	The teacher was like a storm thundering around the classroom. The reporter was as intrusive as a seagull at a picnic.
Metaphor	Comparison of one thing with another by claiming that one thing actually is another thing	The teacher was a storm thundering around the classroom.
Personification	Attribution of human qualities and characteristics to objects	The car coughed into life and shuddered in the cold.
Alliteration	Repetition of a consonant sound in a phrase or sentence	The soldiers stand silently before their sergeant.
Onomatopoeia	Use of words that imitate actual sounds	The bicycle wheels screeched as he hit the brakes.
Assonance	Repetition of vowel sounds	The mysterious silver ring glittered and shimmered in the mist.

Breakaway tasks 3

Remembering

1 State which of the writing techniques outlined in the table above are used in the following sentences.

- a Four fevered fowls fought for the feed.
- b The tree creaked and groaned with each movement of the wind.
- c Des was like a corpse roaming the corridors.
- d The factories were old men smoking in the night.
- e All that could be heard were the birds in the firs.

Understanding

2 Look around your classroom and describe five items to your partner using one of each of the writing techniques outlined above.

3 Make a set of posters for the classroom that explain each of the writing techniques. Use your examples from the previous task.

Applying

4 The following paragraphs describe what the author faced when she visited her grandmother's home after an absence of many years. Underline the writing techniques used in the piece.

On either side of the road the trees stared down at me in mute disapproval at my return. How dare I come back, they whispered, sighing as they gave me their message. The old building stood like a long-forgotten castle on the street corner. Around it, its compatriots had been demolished to make way for more modern buildings; but my grandmother's house stood defiantly against the encroaching modern architecture that now surrounded it. It was an orphan, abandoned by its parents.

I walked timidly up the creaking stairs towards the front door. The paint had blistered, blackened and bubbled. The knocker, formerly bronzed and glowing, now hung lifeless and rusting on the sole remaining screw. Lifting it gingerly, I let it thump back onto the brass plate. CLANG! In a moment there was a shuffling and the door began to slowly open, like a clam being prised apart to reveal its pearl.

5 The passage above sets a sombre mood. Imagine that you are looking forward to visiting your much loved grandmother. Write your own version of this story, using as many of the writing techniques as possible to create a more upbeat description.

Vocabulary

Spelling and word choice are two of the most important factors in making your reader's journey easier and more interesting. Making the right word choice and using the correct spelling enables you to negotiate the difficult terrain of a piece of writing and allows you to drive through different conditions.

Spelling

Some words are commonly misspelt and they really just need to be absorbed so that they become second nature to the good writer. Some of these words are listed below.



accommodation	already	arrangement	believe	committee
discipline	embarrassment	encourage	evidently	fashion
February	happiness	humorous	impostor	improvement
intelligent	interesting	interview	management	miscellaneous
moisture	mosquitoes	obeyed	occasionally	occupation
occurred	opposite	ordinary	possession	predict
preliminary	privilege	reasonable	recommend	relieved
rhythm	routine	Saturday	separate	submarine
suburbs	success	sufficient	summarise	technique
telescope	terrific	vacant	villain	whether

Breakaway tasks 4

Remembering

1 Use the Look, Cover, Write, Say, Check method to ensure that you can spell all the words in the table above.

Understanding

2 Write all the words in your notebook in alphabetical order.

3 Look up all the words in the dictionary. Write out their meanings in your notebook.

Applying

4 Using your dictionary, find out whether each word is a noun, a verb, an adjective or an adverb. You might discover that some words can be more than one type of speech, depending on their usage.

5 Write a paragraph on a subject of your own choice that uses at least five of these words.

Word choice

Choosing the right word is incredibly important in conveying your meaning correctly. The wrong word can change the meaning of your sentence or decrease the importance of what you are trying to say. Look at the examples below:

'I can't believe you just did that,' screamed Janice.

'I can't believe you just did that,' laughed Janice.

'I can't believe you just did that,' murmured Janice.

'I can't believe you just did that,' said Janice.

By changing just the one word that describes Janice's reaction, we have changed the whole tone of the sentence. Similarly, getting the most accurate word will help you achieve the best writing. Look at the examples below:

The players were jubilant at the end of the Grand Final.

The players were ecstatic at the end of the Grand Final.

The players were pleased at the end of the Grand Final.

DID YOU KNOW...

The easiest way to create the mood that you are after is to use the right adjective.

2 Below are words that can be used instead of the word 'said'. Write one line of dialogue using each word.

alleged	apologised	assumed	bellowed
bragged	confided	consented	held
moaned	objected	pleaded	praised
promised	screamed	supposed	thought
understood	whispered		



Breakaway tasks 5

Understanding

1 Listed below are twenty words that are commonly used as adjectives. Write them in your notebooks and, using a dictionary, write their definitions. Beside each word, make a list of three other words you could use in its place.

appropriate	agreeable	bewitching	desirable	gaseous
ghastly	honourable	illiterate	leisurely	illustrious
necessary	pretentious	religious	temporary	slimy
stealthy	superficial	tenuous	tyrannical	juvenile

Strands in action

Bringing it all together

Now that you know all the rules and requirements associated with writing, it's time to get behind the wheel and head out on your own. When you write, you get to plan your own journey. You decide what you want your passengers to see, experience, know, enjoy or discover. When you have a vision of where you want to go and you know how you can get there, you will take your readers on a journey to remember.

1 Use the prompts below to inspire a piece of writing. Use all the skills and techniques that you have been shown in this chapter to dazzle your audience and take them on a journey that they will remember.

- The locked chest
- Footprints by the doorway
- I found gold in the …
- There was a voice from under the stairs
- They called him the pocket rocket
- Someone had stolen my medal
- Why do they say, 'He who laughs last, laughs longest'?
- My mother says it's rude
- If I lived on a boat
- The PRANK
- She just pushed in
- The last tree
- Two parties on the same day
- The best gift I ever received
- The alien school
- What makes a good friend?
- The seed
- I wish everyone loved …
- The potion wasn't meant to …
- My big brother
- Where would you prefer to be right now?
- I hate my bike helmet
- An old lamp
- How the family picnic went wrong
- It was a dull evening until …



2 Use one of the pictures above to explore one or more aspects of the following ideas:

- rich and poor
- big and small
- responsibility
- friendship
- the future
- your dreams.



Art Spiegelman (b. 1948), comic book artist and editor

VISUAL LITERACY:

COMICS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS

Chapter overview

Words are not the only way to tell a story or to get a meaning across. Sometimes words are best, but at other times words can just get in the way. Signs, symbols, pictures and images can tell a story in themselves or when combined with words. Cartoons, comics and graphic novels entertain, amuse and enlighten us. They can make us see things in a new and different light and they can give us large amounts of pleasure.

1

Words, images and communication

When we think of language, we usually think of words—words that are written down or words that are spoken. But there are many other kinds of language. There are sign languages, such as Auslan (the Australian sign language of the deaf community), and we have all heard about body language. There is also a visual language, made up of pictures, images and symbols.

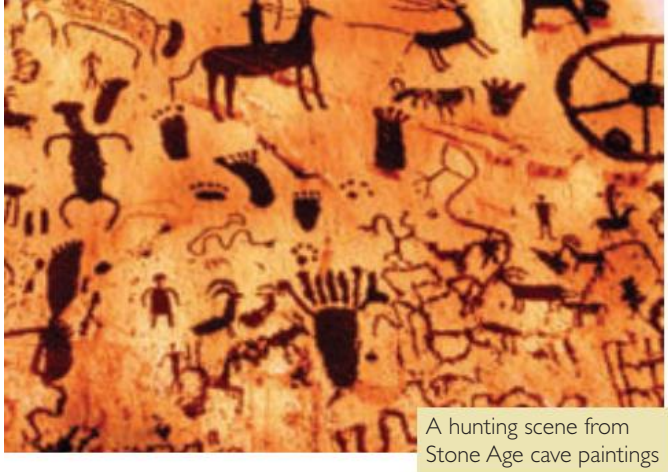
We learn to read a visual language just as we learn to read written words. You may think that a picture just shows something that exists in reality, but really a picture is just a collection of squiggles on a page and a photo is just a collection of dots of light on a screen or dots of ink on a page. We have been taught to read those lines or dots and to make sense of them, just as we have been taught how to read the lines on this page as words and to put a meaning to the words. This usually happens when we are young and our parents, teachers and others point out things to us from picture books and photos. That is how we were taught to read a visual language.



The word 'word' in sign language

Using the terms

We talk about pictures and images and writing and text. So which terms do you use? While it is acceptable to use either, it is generally considered more accurate to use the terms 'image' and 'text' rather than 'picture' and 'writing'. This is because, while a picture will always be an image there may be images that are not pictures, such as a still frame from a movie or a symbol; similarly, while writing is text, text may include more than writing.



A hunting scene from Stone Age cave paintings

Visual language

People have been using visual language for a very long time. The original inhabitants of Australia, the Aboriginal people, painted images in caves and on rocks. Cave paintings have also been found in Asia, Africa, America and Europe.

Experts are still unsure of the meanings or uses of many of these images. Some may have been to express an idea or wish, some may have been early religious symbols or part of a ceremony, and some may have marked a tribe's territory.

The one thing we can be sure of is that these images had a purpose and that purpose was to communicate an idea, a thought or a concept to someone other than the artist.

Some of the earliest written examples of language used a number of visual signs or images to create meaning. When we think of visual languages, we often think of the ancient Egyptians and their written language, hieroglyphics.

It is thought that Egyptian hieroglyphics started out as single images that communicated single ideas, so that an image of an eye meant an eye. This then began to develop into a more complicated system in which the eye became a symbol and its meaning changed depending on the use of other symbols around it.



Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics were often found in the tombs of the pharoahs.

In modern languages we sometimes use this idea to play a simple language game called a rebus.



A rebus: 'eye', 'heart', 'OZ' is understood as 'I love Australia'.

Breakaway tasks 1

Remembering

1 How do we learn to read images?

2 Where have cave paintings been found?

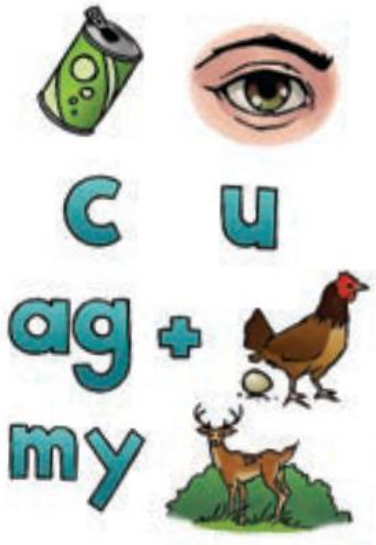
3 Why do we use visual language?

Understanding

4 a Look at the rebus below. What do each of the individual symbols mean?

b How do they work together to create a meaning? Is there any other meaning you could make from these symbols?

Creating



Over time, rebuses have become popular puzzles to send to friends or family.

5 Create a rebus of your own. It might be about something you like doing, somewhere you like going or even someone or something you like seeing.

6 Imagine you are in a small band of Stone Age hunters; create an image telling other tribe members that there is good food or water in this area.

Symbols and characters

Traditional Chinese writing is very visual and many ancient symbols are still in use and readable today. Unlike European and many other languages, Chinese is not phonetic. A phonetic language is one in which the written signs represent the sounds of the language. For example, the word 'door' in English looks nothing like a door but the letters make the sound of the word 'door'.

In Chinese, the traditional symbol for the word 'door' just means 'door'. It is not a combination of sounds that add up to 'door'. The image equals the idea or object.

門

You can see that the symbol for door looks like a traditional door in a Chinese house.

DID YOU KNOW...

You do not have to be able to speak Chinese to read it. Because the symbols stand for an idea, as long as you know the system of symbols, you can read it. This means that people in countries that have used the Chinese system of visual language, such as Japan, can read Chinese writing even though they can't understand the spoken Chinese language.

The Chinese sign for the country of China is another good example of this type of visual language.

中国

In ancient China they called their country the Middle Kingdom. The first sign means 'the middle' and the second sign is a stylised drawing of a bird's eye view of a city or kingdom.

The use of images to carry a single meaning is common across the world. We use an international visual language to communicate simple ideas and instructions. This language of signs is all around us and is used to enable quick, easy and understandable communication. It is especially useful in places where a large number of people who speak many languages gather, such as airports and railway stations. The information it gives is used for a variety of purposes, ranging from safety instructions to helping people avoid embarrassment.



We also see these signs on our roads and in public buildings such as schools and libraries. Imagine the traffic chaos if we did not use the international signs for driving on our roads.

Breakaway tasks 2

Remembering

1 What do we call the visual language used by the ancient Egyptians?

2 What is a phonetic language? Give an example.

3 What does the Chinese symbol for a door look like?

4 What does the Chinese symbol for China mean literally?

Understanding

5 Write down any symbols you can see in or from the classroom. What do they mean? Can you think of another way to communicate the meaning that does not use words?

6 In pairs, take five minutes to walk around the school. List the signs and symbols you see and what they mean. How do you think they communicate the idea? If you were an alien who landed in your school, what other meanings could you give these signs?

7 The following is one of the very few signs that does not use symbols. Why do you think that might be the case?



Analysing

8 Write down what you think these signs mean.



9 Do you think they are effective? Do they communicate the idea easily?

10 Which do you think is the most effective and why?

11 Which do you think is the least effective and why?

Creating

12 Create new international visual symbols for the following—you can draw them by hand or use a computer drawing program:

- people studying
- silence
- fruit picking allowed
- no phone texting.

13 Imagine what the world would look like without signs and symbols. Think of ten signs you see on your way to school. Write a short description of what would happen if they suddenly disappeared. You may want to write this as a diary entry, a news report or a descriptive piece of writing.

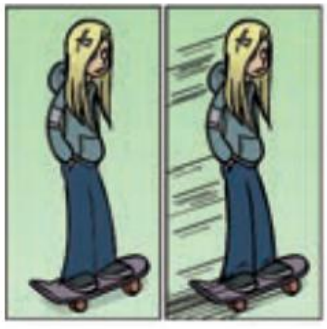
Visuals: changing meaning

When artists create illustrations they have at their disposal a number of techniques that they can use, some quite simple. And often these changes will alter the way you interpret things quite significantly. Below are two examples of how minor visual alterations to an object or person can alter the meaning of the illustration.

Take a moment to look at the three frames on the right and consider why the simple additions in frames two and three change our view of the pie.



Although illustrations such as the example on the right are static images, through the simple addition of lines the illustrator can change your perception of a character.



The visual and the written

Images and words have long been placed together and writers have found that the combination of image and text is very powerful. In our everyday lives there are many occasions when you would want to put words and images together. You might place them together to emphasise a point, like on a birthday card. You might want to put them together to illustrate a point, such as in a scientific diagram, or you might put them together to create a bit of fun, as in a cartoon.

The important thing is that we are trying to communicate an idea or send a message. The idea might be a very simple one, like 'happy birthday', or 'vote for X party', or it might be complex, like labelling the parts of a plant.

Images and words can also be combined to tell a story, to poke fun at someone, or to say something new, important or interesting. Combining images and words is also a powerful way of making a comment or statement.

Breakaway tasks 3

Understanding

1 Use your dictionary to find the meaning of the following words:

a connotation *(noun)*

b static *(adjective)*.

2 Look at each of the pie frames carefully and then choose two words for each frame that best describe what is happening to the pie.

3 Which frame suggests that the pie is hot? Why is this so?

4 Looking at the skateboard illustration, what is achieved by adding lines behind the skateboarder?

Creating

5 Using your knowledge of visual language, add an additional frame to each of the illustrations opposite to alter their meaning once again.

Combining image and text

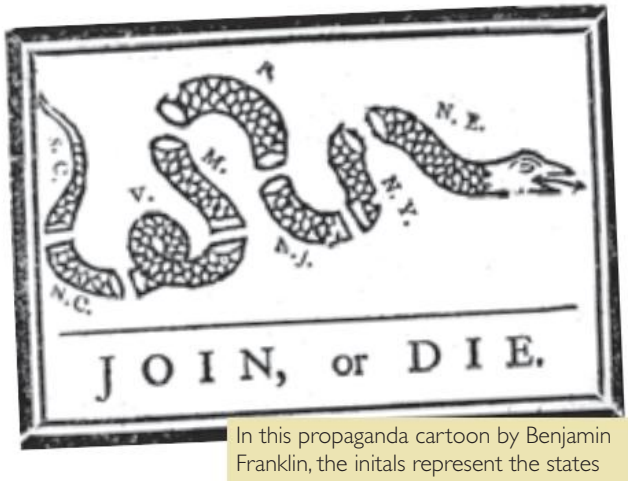
Artists and authors have used the combination of images and writing to communicate ideas or to make points for centuries. In ancient Rome, people often used a combination of images and text to inform and warn.



Cave canem is Latin for 'Beware of the dog'.

In the American War of Independence (1775–83), writers used images and text to make political points. The example below gives the initials of the states that were rebelling against England and the writer is emphasising the point that if the states do not join together they will lose.

This cartoon by Benjamin Franklin is a good example of the use of a combination of image and text for propaganda purposes.



In this propaganda cartoon by Benjamin Franklin, the initals represent the states that were rebelling against England.

Modern artists and writers also use the combination of image and text to make a point. The British artist Banksy uses a combination of image and text in his street art and in his gallery works. Banksy often uses his combination of image and text to question authority and to provide us with a different way of seeing things. In the following example you might think that he is making a comment on a number of things. These could range from how we see our relationship to animals and the environment to how we might see authority. Remember, our interpretation can depend a great deal on who we are and what our position in society might be. This work could be interpreted differently by an animal rights activist, a politician or a police officer.



The works of British artist Banksy are found everywhere, from art galleries and museums to the streets.



Propaganda is information that promotes a cause or political party. It often presents the opposition in a bad light.

Breakaway tasks 4

Analysing

1 Look at the Roman mosaic on the opposite page. What reasons can you think of for there being images and text?

2 Look carefully at the Benjamin Franklin cartoon on the opposite page.

   a Do you think it would work without the text? What or who do you think the word 'join' is referring to?

   b Do you think there might have been a reason that Franklin used the image of a snake? Why do you think this?

Storytelling

A single cartoon tells a story, but that story is really only a snapshot. It is about a moment in time and the reader chooses to see it as a single event. You can choose to continue the story in your imagination but that takes you outside the cartoon.

You can choose to tell your own stories by placing frames of a cartoon together. In this way you create a comic. Comics are popular across a large range of peoples and cultures. As you will see later, comics evolved into graphic novels.

The comic is not a modern invention; some people argue that the Bayeux tapestry (below) is a giant comic.

Time is an important part of a comic; to tell a story, the events have to happen over time. In a comic, the passing of time is usually represented by the movement from one frame to another; that is, as readers we imagine that time has passed between one frame and the next.

The space between the frames is called the gutter and it is sometimes said that the gutter is just as important as the frames. The gutter not only tells you that time has passed, it gives you the opportunity to fill in gaps and use your imagination, or to think about the situation.

On the following page, Gene Luen Yang explores the concept of time and place further in his comic *American Born Chinese*.



One definition of a comic is a series of connected images, usually with text, that tell a story that happens over time.



The Bayeux tapestry was created in about 1077 to celebrate the invasion of England by William the Conqueror in 1066. It is a series of images with text underneath that tells the story of the invasion and victory. The tapestry is 70 metres long and is preserved in a gallery in the French town of Bayeux.

GRAPHIC NOVEL

AMERICAN BORN CHINESE

By Gene Luen Yang





Source: Gene Luen Yang / Lark Pien, *American Born Chinese*, First Second Books, 2006

Breakaway tasks 5

Remembering

1 Why was the Bayeux tapestry made?

2 What is one definition of a comic?

Understanding

3 What does the word 'parable' mean? Use your dictionary to find out.

Analysing

4 How long do you think the conversation takes in *American Born Chinese*?

5 Gene Luen Yang has shown time passing in two different ways. What are they?

6 What is the point of the Chinese story Gene's mother tells him?

Creating

7 Draw and write another two frames at the end of *American Born Chinese*.

Cartoon structure

It is very easy to indicate time passing with words; you can simply say 'the next day' or 'one hour later'. With cartoons, you assume that time has passed because that is how you have learnt to read the series of frames. When it comes to telling a story, you can use words, images or a combination of the two. As you saw earlier in this chapter, you learnt to read images just as you learnt to read words. You looked at examples of single images then. The same thing is true when you look at storytelling with images. There is a visual language that you have learnt that helps you to understand and make sense of the images.

Most short comic strips in newspapers and magazines use what is called a three-act structure. This term originally came from the theatre. This three-act structure is very common and it is what we are accustomed to when we read a comic. In fact, the three-act structure is used in most plays, films, books and many other types of storytelling. At its simplest it means that we expect a story to have a beginning, a middle and an end. This is what generally happens:

- beginning = things are normal
- middle = a problem occurs
- end = the problem is fixed and things return to normal.

Take the story of the Three Little Pigs, for example:

- beginning (normal) = the pigs are building their houses
- middle (problem) = the wolf arrives and blows down the houses
- end (solution) = the wolf is stopped and the pigs live happily ever after.

This structure is used in a variety of genres of storytelling.

In humorous comics, the three-act structure usually looks like this:

- beginning = the scene is set
- middle = the joke is set up
- end = there is a punchline and the joke is revealed.

In the cartoon below, you see a conversation between Hagar and Lucky Eddie. It is obvious that this conversation has to take a minute or so to complete and it is the frames that tell you that time has passed. This cartoon also follows a typical three-act structure.



This is an example of a classic three-cell comic strip.

Breakaway tasks 6

Remembering

1 How many miles away from civilisation are Hagar and Lucky Eddie?

Understanding

2 Describe the island that Hagar and Lucky Eddie are on. How do we know that they are completely isolated?

Analysing

3 Could the conversation between Lucky Eddie and Hagar have taken place within one frame? What would be the effect if it did?

4 What role does the bolded speech bubble text have in increasing your understanding of the comic?

5 Describe the three 'acts' of the Hagar strip.

Creating

6 Using the Hagar comic as your template, write a new three-cell comic that includes Hagar and Lucky Eddie on the desert island.

Words

The way words are used in comics, cartoons and graphic novels is, of course, very different to the way they are used in a short story, an essay or a novel. In all of these forms, the words are the story, but in comics and graphic novels the words combine with the images to create the story. In a graphic novel or comic, words are used but the number of words will vary, depending on the purpose of the work and the audience for which it is intended. For example, in a picture book intended for children, such as *Madeline, Babar* or *Where the Wild Things Are*, too many words would get in the way.



Maurice Sendak wrote and illustrated *Where the Wild Things Are*.

The wild things roared their terrible roars and gnashed their terrible teeth
and rolled their terrible eyes and showed their terrible claws
but Max stepped into his private boat and waved good-bye

Written language

You have seen how visual language works to create shortcuts and pack meaning into a small space. The written language of comics does this too, for example in indicating sounds. How do you write down something you hear? One way of doing this is compare the sound to something, for example 'the pistol shot sounded like a twig snapping'. This is known as a simile. You use a simile when you compare one thing to another. A simile usually uses 'like' or 'as' in the sentence.

Another way to indicate sound is to write what you think it sounds like, such as 'bang' to show a loud noise. This is known as onomatopoeia.

Writers for comics are very concerned with space and they don't want to waste time and space using a simile to describe a sound when they can use words to make the sound.

Breakaway tasks 7

Remembering

1 What is a simile? Give three examples of similes.

Understanding

2 What actions match the following words?

- wham
- sobs
- whaaaaaaahhhhh
- skreeeeeek
- splat
- blam
- haw, haw
- tee hee

3 How many different sounds are there happening in this frame from a Batman comic? Why do you think the artist has chosen to use those words to create the sounds?





Onomatopoeia (pronounced on-o-mat-o-pea-ah) is the use of words that imitate the sounds actually produced, such as 'hiss', 'meow' and 'cock-a-doodle-do'.

4 Create new onomatopoeic sounds that a comic book artist could use to represent the following actions:

- catching a fish
- falling over on concrete
- hitting a tennis ball.

Analysing

5 Who do you think is the audience for the story *Where the Wild Things Are*?

6 How can you tell from this extract?

7 How many words are there?

8 Try to cut the word count down by half.

- Can you keep the meaning?
- Does this improve or worsen things? How and why?

9 Why do you think the writer used this number of words?

10 Sendak repeats the word 'terrible'. Why do you think he uses it so often and what is the effect?

Strands in action

Core tasks

1 Look at the Lauren Weinstein illustration below.

- **a** Write out the story in words. Which do you prefer, the comic or the words? Why?
- **b** Which do you think captures the feeling better? Why do you think that?
- **c** Remembering the three-act structure, divide the frames into beginning, middle and end. Justify your choice of frames for each category.
- **d** Look at the last panel. How would you describe the expression Lauren and John each have?
- **e** How do you think they feel? Why do you think that?
- **f** Add two new frames to the start of the story.
- **g** Add two new frames to the end of the story.

2 Think of an event in your life that would be suitable for a single-frame cartoon or a three-frame strip. It could be something that has happened to you, or to one of your family members, a pet or a friend.

- **a** Write out the incident, what happened, who it happened to and where it happened. Remember if the incident is too complicated it will be very hard to tell it in a short and interesting way.
- **b** Draw the main character. You need to decide whether your character will be life-like or cartoonish and exaggerated.
- **c** Create the cartoon or comic strip.

Lauren Weinstein often draws scenes from her youth.



Source: *John & I Go to the Movies*, from GIRL STORIES by Lauren R. Weinstein



Political cartoons are usually published in newspapers. They use images, irony and humour to encourage people to think about a current situation or event.

Source: Nicholson, *The Australian*

Extra tasks

1 Write a short essay giving a history of cartoons through the ages. You may want to include some or all of the following topics:

- ancient Roman cartoons
- political cartoons
- newspaper comic strips.

Make sure you consider:

- what the cartoons looked like (find examples)
- what you think they were about
- what their purpose may have been
- how popular they were and why
- what you think of them.

2 Look again at the political cartoon at the top of this page. Use the clues to find out who created it, when it was created and what it is about. What does this cartoon say about the event?

3 Look at as many of the political cartoons from today's newspaper as you can. You can go online and look at the websites of the major newspapers. Try to include the *The Age*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Courier Mail*, *Herald Sun*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *Adelaide Advertiser*, *The West Australian* and *The Australian* newspapers. Answer the following questions.

a What is each cartoon about?

b Are there any you don't understand? Show it to a friend and see if they can explain it. When all else fails, ask your teacher!

c How many papers have covered the same topic? What are the similarities or differences between the cartoons?

d Does the cartoon relate to any articles in the paper too? How does the cartoon add to the way you understand the article?

4 Create a one-page comic based on something that has happened to you or that you have witnessed. If you like you can build on your work from Core Task 2. You will need to consider:

- if your comic will be serious or amusing
- whose eyes the story will be seen through
- if it will be sympathetic to one character.

Remember the three-act structure and make sure you have a beginning, a middle and an end. You can hand-draw your comic, or your school may have access to comic-writing software. You can draft your comic page using some free software by going to the web destinations and following the links provided.

Web Destination

2

Manga



Manga is a form of comic and graphic novel that originally comes from Japan. Other countries now produce manga. Many artists have adapted the manga style, but fanatical manga fans will tell you that the only true manga is the manga that is produced in Japan.

DID YOU KNOW...

The word 'manga' come from two Japanese words: *man*, which means 'comic', and *ga*, which means pictures. Simple really! A *mangaka* is a person who creates manga.

Manga is a huge industry in Japan and there are libraries, shops and cafes that are filled with manga. Various sources claim that between one-quarter and one-half of all publications in Japan are manga. One estimate is that there are about two billion manga comics, books and magazines produced each year in Japan.

Many people use the words 'manga' and 'anime' interchangeably but they refer to two different things. Manga comprises still images that are printed on paper. Anime are moving images that are usually seen as films or TV shows.

Origins

Japan has a long and proud history in visual art and in printmaking in particular. Hiroshige and Hokusai are two eighteenth-century artists whose work has been a great influence on artists around the world, particularly in Japan.

Cartoons and comics were produced in Japan in the early twentieth century but they were not particularly popular. The huge growth in manga happened after Japan was defeated in the Second World War (1939–45). It is believed that the American soldiers who were in Japan after the war introduced the Japanese to American comics. Comics were hugely popular in the American armed forces, particularly superheroes such as Batman, Captain America and Superman. These comics also influenced Japanese artists. This combination of American comics and traditional Japanese art is said to have led to a new style of comic and the modern manga was born.

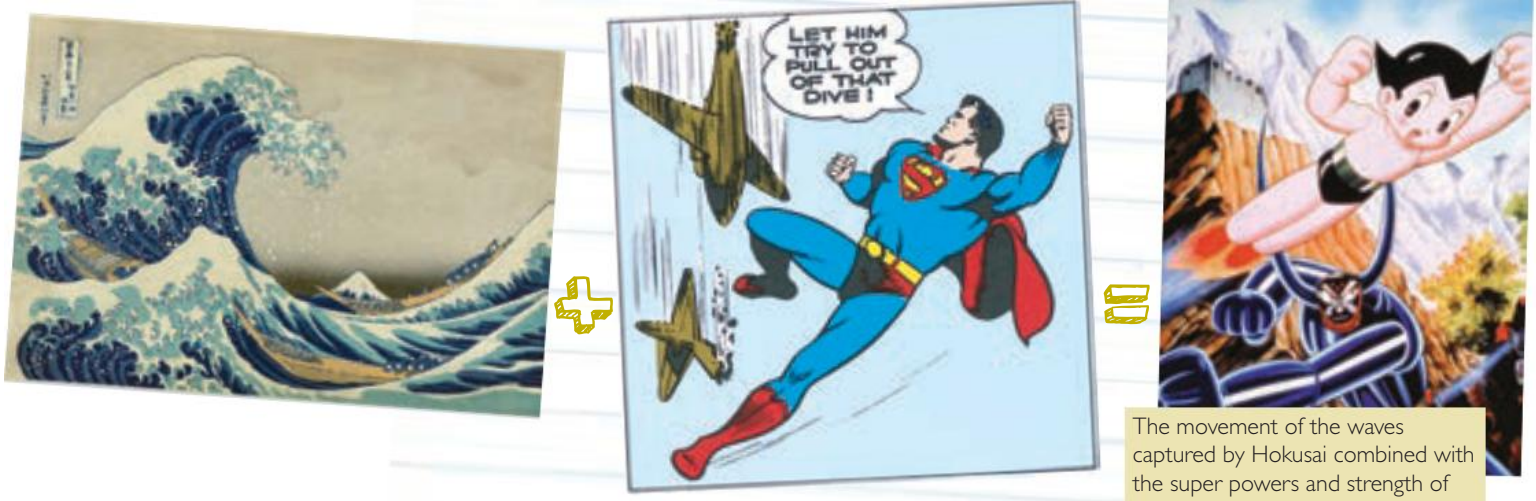
At the same time that American superhero comics were coming into Japan, so were Hollywood action movies. Many manga artists loved watching these movies and tried to capture the feeling and excitement of speed and movement in their work. They used film techniques such as close-ups and mid-shots and mixed these with cartoon techniques such as strong lines to make the images dynamic.

Writer's TOOLBOX

Writers use the word 'dynamic' to indicate movement, energy and power. 'Dynamic' is a word that is often used by writers and critics when talking about art. The opposite of dynamic is static.

DID YOU KNOW...

When representing people, close-up is a photo or picture of a particular part of the body, such as a face or hand. A mid-shot shows the body from about the waist or knees up and a long shot shows the whole person.



The movement of the waves captured by Hokusai combined with the super powers and strength of Superman led to the creation of Atomu—known as Astro Boy.

Manga genres

Manga is produced for a wide range of audiences, from primary school students to adults. The two genres that are most popular are *shonen*, or boy manga, and *shojo*, or girl manga. The audience for these are usually girls and boys from late primary to the end of high school.

Shonen manga nearly always have a male main character and the stories are usually about things that are traditionally seen to appeal to boys. There is a lot of action and fighting and the setting is often in the future or in outer space. A typical manga male character is likeable and good but often has problems that he has to grapple with. Unlike American comics, which are usually about people with extraordinary powers, *shonen* manga concentrate on technology. Quite often the main characters are giant machines or robots.

Shojo manga usually have a female main character and the story is told from her point of view. Some *shojo* are action-packed, but usually the subject of *shojo* manga is emotions and magic rather than fighting and action. The issues are usually to do with friendship, school, family and romance. Also popular among girls are *shojo* that have a female hero who has mystical powers that she uses to defend the world. Sailor Moon and her friends are typical magical *shojo* heroes. A typical female character is usually likeable and pretty. She has a number of girl friends but nearly always has one best friend. There is usually a romance or a boy that she secretly likes but often says she hates or pretends not to notice.



Nearly all the *shojo* books are written by women. One of the most popular writers is Natsuki Takaya, who writes the very successful Fruits Basket series. These are about a girl who, after her mother has died, moves in with her friend's huge family.



Breakaway tasks 8

Remembering

1. Which country does manga come from originally?
2. How much manga is produced there each year?
3. What are two of the main influences on manga artists?
4. What does *mangaka* mean?

Understanding

5. Look up the words 'dynamic', 'static', 'close-up', 'mid-shot' and 'long-shot' in your dictionary. Write out a definition of each in your own words. Try to make your definition relevant to art, comics or manga.



Source: *Astro Boy: Hero of Space* (1963)

6 Look at the image of Astro Boy above, and answer the following questions.

- Would you describe this as dynamic or static? Why?
- How has the artist created movement?
- What influences from cinema can you see?





DID YOU KNOW...

Otaku are people who are fanatical about manga and anime. In Australia, Europe and the United States, the term is applied to fans and is used with pride. In Japan, however, it also means that a person is obsessed and refuses to grow up.

How to read a manga

There is a huge debate in the world of manga about how a manga book should be read. It sounds simple—just pick it up and go—but it is not quite that simple. When we read English, we start at the left-hand side of the page and read across to the right. Just as you are doing now. In Japan, however, they start reading on the right-hand side and move across to the left. So the set of images that are a manga is read in the opposite way to the way we are used to.

The debate is about what to do when the manga is translated into English. Should it be kept in its original form and be read in the Japanese way, even though its written in English, or should it be changed to read left to right in the way English readers are used to? The *otaku* say that it must remain how it was originally written, while others say that it is the pictures and story that are important and they should be easy to read in the way each culture is used to.

Manga and storytelling

Manga obviously uses a combination of words and images to tell a story. This is just like comics from all over the world, but there are certain things that give manga its style.

Quite often a manga will start with a character study—that is, there is a picture of each of the main characters and a short description of them. In a series, there is usually a short description of what has happened in previous episodes. Other common openings are a short title or narration that sets the scene. This can be as short as 'Tokyo 2086' or as long as one page, giving the audience information on events that lead up to where the story begins.

MANGA

HAMLET



Source: SelfMadeHero, 2007. Artist Emma Vieceli

Breakaway tasks 9

Understanding

Read the extract from *Hamlet* and then complete the following tasks.

a Describe the situation and the two characters in words. Who do you think is talking? What makes you think this?

b What effect do you think the close-up images of eyes have on the reader?

c Manga has been heavily influenced by movie-making techniques. What movie influences can you see in this extract?

d How do think the illustrations have added to our understanding of the situation?



Visual storytelling

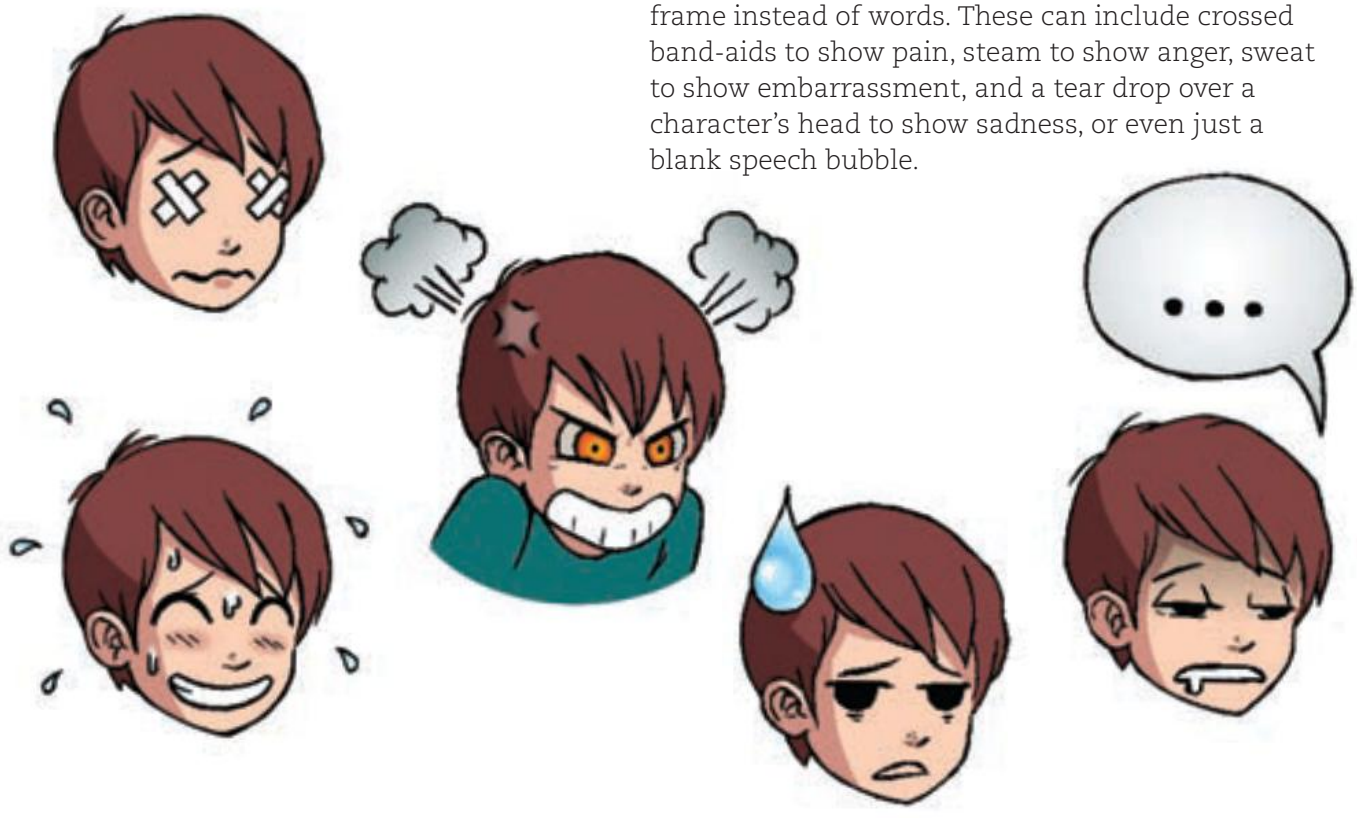
Manga has its own very distinctive visual style. It is very easy to look at a book, magazine or comic and identify it as manga. The style of manga is not a realistic one. That means it does not try to look real, like a photo. Rather than using realistic illustrations, manga artists aim to build up a feeling, mood or impression. This is called a stylised way of drawing.

A good example of this is the manga representation of people. Faces are very important in manga because the artist uses them to show the characters' feelings and moods.

There are lots of close-ups of characters' faces in manga. The faces tend to have big eyes, small noses and even smaller mouths; sometimes the mouth is just a line. The faces are large but often flat and unrealistic.

The eyes are very important in manga and the artist uses them to give information about the character, their emotions and feelings. Big, wide-open eyes suggests innocence or excitement; black or shaded eyes often indicate deep anger. Manga artists sometimes replace the eyes with symbols—hearts to show love, crosses to show unconsciousness or spirals to show confusion.

Manga artists also use symbols within the frame instead of words. These can include crossed band-aids to show pain, steam to show anger, sweat to show embarrassment, and a tear drop over a character's head to show sadness, or even just a blank speech bubble.





This comic is an example of a manga that has been influenced by a film or cinematic style.

Breakaway tasks 10

Applying

1 Use the following list to create two manga characters.

- name
- gender
- age
- special skills
- best friend
- school
- best subject
- worst subject
- favourite food
- favourite colour

Describe what they look like, how they act and give some family background.

Analysing

2 Read the comic, above.

a Which is the right way to read it—left to right or right to left? Why? Does it make sense if you read it the other way?

b Is this a static or dynamic piece of work?

c How has the artist created a feeling of movement?

Creating

3 Draw or write down the action that could have occurred in the previous three frames and what might happen in the next three frames of the comic.

Strands in action



Source: *Scott Pilgrim Vol 2: Scott Pilgrim vs. The World*, Bryan Lee O'Malley, HarperCollins 2010

Core task

Reading manga and other visual texts can be a complex task that involves making a variety of interpretations of the text. Answer the questions below and then compare your answers with others in the class. Did you all interpret the text in the same way? How did some readings differ? Can you see why they may have differed?

a Which way do we read the comic opposite? Is this the Japanese way or the Western way?

b Write out the story in words. Do you think having just words alters the meaning or the way we interpret this extract?

c It is possible to view the action through the eyes of the characters or from the position of another person who is observing what is going on. How many points of view do we see in *Scott Pilgrim?* Whose are they?

d Continue this story through to the end by drawing the next page or two. You will need to make sure the story is resolved.

Extra tasks

1 Research the history of manga and its influence today. You can present your research as a project on paper or as a slide presentation. Remember that it is an important part of manga to match images and words, so try to do the same in your project.

2 Investigate the author of one *shonen* manga and one *shojo* manga. Compare how they write, the characters in their books and what the stories are about. Give a summary of one book from each author and compare the stories and characters. How many books has each author written and how popular are they? Some authors you might like to consider are Osamu Tezuka (Astro Boy's creator), Akira Toriyama (Dragon Ball creator), Naoko Takeuchi (Sailor Moon creator) and Natsuki Takaya (*Fruits Baskets* creator).

3 Create the plot of a typical manga—it can be *shonen* or *shojo*. You can use the characters you created earlier or you may want to create new ones. Remember, you will need to have a beginning, a middle and an end. Write out the plot and aim for a short manga of about five to eight pages.

4 Turn the work you have done in Question 3 into a manga comic. You may want to hand-draw it or use a simple computer program.



3

Graphic novels

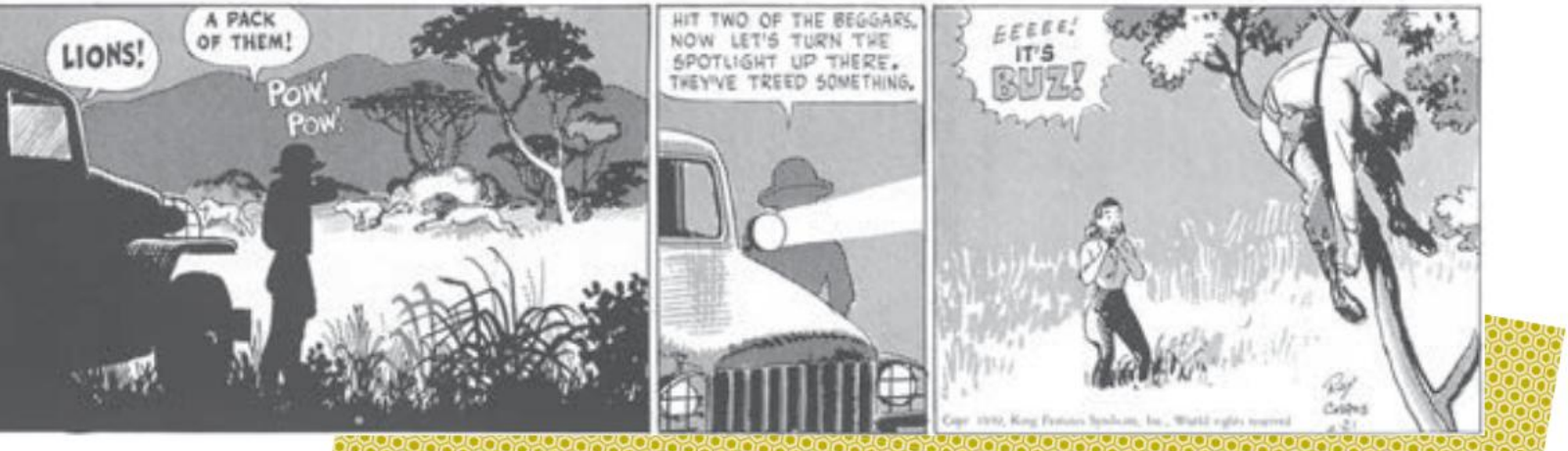
What is the difference between a comic and a graphic novel? Famous graphic novelist Art Spiegelman, the author of *Maus*, said, 'A graphic novel is a comic book you need a bookmark for'. He didn't just mean that a graphic novel is usually too long to read in one session—although that is often the case—he also meant that when we talk about a graphic novel we usually mean that it is one continuous story.

Unlike a cartoon or a comic strip, a graphic novel usually has a single story (or a collection of connected stories) that occurs over a period of time. Art Spiegelman also meant that a graphic novel is not a collection of cartoons or comic strips that you can open at any page and read. A graphic novel needs to be read from beginning to end like any novel.

Comics as serials

In the 1930s, comic strips were most commonly found in newspapers and, due to limited space, there were usually only three or four frames in a strip. That is plenty of space to tell a joke but the writers of comic strips wanted to tell more than jokes. They wanted to tell stories with images, heroes and adventures. They started to serialise their strips; that is, each strip told part of a bigger story and you had to read the next day's newspaper to continue the story.

Buz Sawyer was a popular comic strip that ran in newspapers for many years.



Breakaway tasks 11

Remembering

1 What comment does Spiegelman make about the difference between a comic and a graphic novel?

2 Can you start to read a graphic novel on any random page? What reasons can you give for your answer?

Creating

3 Continue the story of Buz Sawyer. Write two paragraphs telling the next two instalments of the series.

Superheroes

The stories of superheroes started out as serialised comic strips in daily newspapers. The earliest superheroes were detectives such as Dick Tracy or crime fighters like the Phantom.

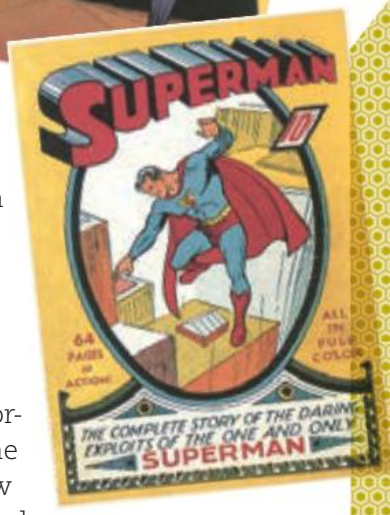


The earliest superheroes were humans who had some special skill, training or technology.

These strips were collected together and published as comic books, which told a single continuous story. These comic books were usually thirty-two pages long and became extremely popular. The detective superhero eventually gave way to the first of the modern-day superheroes, Batman; he was a human but he had very special abilities and training.



Early appearances of Batman and Superman.



Hot on the heels of Batman came the one many considered to be the ultimate superhero, the Man of Steel, Superman.

Unlike Batman, who is a human whose power comes from special training, Superman is an alien from another planet. His father, Jor-El, sent him to Earth from the planet Krypton before it blew up. He was found and adopted by an American couple from Kansas.

These comic books remained at thirty-two pages for a long time, but the artists and writers felt constrained by that length. They wanted more space to tell more involved stories with more characters, more adventures and more action. They wanted their comics to be longer, and they wanted them to be more like the movies. The superhero graphic novel was born.

DID YOU KNOW...

Detective Comics No. 27, where Batman first appears, is worth over $1.7 million. Superman's first appearance was in *Action Comics* No. 1, which is now worth over $1.5 million.

Just as film had a huge impact on manga, it also had a massive impact on how superhero comics and graphic novels were made. Most of the original superhero comics were fairly static; there was movement within the frame but the drawings (or shots, if we compare the comic to a film) tended to be drawn from one perspective or point of view. There was little or no movement across the frames.

The literary tradition

Many people think that superheroes belong in comics, not graphic novels. Some argue that a graphic novel should have a more literary or serious tone, and if the purpose is to entertain, it should stay a comic. In fact, many critics believe that the early beginnings of graphic novels were in the literary tradition.

The first person to consistently combine long pieces of text with specifically created images was William Blake. Blake was a poet and artist who worked in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. He illustrated most of his own works and also worked as an illustrator for others. His work is seen as a forerunner to the modern graphic novel because he integrated the image and the text. Each existed on the page to complement and add to the other. One of Blake's famous poems is 'A Poison Tree'.



Breakaway tasks 12

Understanding

1 How does Blake deal with the anger he feels towards his friend?

2 What is the result of Blake's anger to his enemy?

3 Describe what you see in the images that surround the text.

Applying

4 Use your dictionary to find the meanings of these words and write down what they mean in the poem:
- beheld
- deceitful
- outstretched
- wiles.

5 What do you think the phrase 'sunned it with smiles' means?

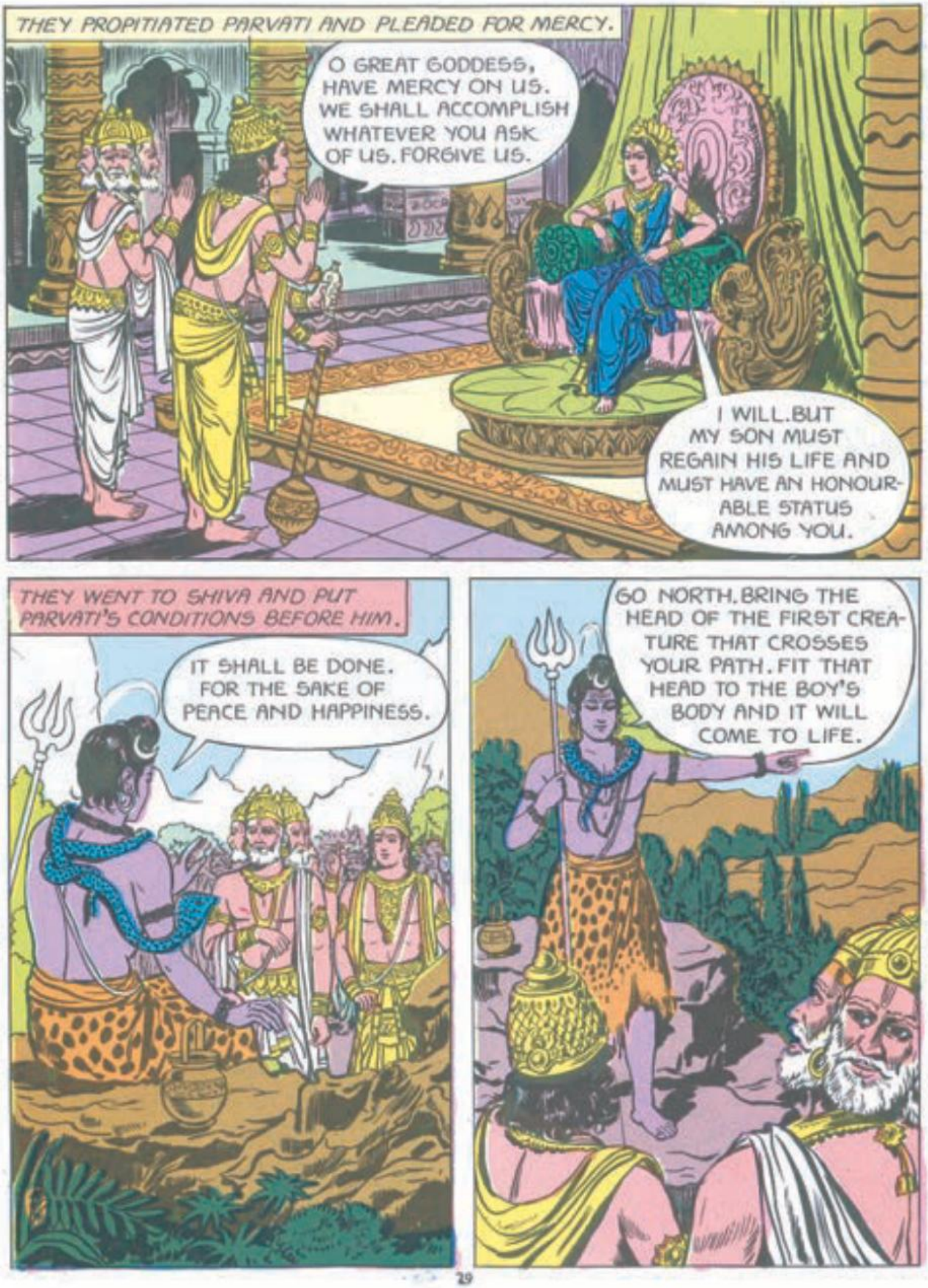
Evaluating

6 What effect does the illustration have on the viewer?

7 In this poem we see the effect visually (the enemy's body) and learn the cause (why it is there) from the text. How effective do you think this is and why?

Instruction

There has been a long tradition of using images and text to educate. The Bayeux tapestry is an early example of this and the tradition is alive and well throughout the world. In India, the graphic novel is a popular form in which to inform and educate people about national heroes, such as Gandhi; major historical events, such as independence; and religious and cultural stories. This is important in a country as large and diverse as India, which has a large population and a number of different religions.


THEY PROPITIATED PARVATI AND PLEADED FOR MERCY.
O GREAT GODDESS, HAVE MERCY ON US. WE SHALL ACCOMPLISH WHATEVER YOU ASK OF US. FORGIVE US.
I WILL. BUT MY SON MUST REGAIN HIS LIFE AND MUST HAVE AN HONOURABLE STATUS AMONG YOU.
THEY WENT TO SHIVA AND PUT PARVATI'S CONDITIONS BEFORE HIM.
IT SHALL BE DONE. FOR THE SAKE OF PEACE AND HAPPINESS.
GO NORTH. BRING THE HEAD OF THE FIRST CREATURE THAT CROSSES YOUR PATH. FIT THAT HEAD TO THE BOY'S BODY AND IT WILL COME TO LIFE.
29



Source: *Ganesha*, India Book House Inc., 1975

Breakaway tasks 13

Understanding

1 Find out the meaning of the word 'propitiated' and write the word in a sentence.

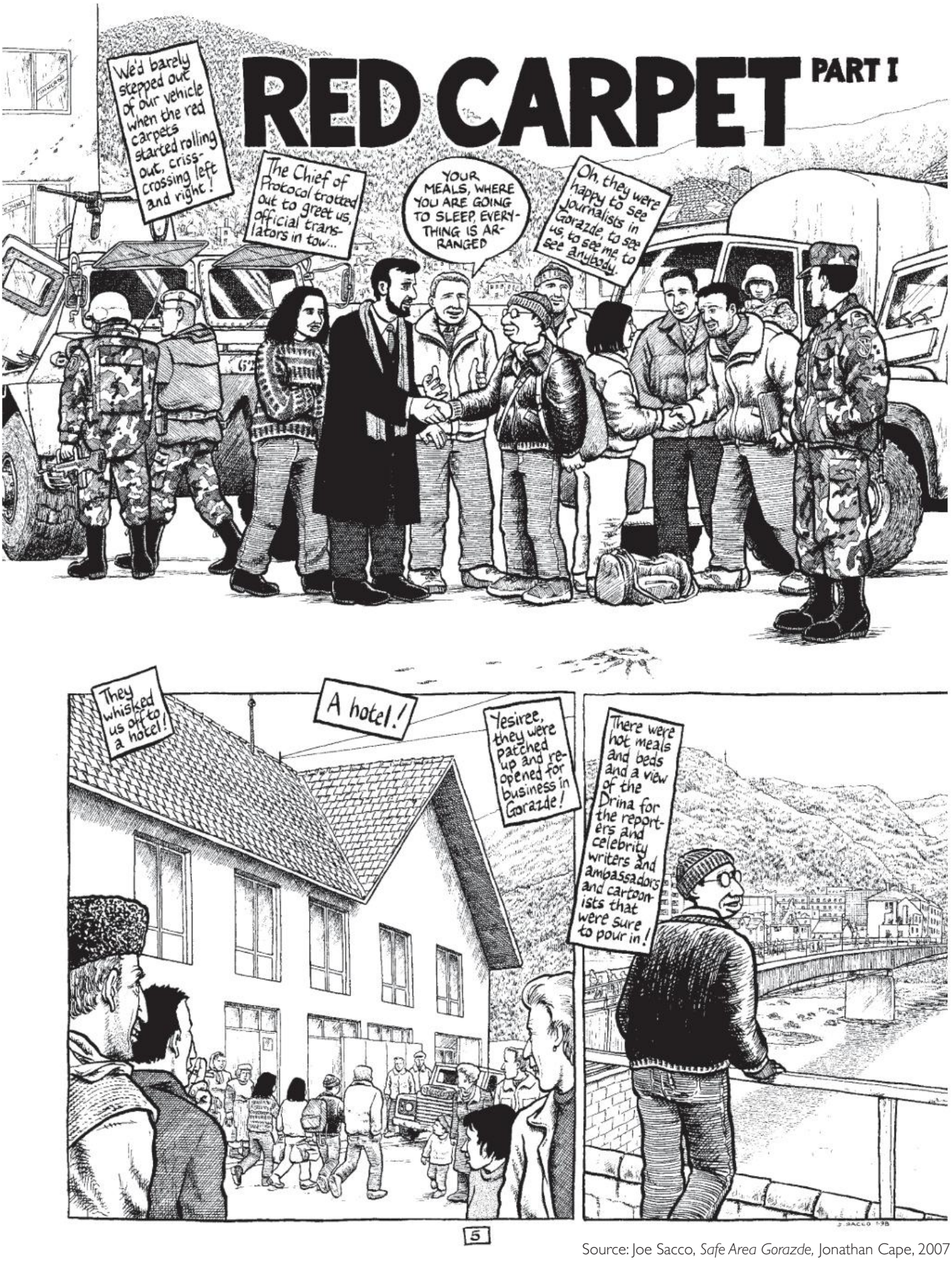
Evaluating

2 a Write a short paragraph about each of the following, describing their physical characteristics: Brahma, Vishnu, Parvati, Shiva and Ganesha.

b Compare your paragraphs with their images. Which do you think is more effective in portraying them? Why? Is there anything you couldn't describe in words or that is better described in images?

Reporting

When you think of reporters and news or documentaries, you usually think of TV news correspondents broadcasting back images of war or famine, or newspaper correspondents reporting from disaster areas. However, there are also graphic novelists who work as reporters. One of the most well known is Joe Sacco, who has written graphic novel documentaries on the Balkan wars and Palestine and Israel.



Source: Joe Sacco, *Safe Area Gorazde*, Jonathan Cape, 2007

Breakaway tasks 14

Remembering

1 Where does the activity take place in the extract from *Safe Area Gorazde*?

2 Who has arrived in the town and how are they treated?

Understanding

3 Use your dictionary to give a definition in your own words of 'protocol'.

4 What is a 'chief of protocol'?

5 What does 'the red carpet' mean in this extract?

6 Describe Joe Sacco. Do you think he flatters himself or does he portray himself realistically? Why do you think this, and what effect do you think this has on how you see the story he will tell?

Evaluating

7 Do you think a graphic novelist can act as a reporter?

8 Rank the following types of reporters from most to least believable:

- a newspaper reporter
- a TV reporter
- a newspaper photographer
- a radio reporter
- a reporter artist/cartoonist/graphic novelist.

Prepare a two-minute oral report on why you have ranked them the way you have.

9 Do you think some types of images are more believable or valuable than others? Which ones and why?

Original fiction and adapted fiction

One of the oldest forms of graphic novel is the illustrated adaptation of an existing novel. Between the 1940s and 1960s, Classics Illustrated adapted literary classics such as *Oliver Twist* and *The Three Musketeers* and sold 200 million copies in total. Adaptations are still very popular today—classic novels such as *Huckleberry Finn* have been turned into manga and contemporary novels such as *Artemis Fowl* have become graphic novels.

The literary adaptation can be very difficult. The adaptor is usually working with a well-known and much-loved text and this can cause disappointment in audiences who have imagined the character in a completely different way.

When a novel describes a character or a place we build up our own image of what they look like or how they act. This is one of the strengths of a novel and a weakness in a graphic novel. On the other hand, a graphic novel is usually better at showing us action and movement.

Read the following opening of the novel *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson and the section of the graphic novel that tells the same part of the story.

TREASURE ISLAND

By Robert Louis Stevenson

SQUIRE TRELAWNEY, Dr. Livesey, and the rest of these gentlemen having asked me to write down the whole particulars about Treasure Island, from the beginning to the end, keeping nothing back but the bearings of the island, and that only because there is still treasure not yet lifted, I take up my pen in the year of grace 17__ and go back to the time when my father kept the Admiral Benbow Inn and the brown old seaman with the sabre cut first took up his lodging under our roof.

I remember him as if it were yesterday, as he came plodding to the inn door, his sea-chest following behind him in a hand-barrow—a tall, strong, heavy, nut-brown man, his tarry pigtail falling over the shoulder of his soiled blue coat, his hands ragged and scarred, with black, broken nails, and the sabre cut across one cheek, a dirty, livid white. I remember him looking round the cover and whistling to himself as he did so, and then breaking out in that old sea-song that he sang so often afterwards:

'Fifteen men on the dead man's chest—
Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!'

in the high, old tottering voice that seemed to have been tuned and broken at the capstan bars. Then he rapped on the door with a bit of stick like a handspike that he carried, and when my father appeared, called roughly for a glass of rum. This, when it was brought to him, he drank slowly, like a connoisseur, lingering on the taste and still looking about him at the cliffs and up at our signboard.

'This is a handy cove,' says he at length; 'and a pleasant sittyated grog-shop. Much company, mate?'

My father told him no, very little company, the more was the pity.

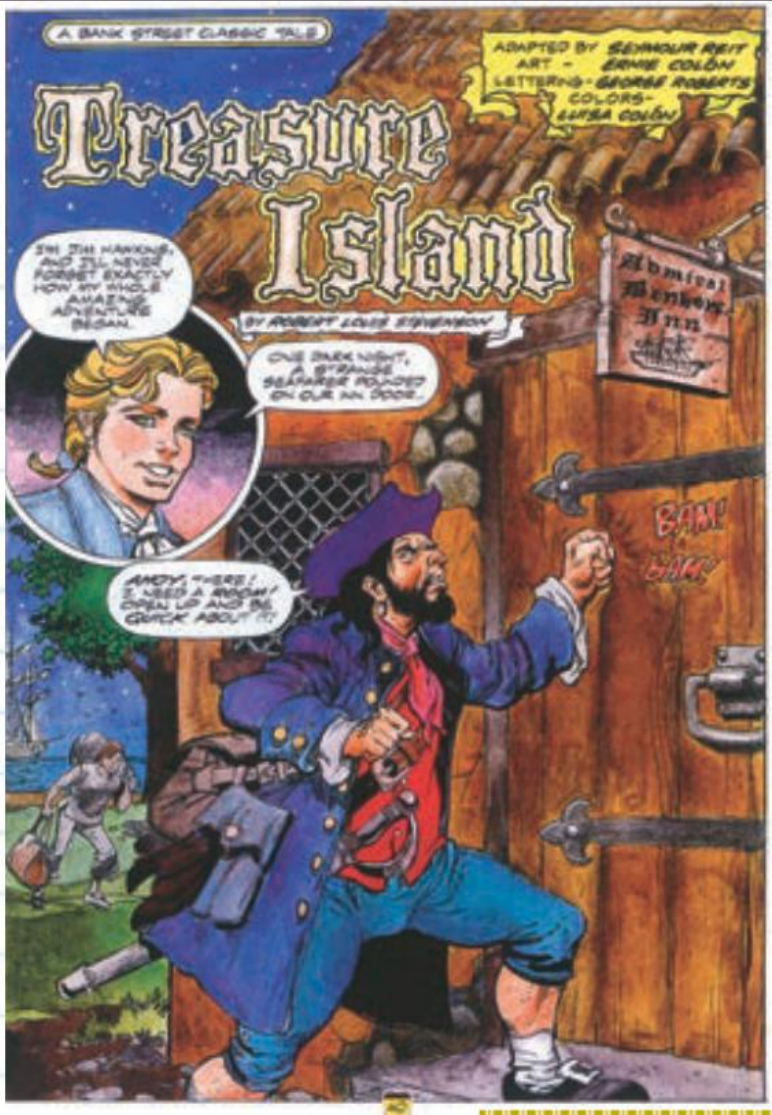
'Well, then,' said he, 'this is the berth for me. Here you, matey,' he cried to the man who trundled the barrow; 'bring up alongside and help up my chest. I'll stay here a bit,' he continued. 'I'm a plain man; rum and bacon and eggs is what I want, and that head up there for to watch ships off. What you mought call me? You mought call me captain. Oh, I see what you're at—there'; and he threw down three or four gold pieces on the threshold. 'You can tell me when I've worked through that,' says he, looking as fierce as a commander.

And indeed bad as his clothes were and coarsely as he spoke, he had none of the appearance of a man who sailed before the mast, but seemed like a mate or skipper accustomed to be obeyed or to strike. The man who came with the barrow told us the mail had set him down the morning before at the Royal George, that he had inquired what inns there were along the coast, and hearing ours well spoken of, I suppose, and described as lonely, had chosen it from the others for his place of residence. And that was all we could learn of our guest.

He was a very silent man by custom. All day he hung round the cove or upon the cliffs with a brass telescope; all evening he sat in a corner of the parlour next the fire and drank rum and water very strong.

Source: Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island,* Cassell, 1883

TREASURE ISLAND—THE GRAPHIC NOVEL





Source: adapted by Seymour Reit, *Treasure Island*, World Almanac, 2007

Breakaway tasks 15

Remembering

1 What is the name of the narrator in the extract from *Treasure Island*?

2 What is the name of the inn?

3 What is the seaman's name? Where did you get the information?

Understanding

4 Why does the seaman choose to stay at that inn?

5 'Chest' can have two meanings here. What are they and which meaning do you think Stevenson meant? Do you think the use of two meanings is deliberate? If so, why?

Applying

6 In the written extract Stevenson deliberately spells two words incorrectly. Which are they and why do you think he spelt them incorrectly?

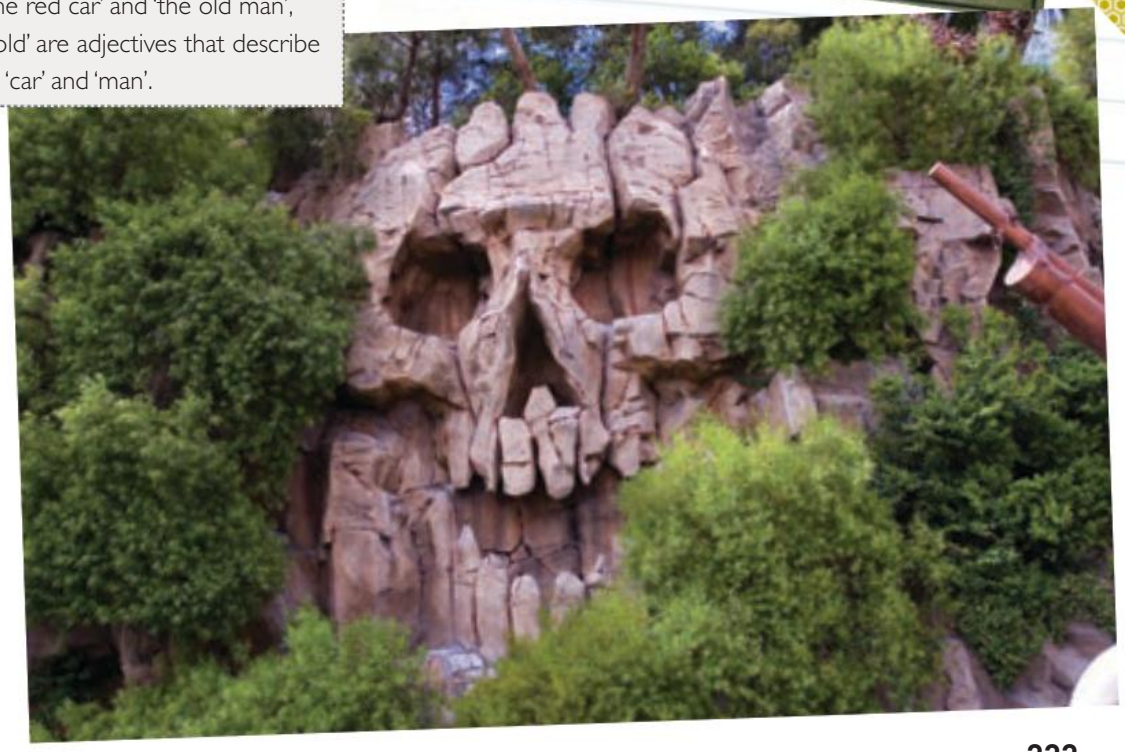
7 a Write down ten adjectives from the original text that are used to describe the seaman.

b How many adjectives are there in the extract from the graphic novel?





Adjectives are describing words. They describe nouns. For example, in the phrases 'the red car' and 'the old man', 'red' and 'old' are adjectives that describe the nouns 'car' and 'man'.



Strands in action

Core tasks

1 Create your own superhero by writing a simple story-line that explains how they began their career as a crime fighter. Remember the three-act structure: a clear beginning that establishes the scene, a middle in which the main action happens and an end where things are settled.

2 Script a dialogue between a superhero and their enemy. Make the setting the enemy's secret headquarters. What happens now? End your dialogue with a bang! Find a partner to take one of the roles and present your dialogue to the class. Do the same with your partner's dialogue.

Extra tasks

1 Write a review of a comic or graphic novel of your favourite superhero. You will need to include:

- a brief summary of the story
- a description of the major characters, including how they look and how they act (Start by writing down two nouns, two verbs and four adjectives that describe them. Using those words as a base, build up a portrait of the character.)
- what you liked and did not like about the story
- a description of its visual style
- what you thought of the visual style and whether or not it suited the story
- any special features you particularly liked or disliked
- who might you recommend it to and why they might enjoy it.

When you have finished your review, give the text a rating. You could use a star system, for example five stars, or a score out of ten.

2 Some superheroes have been around for fifty or more years. Choose a superhero who has been around for at least thirty years. Write out their biography—that is, a history of their life. Be sure to include all the major events in their life. You will also need to look at how they have been portrayed visually. Is there any difference in how they have been drawn over the years?

3 Think of the opening or closing page of your favourite novel and convert it into a one-page graphic novel version.

4 Survey ten people and ask them the following questions.

a Do you read comics or graphic novels? If so, which are your two favourites?

b Do you read novels? If so, which are your two favourites?

c Have you ever read both the written and graphic versions of the one novel? Which did you think was better? Why?

d Are you for or against comics and graphic novels for children? What about for adults?

e Do you think classic books such as *Oliver Twist* should be turned into graphic novels? Why?

In order to get a good cross-section of views you will need to make sure you survey two people from each of the following groups:

- your parents' age group
- your grandparents' age group
- your age group.

Prepare a report on your findings and present it to the class. You may wish to include charts and graphs and present it using a slide presentation.

5 Use the internet to research creation myths; that is, myths that different cultures and societies use to explain the beginning of the world or how humans came into being. Choose a myth you like and turn it into a short graphic novel. You may wish to hand-draw it, or use a simple computer program or specialty software.



Transformations

Chapter overview

This chapter is about transformations—when an original creation is adapted to become a new product. Books become movies. Computer games become books. Graphic novels become films, then become books, and then get turned into computer games.

Complex analysis, judgements and decisions are made each time a creation is transformed. Each new format requires an understanding of the demands of the medium, including its challenges and benefits.

In this chapter, you will examine three original works that have been transformed into various formats and the challenges that stem from this process. These works are Neil Gaiman's *Coraline*, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and John Boyne's *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*.

> We are beginning to notice that the new media are not just mechanical gimmicks for creating worlds of illusion, but new languages with new and unique powers of expression.
>
> Marshall McLuhan (1911–1980), philosopher

1

Coraline



Neil Gaiman

The multi-award-winning writer Neil Gaiman is a perfect example of the modern creator. He has written novels (*American Gods, Stardust*), picture books (*The Day I Swapped My Dad for Two Goldfish, The Wolves in the Walls*) and graphic novels (the *Sandman* series, *Batman: Whatever Happened to the Caped Crusader?*). He has also written screenplays for major films (*Beowulf, Mirrormask*) and has a significant online presence, interacting with his legion of fans through blogging and regular website updates. There is even a tribute CD dedicated to him, *Where's Neil When You Need Him?*, which was produced by well-known singers and songwriters.

About Neil Gaiman

Neil Gaiman's work exists across many media formats, transformed from one form to another, utilising the best features of each format.

Coraline is one of Neil Gaiman's most highly praised works. This creepy, spooky and disquieting book for young people is written as a modern-day fairytale. It is deceptively simple. An enormous success, *Coraline* has been transformed from its original novel form and into a 3D animated movie, a graphic novel, a stage musical and a computer game. It is an excellent example of how, in today's world, a single work can end up in many different forms.

Throughout the novel, Coraline Jones's everyday experiences gradually become more and more sinister. Eventually, the commonplace becomes a nightmare.

Coraline, first published in 2002, is part of a long tradition of creepy fairytales. Many of the best known were darkly disturbing in their original form. They feature themes such as murder (*Red Riding Hood*), child abandonment (*Tom Thumb*, *Snow White*), mutilation (*Cinderella*, *Little Mermaid*) and even cannibalism (*Hansel and Gretel*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*).

During the nineteenth century, many fairytales were 'cleaned up' by concerned adults who went through and rewrote the stories, deleting what they viewed as inappropriate material. Most fairytales written today continue this approach.

American psychologist Bruno Bettelheim insists that reading fairytales to children as they were originally written is important. He says that if children hear stories about serious problems and drastic, dangerous events, it can help them imagine useful responses that could be helpful in their later lives. According to Bettelheim, dark fairytales show children that they can triumph over adversity and can have a chance of living happily ever after.

DID YOU KNOW...

For all you need to know about the various versions of *Coraline*, follow the links on **Pearson Reader**.
You can also look for video interviews with Neil Gaiman in which he talks about *Coraline*.

Web Destination

DID YOU KNOW...

Follow the links on **Pearson Reader** for a comprehensive internet source of annotated original fairytales, with different versions from many different cultures, plus a thoughtful discussion forum.

Web Destination

ABOUT CORALINE THE BOOK

By Neil Gaiman

More than ten years ago I started to write a children's book. It was for my daughter, Holly, who was five years old. I wanted it to have a girl as a heroine, and I wanted it to be refreshingly creepy.

I started to write a story about a girl named Coraline. I thought that the story would be five or ten pages long. The story itself had other plans …

It was a story, I learned when people began to read it, that children experienced as an adventure, but which gave adults nightmares. It's the strangest book I've written, it took the longest time to write, and it's the book I'm proudest of.

Source: Mouse Circus, the Official Neil Gaiman Website for Young Readers, 2010



Coraline the book

In the following extract the Jones family have just moved into a new house.

CORALINE, CHAPTER 1

By Neil Gaiman

Coraline went over to the window and watched the rain come down. It wasn't the kind of rain you could go out in, it was the other kind, the kind that threw itself down from the sky and splashed where it landed. It was rain that meant business, and currently its business was turning the garden into a muddy, wet soup.

Coraline had watched all the videos. She was bored with her toys, and she'd read all her books.

She turned on the television. She went from channel to channel to channel, but there was nothing on but men in suits talking about the stock market, and sports programmes. Eventually, she found something to watch: it was the last half of a natural-history programme about something called protective coloration. She watched animals, birds and insects which disguised themselves as leaves or twigs or other animals to escape from things that could hurt them. She enjoyed it, but it ended too soon, and was followed by a programme about a cake factory.

It was time to talk to her father.

Coraline's father was home. Both of her parents worked, doing things on computers, which meant that they were home a lot of the time. Each of them had their own study.

'Hello, Coraline,' he said when she came in, without turning round.

'Mmph,' said Coraline. 'It's raining.'

'Yup,' said her father. 'It's bucketing down.'

'No, ' said Coraline, 'It's just raining. Can I go outside?'

'What does your mother say?'

'She says, "You're not going out in weather like that, Coraline Jones".'

'Then, no.'

'But I want to carry on exploring.'

'Then explore the flat,' suggested her father. 'Look—here's a piece of paper and a pen. Count all the doors and windows. List everything blue. Mount an expedition to discover the hot-water tank. And leave me alone to work.'

'Can I go into the drawing room?' The drawing room was where the Joneses kept the expensive

(and uncomfortable) furniture Coraline's grandmother had left them when she died. Coraline wasn't allowed in there. Nobody went in there. It was only for best.

'If you don't make a mess. And you don't touch anything.'

Coraline considered this carefully, then she took the paper and pen and went off to explore the inside of the flat.

She discovered the hot-water tank (it was in a cupboard in the kitchen).

She counted everything blue (153).

She counted the windows (21).

She counted the doors (14).

Of the doors that she found, thirteen opened and closed. The other, the big, carved, brown wooden door at the far corner of the drawing room, was locked.

She said to her mother, 'Where does that door go?'

'Nowhere, dear.'

'It has to go somewhere.'

Her mother shook her head. 'Look,' she told Coraline.

She reached up, and took a string of keys from the top of the kitchen doorframe. She sorted through them carefully and selected the oldest, biggest, blackest, rustiest key. They went into the drawing room. She unlocked the door with the key.

The door swung open.

Her mother was right. The door didn't go anywhere. It opened on to a brick wall.

'When this place was just one house,' said Coraline's mother, 'that door went somewhere. When they turned the house into flats, they simply bricked it up. The other side is the empty flat on the other side of the house, the one that's still for sale.'

She shut the door and put the string of keys back on top of the kitchen doorframe.

'You didn't lock it,' said Coraline.

Her mother shrugged. 'Why should I lock it?' she asked. 'It doesn't go anywhere.'

Coraline didn't say anything.

It was nearly dark now, and the rain was still coming down, pattering against the windows and blurring the lights of the cars in the street outside.

Coraline's father stopped working and made them all dinner.

Coraline was disgusted. 'Daddy,' she said, 'you've made a *recipe* again.'

'It's leek and potato stew, with a tarragon garnish and melted Gruyère cheese,' he admitted.

Coraline sighed. Then she went to the freezer and got out some microwave chips and a microwave mini-pizza.

'You know I don't like recipes,' she told her father, while her dinner went round and round and the little red numbers on the microwave oven counted down to zero.

'If you tried it, maybe you'd like it,' said Coraline's father, but she shook her head.

That night, Coraline lay awake in her bed. The rain had stopped, and she was almost asleep when something went *t-t-t-t-t-t*. She sat up in bed. Something went *kreeee* …

… *aaaak*.

Coraline got out of bed and looked down the hall, but saw nothing strange. She walked down the hallway. From her parents' bedroom came a low snoring—that was her father—and an occasional sleeping mutter—that was her mother.

Coraline wondered if she'd dreamed it, whatever it was.

Something moved.

It was little more than a shadow, and it scuttled down the darkened hall fast, like a little patch of night. She hoped it wasn't a spider. Spiders made Coraline intensely uncomfortable.

The black shape went into the drawing room and Coraline followed it in, a little nervously.

The room was dark. The only light came from the hall, and Coraline, who was standing in the doorway, cast a huge and distorted shadow on to the drawing-room carpet: she looked like a thin giant woman.

Coraline was just wondering whether or not she ought to turn on the light when she saw the black shape edge slowly out from beneath the sofa. It paused, and then dashed silently across the carpet towards the farthest corner of the room.

There was no furniture in that corner of the room. Coraline turned on the light.

There was nothing in the corner. Nothing but the old door that opened on to the brick wall.

She was sure that her mother had shut the door, but now it was ever so slightly open. Just a crack. Coraline went over to it and looked in. There was nothing there – just a wall, built of red bricks.

Coraline closed the old wooden door, turned out the light, and went back to bed.

She dreamed of black shapes that slid from place to place, avoiding the light, until they were all gathered together under the moon. Little black shapes with little red eyes and sharp yellow teeth.

They started to sing:

We are small but we are many
We are many, we are small
We were here before you rose
We will be here when you fall.

Their voices were high and whispery and slightly whiny. They made Coraline feel uncomfortable.

Then Coraline dreamed a few commercials, and after that she dreamed of nothing at all.

Source: Neil Gaiman, *Coraline*, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2002

Breakaway tasks 1

Remembering

1 Where do the Joneses keep their best furniture?

2 What does Coraline think about spiders?

Understanding

3 Why doesn't Coraline like her father's cooking? What does this tell us about her?

4 Who is singing at the end?

Applying

5 Draw a bird's-eye view of the Jones's house.

Analysing

6 How many sentences have fewer than five words? What is the effect of these short sentences?

7 How is Coraline different from her parents?

8 Find the colons in the extract. How do they add to the sentences in which they are used?'

9 What do you think the shadow in the text might symbolise? Brainstorm the possibilities as a class and decide on the most likely.

Evaluating

10 Rank the three sentences from the chapter that you like best, then write a sentence for each explaining why you like it.

11 Which character would you like to know more about? Why?

12 Would you read another novel by Gaiman based on the extract? Why or why not?

Creating

13 Create a menu for a meal made by Coraline's father.

14 Create a TV guide entry for the natural history program Coraline watches. You must include the title of the program, the running length and a short summary.

Writer's TOOLBOX

One of the key rules for writers is '**Show, don't tell**'. Instead of merely saying that a character is angry, a more interesting way to convey their anger is to say something like: 'She was red in the face, her fists were clenched and she shouted so loudly that the windows shook.' This shows the reader that the character is furious, instead of telling the reader. In *Coraline*, Neil Gaiman shows us something interesting about Coraline's personality by her reaction to her father's cooking.

Coraline the graphic novel

In 2008, *Coraline* became a graphic novel. It was adapted by the original author, Neil Gaiman, and illustrated by Craig Russell.

GAIMAN TALKING ABOUT CRAIG RUSSELL

By Neil Gaiman

I've been a fan of P. Craig Russell's work since I was about fifteen, when I persuaded my school to let me write about an episode of *Killraven* in my English exams. He's one of the most elegant and beautiful artists working in comics today, and one of the things he does better than anyone is to adapt things into comics form. He's adapted operas and Kipling stories, he's even adapted short stories of mine, and I've always loved what he did.

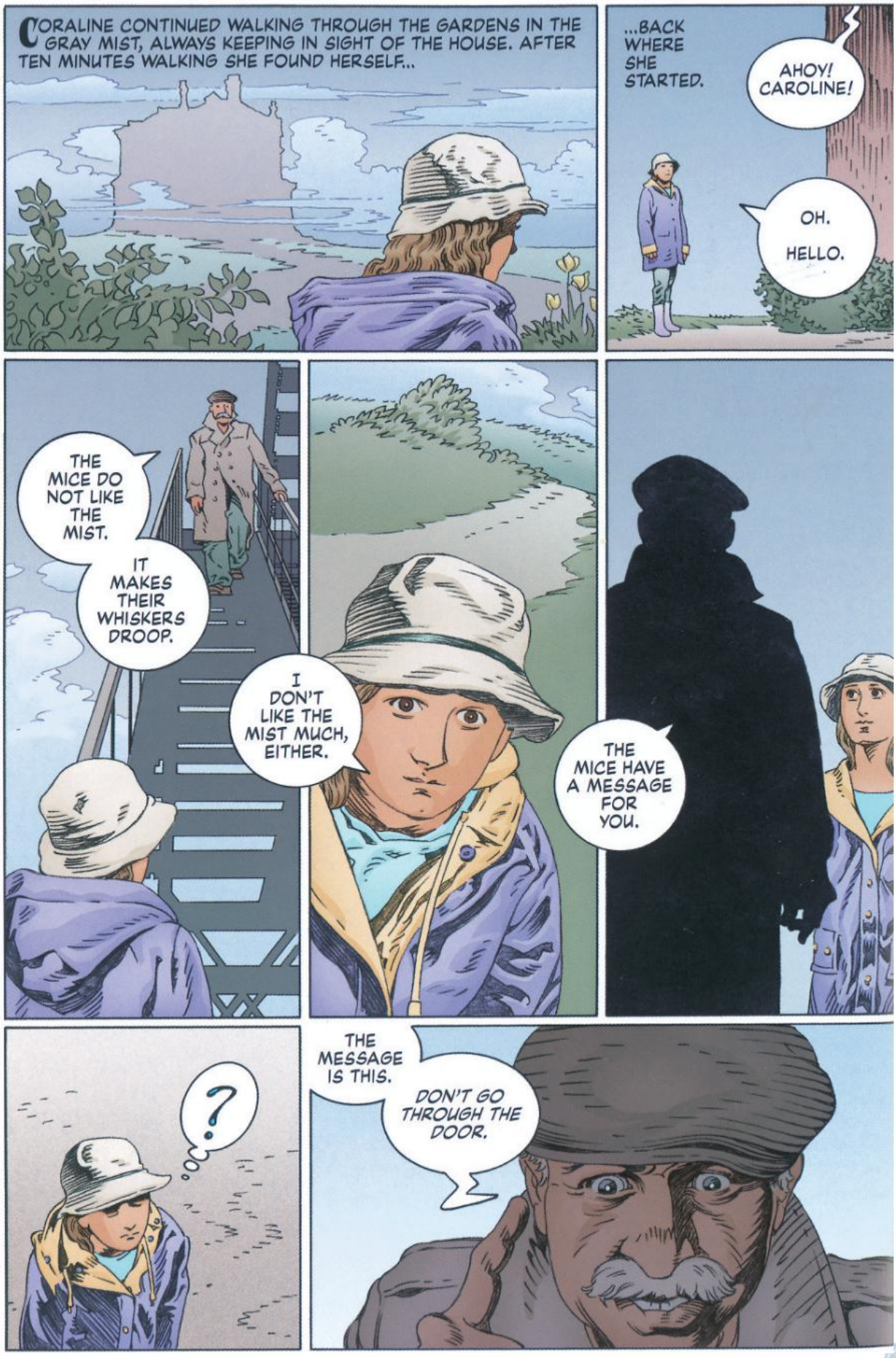
So when I was asked by Harper Childrens who I would like to see adapt *Coraline*, my scary children's novel, into a graphic novel, I said 'P. Craig Russell, please'. I knew it would look good, I knew the adaptation would be faithful and the art would be beautiful.



I wasn't expecting how good either would be. Craig's adaptation of *Coraline* is a two-hundred page graphic novel, coloured by Digital Chameleon, that's gorgeous and haunting, and, most importantly for me, a real book in its own right.

Source: Mouse Circus, the Official Neil Gaiman Website for Young Readers, 2010


2
THE NEXT DAY IT HAD STOPPED RAINING, BUT A THICK WHITE FOG HAD LOWERED OVER THE HOUSE.
I'M GOING FOR A WALK.
DON'T GO TOO FAR.
AND DRESS UP WARMLY.
YES, MUM.
HELLO, CAROLINE. ROTTEN WEATHER.
YES, MISS SPINK.
YOU'D HAVE TO BE AN EXPLORER TO FIND YOUR WAY AROUND IN THIS FOG.
OF COURSE YOU ARE, LUVVY. DON'T GET LOST, NOW.
I'M AN EXPLORER.



Pages from the graphic novel *Coraline*

Breakaway tasks 2

Remembering

1 How many highland terriers is Miss Spink taking for a walk?

2 How long does it take Coraline to walk around the house?

3 Why don't the mice like the mist?

Understanding

4 Describe Coraline's mother's tone of voice in the second panel.

5 Both the old woman and the old man call Coraline 'Caroline'. Why do you think they do this?

Applying

6 Look at the second panel. What other advice do you think Coraline's mother might give Coraline before she goes out?

7 Write a thought balloon for the second panel by answering this question:

What do you think Coraline is thinking when her mother is giving her all that advice?

Analysing

8 How does the mist add to the tension?

9 Why is the man in the third last panel presented as a silhouette?

10 How old do you think Coraline looks?

11 What is Coraline thinking in the second-last panel?

Evaluating

12 Which panel do you like best? Why?

13 Do you think all three versions of *Coraline* have the same purpose? Brainstorm the changes that would need to be made for a different purpose.

Creating

14 Draw a map of Coraline's explorations. The house should be in the centre. Label where Coraline met Miss Spink and where she met the crazy old man. Draw and label anything else she may have come across, based on the panels of the graphic novel.

Coraline the film

The film version of *Coraline* was released in 2009. Transforming a book into a film is a challenge. Many, many films based on books have been disasters simply because the two forms are so different. Whenever a book is made into a film, changes must be made, and often these changes result in a story that is significantly different from the original. A common, almost necessary, change is that some parts of the book will be cut out or not filmed. This is simply because filming most novels in their entirety would make a film much too long.

And then there's the issue of casting. When we read a book, we create an image of the characters. When a film is made, the appearance and sound of the characters is presented to us—and sometimes the choice of actor is completely different from what we have in our imagination.

Henry Selick, the director of the film version of *Coraline*, understood the challenges of turning a book into a film, and here he shares some of his experiences.

DID YOU KNOW...

Follow the links on **Pearson Reader** for the official *Coraline* film trailer.

Web Destination

HENRY SELICK IN CONVERSATION

By Scott Macaulay

Henry Selick arrives at the FilmInFocus office carrying a Coraline puppet, and it sits on the table shooting a bemused and quizzical half-scowl the director's way as we conduct our interview. That Selick could do that—bring an actual Coraline from the film's production and not just a replica created by a toy merchandising company—speaks to the old-fashioned, artisanal pleasures of his unique animated film. Mixing stop-motion animation—the kind we all remember from Saturday afternoon mythology-and-monster pics—with digital

Writer's TOOLBOX

bemused: confused
quizzical: questioning
artisanal: craftlike



Still from Henry Selick's animation of *Coraline*

shooting and 3D technology, Selick has created a thoroughly modern picture that, in telling the story of the lonely young Coraline and her frightening journey into a beckoning fantasy world where all seems good, combines the comforts of the familiar with the surprise of the completely new.

Coraline is Selick's fourth feature. After attending Cal Arts and working as an animator for Walt Disney Studios and, later, MTV, Selick captured the attention of Tim Burton, who produced his debut film, 1993's stop-motion *The Nightmare Before Christmas*. Following were *James and the Giant Peach* (1996) and *Monkeybone* (2001), both of which mixed stop-motion with live action. After contributing stop-motion animation to Wes Anderson's *The Life Aquatic*, he directed a short film using CG animation (*Moongirl*) and became the supervising director for feature film development at the Portland, Oregon animation studio LAIKA, where *Coraline* was produced.

How did you wind up getting involved with *Coraline*?

I was introduced to Neil Gaiman eight years ago and was given the pages; it was not yet a published novel. I read it immediately, and as I read it I could already see it as a film. The chemistry of Neil's creative mind seemed to be in tune with what I was looking to do as well as my own chemistry. But it was a very long journey from that first meeting to finally mounting the film.

Did you ever give a thought as to whether it should be an animated film or a live action film?

A lot of people read the book and saw it as live action, and originally there was some intention

DID YOU KNOW...

Follow the links on **Pearson Reader** for a video of the Henry Selick interview.

Web Destination

to go that route. But I always thought it would be best served as an animated film, and best served as a stop-motion animated film. The challenge is simply that these characters aren't talking animals. *Coraline* may be a fairy tale, but it is set in our times, modern times, and stop-motion animation brings a charm, a warmth—it takes a little bit of an edge off the darkest, most troubling parts of the story, I think, and adds a little creepiness to parts that might be too sweet.

Stop-motion animation is a style I associate with my childhood—watching Saturday afternoon movies broadcast by the local TV station. What were the seeds of your interest in stop-motion?

I was four or five years old and my mother took me to a Ray Harryhausen film, *The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad*. He is the master of stop-motion. There is an incredible Cyclops [in that film]—it seemed absolutely, totally real, and it stayed with me my whole life. And then there were the Rankin Bass Christmas specials—*Frosty the Snowman, Rudolf the Red-nose Reindeer*.

As a director who repeatedly works in stop-motion, do you find yourself having to justify the choice of stop-motion in a world in which CG animation is dominant and Pixar has had such great success?

The reasons I love stop-motion today are not the things people want to hear when they are selling a film. They want what's new, what's cutting edge,



Dakota Fanning, the voice of Coraline in Henry Selick's animation of *Coraline*

and I think that it is a terrible hang-up in the United States. New is always equated with 'better', and in most of the world, it is not. When CG animation came into being, Hollywood said, 'That is the way all animated films should be made [from now on]'. And even though Disney had great successes with a couple of 2D films, like *Brother Bear* and *Lilo and Stitch*, they shut down all [the rest] of their 2D. But over in England, when CG came on board, it was seen as another tool—stop-motion animation and 2D animation continued. They didn't think of shutting down these other ways of telling stories. Stop-motion isn't sexy unless you like things that are real and hand made, and I like to see the hand of an artist. I don't like airbrushed photorealism, that totally lubricated image of 3D animation. Stop-motion is flawed, its textures are real, and I think it invites the audience to work a little to make it happen in their minds. As for Pixar, it has the best story department of any animation studio in the world. I could clip off my fingernail, and they could do a feature on that fingernail. They would take six years developing the story, they would come up with a world and context, and they would make a great movie. Their films are a marriage of [CG and their story department].



Stop-motion animation is where small figures are created (often from clay or plasticine) and then shifted in tiny movements. Each movement is filmed, and when put together this creates the illusion of motion. The *Wallace and Gromit* films, and the films of Australian director Adam Elliot are made this way.

How does the practice of stop-motion differ from the other forms of animation?

Traditional animation is a really long process and there are many stages. You draw your characters. You rough them in, and there are pencil tests. Assistant animators do the in-between, and you do the clean up, and then it goes to electronic ink-and-paint. And then those things get composited. Backgrounds [are added]. In CG, there are even more stages—wireframe forms, etc.—and it is not until the end of the process that all those images get rendered and output and you can see the lighting and what [the whole image] finally looks like. One of the things that I love about stop-motion is that there is an immediacy; there are not many steps at all from the concept to the finished film. We sketch out the entire movie in storyboards, which are cut together and then [we build] story reels that we run in real time. We sometimes use temp voices and music. We cast the film and cut in real voices, and then these storyboards become the plan for the film. You figure out the sets and the number of puppets, and it becomes a fluid thing—these [early elements] are not perfect. They are somewhat rough. Then from these storyboards you build the elements, and when you finally shoot it, you put the puppets on the sets.

Although you classify the film as stop-motion, you also used digital technologies in your filmmaking process. How did you integrate the two?

We used modern technologies to assist us. Shooting digitally allowed us to share images more quickly and to review shots as soon as they were in. I loved that process. [Shooting] digitally allowed us to manipulate images, to do our paint-outs of the face cracks, to remove the rigs, composite skies, and take the cotton we stuck on the ground in the

banana slope scene and shift it around a lot more easily. And we did replacement facial animation, which has been done in TV commercials for a very long time. We split Coraline's face so that we would have more control of her brows and eyes separate from her mouth. There would be this big line [bisecting her face]. For a while I preferred leaving it in because it lets you know that this is a hand made movie, and I found that within four minutes people didn't notice it. But there was a concern and fear that it would be distracting so we did paint that out. When Coraline jumps in the air, she has to be supported by a rig—a very simple thing with a base and an arm that is adjustable mechanically by hand—and that got painted out too. I had to fight, however, to keep the scenes that most people would have done in CG as stop-motion. The mouse circus—we have a series of replacement mice, each one hopping, which is something George Pal invented 60 years ago with his Puppetoon films. I had to fight to make all the Scottie dogs, all 500 of them, in stop-motion. And when those scenes were done all those people were happy I fought for those scenes. It plussed the movie—it was in tune with the soul of the movie. There were shots where there were also [visual] effects, where we shot green screen and comped in the action, but for two thirds of the film what we shot first was 90% done. So we did use [digital] tools, but we tried to keep them from overwhelming the process.

What was a typical day like for you in production?

We would start with the animators looking at storyboards. I might act out and do sketches, and they might act out and do sketches. What are we thinking of? What is the essential thing in the shot? While the animators can do beautiful work, there is always an essential story point that if it is not conveyed, then the shot is no good. So we would discuss the shot and talk about how the character might move. Then the camera [department] comes in separately, and we would talk about a basic scheme for lighting. Then there was blocking. You 'find the marks' just like live action [shooting]. We would do a little rehearsal and then launch the shot. I would check in on the animators while they were animating, see if the shot could work better with a little adjustment. And I would spend a ton of time in editorial; there were two edit rooms going like crazy, I would jump back and forth as animators and lighters would come in, and I would be out on the stages walking six to eight miles every day. Out on the stages is the most fun because you are in the trenches



Travis Knight, head animator on the set of *Coraline*

where everything is real. You open up the black curtain, the duvetyn that surrounds each of these sets, and then you are in that world. Everything outside, the noise of all the construction, fades away, and you are working with the actor and the animator in the moment.

Source: Filminfocus, Focus Features website, 2010

DID YOU KNOW...

Duvetyn is a cloth that is often used as theatre backdrop.

Breakaway tasks 3

Remembering

1 What was Henry Selick's first commercial film?

2 What was the main advantage of filming digitally?

Understanding

3 What does 'CG' stand for in 'CG animation'?

4 Why was Henry Selick happy to have insisted on making all 500 Scottie dogs in stop motion rather than CG?

Applying

5 Write five questions you'd like to ask Henry Selick to follow up this interview.

6 Construct a glossary (with definitions) of the technical words from the article to include in an article called 'A beginner's guide to animation in films'. Add an asterisk to the words with which you are unfamiliar.

7 Conduct some research to find the etymology (roots) of the following words and list as many of their common uses as you can: animation, chemistry, composite, context, contributing, digital, incredible, intention, mechanical, mythology, originating, quizzical, technology, transforming.

Analysing

8 Why does Henry Selick like stop-motion animation so much?

9 Why did Henry Selick choose animation instead of live action for *Coraline*?

Evaluating

10 Henry Selick details the whole process of putting together a stop-motion film. Which part would you most like to do? Why?

Creating

11 Design a poster for *Coraline* the film.

12 Make a flow chart outlining the process of putting together a stop-motion film.

Coraline the computer game



Box of *Coraline* computer game

With Neil Gaiman's reputation for new and different projects, a computer game version of *Coraline* seemed only natural. After all, his works had been transformed from book to multimedia and the production of the film and the computer game at the same time seemed like an efficient use of time. Some of the animation from the film could be used in the computer game and the same actors could provide voices for both. It looked like the perfect process. However, not every transformation is successful. Here is a review of the game version.

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR

By Maria Montoro

Movie-based games tend to be bad, but we've seen quite a few lately that were able to keep players interested and even entertained. While the gaming industry continues to grow and games (even movie-based ones) continue to improve, some titles are still best left behind. When a game is made with low-quality standards but it's being sold for 30 dollars, I have to make sure I do my job and let you know why it may be a waste of your time and money.

Coraline is a unique and interesting, yet strange, tale written by Neil Gaiman. It's a dark, kids' novel about a girl who just moved into a new house with her parents and is bored out of her mind. Her parents often neglect her due to their busy jobs as writers, and she can't help it but be curious about everything that surrounds her.

This leads her to meet her wacky neighbors. The one upstairs, Mr. Bobinski, is an eccentric circus acrobat who trains mice for circus performances. The neighbors downstairs, Miss Forcible and Miss Spink, are retired actresses with a strange affinity for Highland Terriers. As if these people weren't odd enough, Coraline ends up finding a secret gate to 'the other side' in her very own home! There, she'll meet her 'other mom', her 'other dad', and also alternate versions of her own neighbors and her friend Wybie. These new versions of the people she's familiar with are very friendly and extremely fun, though they all seem to have something in common that Coraline doesn't quite understand. Their eyes—they're just button eyes, sewn with thread and a sharp needle!

The rest you'll figure out by yourself if you read the book, watch the movie, or play the game. Unfortunately, I assure you the latter option is the least fulfilling of the three; this game hasn't been made with much love (or so it seems). I have played several movie-based games in the past few months and I found this one to be the most boring of them all. The game starts on the right foot with the cool opening cinematic also seen in the movie, but, as soon as you start, you'll notice the visuals are not as appealing as they are in the film and, as you delve deeper into it, you'll see the story is not quite as revealing. In fact, you'll be a little lost if you didn't watch it first or read the novel.

Even though the game is based on a gorgeous animated movie, the fluid animations and characters' moves haven't been translated properly for the video game. The game looks similar to the movie, but Coraline is slow as can be, and performing any kind of task with her feels like a real chore, whether it's moving newspapers out of the way, climbing on top of a box, or pushing stuff around. Subtle details that were so amazing in the film also leave a lot to be desired in the game. I noticed the ugly reflection of the dad's face on his computer screen, and that was one of the first clues about the overall quality of the video game. In the movie, the reflection looked crystal-clear, and it mimicked the dad's moves. In the game, it looks static and very artificial.

The gameplay will take you right back to the 90s, due to its limited controls and overly simplistic 'scavenger hunt-style' missions. You can only do one thing consistently: moving Coraline around—for the rest of actions like jumping, opening doors, etc. you'll have to wait for on-screen prompts to hit a certain button, which is quite annoying. Gameplay consists of finding things in the house and completing puzzles. There are also a few mini-game challenges here and there, which are based on matching pieces, following the rhythm, and such. This sounds okay for a kids' game in theory; the problem is most of the tasks are not fun at all, and the level of difficulty is so varied that players will lose interest in no time. Sometimes it almost feels like a *Dora the Explorer* kind of game, while other times it will challenge players with ridiculous timed mini-games that will drive anyone crazy.

What's more, this game is rated E10+, probably due to its eerie theme, so it's not appropriate for the younger ones, who might be the only ones interested in the title. Those who are 10 and up will most likely feel boredom, frustration, and indifference before they find any kind of entertainment in it. So, who's the actual target audience for the game? We can't really tell. The unbalanced gameplay is definitely one of the



Stills from the *Coraline* Wii game

biggest problems with it—developer Papaya Studios doesn't seem to have thought this one through.

The controls are also unbalanced and not very practical. We know the PS2 will have to use the DualShock controller with its control stick and face buttons, but the Wii controls are not that different. Everything, including the slingshot challenge, is handled with the Nunchuk control stick and buttons, as well as a few buttons on the Wii Remote. Point-and-click is not used, and very few motion controls are involved. In a way, this is nice; it allows players to sit and relax, and it doesn't force you to do unnecessary moves that will end up getting annoying. However, there were many occasions in which the controls could have been implemented more efficiently, allowing for more engaging gameplay.

This is especially true with the mini-games. Using rare button combinations instead of motion controls is a poor choice. For example, there's a rhythm-based challenge where you have to hit buttons at the right time. This doesn't work well, and it's been used so much lately that it's getting old. Trying to remember where each button is and doing it at the right time will never be as fun as executing a few fun moves like those in *Rayman Raving Rabbids*. They could have definitely taken advantage of the motion controls on the Wii version, and they would have probably obtained better results.

In addition, there's a problem with the camera. It's completely independent and handled by the game's engine. It follows you around as you move Coraline, and it turns when it feels it has to, sometimes abruptly, and other times after a noticeable delay—you may run into a wall in the meantime. I found myself wanting to change the camera on my own many times, and not being able to do it was frustrating. To top it off, the game ended up giving me some serious motion sickness. This happens to me often while playing first-person shooters (not third-person), but it had never happened to me while playing a kids' game. Had I been able to control the camera, this wouldn't have happened. Of course, I know this may not happen to most people, but still … if you're sensitive to camera changes, *Coraline* will give you a hard time.

It's too bad the game ended up being a poor movie tie-in, because it had all the movie licenses and even original voices from actors like Dakota Fanning and Robert Bailey Jr. The music is equally great, though it doesn't come through like it does in the movie, due mainly to the overall low-budget feel of the game.

Other than the three or four hours of play you'll get out of *Coraline*, there isn't much left to be done. You can play the mini-games individually, and some of them are fun enough to entertain you for a while. But, truth be told, you're better off playing another game or nothing at all. Although *Coraline* was developed by a studio that created quality games such as *Medal of Honor: Airborne*, this one doesn't seem to fit the bill.

Game features

- Play as Coraline and interact with all the colorful characters in this fantastical interactive adventure.
- Explore two distinct, fully interactive worlds like never before: the brooding Normal World and the mesmerising Other World.
- Graphic style and tone inspired by the amazing stop-motion animated film and the eerie storyline.
- Earn buttons as currency through unique and engaging mini-games.
- Collectable items galore: find unique outfits to customise Coraline's look, fill your scrapbook with photos, and unlock artwork and stills from the movie.

	Rating out of 5	Rating description
Graphics	3.0	Even though the game does portray most elements of the movie, the graphics look outdated, and the in-game animations are choppy sometimes.
Control	2.3	Controls are outdated as well. You're only allowed to perform most actions after you've been given a button prompt on the screen, and the camera is so bad it may give you or your kid motion sickness.
Music/ sound FX/ voice acting	3.9	The voice over work is the best part of the game, and it's comparable to the movie. The soundtrack is also enjoyable.
Play value	1.5	The game is very short and doesn't seem suitable for any ages. It's too boring and easy for early teens and adults, and it's too difficult and scary for children.
Overall rating	2.5	Not an average. See Rating legend above for a final score breakdown.

Source: Cheat Code Central website, 2010



Stills from the *Coraline* Wii game

Breakaway tasks 4

Remembering

1 How much was the *Coraline* computer game being sold for? Does the reviewer think this computer game is value for money?

2 What's the only thing you can do consistently in this game?

3 What other game does *Coraline* feel like when played?

Understanding

4 How old-fashioned is the game play?

5 How long will it take to play *Coraline* the computer game?

6 What is the best part of the game?

Applying

7 The reviewer is critical of a number of aspects of the computer game. List five of them.

8 How would the reviewer make the game better?

Analysing

9 According to the rating chart, what is the weakest part of the game?

10 What parts of this review illustrate that the reviewer likes the book and the film of *Coraline*?

Evaluating

11 Review this review by filling out the following chart in your notebook.

	Rating out of 5
Description	
Content	
Clarity of writing	
Helpfulness	
Overall rating	

Creating

12 Use this style of review (including the ratings chart and the features sections) to review a TV program, film or book you've watched or read recently.

DID YOU KNOW...

Follow the links on **Pearson Reader** for a trailer for the Playstation version of the *Coraline* computer game.

Web Destination

The *Coraline* website

For more of *Coraline*, explore the multilayered *Coraline* website. It brings together the film and the computer game and adds some wonders of its own.



How would you look with button eyes? You can find out on the *Coraline* website!

Strands in action

Core tasks

One of the basic problems of transforming a book into other formats is the challenge of turning words into visuals. If a book becomes a film, the words must become moving pictures. If a book becomes a graphic novel, the words must become illustrations. If a book becomes a computer game, the words must become an interactive medium in which images and sounds can be manipulated by the user.

1 Begin the process of turning a book into a visual format. You do not need to do any drawing, illustrating or imaging. Choose a novel (not a picture book!). Draw a table in your notebook similar to the one below and complete the following tasks.

a List all the characters.

b Provide a description for each character. Use exact quotes from the novel wherever possible. Include details of age, physical appearance and clothing.

c List all the settings.

d Provide a description for each setting. Use exact quotes from the novel wherever possible. Include details of landmarks, typical weather, geographical features and/or buildings, as appropriate.

Brief provided by: Jana Hammoudah		**Title:** To Kill a Mockingbird
	Name	**Description**
Character 1		
Character 2		
Setting 1		
Setting 2		

2 Take the first page of the novel you've chosen and turn it into a graphic novel.

3 Write a 400-word response to this topic: What are the purposes of the three modes of this text (print, film and game)? Are they all the same?

4 In groups of four, present a short play in which you are playing the board game based on your novel. This must be done without having an actual board game in front of you—mime the props that you need to convey playing the game. Through the conversations of the characters, you must let your audience know some of the rules of the game.

Extra tasks

1 Draw each of the characters for whom you've provided descriptions.

2 Draw each of the settings for which you've provided descriptions.

3 Design the box for a computer game based on the novel you chose.

2

Frankenstein



Frankenstein is the story of a rampaging monster who was created by an ambitious scientist. The image of Frankenstein's monster has been versioned thousands of times in films, TV and print. It has been used in advertising and cartoons and has turned up in westerns and science fiction. It's a classic horror costume dress-up, and has even been made into a stage musical and an opera. Not bad for a character who first appeared in a novel published in 1818!

Surprisingly, *Frankenstein* was written as the result of a bet. Writer Mary Shelley was holidaying in Switzerland in 1816. The weather was poor so Shelley and the other holidaymakers amused themselves one stormy night by telling ghost stories. One of the guests, the famous poet Lord Byron, suggested that they each try writing their own scary story with a prize to be given for the best. After this discussion—and a horrible nightmare that night—Mary Shelley wrote *Frankenstein*.

The story of *Frankenstein* has fascinated people for so long because it deals with fears that are common in every age—including today. The fears explored in *Frankenstein* include fear of the unknown, fear of what science can create and fear of the future.



Mary Shelley



The Villa Diodati—where Mary Shelley wrote *Frankenstein*

DID YOU KNOW...

Part of the discussion that led to the writing of *Frankenstein* was about the relatively new discovery of galvanism—applying electricity to muscles and seeing them twitch. Today, this technology is called 'electrophysiology'.

Characters

Frankenstein contains a number of characters that are now stock figures in horror fiction everywhere. The following characters have become clichés but when Mary Shelley wrote them, they were surprising and new.

The Mad Scientist

This brilliant, but slightly unstable, person is obsessed with achieving their ambition to prove themselves to the world. They will ignore advice, warnings or portents of doom, and will press on into the often dangerous unknown. The Mad Scientist's favourite saying tends to be something along the lines of: 'Mad? 'Mad' they call me? I'll show them who's mad!'.

The Assistant

Usually a man with a hunched back, the Assistant is a grotesque character who supports his master, the Mad Scientist, and is often responsible for taunting the Monster.

The Monster

The Monster is the hideous creation of the Mad Scientist. Usually it's not quite right, and it's almost guaranteed to go on a rampage and to try (and even succeed) to kill the Mad Scientist. Early on in the narrative, it will try to be good, but its frightful appearance will make others scared and angry. It will then be pursued, usually with pitchforks and flaming torches before finally going on a rampage.

DID YOU KNOW...

Frankenstein is the name of the Monster's creator, Victor Frankenstein. The Monster doesn't have a name and should simply be referred to as Frankenstein's Monster.

Writer's TOOLBOX

The key question for any horror writer is whether to 'show' the reader the monster, or to leave it 'off stage'. If you leave your monster off stage and hint at it, without fully describing it, then the reader's imagination does the work and can come up with something truly horrific—but the reader can get frustrated. If you show the monster and describe it in scary detail, the reader can be let-down—but at least the reader gets to see it. It's a tough decision.

About the author

Mary Shelley (1797–1851) came from a famous family. Her father, William Godwin, was a prominent political philosopher and her mother, Mary Wollstonecraft, was one of the earliest feminist thinkers.

Mary married poet Percy Shelley in 1816 and she was a friend of many of the most celebrated poets and writers of the day.

The summary of *Frankenstein* (see the next page) picks up the story from when Victor Frankenstein has been trying to discover the secret of life. After much obsessive study and research, he thinks he has it—and wants to put his findings into action.



William Godwin



Mary Wollstonecraft

FRANKENSTEIN SUMMARY

The story of *Frankenstein* is told in retrospect—Victor Frankenstein tells it to Robert Walton, the captain of a steamship which is trapped in ice near the North Pole. While exploring, Walton and his crew find Frankenstein half-alive in the wasteland.

Frankenstein recounts the story of his life. He is the child of a privileged Swiss family. He is a curious young boy, deeply interested in the natural world. He looks forwaring to attending university to learn more, but his mother dies just before he leaves. This tragedy devastates him and he becomes obsessed with questions of life and death.

At university in Ingolstadt, this obsession leads him to experiment with science, stealing body parts from hospitals and graveyards to help his investigations. He discovers the secret of life and creates a hideous creature.

When the creature lurches into life, Frankenstein is horrified by what he has done. He collapses and becomes delirious. The creature flees.

For four months, he is helped back to health by Henry Clerval, a friend from his childhood. During this time, the creature travels on foot to the Frankenstein home. Once there, it murders Frankenstein's five-year-old brother, William, and flees. It is lonely and tries to befriend people, but its hideous appearance makes them afraid and they reject it. In anger, the creature vows to seek revenge against Frankenstein for making it such a horrible monster.

After he recovers, Frankenstein leaves Ingolstadt and rushes home. While grieving and angry at the death of his brother, he sees the creature in the woods nearby and pursues it. They battle, with Frankenstein determined to destroy the creature, but it is much too strong. It tells him the terrible story of its life, the horrors it has perpetrated and the awful way it has been treated by people. It tells of its loneliness and insists that Frankenstein create it a female companion.

Frankenstein feels responsible for the creature's plight and agrees, with some reluctance. With his friend Clerval, he goes to England but has second thoughts and destroys all his workings. In England, the creature murders Clerval and promises to continue its revenge on Frankenstein.

Frankenstein collapses again, overwhelmed by his friend's death and the creature's threats. He travels home to Switzerland and marries Elizabeth, his cousin. The creature finds him, kills Elizabeth in an act of vengeance and Frankenstein's father dies from sorrow.

Nearly mad with grief and rage, Frankenstein pursues the monster. Months later, he finds it in the Arctic where the creature batters him nearly to death.

When Frankenstein finishes his tale, Captain Walton takes over the narrative. He describes in a letter to his sister how Frankenstein died after completing his story, and how the creature appeared on the ship soon after. The creature is remorseful, and tells Walton and the crew that it will go over the ice toward the Pole, where it will build a fire and destroy itself.

Frankenstein the book

Frankenstein was first published in 1818. It was immediately popular, with a stage version appearing in that year. The public loved its mysteries and its murders and it was only gradually that the serious, underlying themes came to be appreciated.

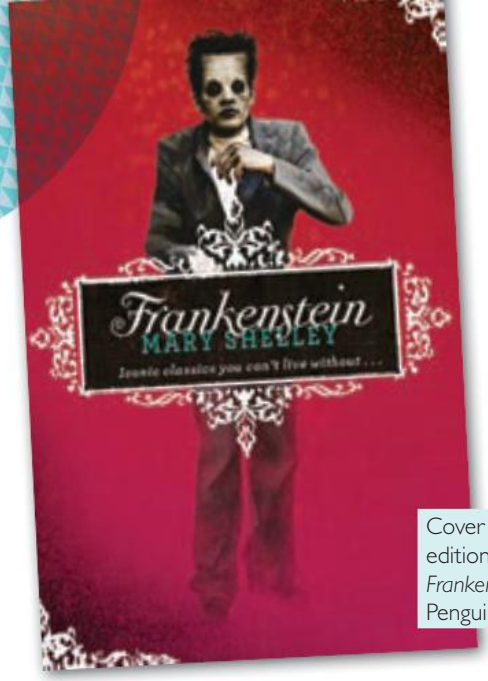
Frankenstein covers

Frankenstein was first published in three leather-bound volumes with gold embossing. There was no cover image nor did the author's name appear on the work.

Mary Shelley's name appeared on the cover of the third edition of *Frankenstein*, which was published in 1831. It also included a frontispiece illustration of the monster. This edition was published in one volume and was a revised version of the tale. Shelley included a longer preface and made Victor Frankenstein a more sympathetic character by altering his motives.

Frontispiece of 1831 edition of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*





Cover of 2011 edition of *Frankenstein*, Penguin Classics

As publishing trends changed, later editions of the novel have included images on the cover. But with each publication, the representation of the Monster changed, often reflecting the times in which they were published.



Cover of 1875 edition of *Frankenstein*, Penguin

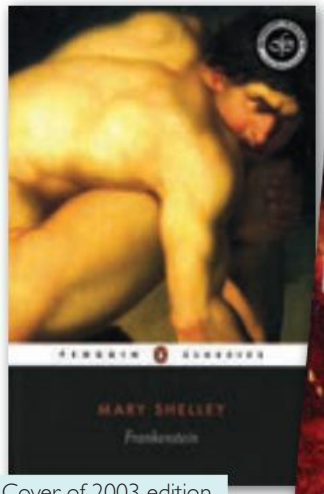


Cover of 1968 edition of *Frankenstein*, Penguin English Library

The 1968 cover (above right) was inspired by the painting *The Nightmare* by artist Henry Fuseli. Fuseli's painting is thought to have been based on Mary Shelley's account of the murder of Elizabeth in her marriage bed.

> She was there, lifeless and inanimate, thrown across the bed, her head hanging down, and her pale and distorted feature half covered by her hair. Everywhere I turn I see the same figure—her bloodless arms and relaxed form flung by the murderer on its bridal bier.

By the twenty-first century, covers of *Frankenstein* had changed dramatically once again.



Cover of 2003 edition of *Frankenstein*, Penguin Classics



Cover of 2006 edition of *Frankenstein*, Penguin Classics

Breakaway tasks 5

Understanding

1 Why do you think that Mary Shelley's name was not on the cover of the first or second editions?

2 Why were there no images on these first two covers?

3 Why is the 1968 cover a good representation of *The Nightmare* and of the extract?

Analysing

4 Why do you think that there is such a great difference in how the Monster is depicted in the 2003 cover (above left) and the 2006 cover (above right)?

5 Compare and contrast the four images used as either covers or a frontispiece in a graphic organiser of your choice.

Evaluating

6 What do the images used for the novel tell us about the periods of time in which they were published?

7 Which cover do you like best? Why?

8 Conduct some further research to find more cover images of *Frankenstein*.

- a Compare them with the covers you have already seen.
- b What conclusions can you make about why particular cover images are chosen for novels?

FRANKENSTEIN, Chapter 20

By Mary Shelley

I trembled and my heart failed within me, when, on looking up, I saw by the light of the moon the daemon at the casement. A ghastly grin wrinkled his lips as he gazed on me, where I sat fulfilling the task which he had allotted to me. Yes, he had followed me in my travels; he had loitered in forests, hid himself in caves, or taken refuge in wide and desert heaths; and he now came to mark my progress and claim the fulfilment of my promise.

As I looked on him, his countenance expressed the utmost extent of malice and treachery. I thought with a sensation of madness on my promise of creating another like to him, and trembling with passion, tore to pieces the thing on which I was engaged. The wretch saw me destroy the creature on whose future existence he depended for happiness, and with a howl of devilish despair and revenge, withdrew.

I left the room, and locking the door, made a solemn vow in my own heart never to resume my labours; and then, with trembling steps, I sought my own apartment. I was alone; none were near me to dissipate the gloom and relieve me from the sickening oppression of the most terrible reveries.

Several hours passed, and I remained near my window gazing on the sea; it was almost motionless, for the winds were hushed, and all nature reposed under the eye of the quiet moon. A few fishing vessels alone specked the water, and now and then the gentle breeze wafted the sound of voices as the fishermen called to one another. I felt the silence, although I was hardly conscious of its extreme profundity, until my ear was suddenly arrested by the paddling of oars near the shore, and a person landed close to my house.

In a few minutes after, I heard the creaking of my door, as if some one endeavoured to open it softly. I trembled from head to foot; I felt a presentiment of who it was and wished to rouse one of the peasants who dwelt in a cottage not far from mine; but I was overcome by the sensation of helplessness, so often felt in frightful dreams, when you in vain endeavour [try] to fly from an impending danger, and was rooted to the spot. Presently I heard the sound of footsteps along the passage; the door opened, and the wretch whom I dreaded appeared.

Shutting the door, he approached me and said in a smothered voice, 'You have destroyed the work which you began; what is it that you intend? Do you dare to break your promise? I have endured toil and misery; I left Switzerland with you; I crept along the shores of the Rhine, among its willow islands and over the summits of its hills. I have dwelt many months in the heaths of England and among the deserts of Scotland. I have endured incalculable fatigue, and cold, and hunger; do you dare destroy my hopes?'

'Begone! I do break my promise; never will I create another like yourself, equal in deformity and wickedness.'

'Slave, I before reasoned with you, but you have proved yourself unworthy of my condescension. Remember that I have power; you believe yourself miserable, but I can make you so wretched that the light of day will be hateful to you. You are my creator, but I am your master; obey!'

'The hour of my irresolution is past, and the period of your power is arrived. Your threats cannot move me to do an act of wickedness; but they confirm me in a determination of not creating you a companion in vice. Shall I, in cool blood, set loose upon the earth a daemon whose delight is in death and wretchedness? Begone! I am firm, and your words will only exasperate my rage.'

The monster saw my determination in my face and gnashed his teeth in the impotence of anger. 'Shall each man,' cried he, 'find a wife for his bosom, and each beast have his mate, and I be alone? I had feelings of affection, and they were requited by detestation and scorn. Man! You may hate, but beware! Your hours will pass in dread and misery, and soon the bolt will fall which must ravish from you your happiness forever. Are you to be happy while I grovel in the intensity of my wretchedness? You can blast my other passions, but revenge remains—revenge, henceforth dearer than light or food! I may die, but first you, my tyrant and tormentor, shall curse the sun that gazes on your misery. Beware, for I am fearless and therefore powerful. I will watch with the wiliness of a snake, that I may sting with its venom. Man, you shall repent of the injuries you inflict.'

'Devil, cease; and do not poison the air with these sounds of malice. I have declared my resolution to you, and I am no coward to bend beneath words. Leave me; I am inexorable.'

'It is well. I go; but remember, I shall be with you on your wedding-night.'

I started forward and exclaimed, 'Villain! Before you sign my death-warrant, be sure that you are yourself safe.'

I would have seized him, but he eluded me and quitted the house with precipitation. In a few moments I saw him in his boat, which shot across the waters with an arrowy swiftness and was soon lost amidst the waves.

Source: Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, 1831

Breakaway tasks 6

Remembering

1 Who did Frankenstein want to wake up to come to his assistance?

2 What form of transport did the Monster use to escape?

Understanding

3 What did Frankenstein do that made the Monster howl and withdraw?

4 Why does the Monster call Frankenstein 'slave'?

Applying

5 Write an interview in which a newspaper reporter asks Frankenstein about the events described here.

Analysing

6 Through which four countries did the Monster follow Frankenstein?

7 As *Frankenstein* was written in 1818, it contains some words that are old-fashioned and others that are not in common use now. Use your dictionary to find definitions for these words:

a daemon	b casement	c countenance
d labours	e dissipate	f oppression
g reveries	h reposed	i profundity
j condescension	k presentiment	l requited
m wiliness	n inexorable	o precipitation

Evaluating

8 What did Victor think was the worst feature of the creature?

Creating

9 Unlike many *Frankenstein* films, in the book there is no mention of Victor Frankenstein having an assistant. Imagine that you *are* Victor's assistant. Retell the events above from the point of view of the assistant. Make sure you comment on how Victor looks and his reactions.

Frankenstein the film

Perhaps the most famous version of *Frankenstein* is a film made at Universal Studios in 1931. This film is so powerful that the image of Frankenstein's Monster used in the film is the one that most people have today. The Monster has a flat head, scars and stitches on his face, bolts in his neck, undersized clothes, huge boots and a shambling walk.



The film was a huge success, even though it was very different from the book. For example, Shelley's original Monster learns to speak and demonstrates definite intelligence. In the film, the Monster only grunts and appears to be of low intelligence. Other differences include the scientist's name, which is changed from Victor to Henry, and in the film the Monster isn't created from body parts as in the book.

The man who played the part of the Monster, Boris Karloff, instantly became a star and went on to be one of the most famous horror actors of all time. The following extract outlines how Karloff transformed from an ordinary actor into a horror icon.

ABOUT BORIS KARLOFF

By Cynthia Lindsay

Boris always said, 'Success is simply a matter of being on the right corner at the right time'. His right corner happened to be the Universal Studio's commissary, where he was lunching while playing a murderer in a film called *Graft*. Speaking of the moment sometime later, Boris recalled, 'James Whale, the director, who had just come over from England triumphant from the success of his direction of R.C. Sheriff's *Journey's End*, was

DID YOU KNOW...

Boris Karloff's real name was William Pratt.

lunching at a nearby table. Suddenly he caught my eye and beckoned me over. I leapt—he was the most important director on the lot. He asked me to sit down. I did, holding my breath, and then he said: "Your face has startling possibilities …" I cast my eyes down modestly, and then he said, "I'd like you to test for the Monster in Frankenstein." It was shattering—for the first time in my life I had been gainfully employed long enough to buy myself some new clothes and spruce up a bit—actually, I rather fancied meself! Now, to hide all this new-found beauty under monster makeup? I said I'd be delighted. Half a dozen actors, including Bela Lugosi, who refused it, had been tested for the part, but I ended up the lucky one—I say lucky because any one of them could have played it just as well as I did, and would have reaped the benefits that came to me.

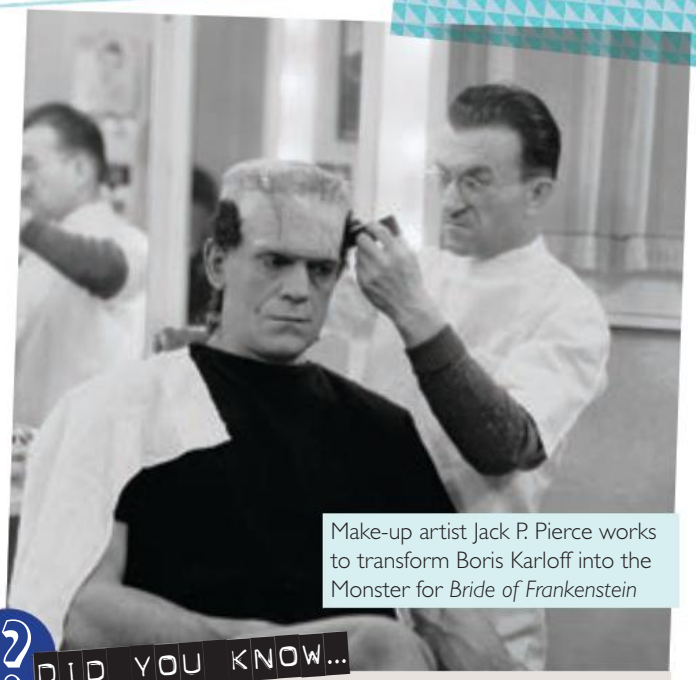
"After Whale asked me to make a test for the Monster, the first thing I did was to go to Jack Pierce, the head makeup man at Universal. Jack was nothing short of a genius, besides being a lovely man. He was also in the inside of the studio, knew what the score was, and was in a position to stall the test. So at the end of the day's work on *Graft* I would stay, and he would stay, and nightly he worked on the makeup until we felt it was ready. People in production were constantly calling and saying, "Aren't you ready yet?" And we would answer, "No—we're not ready yet".

"Of course I rushed out and bought the book—but Mary Shelley's description of the Monster would have been impossible to duplicate, so we had to devise our own approach. Jack was brilliantly inventive, but his disguise was devilish to wear. It was worth it, though. I have to give him full marks for realizing the importance of what, ultimately, was a work of art. Up to that point, the part had just meant another job but—by Jove—thanks to Jack, it kicked the goal for me.

Pierce approached the construction of the make-up in an entirely scientific fashion. In an interview in *The New York Times* in 1939, Pierce explained his creation:

> There are six ways a surgeon can cut the skull and I figured Dr Frankenstein, who was not a practising surgeon, would take the easier. That is, he would cut the top of the skull off straight across like a pot lid, hinge it, pop the brain in, and clamp it tight. That's the reason I decided to make the Monster's head square and flat like a box and dig that scar across his forehead and have two metal clamps hold it together. The two metal studs that stick out the sides of his neck are inlets for electricity—plugs. Don't forget the Monster is an electrical gadget and that lightning is his life force …
>
> The lizard-eyes were made of rubber, as was his false head. I made his arms look longer by shortening the sleeves of his coat. His legs were stiffened by steel struts and two pairs of pants. His large feet were the boots asphalt-spreaders wear. His fingernails were blackened with shoe polish. His face was coated with blue-green greasepaint, which photographs gray.

Source: *Dear Boris…the life of William Henry Pratt a.k.a. Boris Karloff*, Cynthia Lindsay, Limelight Edition, Hal Leonard Corp. 1975



Make-up artist Jack P. Pierce works to transform Boris Karloff into the Monster for *Bride of Frankenstein*

DID YOU KNOW…

Once Boris Karloff was completely dressed as the monster he was 230 centimetres tall. His make-up and padding weighed 30 kilograms. His boots weighed 14 kilograms each.



Boris Karloff as Frankenstein's Monster

DID YOU KNOW...

There are many films versions of *Frankenstein*, all with different titles, including *The Bride of Frankenstein*, *Son of Frankenstein*, *The Curse of Frankenstein*, *Dracula VS Frankenstein*, *I Was a Teenage Frankenstein*, *Frankenstein Meets the Space Monster* and *Jesse James Meets Frankenstein's Daughter*.

Breakaway tasks 7

Remembering

1 Who did the make-up for the Monster?

2 Who directed the 1931 film *Frankenstein*?

Understanding

3 Based on the text, what do you think a 'commissary' is?

4 Why did Pierce make the Monster's head 'square and flat'?

5 What were the metal studs on the Monster's neck for?

Applying

6 Draw a picture of the Monster and label it.

Analysing

7 Describe Boris's mixed feelings when Whale asked him to test for the part of the Monster. Why would he feel this way?

8 What does Boris think about Pierce?

Evaluating

9 What do you think would have been the most difficult part of the Monster make-up and costume to wear? Why?

10 Look carefully at the film poster of *Frankenstein* before the extract about Boris Karloff. Explain the artist's choice of colour, background images. Who is the woman on the right and what is she wearing?

Creating

11 Demonstrate walking like Frankenstein's Monster. Remember, you have metal struts stiffening your legs.

Frankenstein on TV

In 2004, a four-part TV mini-series, *Frankenstein*, was screened. It starred William Hurt and Donald Sutherland and aimed to stay as close as possible to the original Mary Shelley novel.

Many of the problems of adapting a book to the screen are caused by the restricted time limit. Inevitably, much of a book needs to be cut out. But a TV mini-series can extend for much longer time than a standard movie, and therefore can include much more of the original work.

FRANKENSTEIN (2004)

Andreas Rohrmoser

Hallmark Entertainment's 4-part TV mini series [2004] has often been hailed as THE most faithful retelling of Mary Shelley's novel to date. Unlike Kenneth Branagh's 1994 movie, which made similar claims, director Kevin Connor's version adapts the novel without making any major changes. It contains all the important episodes from the novel, even the narrative frame with Robert Walton is intact. Apart from giving away the secret of life—once again Victor Frankenstein uses electricity created by a thunderstorm to bestow life upon his creature —screenwriter Mark Kruger has not added any new plot devices such as the re-animation of Elizabeth in Branagh's film.

Kevin Connor's version carefully recreates the 19th century period settings and beautifully designed costumes. However, much of the realism is lost due to the fact that here everything looks a bit too clean and sanitized. Being a rather colorful movie, it is far removed from the horror of other adaptations. Emphasising the melodrama, Connor gives more space to the love story between Victor and Elizabeth, playing down the gothic horror elements and violence. Clerval and Professor Waldmann, who repeatedly warn Victor of the possible consequences of his doings, also get much more screen time than in previous movies. This adaptation focuses not on the action but on character development and psychology. This approach might scare away horror buffs, but since Shelley's novel has never really ranked as a horror story, it is ultimately a more faithful adaptation than most before.

Here the portrayal of the monster also differs from most other adaptations. Former pop singer Luke Goss plays the monster as a pitiful, kind creature, filled with sadness rather than anger. There are many such instances where the audience witnesses the monster's misery. When the blind man and his granddaughter give him food, he bursts out in tears because they are the

first people who have treated him with such sort of kindness. When he takes Justine's hanged body down from the gallows, he apologises to her. In his conversation with Victor it turns out the monster killed the boy William accidentally, in fact he never wanted to harm him. However, when he planted the medallion on Justine, he clearly states that he condemned her to hurt Victor. Speaking with a soft voice and calling Frankenstein 'father', the creature rarely is a menace, but rather the one the audience sympathizes with. When he sees his future bride, lifeless on the operating table in the lab, the monster promises to her how he would show her love and care for her. His disappointment and anger becomes perfectly understandable, when instead of giving life to the bride, Victor burns her in front of his creature. This is finally the point, where the monster's sorrow turns to hate.

The ensuing path of revenge—the creature kills both Clerval and Elizabeth—and Frankenstein's hunt for the monster, who keeps leaving hints for him to follow all over Europe, is a welcome change of pace. The melodrama is replaced by more action that only ends when the monster finally finds dead Victor Frankenstein on board of Walton's ship and disappears into the arctic ice carrying his creator's body, after having explained his motives to Walton.

Connor's *Frankenstein* has often been criticized as being too slow and long—with a running time of about 180 minutes it surely ranks among the longest Frankenstein films. Some might even see this first fully faithful adaptation as proof that Shelley's novel does not translate well to the screen without major cinematic changes. But this only applies if one expects a horror movie, a conception based on earlier adaptations. If *Frankenstein* is seen as what it is, a gothic melodrama, then this movie does it full justice.

Source: Andreas Rohrmoser, 2004

Breakaway tasks 8

Remembering

1 When did Kenneth Branagh make his *Frankenstein* movie?

2 Who is the screenwriter for this *Frankenstein* mini-series?

Understanding

3 What might 'scare away horror buffs'?

4 How is the character of the Monster different in this version from other versions?

Applying

5 Write a paragraph summing up and give the mini-series a rating. The paragraph is to go after the last paragraph of this review and therefore should flow on from it.

Analysing

6 In one column, list the things that the reviewer likes about this mini-series, and in another column, list the things he does not. Which column has more entries?

7 What does the reviewer have to say about the acting in this mini-series?

Evaluating

8 Compare the outline of the mini-series with the *Frankenstein* summary earlier in the module. How well do you think the mini-series captured the original story?

Creating

9 Sometimes, the producers of a film give a sneak preview, to get audience reaction. Then they tinker with the film based on that feedback.

Your task is to create a survey to give to the audience of a sneak preview.

You must ask the audience members to rate various aspects of the film on a scale of 1 to 10 and leave room for comments.

What aspects do you want your audience to comment on? What sorts of things are important for the success of a film? Consider all the elements that go into the making of a film and choose four that you're keen to find out about before drawing up a survey similar to the one below for the audience to fill out.

Name of film:		Your name:	
Aspect 1: /10	Aspect 2: /10	Aspect 3: /10	Aspect 4: /10
Comments:			

Strands in action

Core tasks

One of the ways in which an original text becomes transformed is through merchandising. When a book is transformed into a film, its characters can be used in many, many different forms such as action figures or in colouring books. The aim is to help sell more books and movie tickets, but also to make some extra money from the merchandising items themselves.

A new *Frankenstein* film and computer game is being produced and developed by your company. Your job is to look for other opportunities to extend the *Frankenstein* brand.

1 Write a marketing plan that you will present to the directors of your company. Use the following headings to structure your plan.

- Introduction (a quick summary of the *Frankenstein* story)
- Objective (what you are trying to do)
- Target market (who you are trying to encourage to buy all your *Frankenstein* products)
- Merchandising opportunities (what *Frankenstein* items you want to make and sell)
- Freebies (what *Frankenstein* items you want to give away, where and why)
- Tie-ins and partnerships (any other companies or organisations you want to work with to sell *Frankenstein* products, how this will work, what the other company or organisation will get out of it)
- Summary (restate your objective and emphasise why it's a good thing).

2 Put together a CD of the soundtrack of your new *Frankenstein* film. List the tracks (they can be imaginary or from real artists) and design a cover.

3 Sketch the characters from your *Frankenstein* film and say how you would achieve that costume and make-up look for each of them.

4 Make a series of *Frankenstein* themed greeting cards for the following occasions:

- birthday
- engagement
- holiday occasion (Christmas, Eid, Chinese New Year etc.).

You must include graphics on the outside and appropriate (and clever) text on the outside and inside. Hint: Many desktop publishing programs have card templates.

Extra tasks

1 Design a *Frankenstein* T-shirt. Follow the links on **Pearson Reader** for a site to help with designing a T-shirt. Ask for feedback on your design before you finalise it.

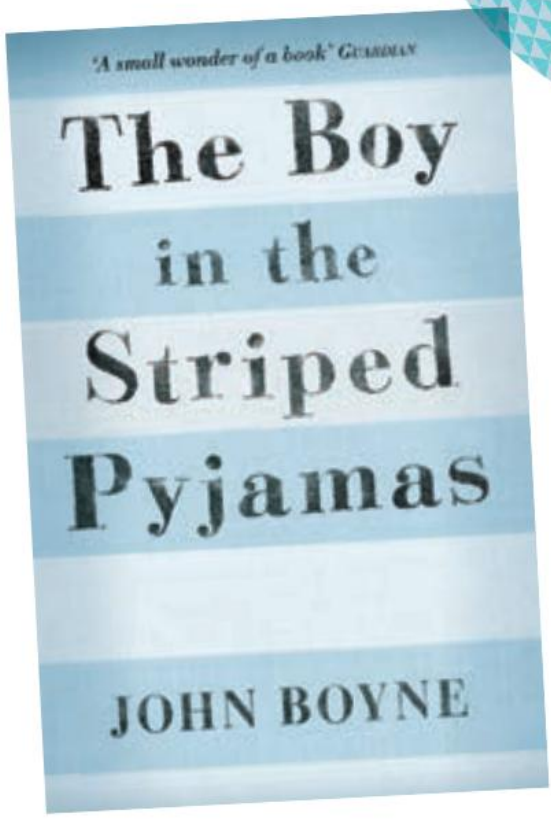


2 Design a menu for a well-known fast food chain with a *Frankenstein* theme.

3 Discuss possible new items of *Frankenstein* merchandise with your teacher. Then design, create, construct or make another *Frankenstein* product. What other sorts of items have been used to publicise films? How could language and images be used to make your merchandise really effective?

3

The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas



The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas was written by Irish author John Boyne, and published in 2006. It is a moving story of the Holocaust and how children are caught up in horrible events. It is written through the eyes of a young German boy, Bruno.



The novel describes Bruno's puzzlement over the events around him, and how he comes to meet a boy called Shmuel. Shmuel wears striped pyjamas and lives behind barbed wire near Bruno's house. Their friendship and the inevitable chain of events that follows results in a profound and unforgettable book. The way that it has been transformed from an award-winning novel into an award-winning film is an excellent example of the transformation process in action.

Reading the early parts of *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* is like putting together a puzzle. There are many hints as to what is going on, but you have to be alert!

The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas—the novel

BRUNO MAKES A DISCOVERY

By John Boyne

One afternoon, when Bruno came home from school, he was surprised to find Maria, the family's maid — who always kept her head bowed and never looked up from the carpet — standing in his bedroom, pulling all his belongings out of the wardrobe and packing them in four large wooden crates, even the things he'd hidden at the back that belonged to him and were nobody else's business.

'What are you doing?' he asked in as polite a tone as he could muster, for although he wasn't happy to come home and find someone going through his possessions, his mother had always told him that he was to treat Maria respectfully and not just imitate the way Father spoke to her. 'You take your hands off my things.'

Maria shook her head and pointed towards the staircase behind him, where Bruno's mother had just appeared. She was a tall woman with long red hair that she bundled into a sort of net behind her head, and she was twisting her hands together nervously as if there was something she didn't want to have to say or something she didn't want to have to believe.

'Mother,' said Bruno, marching towards her, 'what's going on? Why is Maria going through my things?'

'She's packing them,' explained Mother.

'Packing them?' he asked, running quickly through the events of the previous few days to consider whether he'd been particularity naughty or had used those words out loud that he wasn't allowed to use and was being sent away because of it. He couldn't think of anything though. In fact over the

last few days he had behaved in a perfectly decent manner to everyone and couldn't remember causing any chaos at all. 'Why?' he asked then. 'What have I done?'

Mother had walked into her own bedroom by then but Lars, the butler, was in there, packing her things too. She sighed and threw her hands in the air in frustration before marching back to the staircase, followed by Bruno, who wasn't going to let the matter drop without an explanation.

'Mother,' he insisted. 'What's going on? Are we moving?'

'Come downstairs with me,' said Mother, leading the way towards the large dining room where the Fury had been to dinner the week before. 'We'll talk down there.'

Bruno ran downstairs and even passed her out on the staircase so that he was waiting in the dining room when she arrived. He looked at her without saying anything for a moment and thought to himself that she couldn't have applied her make-up correctly that morning because the rims of her eyes were more red than usual, like his own after he'd been causing chaos and got into trouble and ended up crying.

'Now, you don't have to worry, Bruno,' said Mother, sitting down in the chair where the beautiful blonde woman who had come to dinner with the Fury had sat and waved at him when Father closed the doors. 'In fact if anything it's going to be a great adventure.'

'What is?' he asked. 'Am I being sent away?'

'No, not just you,' she said, looking as if she might smile for a moment but thinking better of it. 'We all are. Your father and I, Gretel and you. All four of us.'

Bruno thought about this and frowned. He wasn't particularly bothered if Gretel was being sent away because she was a Hopeless Case and caused nothing but trouble for him. But it seemed a little unfair that they all had to go with her.

'But where?' he asked.

'Where are we going exactly? Why can't we stay here?'

'Your father's job,' explained Mother. 'You know how important it is, don't you?'

'Yes, of course,' said Bruno, nodding his head, because there were always so many visitors to the house — men in fantastic uniforms, women with typewriters that he had to keep his mucky hands off — and they were always very polite to Father and told each other that he was a man to watch and that the Fury had big things in mind for him.

'Well, sometimes when someone is very important,' continued Mother, 'the man who employs him asks him to go somewhere else because there's a very special job that needs doing there.'

'What kind of job?' asked Bruno, because if he was honest with himself — which he always tried to be — he wasn't entirely sure what job Father did.

In school they had talked about their fathers one day and Karl had said that his father was a greengrocer, which Bruno knew to be true because he ran the greengrocer's shop in the centre of town. And Daniel had said that his father was a teacher, which Bruno knew to be true because he taught the big boys who it was always wise to steer clear of. And Martin had said that his father was a chef, which Bruno knew to be true because he sometimes collected Martin from school and when he did he always wore a white smock and a tartan apron, as if he'd just stepped out of his kitchen.



But when they asked Bruno what his father did he opened his mouth to tell them, then realized that he didn't know himself. All he could say was that his father was a man to watch and that the Fury had big things in mind for him. Oh, and that he had a fantastic uniform too.
'It's a very important job,' said Mother, hesitating for a moment. 'A job that needs a very special man to do it. You can understand that, can't you?'
'And we all have to go too?' asked Bruno.
'Of course we do,' said Mother. 'You wouldn't want Father to go to his new job on his own and be lonely there, would you?'
'I suppose not,' said Bruno.
'Father would miss us all terribly if we weren't with him,' she added.

Source: John Boyne, *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, 2006

Breakaway tasks 9

Remembering

1 What is the name of Bruno's sister?

2 What colour hair did Bruno's mother have?

Understanding

3 Why did the maid always keep her head bowed and never look up from the carpet?

4 Why were the rims of Bruno's mother's eyes more red than usual?

Applying

5 List three sentences that tell you what sort of boy Bruno is.

6 What do you know about the Second World War? How would knowing more help you to understand the text better?

Analysing

7 How did Bruno's father speak to the maid? Why do you think he spoke like this?

8 Who or what do you think 'the Fury' is?

9 List five details that tell you that the events here take place in the past. These could be words, ways of speaking or specific references.

Evaluating

10 In pairs, present a section of the dialogue in the extract between Bruno and his mother, but the part of Bruno must be done entirely in mime. This means that the facial expressions and gestures are vital for letting the audience know what Bruno is thinking and feeling.

Creating

11 Write a letter from Bruno's mother to her husband, telling him of how the chat with Bruno when she told him they'd have to leave Berlin.

The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas—the film

How does an author feel when their book is made into a film? Here, John Boyne shares his experiences and gives us an insight into the relationship between writer, filmmaker and the final motion picture.

INTERVIEW WITH JOHN BOYNE

How involved have you been in the process of adapting your novel for the screen?

The film adaptation actually began before the book was published, when the book was in proof form, in late 2005. There were two separate approaches actually, Mark Herman—who is the writer and director of the film—[who] had read a proofed copy. He got in touch through my agent and we met up and discussed the book; he said he'd really like to adapt it and he had various ideas for it. At the same time David Heyman—who's the producer—had also read it and he got in touch and I met him and he also had, of course, his own ideas. So you know, I was talking to both of them and then they talked to each other and came together on it and between them they bought the rights and started the process. Over the course of the last couple of years, while this has been happening in the pre-production and in the production of the film, they've been very generous to me I think



John Boyne with Mark Herman

as the author, to involve me all the way through. Mark sent me all the drafts as he wrote them and I would send back my notes and he would take some of my notes on board and use them.

Right from the start I felt he was approaching it correctly. He had the sense of the book—he had the story —he was adding some things, he was taking some things out which weren't going to be necessarily useful on screen. So when I read the first draft he wrote nervously. You know I got to the end of it and I was just incredibly relieved and very proud of it really, even though I hadn't written the screenplay. So it's been a very exciting journey I suppose it would be crazy to say it hasn't been exciting. Being on set in Budapest watching these scenes that I'd written take place, meeting the actors playing the characters and, of course, I've spent the last couple of years talking about these characters to audiences. So, to see somebody in costume delivering those lines has been surreal at times but incredibly exciting.

Film is a creative process that involves many contributors. How does this compare to working on a novel?

One of the major differences between the experiences of the novel and the film has been writing. A novel is a very solitary endeavour. I was at home in a room with a computer just writing it and even promoting it or talking about it—it's always just me. So, going onto the set and meeting all these different people who all have different roles, make-up or costumes or cinematography and each of them have read the book and each of them have designed their own particular skill based on their reading of the book was totally different and a totally unusual experience for me, and now as the film is being released, to go places and to talk about it with other people, with the director, with the producer where I'm so used to doing things alone. I suppose it's like the difference between a singer and being in a band. And I have to say it's so much more fun being in a band and not being responsible for everything.

Do you see the film as a moving image version of your novel, or do you view it as a separate entity?

I kind of think of it as just another translation. There are all these different languages and this is another language of cinema. It's obviously going to reach more people I suppose than some of the books have, but to me it's just another way of presenting the book. You know, of course, to the filmmakers you know the film is what they do but I'm a novelist so to me it's another way of bringing the book to people. But I think it's a very beautiful film you know; I think it's very moving even as a separate entity entirely. So I hope people who have both read the book and haven't read the book can approach it on its own terms and appreciate it for what it is.

Source: Film Education UK website, 2011

Breakaway tasks 10

Remembering

1 Who was the director of the film version of *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*?

2 Who was the producer of the film version of *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*?

Understanding

3 What is the 'proof form' of a book?

4 How did Boyne feel after reading the first draft of the screenplay? Why?

Applying

5 Boyne uses a simile ('I suppose it's like the difference between a singer and being in a band') to describe how it feels to be involved in filmmaking. Invent three other similes to describe how it feels.

Analysing

6 What does Boyne think is the difference between books and films?

7 Does Boyne think the film version of *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* is *his* film?

Evaluating

8 Based on this interview, list five words to describe John Boyne.

9 What else would you like to know about the process of turning a book into a film?

Creating

10 With a partner, present your answer to Question 9 as an interview for the class, or as a recorded interview.

11 Create an alternative cast list for the film of *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*. Choose which of your friends would be best for each role—give a one-sentence reason why. A list of characters can be found on Wikipedia.

Strands in action

Core tasks

Throughout this chapter you've been shown some of the difficulties of transforming a work into another medium or format. The best known of these transformations is turning a book into a film.

Your task is to compile some guidelines for someone who might be thinking of turning a book into a film. Divide your document into these sections:

1. List two rules for turning a book into a film. Follow the 'DO NOT …' or 'DO …' format.
2. List two examples of books that have successfully been turned into a film.
3. List two examples where turning a book into a film has been a disaster.
4. Write 200–300 words about one of the successes and why it was a success.
5. Write 200–300 words about one of the disasters and why it was a disaster.
6. List two great casting mistakes, when the wrong actor has been chosen to play a particular part.

Extra tasks

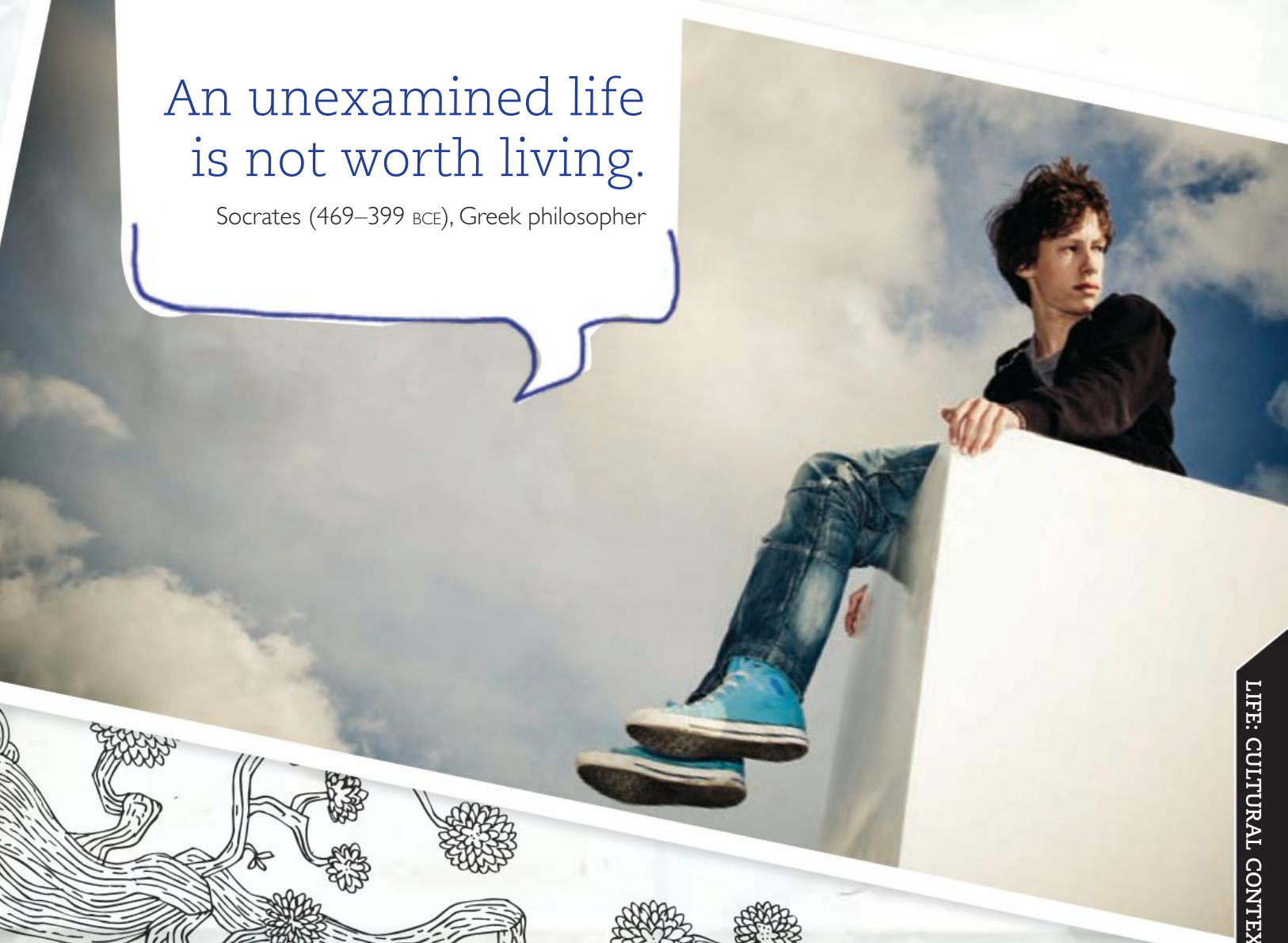
Complete three of these extra tasks.

1. In a group of four, turn a section from a book into a film/video. Each group member should view the other group members' work and evaluate the combination of techniques, design, form and style they have used.
2. Reverse the process. Turn a section of a well-known film into a book. Make the cover (front and back) and write the first and last page.
3. Take a book that hasn't been made into a film and:
   - **a** develop a cast list—who will play what part?
   - **b** list at least five sections of the book you would leave out, in order of the sections that you wouldn't mind losing first, and the ones that would really hurt last.
4. Run a formal debate on the topic of '[Book title] should never be made into a film' (where [book title] is a book that hasn't yet been made into a film). Make sure you raise the issue of literary value and what this means.



When preparing a debate, make notes to remind yourself to organise your argument clearly. You should use evidence, so make sure you use words like 'since', 'for example' and 'because'. You need to build up to a conclusion, so remember to use words like 'therefore', 'finally' and 'so'.

5. In a group of four, run a talkback radio show on the topic of 'Which is better, the book or the film of [book title]' (where [book title] is the name of a recent book that's been made into a film.
   - One person role-plays the talkback radio host, and the other three group members play the part of the various audience members ringing in to voice their opinions.
   - The host sits centre stage (at the front of the classroom) and introduces the show and the topic, then takes calls.
   - The group members who are playing the parts of the callers can take multiple roles, standing to one side and using different voices.
   - Each caller must choose their words carefully to make sure the audience and the radio host understands what they think of the book or film. Use colourful and vivid language. Use clever comparisons. Use sentences that begin with 'It's like …' and 'In other words, …'.
6. Take a story from a culture or a historical context that is very different from your own and rewrite it, setting it in your time and culture.



> An unexamined life is not worth living.
>
> Socrates (469–399 BCE), Greek philosopher

Life: Cultural contexts

Chapter overview

How often do you stop to think about how your life compares with those of other people from different times and cultures? Or how your life is changing as new technologies transform what you are able to do and how you are able to communicate? Or about all the intriguing and curious things that happen in the world around you? How often do you stop to think about what your life means?

1

Life is diverse



Asia–Pacific region

Chinese author Adeline Yen Mah said that, 'For all of us to get along during the next millennium we must understand each other's history, language and culture'. She makes an excellent point. What you understand as 'life' is often very different for people of different cultures. What you think is normal may well be very strange for someone else. As it becomes faster and easier to fly around the world, and the click of a button lets you communicate instantly with people thousands of kilometres away, the need to know and understand each other better is becoming increasingly important.

DID YOU KNOW...

In Australia, one person is born every two minutes. In China, one person is born every 1.7 seconds. In India, one person is born every 1.2 seconds.

In Australia, our closest neighbours come from the Asia–Pacific region. As we move further into the twenty-first century, our relationship with these neighbours is going to become more and more significant. By exploring the cultures of our Asia–Pacific neighbours, we can begin to strengthen the bonds between us.

Adeline Yen Mah

Adeline Yen Mah was born in Tianjin, China, in 1937. Adeline's family considered her to have brought bad luck, because her mother died giving birth to her. As a result, they treated her poorly, making her feel unwanted and unloved throughout her childhood. *Chinese Cinderella* is the story of Adeline's childhood growing up in a family where she struggled to be accepted. It is also the story of a childhood in a time of great social change in China.

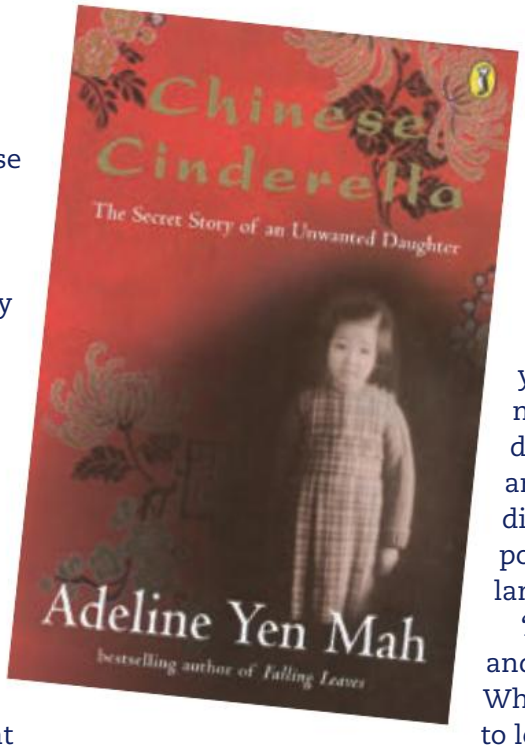
Chinese Cinderella begins in 1941, two years into the Second World War (1939–1945). Shortly after the Second World War ended in 1945, civil war erupted in China between the Nationalists and the Communists, under Mao Ze-dong. In 1949, when Adeline was twelve years old, the Chinese Communist Party won the civil war and established the People's Republic of China on mainland China.

In order to escape the strife of the civil war, Adeline's family moved to Hong Kong in 1948, which at the time was still a British colony. The story that is recounted in the following extract takes place the day after Adeline arrives in Hong Kong to join them. She is reading the newspaper to her grandfather, Ye Ye, but she is stumbling over many of the Chinese words. At her previous school, she was allowed to speak only English or French.


Mao Ze-dong

CHINESE CINDERELLA: THE SECRET STORY OF AN UNWANTED DAUGHTER

By Adeline Yen Mah



'You are forgetting your Chinese!' Ye Ye admonished. 'Go get the dictionary on the table by my bed. Look up those new words I just taught you and copy them into your notebook.'

My mind was full of gloomy thoughts and I suddenly burst out, 'I'm sick and tired of blindly copying Chinese characters over and over into my notebook like a robot! I hate studying Chinese! It's a waste of time. Besides, your dictionary is not a real dictionary. It's only a Chinese–Chinese dictionary, not a Chinese–English dictionary. I only want to learn English, not Chinese.'

'How can you say that?' Ye Ye exclaimed.

The hurt on his face made me cringe but I was unable to stop. 'My teacher Mother Marie says the only way to succeed in the second half of the twentieth century is to be fluent in English.'

'Hand me a piece of paper, get me a pen and come over here,' Ye Ye said softly. 'Let me show you something. Though you have a fine mind and a subtle intellect, the sentiments you express not only expose your ignorance, they also wound my heart. You forget that I know you only too well. Not only what you look like outside, but also how you are made inside. How can you say you hate the study of Chinese when you are Chinese yourself? Go look in the mirror if you have any doubts!

'You may be right in believing that if you study hard, one day you might become fluent in English. But you will still look Chinese and when people meet you, they'll see a Chinese girl no matter how well you speak English. You'll always be expected to know Chinese and if you don't, I'm afraid they will not respect you as much.

'Besides, China is a huge country with a vast population and an ancient culture. Though life has to be lived forward, it can only be understood backward. Reading Chinese history will enlighten you in ways no English writing can.

'I predict that in a hundred years from now, the world's many languages will be distilled down to three: Chinese, English and Spanish. Chinese will never disappear because China's population has a unified written language.

'Above all, there is the wisdom and magic of our language itself. When you read a Chinese book, try to look at the characters and think about them. I have met many who appear to know a good many Chinese words, but never actually grasp the true meaning of any of them.

'Let me give you the example of just one character 貝 (bei) to illustrate my point.

'In ancient times, cowrie shells were used as units of money and were exchanged for goods and services. In time, a hole was drilled in these shells and a row of shells was held together by a string. A string of shells was called 貝 (bei). Look at the character 貝 (bei) carefully. Does it not resemble a row of shells held together by a piece of string knotted at the end?...

'Because the word evolved from something that was "valuable" in ancient times, modern Chinese words containing the component 貝 (bei) are associated with finance or commerce in some way. Take the word 買; it means "to buy". 賣 means "to sell". Place the two words side by side 買賣 (buy-sell) and the term means business. Now, what is the essence of business if not buy-sell?'

Source: Adeline Yen Mah, *Chinese Cinderella: The Secret Story of an Unwanted Daughter*, Penguin, 1999

Breakaway tasks 1

Remembering

1 What does Adeline say that hurts Ye Ye?

2 In ancient times, what was used as a unit of money?

Understanding

3 List three arguments Ye Ye uses to convince Adeline that it is important for her to learn Chinese.

4 Why does Adeline say that Ye Ye's dictionary is not a real dictionary?

5 Explain what Ye Ye means when he says, 'Though life has to be lived forward, it can only be understood backward.'

Applying

6 a Conduct an internet search for ten more Chinese characters. These characters should be related to your own life in some way.

b Using the headings in the table below, copy each character and write the English word for it. Then find out the etymology (word origin and history) of the English word.

Character	English word	Etymology



Etymology is the study of the origin, history and changes of form in a word or words.

Analysing

7 What simile does Adeline use to show that she thinks her study of Chinese is a mindless activity?



A **simile** is a phrase that describes something by comparing two different things, and contains the word 'like' or 'as … as'. For example, 'Harry slithered up behind them like a snake in tall grass.' Here, the simile 'like a snake' describes Harry. It tells us that Harry is quiet and sneaky and a little bit dangerous.

8 When Adeline exclaims, 'I only want to learn English, not Chinese,' she is rejecting a part of her identity, a part of who she is. Why does Ye Ye think her cultural identity is so important?

Evaluating

9 Ye Ye predicts that in a hundred years, 'the world's many languages will be distilled down to three: Chinese, English and Spanish'.

a Research to find out which countries around the world have English, Chinese or Spanish as their primary language.

b On a map of the world, colour in these countries, using a different colour for each language.

c Using your general knowledge and your newly discovered information, evaluate Ye Ye's prediction. Do you think it is a valid prediction? Explain your answer.

Creating

10 Carefully re-read Ye Ye's explanation of the character 貝 (*bei*). Note that the character is a stylised illustration of the thing it represents, and the characters are combined to form new words.



a Choose one of the groups of words below or choose your own words and design your own symbolic representation of them.

- to throw/to catch/sport
- lyrics/melody/music
- thunder/lightning/storm
- aeroplane/passport/to travel

b Present your designs to the class, explaining your inspiration for their design and how they resemble the words.



Geoff Havel

Grave of the Roti Men is the story of a young Australian boy, Aaron, who goes to the small fishing village of Pepela on the island of Roti, Indonesia, to spend a month with his father. Once there, Aaron meets a local boy, Husni, who lives a life that is very different from Aaron's. As the two become friends, Aaron learns a lot about Husni's way of life.

DID YOU KNOW...

Indonesia is the world's fourth most populous country after China, India and the United States of America.



A traditional Indonesian fishing village

GRAVE OF THE ROTI MEN

By Geoff Havel

One morning Aaron found Husni sitting alone on the jetty throwing bits of shell into the water. He wasn't smiling.

'What's wrong?'

Husni stood up. 'Soon I must go fishing. My father died owing a man some money. Now I must work on the man's boat to pay back my family's debt.'

Aaron tried to follow Husni's reasoning. It didn't sound like a fair arrangement.

'But that was two years ago.'

'Yes, but I am old enough to work now,' Husni explained.



'That sucks!'

'It is business and it is the will of Allah.'

Aaron knew better than to argue. 'So show me the boat.'

Husni pointed to a battered fishing boat. Its sides curved low towards the water. Streaks of rust ran everywhere.

'That old thing!' said Aaron, shocked.

Husni shrugged. 'Many times this boat has sailed.'

'But it hasn't even got a motor.'

Again, Husni shrugged. 'No motor, no radio. That is Australia's rules.'

'What's the motor and the radio got to do with Australia?'

'If we fish in the MOU we must use traditional boats,' Husni answered.

'This is a traditional boat?'

Husni nodded.

Aaron frowned. 'What's the MOU?'

'It is the area where Australia says we can still fish.'

'So how do you find the islands?'

'The stars, a compass.'

Aaron couldn't believe what he was hearing.

Source: Geoff Havel, *Grave of the Roti Men*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 2003

Breakaway tasks 2

Remembering

1 What is Husni doing when Aaron finds him?

2 Describe the boat that Husni will be working on.

Understanding

3 Why is Husni unhappy?

4 List three things that shock Aaron from his conversation with Husni.

Applying

5 Find out what MOU stands for and write, in one sentence, what it is about.

6 Find a map that includes Australia and the Asia–Pacific region. Use your atlas to locate the following places: Roti, Pepela, Broome, Darwin and the Timor Sea. Mark them on your map.

Analysing

7 Why do you think the story might be called *Grave of the Roti Men*?

8 Why is Husni able to accept his fate so calmly?

9 What is Aaron learning about life from this conversation with Husni?

Evaluating

10 Use your research skills to find out about the effect of the MOU on fishermen from villages like Pepela, and its purpose in protecting the reefs near Australia's northern coast from overfishing.

11 Use your information to prepare a debate on the following topic: 'The disadvantages of the MOU between Australia and Indonesia outweigh the advantages.'

Creating

12 Design a board game in which the aim is to catch as many fish as possible. Your board game should use navigating by the stars and compass points to determine the direction a player moves and use weather conditions to provide unexpected twists and turns.

Writer's Toolbox

A **debate** is a formal verbal argument presented by two teams. There is an affirmative team, who argue in support of the topic, and a negative team, who argue against it. Each team has three speakers. They speak in the following order:

1 First speaker for the affirmative	2 First speaker for the negative
3 Second speaker for the affirmative	4 Second speaker for the negative
5 Third speaker for the affirmative	6 Third speaker for the negative

DID YOU KNOW...

PP Web Destination

When navigating by the stars, the most important constellation in the Southern Hemisphere is the Southern Cross, which is also known as 'Crixa' or 'Crux'. The most important navigational star in the Northern Hemisphere is called Polaris and is part of the constellation called Ursa Minor. For more information, check out the web destinations or try searching for 'star navigation' with your favourite search engine.



The Southern Cross (left) and Ursa Minor (right)

Craig Silvey

Craig Silvey grew up in Western Australia and *Jasper Jones* is his second novel. It is a 'coming of age' novel and tells the story of Charlie Bucktin, who lives in the small Australian mining town of Corrigan. The year is 1965 and Charlie is about to have the summer of his life! Dangerous, rebellious Jasper Jones wakes him up one night and draws him into his horrifying, devastating secret. Charlie falls in love for the first time and struggles to keep the peace with his fiery mother. But luckily for Charlie, he has his best friend Jeffrey Lu by his side.

Jeffrey Lu is Vietnamese and with the Vietnam War (1955–1975) in full swing, life in this small Aussie town is not so easy for him either. Jeffrey is obsessed with cricket and he and Charlie spend much of their time at the nets, or discussing life's bigger questions. In the following extract, Jeffrey and Charlie are discussing the merits of various superheroes. Jeffrey has just finished explaining why Superman is the greatest superhero, but Charlie disagrees. He's nominated Batman as the greatest.

JASPER JONES

By Craig Silvey



'Chuck, you're an *idiot*! That is the stupidest thing I have ever heard. Batman isn't even a superhero!'

It's my turn to stop.

'Shut your mouth!' I slap the ball out of his hands. It skips down the street.

'It's true! He's not a superhero!'

'Jeffrey, you're an idiot!'

'*You're* an idiot! Batman doesn't have any superpowers. He's not superhuman. He's not *super*. So therefore he can't be a *super*hero.'

'Jeffrey, *what* are you talking about? He's *Batman*.'

'What does that even *mean*? Batman is just an eccentric billionaire with insomnia! He's a vigilante, not a superhero. Because he doesn't have super*powers*. He just has a cool car and a handy belt.'

'Jeffrey, you are insane. For a start, I disagree fundamentally that you need superpowers to be a superhero. But I would argue that he is super anyway, given that super just means *greater than usual*. So in every aspect he *is* super human.'

'So Doug Walters is a superhero, because he possesses superhuman abilities?'

'No, Doug Walters is a maniac. Are you listening? Batman is the *ultimate human*. He is flawless, yet he is capable of being flawed. He's mastered the way of the ninja. He's one of the world's greatest scientists and detectives. His body is in peak condition. He is a man of unfathomable mental toughness. He *is* human perfection. He's a Renaissance man. And it's the fact that he is just a normal guy with a bum load of money and a burning vendetta that makes him the greatest. And because he can fight against and alongside people *with* superpowers. He is a superhero, and you, *sir*, are an idiot.'

'Charles, you are the very *essence* of stupidity. I'll say this slowly: *Batman does not have superpowers. He can't be a superhero.*'

I know I'm winning when he calls me Charles.

'He doesn't *need* superpowers. That's my *point*. You're an *idiot*. He can hold his own. He has an alter ego. He has a costume. He fights for Truth and Justice. He has arch enemies. And he does all this without any weird mutations. He's just really *determined*. That's what makes him interesting. The fact that with enough dedication and desire, we could all be Batman. Bat*men*. Bat*people*. And that's what makes him the best.'

Jeffrey closes his eyes and puffs his cheeks.

'You know I'm right, Jeffrey. It's just like Lex Luthor doesn't need superpowers to be a supervillain. It's called *con*text. Look it up. It's a goddamned comic. I win. You're wrong. Doug Walters is a hero. Muhammad Ali is a hero. Batman is a *super*hero. Simple. And the thing that makes him the *best* superhero is exactly your stupid, ignorant assertion: that he's just a guy. He is fallible. And unlike Superman, he requires courage.'

Source: Craig Silvey, *Jasper Jones*, Allen & Unwin, 2009



DID YOU KNOW...

The term 'Renaissance man' grew out of the period in history known as the Renaissance. It is used to describe someone who is very knowledgeable and talented in many areas. Leonardo Da Vinci is a perfect example.

Breakaway tasks 3

Remembering

1 According to Charlie, what does 'super' mean?

2 How does Charlie know that he is winning the argument?

Understanding

3 What does Charlie see as the key difference between Superman and Batman?

4 What might Jeffrey be thinking when he 'closes his eyes and puffs his cheeks'?

5 With a partner, use the dialogue in the extract to create a mini-performance. Try to capture the character of each boy and the nature of their friendship in your performance. Present your performance to the class.

6 The boys use many interesting and useful words, such as 'vigilante', 'eccentric', 'insomnia', 'unfathomable', 'vendetta', 'assertion' and 'fallible'. Look these words up in a dictionary to learn their meaning.

Applying

7 Write a short piece (no more than 150 words), using each of the words in Question 6.

8 What was the last friendly debate you had with a friend? Describe your friend's point of view and your own.

Analysing

9 It is evident from their conversation that Charlie and Jeffrey are very good friends. What sorts of things do they say to each other that give this impression?

10 What is the effect of the italics that have been used throughout the extract?

11 Charlie tells Jeffrey, 'It's called *con*text.' There are many contextual references used in the extract that tell us a lot about the place (Australia) and the time (1965). Use your research skills to find out who Doug Walters and Muhammad Ali are. Explain why they would be heroes in the boys' eyes.



Context refers to the circumstances in which an event occurs. The context of a novel refers to the time and place in which the story occurs.

12 a The boys argue about the word 'super'. Which definition would you agree with?

b Look up the word origin of 'super' to find out which boy's definition is more likely to be correct. Why do you think the meaning of words such as this can be debated?

13 At the end of the extract, Charlie refers to Superman and a quality that he lacks. Based on this paragraph, what do you predict Charlie will argue next about what makes someone a superhero?

Evaluating

14 Copy the table below into your notebook.

Batman is the greatest superhero.	
Arguments for (Charlie)	Arguments against (Jeffrey)

List Charlie's and Jeffrey's arguments in the appropriate columns. Evaluate the arguments of each boy. Which argument do you think is the most convincing and why?

Creating

15 Who is your favourite, all-time superhero? Who do you think is the greatest of them all? Make your selection and then construct an argument to convince your peers that your choice deserves the title of the greatest superhero of all. Make a list of five arguments in support of your choice. Use each argument as the topic sentence of a paragraph. Write your argumentative essay.



A **paragraph** is a collection of sentences that are logically arranged to develop and explain a central idea. The central idea is usually contained in a single sentence called the 'topic sentence'.

When you are constructing an argument, you should state your argument clearly in your topic sentence. The rest of the paragraph should offer further detail about your argument, explaining it clearly and offering evidence to support it.

Strands in action

Podcasting life

You have started to explore the diversity of life in places close to Australia through examining some different texts, but you can look even closer to home to see examples of various life experiences. Look around at your classmates; everyone's life is different.

Core task

Interview one of your classmates to find out what makes their life unique.

a By drawing names out of a hat, organise yourselves into partners.

b Spend ten minutes in conversation with your partner. Take five minutes each to tell the other person as much general information about your life as you can.

c Working separately, write a list of ten questions about the things that interest you most about your partner's life.

d Interview your partner and record it as a podcast.



Effective interview questions are **open-ended**, which means they require more than a one-word answer. If you don't get enough interesting information from your interviewee, prompt them for further detail by asking questions like the following:

- What did you mean by that?
- How did that make you feel?
- What happened next?
- Can you tell me more about that?

Extra tasks

1 As a class, listen to the podcasts you created from the Core task. Consider what you have heard and write a one-sentence statement about the diversity of life in your classroom. Combine your statement with an image to create a poster for display in your classroom.

2 The texts you have read in this module feature characters from China, Indonesia, Australia and Vietnam, and span the years 1941 to the early 2000s.

a Construct a timeline that begins in 1941 and ends in 2003. For each country, include five major events from this time period.

b Write the events for each country in a different colour.

c Write a paragraph underneath the timeline that summarises what has been happening in the Asia–Pacific region over the last seventy years.

3 Host a lunch banquet to which every student brings a dish to share. Every dish should represent a different culture. Present your dish to the class, explaining what it is and where it comes from, before you begin eating.

4 What have you learnt from this exploration of the diversity of life? Write a one-page reflection.

5 Consider all the characters you met while you were reading the extracts in the previous pages: Adeline, Aaron, Husni, Jeffrey and Charlie. Which character would you most like to add as a friend on Facebook® and why? Write them an email explaining why you think you would enjoy connecting with them on Facebook.

6 Working with a partner, brainstorm ways that you could promote further understanding and appreciation among young people about the diversity of other people's lives, using music, sport and art. Choose your best three ideas and present them to the class.

2

Life is curious

Have you ever heard the saying that truth is stranger than fiction? It is easy to think that the weird and the wonderful belong in novels and films, but if you keep your eyes and ears open, you'll discover some weird and wonderful stuff going on in real life.

The internet is a treasure trove of the truly bizarre and amazing. And check out your daily newspapers! They're full of snippets of information from around the globe that you would never have dreamed possible.



Out of the ordinary

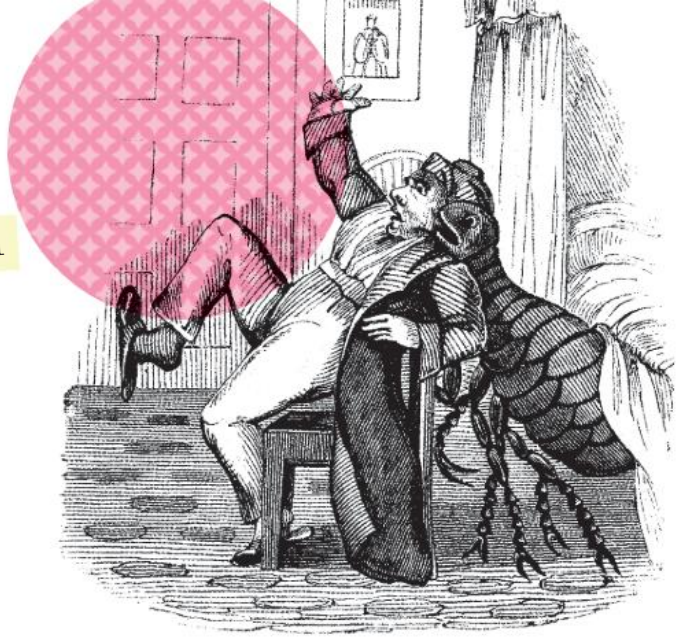
The era between 1837 and 1901 is often referred to as the Victorian era. It was a time of great change and progress, particularly in the area of science. As a result, there was a great interest among the population for all things scientific. The natural world was considered a very unusual place indeed and all sorts of curious animals—and unusual examples of human life—were put on display for people to see. Freak shows were particularly popular during the Victorian period, when people from all classes flocked to gawp at natural curiosities.

The Victorian era was the age of P. T. Barnum, of Barnum and Bailey Circus fame, and of Frank Buckland. Frank Buckland was a surgeon and a naturalist who was known to be one of the most eccentric men of the Victorian era. He was famous for keeping all kinds of exotic pets, including meerkats, otters, scorpions and monkeys, and for eating anything except earwigs, which he claimed were horribly bitter. If there was something mysterious or odd going on, Frank Buckland was sure to find out about it and, lucky for us, he was a passionate writer as well.

In the extract opposite, Frank Buckland describes his encounter with a man who created his very own flea circus.

DID YOU KNOW...

The Victorian era was named after Queen Victoria, who reigned in England from 1837 to 1901. Her reign was the longest in British history.



FLEAS TO MEET YOU

By Frank Buckland

In the month of July 1856, I discovered an individual who for twenty years had devoted his life to the intellectual training of fleas ...

A flea cannot be taken up from its wild state and made to work at once; like a colt or puppy, it must undergo a course of training and discipline. The training is brought about as follows. The flea is taken up gently, and a noose of the finest 'glass-silk' is passed round his neck, and there tied with a peculiar knot. The flea, unfortunately for himself, has a groove or depression between his neck and his body, which serves as a capital hold-fast for the bit of silk; it can slip neither up nor down, and he cannot push it off with his legs; he is a prisoner, and is thus tied to his work. This delicate operation is generally performed under a magnifying glass; but, after a time, the eye gets so accustomed to the work that the glass is not always used. In no way is the future performing flea mutilated; his kangaroolike springing legs are not cut off, nor are his lobsterlike walking legs interfered with—a flea must be in perfect health to perform well.

Every night each flea is taken out of his trappings, fed, and placed in a private compartment for the night; before they go to bed, they have their supper, and in the morning also their breakfasts; they take their meals from the hands of their owner—sometimes he has nearly all the fleas on the backs of his hands at the same moment, biting and sucking away simultaneously. For more than twenty years he has thus daily fed his fleas without any detriment to his health; the quantity of blood each flea takes away being imperceptibly small—one drop of blood, he considers, would feed a flea for many weeks; but it is the itching sensation caused by the flea cutting the skin which is unpleasant. This feeling of irritation he felt painfully when he first began to submit himself to the tender mercies of his little performers; now he is so hardened that he feels them not at all, whether biting or sucking. When, however, there are many fleas on his hands at the same time, he suffers from a sensation of great irritation all over his body, which passes away when the supper is over. He has remarked that his fleas will not feed if his hand be not kept perfectly motionless; the act, therefore, of feeding and harnessing his company of performers is troublesome, and he is obliged to devote two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening to it.

Source: Frank Buckland, *Curious Men*, 1857



A harnessed flea

DID YOU KNOW...

Buckland's flea circus *may* have been real, but many flea circuses were tricks. People were conned into staring at tiny moving attractions supposedly being operated by fleas when in reality they were being moved by electrical or mechanical means such as magnets.

Breakaway tasks 4

Remembering

1 How many hours a day must the man devote to feeding his fleas?

2 What task is generally performed under a magnifying glass?



Use **quotation marks** to enclose a phrase or sentence you have copied from a text to indicate that it is a quote, and to distinguish it from your own words.

Understanding

3 The following words come from the extract and might be new to you: accustomed, depression, capital, mutilated, trappings, detriment and obliged. Consider each word in context to guess what you think it might mean. Then copy the table and complete it for each word.

- In the second column, quote the phrase or sentence from the extract that contains the new word.
- In the third column, explain the thinking process that helped you to work out the definition.
- In the last column, write your definition.

The first one has been done for you.

New word	New word in context	Clues	Your definition
Accustomed	'after a time, the eye gets so accustomed to the work that the glass is not always used'	The paragraph is about tying a noose around the fleas to train them. As they are so small, a magnifying glass is used. After a while, though, something happens to the eyes and the magnifying glass doesn't have to be used any more.	Accustomed: to get used to something

Applying

4 How hard do you think it would be to tie a piece of silk thread around the neck of a flea? Using an ordinary dressmaking pin and some cotton thread, see if you can tie a knot around your pin, just under the head. Race your classmates to see who can do it the fastest. When you have mastered it, race each other to see how many times you can harness your pin in a minute.

Analysing

5 Frank Buckland was writing in the Victorian era—over 100 years ago. Language use changes over time, which is why some of Buckland's sentences might sound a bit strange. Choose three sentences or phrases from the extract that sound a bit odd to you and write them down. Next to each one, explain why it sounds strange and then rewrite it in language that is common today. Share your list with a partner.

Evaluating

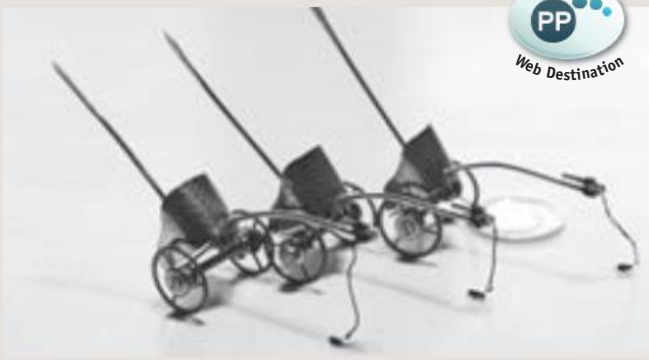
6 Do you think it's possible to train a flea to be a circus performer? Justify your answer.

7 a How effective is Buckland's text in persuading you that there really is such a thing as a flea circus? Look at the 'Did you know' on the next page, and go to the web destinations. Do you think the artist, Maria Cardoso, was tricking her audience, or do you think she really used fleas? Of these two texts, which is the more persuasive to you? Why?

b So, are flea circuses real or not? Conduct research to establish the truth about flea circuses. Then re-read the Buckland extract. Do you think that Buckland meant to document a real-life situation or is this extract a parody (an imitation or send-up) of a piece of information writing? In your answer, include the features of informative writing that you identify in the text.

DID YOU KNOW...

Artist Maria Cardoso spent five years researching and training fleas before creating the Cardoso Flea Circus. Her circus has been exhibited as a work of contemporary art in many art galleries around the world, including the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney. Go to the web destinations to find a video of Cardoso's performing fleas.



Creating

8 Roll up! Roll up! Imagine that you are the ringmaster of the world's greatest flea circus. It is your job to give the opening spiel, a spiel that will build excitement in the audience, introduce the performers and get the show started. Write your script and then perform it for the class.

Writer's TOOLBOX

A **spiel** is a short, informal speech that uses smooth, slick language, usually to persuade or sell something.

Your spiel should:

- welcome your audience to the show
- let them know how amazing they will find it
- tell them what sorts of acts they will see
- introduce the performers.

Circus performers usually have clever or exciting stage names that give the audience an indication of what their act might be. Keep in mind that your performers are fleas when you make up creative and exciting stage names for them. For example: Superflea! Able to leap tall buildings in a single bound! Faster than a speeding dog!

A lion called Christian



Have you ever dreamt of owning an exotic pet—a grizzly bear, a giraffe, or a monkey perhaps? It might seem impossible to us now, not to mention unfair to the animal, but before the Endangered Species Act was passed in the United Kingdom in 1973, ordinary people could buy wild and exotic pets from Harrods, a famous department store in London. And that's exactly what two young Australian men did in 1969. Anthony 'Ace' Bourke and John Rendall bought a lion cub, which they called Christian.

Ace and John raised Christian in a basement apartment and furniture shop in Chelsea, London, until he was about one year old. By this time he was far too big to keep in the suburbs of London. They were lucky enough to be able to fly him to Kenya where he was rehabilitated into the wild by George Adamson, a man passionate about lions.

In 1971, Ace and John wrote a book about their experiences of raising a lion cub in London—and that might have been the end of the story, if it were not for YouTube. Late in 2007, Ace and John were told that a clip featuring their reunion with Christian, one year after he had been let loose in the wild, had been posted on YouTube. By 2008, the clip had received millions of hits and a whole new generation was learning about this curious and remarkable story.

DID YOU KNOW...

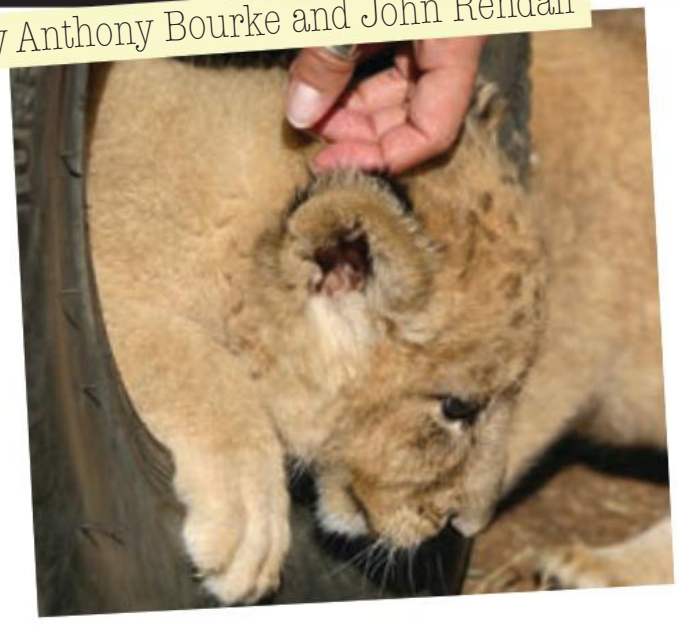
Go to the web destinations to find the clip of Christian the lion.

Web Destination

The interest generated from the clip on YouTube prompted Ace and John to update their original book, and a new version was published in 2009. The following extract (from the original version) describes their daily life with the young, energetic and mischievous lion cub. 'Sophistocat' was the name of the furniture shop where Ace, John and Christian lived.

A LION CALLED CHRISTIAN

By Anthony Bourke and John Rendall



Two main meals, given to him late in the morning and in the early evening, consisted of three-quarters of a pound of raw meat, a raw egg and a spoonful of bone meal to prevent a calcium deficiency. We varied the meat and occasionally gave him an unskinned rabbit. Christian always carried the skin around Sophistocat for several days until it finally disintegrated or the smell became too overwhelming. He enjoyed having huge bones to play with and gnaw, and as there was no competition from other animals, we could safely handle his food as he ate.

We were to find that people's preconceptions about lions were often wrong. For example, it is a fallacy that it is dangerous to give an animal such as a lion raw meat because it supposedly will turn them into 'man-eaters'. We rather enviously eyed the delicious fillet steaks that a French chef sometimes brought in for Christian. The chef loved lions and of course had access to plentiful supplies of meat. The quantity of meat Christian required increased weekly, and he became so expensive to feed that we regretted not being able to turn him into a vegetarian!

He was inexhaustibly playful and had a variety of toys and rubber balls scattered all over the shop and the basement. Wastepaper baskets were a great favourite, first to be worn on the head, totally obscuring his sight, and then to be ripped apart. We had to buy him hardy toys, for the average life of a normal teddy bear was about two minutes. He demanded our constant attention and it was impossible to ignore him. If one of us was reading a newspaper, or on the telephone, Christian would immediately climb up on his lap. Sophistocat was a jungle of furniture, and he incessantly stalked us through it, becoming expert at creating games. He knew we would not allow him to jump on us, but he would cleverly manoeuvre himself into position behind a piece of furniture, so that it appeared as if we were in fact temptingly hiding from him. Then with a clear conscience he would charge and leap at us. We developed a habit of glancing nervously over our shoulders. If we caught him frozen in a crouched position with intent mischievous eyes, he would nonchalantly pretend to clean his paws, rather irritated that his fun had been spoiled, for the game was to stalk and catch us unawares. Very quickly we could usually predict what his intentions were from the expression in his eyes. He was always entertaining and amusing, but very exhausting and demanding.

Source: Anthony Bourke and John Rendall, *A Lion Called Christian*, Random House, 1971



Non-fiction writing commonly contains a mix of facts, observations, thoughts, feelings and anecdotes (short, usually amusing stories about particular incidents). For example:
Fact: '... it is a fallacy that it is dangerous to give an animal such as a lion raw meat because it supposedly will turn them into "man-eaters".'
Observation: 'We had to buy him hardy toys, for the average life of a normal teddy bear was about two minutes.'
Thoughts and feelings: 'He was always entertaining and amusing, but very exhausting and demanding.'
Anecdote: 'Christian always carried the skin around Sophistocat for several days until it finally disintegrated or the smell became too overwhelming.'

Breakaway tasks 5

Remembering

1 What did Ace and John regret and why?

2 Christian had two uses for wastepaper baskets. What were they?

Understanding

3 When was Christian able to charge and leap at Ace and John with a clear conscience?

4 List five adjectives that you think best describe Christian.

Applying

5 a In this extract, Ace and John say 'We were to find that people's preconceptions about lions were often wrong.' What preconceptions do you and your classmates have about lions?

b Could you keep a lion in your own house?

Analysing

6 What is apt about the name of the furniture shop where Christian was raised?

7 This extract contains many adverbs. List ten adverbs you can find in the extract and, next to the adverb, write which word they are adding extra detail to. For example:

Safely: adds extra detail to the verb 'handle'



Adverbs are words that add extra information to verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. They give us more detail.
For example:

She talked *loudly*.

'Loudly' is an adverb and tells us the volume of her talking. It gives us extra information about the verb 'talked'. If 'very' is added to the sentence, there will now be two adverbs in the sentence. For example:

She talked *very loudly*.

'Very' gives extra detail about the adverb 'loudly'.
Hint: Adverbs often end in 'ly'.

8 What is implied about natural lion behaviour in the following: '... as there was no competition from other animals, we could safely handle his food as he ate'?

Evaluating

9 Using the information from the extract as a starting point, try to imagine the reality of keeping a lion cub as a pet. Copy and complete the table below, listing as many advantages and disadvantages of owning a lion cub as you can think of.

Owning a lion cub

Advantages	Disadvantages

10 Consider your list of advantages and disadvantages and make a decision about whether or not you would have bought Christian. Explain your answer.

11 Siegfried and Roy were two entertainers who had a white tiger as part of their Las Vegas act. Conduct some research into the show. Write a letter to the Las Vegas Mirage Hotel arguing whether or not they should have allowed the tiger, Montecore, to be part of the act.

Creating

12 Imagine that you have bought a wild and exotic animal as a pet. It might be a gorilla, a hippopotamus, a wallaby—any animal you like. Write an extract about what life is like with your exotic pet. Include at least three paragraphs covering:

- your pet's eating habits
- common misconceptions about your animal
- how you keep your pet entertained.

13 Imagine you have brought your wild and exotic pet home only to discover that you must get a permit from your local council to be able to keep it. Write a letter to the council, persuading them to allow you to keep your pet. Make sure you tell them all the plans you have made to feed your pet, and to entertain and generally care for it. This will be a formal letter, so remember to set it out properly:



Odd Spot

Odd Spot is a tiny story that can be found on the front page of Melbourne's *The Age* newspaper. In about fifty words, the Odd Spot tells a funny, ironic or amazing, but always odd, story from somewhere around the world.

Odd Spot began in *The Age* on Monday, 22 February 1974. It reported that Clarence Davis, of Louisiana, had the richest rat in town. He had noticed a $10 bill sticking up through a crack in the floor and found $40 from his cashbox lining a rat's nest. His comment: 'The smart rat never did touch a cheque.'



Writer's TOOLBOX

'Ironic' is the adjectival form of **irony**. Irony occurs when you find something different from what you expect or when you use words to suggest the opposite of what they normally mean. For example:

Teacher fails spelling test.

This is ironic because teachers teach spelling and it is unlikely that they would fail a spelling test.

Here are some samples of Odd Spots from the last ten years.

NEWSPAPER

15 August 2009
Police in Newcastle, England, are seeking a cruel thief with a sense of humour. A man returned home to find he had lost his entire CD collection in a break-in but the crook had thoughtfully left behind 'There Is Nothing Left to Lose' by the Foo Fighters.

3 August 2009
New Zealanders David Farrier and Christie Douglas will set off for the Gobi to try to make a documentary on the fabled acid-spitting, lightning-throwing Mongolian death worm. Legend says the 1.5-metre worm kills people by spitting concentrated acid or shooting lightning from its rectum.

25 July 2009
A high school principal who admitted jumping on top of a pile of students during a cafeteria food fight has been fired. The Upshur County Board of Education in West Virginia voted to oust Brenda Wells, who said she jumped on the 'dogpile' to relieve the tension.

18 July 2009
A motorcyclist received a caution from police in China's Shandong province for riding (with two adult passengers) with no arms. Liu, 27, lost his arms aged 7 but learned to ride after joining a circus at the age of 10. He admitted he had been riding without a licence for 10 years.

17 July 2009
An American man swiped his debit card to buy cigarettes and was charged $23 148 855 308 184 500—more than 23 quadrillion. To make matters worse for Josh Muszynski of New Hampshire, the Bank of America then tried to charge him a $15 overdraft fee.



6 August 2002
Security staff at a US airport confiscated a 5 cm plastic rifle from a GI Joe doll a woman had in her carry-on luggage. The woman was told that if she wanted GI Joe to keep his rifle, she would have to check in again and put the toy in her suitcase so it could go in the aircraft's hold.

11 December 2001
Polish bakers have used three tonnes of ingredients, including 6000 eggs, to build what they hope is the world's largest gingerbread house. The three-and-half-metre-high house was built with 4000 gingerbread loaves shaped like bricks and cemented with icing.

24 October 2001
A Dutch vet was fined after he decided to show a cow was passing flatulent gas by igniting the gas. The cow became a 'fourlegged flamethrower', destroying the farm. The cow was unharmed.

22 October 2001
The Earl of Devon has to keep his 157-year-old tortoise, Timothy, closely confined when ladies with painted toenails visit his English estate. 'He has been known to attack their toes, mistaking them for strawberries,' the earl explained.



18 September 2001
Auckland police rushed to a city phone box after a call from a trapped man. On the way they got another call as the man panicked. They found he had been pulling the door instead of pushing it.

22 August 2001
Fifty pastry chefs in the Italian town of Oretano showed their love for Ferrari by making a racing car from 40 000 cream pies decorated with almond paste, custard cream and chocolate. It was a five-metre-long version of Michael Schumacher's formula one car.

15 August 2001
A Malaysian coconut grower who hired a trained macaque to pick his coconuts was killed when the monkey dropped one on his head from a tree. Mamat Kundur, 59, was killed instantly in the accident at his coconut plantation in Kelantan state.



23 June 2001
A 70-year-old man was saved by a vacuum cleaner after choking on a mochi, a traditional Japanese rice cake. When his daughter realised he was choking, she used the vacuum to dislodge the cake.

26 March 1998
A London fish shop closed for 11 hours after the owner found a 2.8 metre, 68 kilo conger eel alive and angry in a box of fish he was unpacking.

Source: 'Odd Spot', *The Age*

Breakaway tasks 6

Remembering

1 According to legend, how does the Mongolian death worm kill people?

2 How high was the gingerbread house made by Polish bakers?

3 How did the man get trapped in the phone box?

Understanding

4 What did Liu learn after joining the circus?

5 Why was the thief who robbed a home in Newcastle said to be cruel, with a sense of humour?

Applying

6 The editor of *The Age* has asked you to create an illustration to go with the Odd Spot. Choose your favourite Odd Spot from the examples given and illustrate it.

Analysing

7 Match the headlines below with the appropriate Odd Spot.

- Cigarette smoking damages more than just your health!
- Holy Cow!
- Barbie and Ken declared lethal weapons.
- Pastry chefs start their engines.
- Coco-loco!

Evaluating

8 Read through the Odd Spots and nominate one choice for each of the following categories:

- the funniest
- the oddest
- the most ironic
- the most ridiculous.

9 Working in small groups, discuss your nomination for each category. Negotiate with the members of your group until you all agree on your selections for each of the four categories. Present and justify your choices to the class.

Creating

10 The Odd Spot is a great place to find creative and quirky ideas for short stories, poems, plays, drawings and many other creative activities. Choose one of the Odd Spots from the examples given that sparks your creative fires and then use it as the basis for creating a comic strip, a short story, a script for a short skit or a humorous poem.

11 Use your imagination to write an Odd Spot of your own. Remember, you need to tell the story in about fifty words.

DID YOU KNOW...

Alice from *Alice in Wonderland* exclaimed, 'Curiouser and curiouser!' as she began to grow to a height of more than nine feet (2.7 metres)!



Strands in action

Core task

As you have discovered, you can find all sorts of curious facts on the internet, in books and in the newspaper. Use your research skills to find some truly curious facts. Then, using suitable software, create an interactive game of True or False. You will need to use your imagination to make up some curious, but false, facts to add to your true facts and to challenge the players. Swap and play each other's games.

Extra tasks

1 This activity is for the entire class. Organise yourselves into pairs and sit facing one another, in a circle. You will end up with an inner and an outer circle. When your teacher tells you to begin, you will have thirty seconds (and not a second more!) to tell each other something curious about your life or some curious fact. Make a note of what you have learnt. At the end of the thirty seconds, students sitting in the outer circle will move around one place so that everyone has a new partner. You will then have another thirty seconds to tell each other something curious. The catch is that you can't say the same curious thing twice!

If you cannot think of anything curious to share, you are out of the game. Your partner stays in, however. This might mean that some players have a 'bye' in some rounds. Keep playing until there is only one pair left.

2 Mathematics is often used to explain all sorts of phenomena. Use the following equation to determine just how curious something is:

A + M ÷ N = Curiosity Rating

A is amazement (on a scale of 1 to 10)

M is minutes you spent talking about it

N is the number of classmates who had heard your curious item before.

Use your equation to determine the curiosity rating for a series of curious facts, stories, objects and so on. Try to develop your own equation!

3 Using just one piece of equipment, invent the most curious sport ever. Write a clear list of instructions and rules explaining how to play your sport. Combine your instructions with diagrams, where necessary, to make them easy to follow. Teach your curious sport to your friends and try it out.

4 More is known about our solar system than about the depths of the oceans and the life that exists in them.

Imagine what creatures may be lurking in the deep, dark depths of our oceans. Imagine the most curious sea creature you can and draw it. Combine your drawing with a descriptive paragraph that captures, in words, just how curious your sea creature is. You might like to search the internet for some pictures of real sea creatures first to spark your imagination. Some of them may be more curious than you can imagine!

5 Use your research skills to find out about P. T. Barnum and the Feejee Mermaid. Write a report, listing as many factors as you can think of that helped Barnum to get away with it.

Feejee Mermaid



6 When people experiment with new forms of music, the results can be very curious indeed. Working either on your own or in a small group, experiment with instruments and styles to devise a new kind of music. For example, you might like to perform rap in a choir, or use a flute to accompany rock music, create an orchestra using just your voices as instruments, sing the words of one song to the tune of another and so on.

Perform your piece for the class. You might like to work with others who have completed this task and stage 'The Most Curious Music Concert Ever'.

3

Life is changing



When your parents were your age, they didn't have computers and MP3 players, mobile phones or pay TV on demand; and the internet, which has revolutionised the way we live, was just being developed! You have been lucky enough to be born into this world of technology, but how much do you really know about how it all works?

If you want to find something out you probably google it or look it up on Wikipedia®, or you might send a Tweet about it, or post a note on Facebook to see if one of your friends can tell you. But do you know how Google actually works? Do you know where Wikipedia comes from?

Knowing more about these wonderful tools can help you to use them more effectively and also ensure you avoid the pitfalls associated with using them blindly.

DID YOU KNOW...

Go to the web destinations to view a video about the progress of technology and how it is changing our lives.

Web Destination

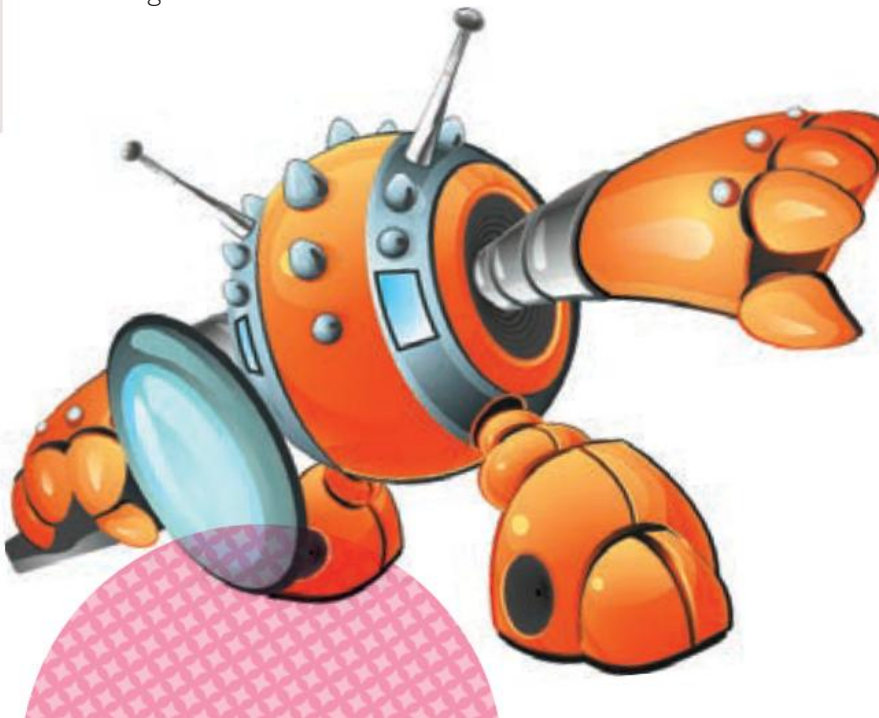
Google

Many students make the common mistake of listing Google in their bibliographies. It might seem like Google provided all the answers but in actual fact, all Google does is lead you to them. Google is not a website; Google is a search engine.

To understand what a search engine is, first you need to understand what the World Wide Web is.

The World Wide Web consists of billions of internet sites that are interconnected through hypertext or links. When you talk about hypertext, or links, you are talking about the places on a website that you click on to be taken to another page. With billions and billions of websites out there on the World Wide Web, how can you possibly find what you are looking for? That's where a search engine comes in handy.

A search engine, such as Google, is a software program. It works by sending out 'spiders' or 'Googlebots' that are constantly crawling all over the billions of pages of the World Wide Web, searching for new information.



Important websites, or websites that change frequently, are crawled over every few minutes, while smaller, less important or less frequently updated sites are scanned every few weeks. The Googlebots store the information they find in their own special database. From this database, an index, just like the index that you find at the end of a book, is created. In this way, Google creates its own version of the World Wide Web for people to search. So when you type your search words into Google, you are actually searching Google's own index and database to try to find the information you are looking for.

Google ranks the sites in its database using an algorithm known as PageRank™.

DID YOU KNOW...

An algorithm is a step-by-step procedure for solving complicated problems that can then be translated into a computer program.

PageRank tries to give you the most useful and relevant site first, based on the words you used for your search. Google is so popular because it has such a good reputation for providing relevant and detailed results, but it isn't the only search engine available. There are hundreds more, such as Yahoo!, AltaVista and Bing™. When you are researching, it's worthwhile trying some of the other search engines too; they might have sent their spiders to websites that Google didn't, giving you access to even more information.

The following extract is taken from an online article written by Matt Cutts, a software engineer for Google.

DID YOU KNOW...

Google's PageRank algorithm is top secret. If companies knew the secret formula, they would be able to create their websites in such a way that theirs came up first when you did a search. This would mean a lot more business for these companies, but not necessarily the most useful search results for you.

HOW DOES GOOGLE COLLECT AND RANK RESULTS?

By Matt Cutts

ONLINE ARTICLE

Crawling and indexing

A lot of things have to happen before you see a web page containing your Google search results. Our first step is to crawl and index the billions of pages of the World Wide Web ...

Our crawl has produced an enormous set of documents, but these documents aren't searchable yet. Without an index, if you wanted to find a term like *civil war*, our servers would have to read the complete text of every document every time you searched.

DID YOU KNOW...

A civil war is a war in which the opposing sides both come from the same country.

So the next step is to build an index. To do this, we 'invert' the crawl data; instead of having to scan for each word in every document, we juggle our data in order to list every document that contains a certain word. For example, the word 'civil' might occur in documents 3, 8, 22, 56, 68, and 92, while the word 'war' might occur in documents 2, 8, 15, 22, 68, and 77.

Once we've built our index, we're ready to rank documents and determine how relevant they are. Suppose someone comes to Google and types in 'civil war'. In order to present and score the results, we need to do two things:

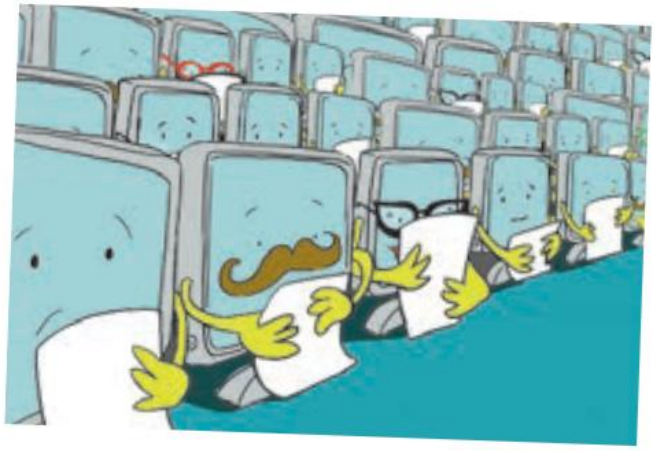
1 Find the set of pages that contain the user's query somewhere.

2 Rank the matching pages in order of relevance.

... How do we find pages that contain the user's query? Let's return to our civil war example. The word 'civil' was in documents 3, 8, 22, 56, 68, and 92; the word 'war' was in documents 2, 8, 15, 22, 68, and 77. Let's write the documents across the page and look for those with both words.

civil	3	8		22	56	68	92
war	2	8	15	22		68	77
both words		8		22		68	

Arranging the documents this way makes clear that the words 'civil' and 'war' appear in three documents (8, 22 and 68). The list of documents that contain a word is called a 'posting list', and looking for documents with both words is called 'intersecting a posting list'.



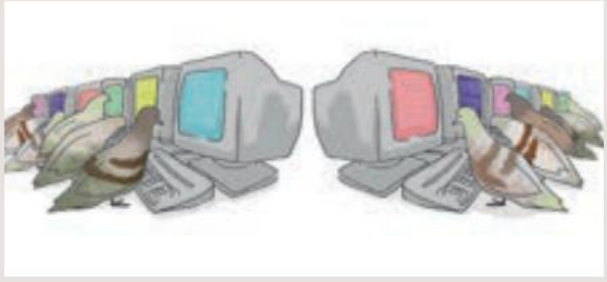
Ranking results

Now we have the set of pages that contain the user's query somewhere, and it's time to rank them in terms of relevance. Google uses many factors in ranking. Of these, the PageRank algorithm might be the best known. PageRank evaluates two things: how many links there are to a web page from other pages, and the quality of the linking sites. With PageRank, five or six high-quality links from websites such as www.cnn.com and the www.nytimes.com would be valued much more highly than twice as many links from less reputable or established sites.

DID YOU KNOW...

Web Destination

On April Fool's Day in 2002, Google posted a spoof of their PageRank algorithm called 'PigeonRank'. They gave a detailed explanation of how pigeons are used to rank the importance of web pages for Google. Go to the web destinations to read all about it.



But we use many factors besides PageRank. For example, if a document contains the words 'civil' and 'war' right next to each other, it might be more relevant than a document discussing the Revolutionary War that happens to use the word 'civil' somewhere else on the page. Also, if a page includes the words 'civil war' in its title, that's a hint that it might be more relevant than a document with the title '19th Century American Clothing'. In the same way, if the words 'civil war' appear several times throughout the page, that page is more likely to be about the civil war than if the words only appear once.

As a rule, Google tries to find pages that are both reputable and relevant. If two pages appear to have roughly the same amount of information matching a given query, we'll usually try to pick the page that more trusted websites have chosen to link to. Still, we'll often elevate a page with fewer links or lower PageRank if other signals suggest that the page is more relevant. For example, a web page dedicated entirely to the civil war is often more useful than an article that mentions the civil war in passing, even if the article is part of a reputable site such as Time.com

Once we've made a list of documents and their scores, we take the documents with the highest scores as the best matches. Google does a little bit of extra work to try to show snippets—a few sentences—from each document that highlight the words that a user typed. Then we return the ranked URLs and the snippets to the user as results pages.

As you can see, running a search engine takes a lot of computing resources. For each search that someone types in, over 500 computers may work together to find the best documents, and it all happens in under half a second.

Source: Matt Cutts, Google 'Librarian Central' website, 2005

DID YOU KNOW...

Google searches what is known as the visible, or surface, web but there is a whole lot more information out there in what is known as the invisible, or deep, web. Search engines can't access these pages so we rarely see them. It is estimated that the invisible web is about 500 times bigger than the visible web. Google, which searches the visible web, has access to about 8 billion pages ... which means there's more information out there than you could ever dream of!

Breakaway tasks 7

Remembering

1 What two things does Google need to do for you to see a list of results for your search?

2 What is a 'posting list'?

Understanding

3 Explain, in your own words, what a 'Googlebot' does.

4 If you were searching for information about wheat farming, list four factors that might determine how highly a website would be ranked in your search results.

Applying

5 In the article, Matt Cutts explains how the process of intersecting a posting list produces more relevant results for your search. Using the posting lists below, try to find all the websites that contain the words 'wheat', 'farming' and 'Australia'.

Wheat: 2 7 13 18 23 36 37 44 51 57 62 66 73 78 81 89 93 97

Farming: 7 18 21 26 27 30 32 33 35 44 55 58 61 66 73 75 91 93 99

Australia: 1 5 8 14 17 18 23 26 31 44 59 61 73 99

Analysing

6 This extract is all about technology and, because it was written by an expert, it contains a lot of technological jargon. Read carefully through the extract and make a list of all the technological jargon you can find.



Jargon is the word used to describe the specialised or technical language used by people who work in the same industry or who belong to a particular group.

7 From your list of technological jargon, choose ten words and/or phrases that you think are the most important. When you are confident that you know what they mean, construct a multiple-choice quiz to test your classmates' understanding of the terms.

Evaluating

8 If you had your own website, would you prefer to have lots of links to other smaller and less well-known websites, or just one or two links to larger, better known websites? Explain the reasons for your choice.

Creating

9 There are many hints and tips available about how to search effectively using Google, including how to choose the best words to type into the search box, how to search for a phrase, and how to use '+' and '–' in your search to help you get more relevant information. Find out what these hints and tips are and construct a slide show presentation that will teach others about your top three search hints.



Google's online information pages are a great place to start when looking for search tips. They include lots of really useful information about how to search with Google. Go to the web destinations to find it.



Wikipedia

You've probably noticed that when you're using Google or another search engine, often the first suggested web pages in your results come from Wikipedia. Now that you know that the number of links a page has, as well as the frequency with which it changes, help to bump a site up the rankings, that's probably not surprising!

The name 'Wikipedia' comes from the words 'encyclopedia' and 'wiki', which is a type of software that allows internet users to work collaboratively to create and edit web pages.



In March 2007, the word 'wiki' became a recognised English word. It was first applied to web software by US programmer Ward Cunningham in 1995, who named it after a Hawaiian word for 'quick'—'wiki wiki'. Now it is everywhere: Wikipedia, Wiktionary, Wikileaks, Wikispaces.

Just like all encyclopedias, Wikipedia attempts to record existing knowledge; it does not cover original research or create new information.

Wikipedia can be a really useful source of information, but it can also lead you into all sorts of trouble if you're not careful. Wikipedia is great because it is continually being updated, which means that information is always current—unlike printed book encyclopedias, which may be reprinted months or years later. Wikipedia has disadvantages too, though. Because anyone can edit the articles, they are not always correct. Older articles on Wikipedia tend to be more reliable, but newer Wikipedia articles often contain misinformation or errors. For this reason, it's important when you're using Wikipedia for research to cross-check the information you find with other sites or sources.

DID YOU KNOW...

Because anyone can edit or contribute to Wikipedia, it is subject to internet vandalism. For example, a fake biography that linked a well-known journalist to the Kennedy assassinations and Soviet Russia was added by an individual as a joke to fool a co-worker. It went undetected for four months.

Breakaway tasks 8

Remembering

1 How is Wikipedia written?

2 Who can edit a page on Wikipedia?

Understanding

3 Why might Wikipedia be called 'the free encyclopedia'?

Applying

4 The Wikipedia introduction page encourages you to make your first test edit on a page called 'the sandbox'. Log on to the Wikipedia Introduction page and click on the link that takes you to the sandbox. Have a go!

5 a If 'wiki' originated in the Hawaiian language, where do you think the word 'Google' came from? Discuss your ideas with a partner, then research to find out the real answer.

b 'Google' has become a verb—'to google' it. By what process do you think the verb form came to be recognised as part of the English language?

Analysing

6 a Describe the logo for Wikipedia, which can be found on the top left-hand side of the screen.

b How does the logo aim to give the impression that Wikipedia is a factual and reliable source of information?

7 List two features of Wikipedia that make it an easy site to navigate.

Evaluating

8 What advice would you give to a student who has to complete a research project on a current event and plans to use Wikipedia as their primary source of information? Be sure to give them wise advice by explaining as much as you can about Wikipedia and how to use it.

Creating

9 If Wikipedia is going to be a useful and reliable source of information, then all the people who contribute to it through their editing need to be ethical in their approach. In other words, they need to edit in a way that ensures that information is as correct, useful and unbiased as possible. Working with a partner, come up with a list of ten specific guidelines that editors of Wikipedia should follow to help maintain the accuracy and reliability of the site.



Website references

Below is an example of a properly referenced website.

Citizen, A. (4/10/2008). 'Referencing web pages properly in bibliographies'. Retrieved 30 August 2009, from Everything You Need to Know about Bibliographies Website: <www.bibliographies.com>

A properly referenced website includes the following information:

- author or creator of the website
- date the website was created
- name of the actual page you visited
- date you looked at the page
- name of the whole website
- website's URL or address.

Strands in action

Core task

The World Wide Web provides a wonderland of information. If you are going to use it effectively, however, you need to be able to make smart choices about the websites you look at to determine whether the information they contain is both accurate and reliable.

a With your teacher, conduct a class discussion about the features of websites and the clues you can look for to determine how reliable and accurate the website might be. In your discussion, don't forget what you have learnt about searching with Google. Create a checklist you can use when evaluating websites.

b Choose a topic of interest to you and conduct an internet search to find out more about it. Choose any five websites about your topic and apply the class checklist to them. Rank your websites in order from the most reliable to the least reliable, according to the results of your checklist. Remember that some items on the checklist might be more important than others when determining reliability.

c Present your most reliable and least reliable websites to the class, explaining what makes them so.

Extra tasks

1 Using Wikipedia, find one fact about ten different topics of your choice. Try to choose a range of topics from older to more contemporary ones. Draw up a table like the one below and write your ten Wikipedia facts in the first column.

Wikipedia facts	Confirmation
1	
2	
3	

Then search other websites (remember, they need to be reliable sites) to confirm whether or not the Wikipedia fact is accurate. Place a tick or a cross as appropriate in the second column and the internet address of the site at which you checked your fact.

2 Working in pairs, construct a game of 'Race around the Net' for your classmates.

a Come up with a list of ten quirky and fun questions that you will need to search the internet to find the answers to. Try to create questions that will require smart searching to find the answers.

b Check that the answers can actually be found somewhere on the internet.

c Create a game sheet with your racing instructions, questions and answer sheet.

Using each pair's game in turn, conduct a class 'Race around the Net'. The student who finds all the correct answers in the shortest time wins.

3 Choose any of the activities from above that you have completed and construct a proper, formal bibliography for the sites you visited.

4 Create an illustration of what you think a Googlebot looks like.

4

Life is meaningful

Since the beginning of time, philosophers have tried to answer the question: What is the meaning of life? It's a tough question because the answer is different for everyone, which is one of the things that makes life so interesting! Have you ever thought about what makes your life meaningful?

For some people, making a difference in the lives of others or tackling global problems makes their lives meaningful. Others have more personal goals, like finding happiness, loving family and friends, or bettering themselves by being good people or learning as much as they can about the world.

What people believe about the meaning and purpose of life is influenced by many things such as family, religious beliefs, culture, nationality, life experiences and so on. All of these things combine to create each person's unique world view and idea about what life is and how it should be lived.

What is life?

The way a person thinks about life will depend on what they believe, what they value, where they come from, what they know and what they have experienced in life. The following quotes represent a range of ideas about life from writers, philosophers, scientists and spiritual leaders from all over the globe.

> Life is nothing until it is lived, but it is yours to make sense of; the value of life is nothing other than the sense you choose.

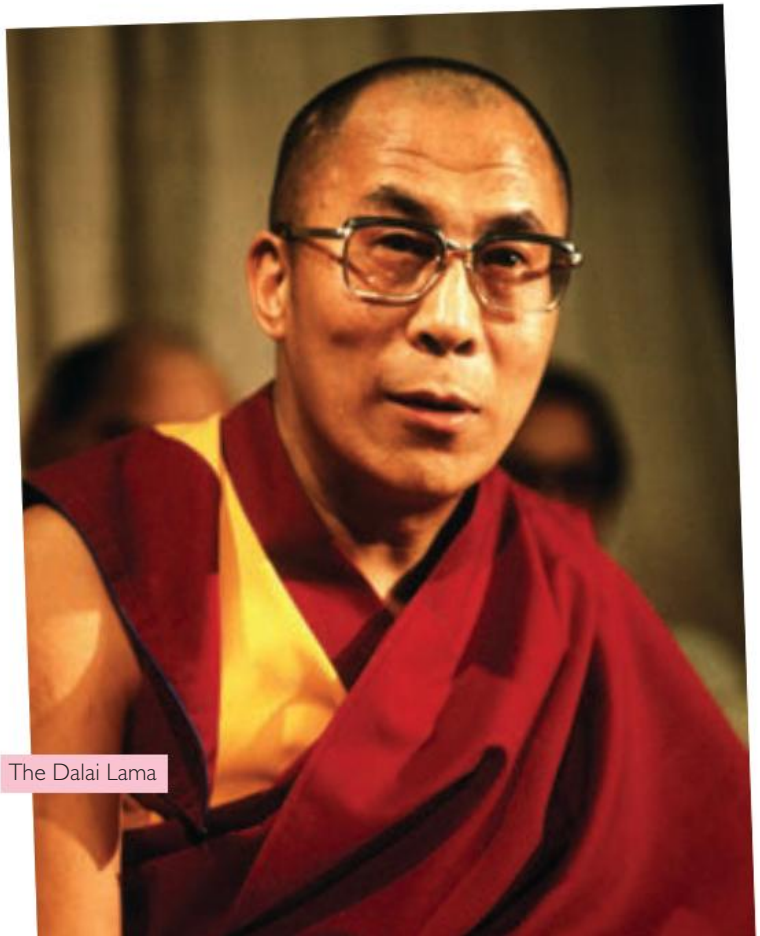
Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980), French philosopher

> Only the soul that loves is happy.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), German writer

> One great question underlies our experience, whether we think about it consciously or not: What is the purpose of life? I believe that the purpose of life is to be happy. From the moment of birth, every human being wants happiness and does not want to suffer. From the very core of our being we simply desire contentment.

Dalai Lama (b. 1935), Tibetan spiritual leader



The Dalai Lama

To believe in God is to realise that life has a meaning.

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951), Austrian–British philosopher

What we are today comes from our thoughts of yesterday, and our present thoughts build our life of tomorrow: our life is the creation of the mind.

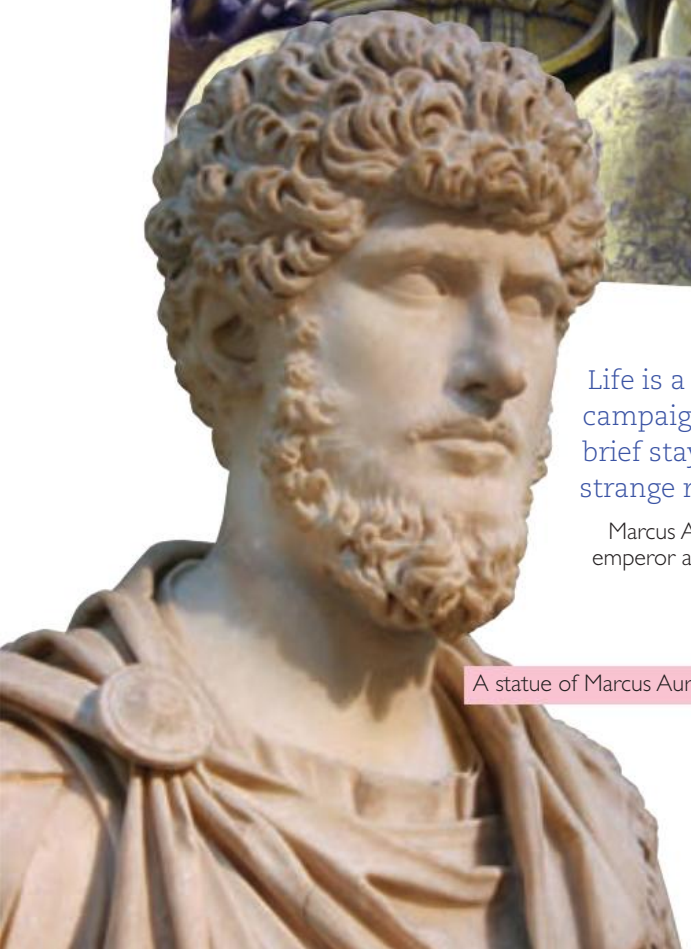
Buddha (ca 450 BCE), Indian spiritual leader



A statue of Buddha

Life is a campaign, a brief staying in a strange region.

Marcus Aurelius, Roman emperor and philosopher



A statue of Marcus Aurelius

Life is a child moving counters in a game.

Heraclitus (ca 500 BCE), Greek philosopher

Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less.

Marie Curie (1867–1934), Polish-born French scientist

The genes are the master programmers, and they are programming for their lives. They are in you and me; they created us, body and mind; and their preservation is the ultimate rational for our existence. (...) We are their survival machines.

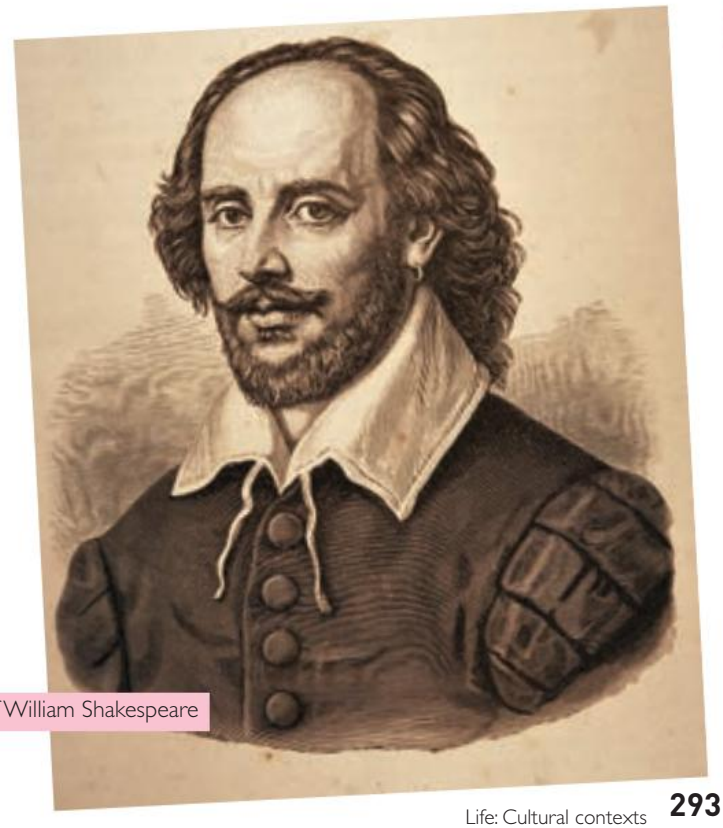
Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene*, 1976

Life is like a beautiful melody, only the lyrics are messed up.

Hans Christian Andersen (1805–1875), Danish writer

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages.

Shakespeare (1564–1616), English poet and playwright



A portrait of William Shakespeare

Once, I, Chuang-Tzu, dreamed that I was a butterfly and was happy as a butterfly. I was conscious that I was quite pleased with myself but I did not know that I was Tzu. Suddenly I awoke and there I was, visible Tzu. I do not know whether it was Tzu dreaming that he was a butterfly or the butterfly dreaming that it was Tzu.

Chuang-Tzu (ca 369–286 BCE), Chinese Taoist philosopher

We don't own the land, the land owns us. The land is my mother, my mother is the land. Land is the starting point to where it all began. It's like picking up a piece of dirt and saying this is where I started and this is where I'll go. The land is our food, our culture, our spirit and identity.

S. Knight, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission

To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that is all.

Oscar Wilde (1854–1900), Irish writer

Breakaway tasks 9

Remembering

1 What does the Dalai Lama believe is the purpose of life?

2 Which writer believes that life is like a beautiful melody?

3 According to Wilde, what is the rarest thing in the world?

Understanding

4 Explain, in your own words, what Sartre believes is the value of life.

5 Buddha says that 'our life is the creation of the mind'. What does he mean by this?

6 How can you tell that Dawkins doesn't believe that life has a spiritual purpose?

Applying

7 On a Sunday morning, four people wake up and decide what they will do with their day.

- Person A agrees with Goethe's belief about life.
- Person B agrees with Wittgenstein's belief about life.
- Person C agrees with Wilde's belief about life.

How might each of these people decide to spend their Sunday?

Analysing

8 Many of the quotes above contain metaphors and similes. List three of them.

Writer's TOOLBOX

A **metaphor** describes something by saying that it is something else. It is not meant literally, but is used to emphasise a quality in the thing being described.
For example:

> Life is a novel with thousands of blank pages waiting to be written.

Life isn't actually a novel but the metaphor emphasises the possibility and unknown quality of life.

9 Which quote suggests that we can never really be sure about the nature of life?

Evaluating

10 Which of the quotes best describes what you think about life? Explain your answer.

Creating

11 Spend some time carefully considering what you believe about life. Write a statement that captures your belief. Share it with the class.



Climate change and Indigenous Australia

World Vision is a Christian organisation that is committed to eliminating poverty globally. It is involved in many different projects around the world, which cover a range of different activities. One area in which it sees the potential to help is in research aimed at building sustainable futures. World Vision recognises unique possibilities for tackling climate change collaboratively with Indigenous Australians because of Indigenous Australians' close connection with, and deep understanding of, the land.

CLIMATE CHANGE: RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIA

ONLINE ARTICLE

Indigenous people living in coastal and remote areas of northern Australia are likely to be among the first in the nation to face the impacts of climate change. But along with the risks come opportunities. Indigenous people have knowledge and skills that can be harnessed to respond to climate change.

Climate change predictions indicate that coastal communities in northern Australia will be particularly vulnerable to storm surge. Low-lying islands, like those in the Torres Strait, will face the risk of inundation due to sea-level rise. Inland areas are likely to experience more bushfires, dust storms, flooding and drought.



Aboriginal elder, Banjo Morton

Because of their disadvantage and their unique connection to 'country', it is feared that Indigenous communities living in these areas are likely to be disproportionately affected by such environmental changes.

At the same time, Indigenous skills and traditional knowledge of the natural environment are increasingly being considered as part of Australia's responses to climate change. And this creates new livelihood opportunities.

Indigenous Australians are in a unique position to provide environmental and other land and sea management services to the government, mining companies and conservation organisations and to develop enterprises such as eco-tourism.

These activities can improve the wellbeing of Indigenous Australians by acknowledging their connection to country, and by generating income and employment opportunities.

Drawing on our international experience, World Vision plans to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, research institutions, governments and landholders to develop projects in Indigenous Australia that focus on climate change and natural resource management capacity building, and on generating income through natural resource management and emerging carbon markets.

Source: World Vision website, 2009

Breakaway tasks 10

Remembering

1 Describe the impact that climate change will have on Indigenous communities in coastal and inland areas, and in the Torres Strait.

Understanding

2 Why are Indigenous communities in a unique position to contribute to Australia's response to climate change?

3 How can being a part of the Australian climate change solution be beneficial to Indigenous Australians?

4 List five words that describe how you feel about climate change.

Applying

5 Search the internet for images of the many different landscapes that make up Australia. Also search for Aboriginal and other Australian poems that contain imagery of various landscapes. Use the images and quotes from the poems to create a digital collage that captures the nature of the Australian landscape. Be sure to reference the websites at which you find your images.

6 If you could interview a representative of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisation about climate change, what three questions would be the most important for you to ask?

Analysing

7 The extract on the previous page is from the World Vision website.

- a What is the purpose of this text?
- b What is the tone of this text?
- c In one sentence, outline the central message of this text.

Evaluating

8
- a Use your research skills to create a list of the five most significant consequences of climate change that Australia faces.
- b Organise your list from most significant to least significant. Justify your choices.
- c Argue for your choices in a class debate. Negotiate with your classmates until you reach consensus on the top five most significant consequences of climate change for Australia.

9 Re-read the extract and look at the graphic to the right. Which is the more persuasive for you? Explain your answer.

DID YOU KNOW...

You can calculate your ecological footprint, the area of land needed to support your lifestyle. Go to the web destinations to find a site that helps you do this, and discover how eco-friendly you really are.

Web Destination

Creating

10 Climate change is an important issue for all Australians to think about. Using ideas inspired by the extract, create an advertisement promoting a collaboration between the Federal government and Indigenous Australians in tackling climate change in Australia. Choose between a radio advertisement, a print advertisement and a TV advertisement. Use an ICT application that you are confident with to create your advertisement.

DID YOU KNOW...

Go to the web destinations to check out a website that explains global population growth and carbon emissions.

Web Destination



Strands in action



Core task

The most important influence on what you believe is probably your family, as much of what you learn about life comes from them. Do you know how similar your views about the meaning and purpose of life are to the views of others in your family?

a Take some time to sit quietly and reflect on your beliefs and ideas about life. You might like to use the questions below to help you gather your thoughts. Write more questions if you think they will help. Write your thoughts down in note form.

- What do you rate as the top most important things in your life?
- What are your plans for your future?
- In the end, what will have made your life worthwhile?
- What do you always strive for?
- What influences have been the most significant in shaping your answers to these questions?

b Now ask your parents to reflect on their beliefs and ideas. If you are unable to interview a parent, try asking an aunt or uncle or someone of a similar age to your parents. Ask them to answer the same questions you asked yourself. Write down their answers in note form. Remember that these are tricky questions, so the person you are interviewing might need some time to think about their answers.

c Now ask a grandparent or someone of their generation to reflect on their beliefs and ideas. Use the same questions again and don't forget to give them some thinking time.

d When you have gathered your information from across three generations, read through your notes carefully and look for similarities and differences. Try to explain why these similarities and differences exist.

e Use your notes to write an essay describing the beliefs of each person you interviewed. Compare their responses and explain how they are similar or different.

Extra tasks

1 Write the recipe for a meaningful life. Begin with a list of ingredients and be sure to write clear instructions.

2 Write a short story in which the main character has an experience that causes them to really think about their life and make changes to it as a result.

3 There are many challenges facing the world today. Some of them were mentioned in the extracts on the previous pages. Each night on the news and each morning in the newspaper, you will hear more and more about these challenges—climate change, poverty, diseases in developing countries, such as AIDS and malaria, economic hardship, the impact of technologies on our lives and many more.

a Spend a week watching the news and reading the headlines of your daily newspaper. Make a list of the global issues you come across.

b Decide which issue should be the top priority for Australians and explain why.

c Use your research skills to find out about two different strategies being used by different people or organisations to tackle your chosen issue.

d Compile a report that includes the following:

- a brief description of the issue
- an explanation of why this issue is of significance to Australians
- a summary of two strategies that are being used to tackle the issue
- an evaluation of the strategies, indicating which you think is the most effective or worthwhile
- a final paragraph that details your own ideas to tackle the issue.

4 Create the soundtrack for your life. Choose a song for each the following stages:

- birth
- ages 2–5
- the start of primary school
- the end of primary school
- life in high school
- life at home.

Explain the significance of your choices.

5 What do you believe are the top ten things that you would like to do in a lifetime? Either find or draw a suitable image for each thing and then present your list to the class, explaining your choices. You could present your list as a slide show presentation or on a poster.

6 **a** If you could have dinner with six fascinating guests, who would you choose? (They can be historical or contemporary.) Create a list, including the name of each guest and why you have chosen them.

b Pick one of your fascinating guests and write the conversation that you would have.

7 What people believe about the meaning and purpose of life is closely related to what they value and what their morals and ethics are.

Explore your morals and ethics by attempting to answer the following questions. Be warned, they're not easy! But they make for fascinating discussion.

a Read each of the following dilemmas on your own and make an initial decision about what you might do.

b Form small groups and debate your choices. Listen carefully to your classmates' ideas. Do they challenge your beliefs? Have you changed your mind?

c Write your answer down and then carefully describe your thinking process; that is, the steps you went through to arrive at your decision.

When describing your thinking process, use phrases like these:

- Initially I thought …
- When my classmate said that she thought …
- After considering their views, I began to think that …
- Then I remembered what my dad/mum always tells me and …



Before undertaking the task it is important to understand what these words mean.

Values: what people consider to be important or of significant worth.

Ethics: the choices people make in regard to their actions and behaviour.

Morals: what people believe about right and wrong and how individuals should behave.

Dilemma 1

Imagine there has been a major disaster and thousands of people have been injured. You are in control of all the medical resources. Many hospitals were destroyed, there are only a few doctors available and your medical supplies are limited. You cannot help all the casualties. How will you decide who to treat? Do you:

- refuse treatment to anyone over 70 years of age because younger people with more life still to live will benefit more?
- treat only those people with the most serious injuries because their need is more urgent and those people with less serious injuries might survive anyway?
- treat only those people with less serious injuries because you'll be able to help more of them with the limited resources you have and the more seriously injured people might die anyway, even if you do help them?

Does your answer change if someone you love falls into one of these categories?

Dilemma 2

Imagine a ship is sinking. The lifeboat is big enough to carry only twenty people but thirty people have crowded onto it. It will sink if nothing is done. The captain of the ship decides it is better for a few people to die rather than everyone so the ten weakest people are thrown overboard and the boat is rowed to safety. Later, after the rescue, the captain is tried for murder. You are a member of the jury at the trial.

- Do you think the captain should be found guilty?
- Would your answer be different if you were the captain?
- Do you think the captain is guilty of anything if he or she merely stopped the last ten people from getting on the lifeboat and rowed away?



> Fiction is like a spider's web, attached ever so lightly perhaps, but still attached to life at all four corners.
>
> Virginia Woolf (1882–1941), English novelist

APPRECIATING FICTION

Chapter overview

Authors and film makers generally have two motivations when they create works of fiction. Firstly, they want to tell a great story, and secondly, they usually have something to say about the human condition; that is, what it means to be human. Works of fiction might not be 'real' but they have the power to tell us a lot about who we are as people, and about what it means to be human and to live a human life. They have the power to engage our imagination in fantastic tales too! That makes novels and films not only entertaining, but worthy of study as well.

1

Focus on novels



Ambrose Bierce

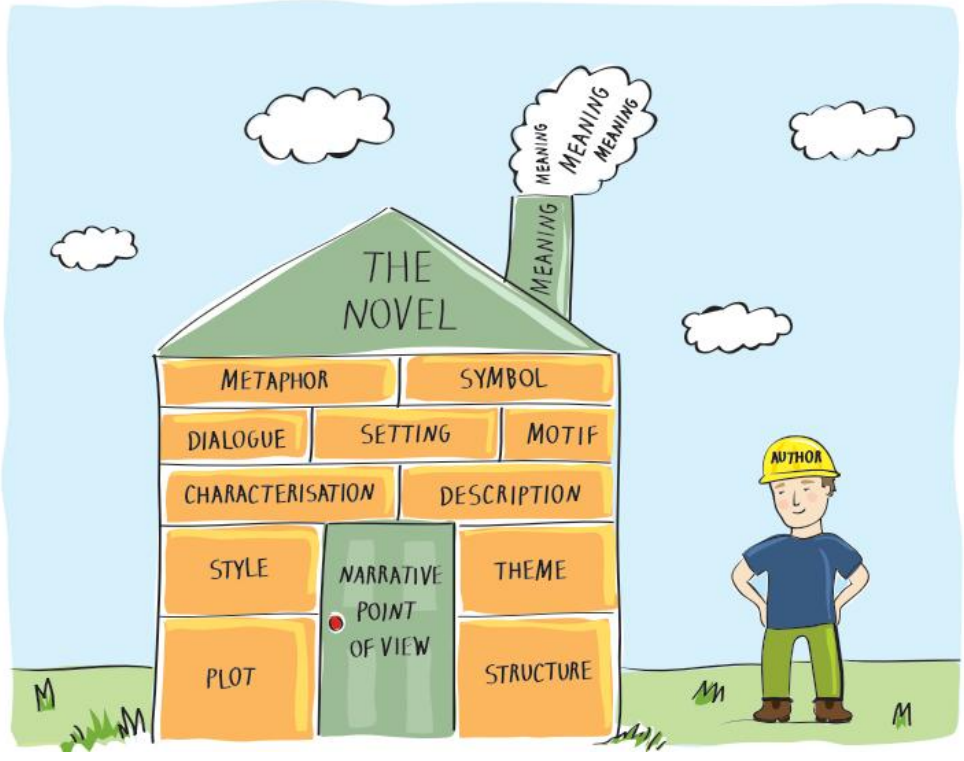
Ambrose Bierce, a nineteenth-century US satirist, short-story writer and journalist, described the novel as 'a short story padded'. He might have been poking fun at the novel but there's some truth to what he says. Novels have many of the same conventions and features as short stories, only on a larger and more developed scale.

Avid readers often claim that the thing they love most about reading is that they can lose themselves in the story, escaping their own lives for a while. The ability to get lost in a novel is what makes reading such a magical experience. You know that authors are the magicians who create this magic, but do you know how they do it?

When we read, we often get the impression that the author has cleverly managed to capture reality, sucking it out of the world around them and trapping it in the pages of their novel. But in order to study a novel effectively, we need to think a little differently about it. We need to understand that a novel is something that is carefully and deliberately constructed—using characters and plot and language and so on—to give readers an artificial reality that they can get lost in.

How are novels constructed?

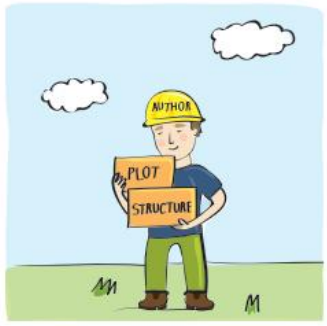
When exploring how novels are constructed, it is useful to think of them as houses that have been carefully assembled, brick by brick, in order to create a meaningful story. In this analogy, the author becomes the builder of the novel and if you were to represent this idea graphically, it might look something like this …



DID YOU KNOW...

Ernest Hemingway stood up while he wrote, Truman Capote wrote only on yellow paper and Roald Dahl wrote his novels in a writing hut in his orchard.

Plot and structure



The plot of a novel refers to what happens in the story, or the series of events that make up the story. You might know it as the storyline. Many novels contain a main plot, as well as one or more smaller plots, called subplots.

When you look at the order in which the events of the plot have been told, or narrated, you are examining the structure of the novel. People often tell each other stories by starting at the beginning, with the first thing that happened, and then filling in the other events chronologically until they get to the end. However, an author will often narrate the events of a story out of order to create a particular effect. For example, they may want to increase the tension or suspense, or to involve the reader in solving a mystery. A common structural device used by authors when they want to vary the structure of a narrative is the flashback. A flashback occurs when there is a pause in the action of the story while a character remembers something from their past, or the narrator fills in some background information.

DID YOU KNOW...

The King of Hearts, when giving advice about reading to the White Rabbit in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, said, 'Begin at the beginning, and go on till you come to the end; then stop.'

The blurb of a novel, usually found on the back cover, often contains a summary of the plot. The following extract is the blurb from the novel *On the Jellicoe Road* by Melina Marchetta.



ON THE JELLICOE ROAD

By Melina Marchetta

Taylor is leader of the boarders at the Jellicoe School. She has to keep the upper hand in the territory wars and deal with Jonah Griggs—the enigmatic leader of the cadets, and someone she thought she would never see again.

And now Hannah, the person Taylor had come to rely on, has disappeared. Taylor's only clue is a manuscript about five kids who lived in Jellicoe eighteen years ago. She needs to find out more, but this means confronting her own story, making sense of her strange, recurring dream, and finding her mother—who abandoned her on the Jellicoe Road.

Source: Melina Marchetta, *On the Jellicoe Road*, Penguin, 2006

Marchetta's novel has an interesting structure. The events of Taylor's story, which form the main plot, are narrated chronologically but passages from the manuscript Taylor finds are scattered throughout the novel. Marchetta does this so that the reader is able to gradually solve the unfolding mystery along with the main character.

Narrative point of view



Narrative point of view refers to who is telling the story (the narrator). This is an important decision for authors as it is the narrator who will guide the reader through the story and it is from their perspective that the events of the story will be seen. Just as the front door leads people into a house, the narrator leads the reader through the story.

An author has three different narrative points of view to choose from: first person, second person and third person.

1 The first person point of view occurs when a character tells their own story. A story told in the first person uses the pronouns 'I', 'me' and 'mine'.

First person narration allows the reader to hear the character's innermost thoughts and feelings so the reader gets to know this character well.

The following extract is from *On the Jellicoe Road* and is written in the first person.

I'm dreaming of the boy in the tree and at the exact moment I'm about to hear the answer that I've been waiting for, the flashlights yank me out of what could have been one of those perfect moments of clarity people talk about for the rest of their lives. If I was prone to dramatics, I could imagine my sighs would have been heard from the boundaries of the school to the town down below.

2 The use of the second person point of view is less common. It involves the use of the pronoun 'you' and has the effect of making the reader feel as though they are a character in the story. For example:

You walk along the beach, the hot sand tickling the soles of your feet. You scan the towels and umbrellas, searching for your friends and wishing the summer would last forever.

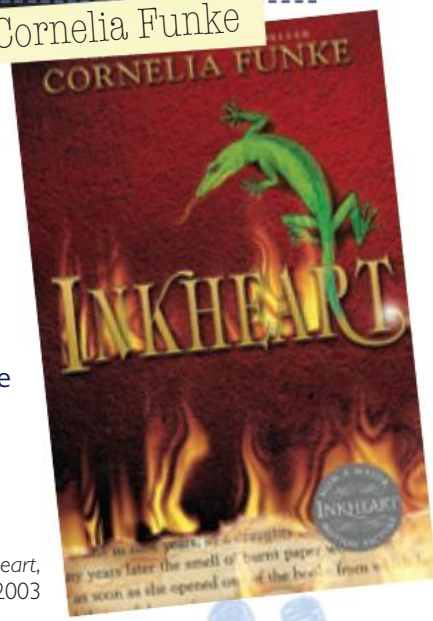
3 The third person point of view occurs when a narrator tells the story. Third person narration uses the pronouns 'he', 'she' and 'they'. There are two types of third person narration.

- An omniscient, or all-seeing, third person narrator is able to see the entire story from any or all of the characters' perspectives. It's useful to think of an omniscient third person narrator as floating above the events of the story, observing and reporting everything they can see and hear.
- A limited third person narrator tells the story but from only one character's perspective. It is useful to think of a limited third person narrator as walking closely behind the character, peering over their shoulder to observe the events of the story.

The following extract from *Inkheart* by Cornelia Funke is written in the third person.

INKHEART

By Cornelia Funke



Rain fell that night, a fine, whispering rain. Many years later, Meggie had only to close her eyes and she could still hear it, like tiny fingers tapping on the windowpane. A dog barked somewhere in the darkness, and however often she tossed and turned Meggie couldn't get to sleep.

Source: Cornelia Funke, *Inkheart*, The Chicken House, 2003

Breakaway tasks 1

Remembering

1 List the three main types of narrative point of view an author can choose from.

2 What is a common structural device used by authors?

Understanding

3 Explain, in your own words, the differences between the various narrative points of view.

Applying

4 The following extract is the opening paragraph to a novel called *Darius Bell and the Glitter Pool* by Odo Hirsch. It is written in the third person. Rewrite this paragraph, changing it to the first person point of view.

Darius Bell walked through the grass. It swished at his knees, and Darius smiled as he went through it, feeling like a pirate ploughing through a wide green sea. Behind him the clock tower rose above the house, and its shadow fell across the grass in front of him.

Source: Odo Hirsch, *Darius Bell and the Glitter Pool*, Allen & Unwin, 2009



Remember that **first person** point of view uses the pronouns 'I', 'me' and 'mine'.

Analysing

5 One of the advantages of the first person point of view is that it allows the reader to hear what the character is thinking and feeling. Read the extract from *On the Jellicoe Road* again. What is the character thinking and feeling at this moment? Support your answer with quotes from the extract.

6 In the extract from *Inkheart*, locate two examples of personification; that is, where an inanimate object is given human characteristics. (Hint: one of them is a simile.) Why do you think the author chose this device? Have a go at writing a paragraph that includes an example of personification.

7 In the *Darius Bell and the Glitter Pool* extract above, what is the effect of the simile? How does it add meaning to the piece?



A **simile** is a phrase that describes something by comparing two different things, and usually contains 'like' or 'as … as'.

8 Why has the author of *Darius Bell and the Glitter Pool* chosen the verb 'rose' in this paragraph? What could you change it to that would give a different effect?

Evaluating

9 The advantages of each of the narrative points of view have been explained to you. What do you think might be the disadvantages or limitations of each?

Creating

10 Choose an event that happened to you some time over the past week.

- a Write a short paragraph describing what happened, as you might for a journal entry.
- b Imagine that this event happened to a character in a story. Imagine that you are an omniscient third person narrator, floating above and watching this event. Describe this event from a third person point of view.
- c Note the differences between your two paragraphs. Which paragraph do you think is more effective and engaging to read? Explain why.

Setting and description

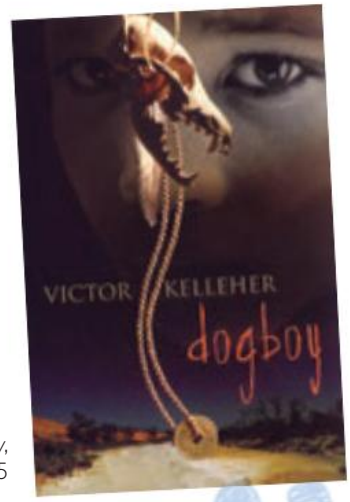


The events of every novel occur in a particular place and at a particular time. This is what is referred to as the setting of the novel. Authors frequently use vivid description to convey the setting to readers so that they can imagine it for themselves. As well as providing a backdrop for the plot, the setting also tells readers a lot about the atmosphere of the story.

The following two extracts come from two very different novels and describe two very different settings. As you read, note the differences between them and think about the sort of stories that might occur in these settings.

DOGBOY
By Victor Kelleher

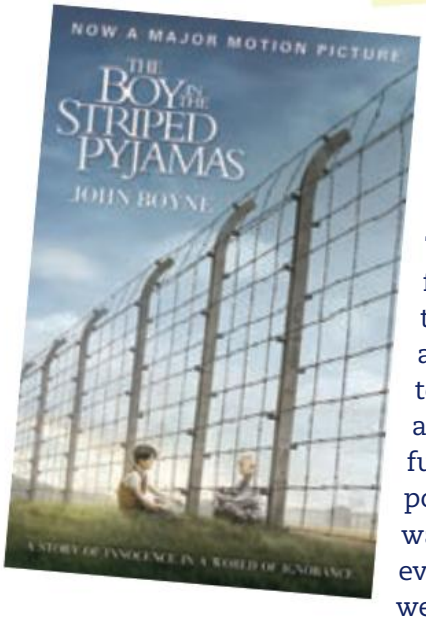
Bethel itself—perched above the riverbank and bounded on the landward side by a protective wall—consisted of a modest cluster of earth-and-reed huts. Although not much to look at, it was in fact more ancient that the great city of Delta, far downstream. Founded by a group of pioneer farmers, in the half-forgotten era of abundant rain, it owed its continued existence, in these less fortunate times, to the ruggedness of its people. And also to their faith in the eternal Spirit of the mountains, to whom they appealed whenever their crops failed and the parched land turned to stone. He, the Great Father, would always sustain them in the end, of that they were convinced.



Source: Victor Kelleher, *Dogboy*, Penguin, 2005

THE BOY IN THE STRIPED PYJAMAS

By John Boyne



About twenty feet further along from the garden and the flowers and the bench with the plaque on it, everything changed. There was a huge wire fence that ran along the length of the house and turned in at the top, extending further along in either direction, further than she could possibly see. The fence was very high, higher even than the house they were standing in, and there were huge wooden posts, like telegraph poles, dotted along it, holding it up. At the top of the fence enormous bales of barbed wire were tangled in spirals, and Gretel felt an unexpected pain inside her as she looked at the sharp spikes sticking out all the way round it.

There wasn't any grass after the fence; in fact there was no greenery anywhere to be seen in the distance. Instead the ground was made of a sand-like substance, and as far as she could make out there was nothing but low huts and large square buildings dotted around and one or two smoke stacks in the distance.

Source: John Boyne, *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, Random House, 2006

Breakaway tasks 2

Remembering

1 What is meant by the setting of a story?

Understanding

2 How can the setting add to the meaning of a novel? Give an example from the extracts provided, or from a novel you've read recently, to support your answer.

DID YOU KNOW...

In Kenya, the Camel Library Service brings books to about one million people in isolated villages around the city of Garissa. Since its launch in 1996, the fleet has grown from three to six camels.

Applying

3 Choose either the extract from *Dogboy* or from *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* and, using clues from the description, draw that setting.

Analysing

4 Based on the description of the setting for *Dogboy*, what sort of story do you think you would find in the novel? Support your answer with evidence from the extract.

5 Good description requires the effective use of adjectives. Make a list of all the adjectives you can find in the extract from *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*.

Writer's TOOLBOX

An **adjective** is a describing word. Adjectives describe nouns. For example:

The girl was *tall* and *thin* and she walked down the *crowded* street with a *cheerful* grin on her face.

6 In the extract from *Dogboy*, explain the author's choice of the following words: 'perched', 'protective', 'cluster'.

Evaluating

7 If you were planning a holiday and you had to choose between the setting described in *Dogboy* and the one in *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, which would you choose and why?

Creating

8 a Choose a character from List A and a situation from List B from the table on the next page.

b Choose a setting for your character and their situation that would enhance the reader's understanding of what the character is experiencing.

c Write a descriptive paragraph that locates your character in your chosen setting.

d Explain why you chose that particular setting.

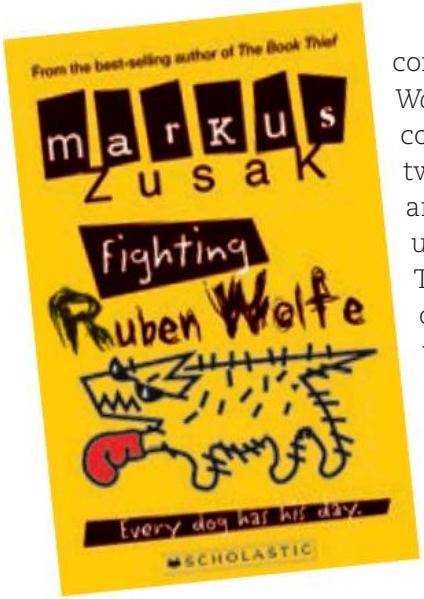
List A: character	List B: situation
Rodney, a grumpy old man	Desperately searching for something precious that they've lost
Ellen, an elite athlete	Feeling really lonely
Charlie, a wealthy real estate agent	Dreaming of a holiday
Maria, a middle-aged cat breeder	Plotting revenge
Kim, a very shy little primary school boy	Feeling perfectly content
Mia, a beautiful but nasty teenager	Anxiously waiting for news

Characterisation and dialogue



You are probably used to listing the names of the characters in novels and describing what those characters look like, how they behave, what sort of people they are and so on, but you might not yet have thought about how the author created the characters to be just like that. The process by which an author creates a character is called characterisation. The author does this by carefully attending to:

- a character's dialogue (the things they say)
- descriptions of the character and their activities
- the ways in which other characters respond to them.



The following extract comes from *Fighting Ruben Wolfe* by Markus Zusak. It contains dialogue between two teenage brothers, Rube and Cameron, who live in urban New South Wales. They get involved in a local competitive boxing circuit to try to earn some money to help their family. While you're reading, try to imagine what these two boys might be like.

FIGHTING RUBEN WOLFE

By Markus Zusak

'Hey Rube.'

'You just woke me, you bastard.'

'Sorry.'

'No you're not.'

'Yeah, you're right. I'm glad I did. You deserve it.'

'What is it this time?'

'Can't y'hear 'em?'

'Who?'

'Mum and Dad. They're talkin' again in the kitchen. About the bills and all that.'

'Yeah. They can't pay 'em too good.'

'It's—'

'Bloody hell! What is that smell? It's a disgrace, ay. Are you sure it's not y'socks?'

'Yes, I'm sure.'

I stop, and breathe.

I think a question and speak it. Finally.

'Did it feel good to smash that guy?'

Rube: 'A little, but not really.'

'Why not?'

'Because …' He thinks for a moment. 'I knew I'd beat him and I didn't care about him one bit. I cared about Sarah.' I sense him staring at the ceiling. 'See Cameron. The only things I care about in this life are me, you, Mum, Dad, Steve and Sarah. And maybe Miffy. The rest of the world means nothing to me. The rest of the world can rot.'

'Am I like that too?'

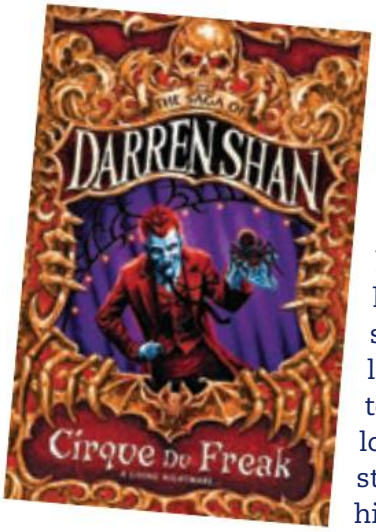
'You? No way.' There's a slight gap in his words. 'And that's your problem. You care about everything.'

Source: Markus Zusak, *Fighting Ruben Wolfe*, Scholastic, 2000

In this extract from *Cirque du Freak* by Darren Shan, the main character, Darren, goes to a bizarre freak show where he describes the following character.

CIRQUE DU FREAK

By Darren Shan



The lights went down low and a creepy-looking man walked onto the stage. He was tall and thin, with very white skin and only a small crop of orange hair on the top of his head. He had a large scar running down his left cheek. It reached to his lips and made it look like his mouth was stretching up the side of his face.

He was dressed in dark-red clothes and carried a small wooden cage, which he put on a table. When he was set, he turned and faced us. He bowed and smiled, like a crazy clown in a horror movie I once saw! Then he started to explain about the act.

Source: Darren Shan, *Cirque du Freak*, HarperCollins, 2000

Breakaway tasks 3

Remembering

1 Define the term 'characterisation'.

Understanding

2 What tools does an author have to help them to create characters?

Applying

3 With a partner, perform the dialogue from *Fighting Ruben Wolfe*. Try to capture the personalities of the two boys in your performance.

Analysing

4 Which words or phrases from the dialogue from *Fighting Ruben Wolfe* tell you that you are hearing the conversation of two teenage boys? Explain your choices.

5 Which words and phrases create the sinister tone of the description of the freak show performer in the extract from *Cirque du Freak*?

Evaluating

6 Which of the two extracts is more effective in helping you get to know the characters? Explain your choice.

Creating

7 Close your eyes and imagine a character. Take a good look at their appearance and watch how they behave in your mind. Visualise them as they walk home, talk to friends and family and spend some time engaged with their favourite hobby. Make sure you know your character really well before you open your eyes and complete the following activities.

- a Write a descriptive paragraph that effectively describes how your character looks.
- b Write another paragraph that explains your character's favourite hobby and what they think about their hobby.
- c Write the dialogue for a conversation that your character has with a family member as soon as they arrive home.
- d Combine your three pieces of writing with an illustration of your character and create a poster to display in your classroom.

Style



Authors need to make all sorts of decisions about language as they write: the sorts of words they will use, the tone they will create, whether to write long or short sentences or a mixture of the two, whether to write lots of description or focus mainly on action, and so on. All of these decisions about language contribute to the style of writing.

The following extract comes from *Don't Call Me Ishmael!* by Michael Gerard Bauer. The novel has a fun, tongue-in-cheek style. In this particular extract, new boy James Scobie is taking on the school bully, Barry Bagsley, much to the admiration and astonishment of the rest of the class. As you read, think about which particular words and phrases are helping to create the humorous style of the novel.

DON'T CALL ME ISHMAEL!

By Michael Gerard Bauer



There was a battle going on before our eyes, but it wasn't like the Western shootout I had imagined earlier—this was more like a boxing match. In the black corner was Barry 'The Annihilator' Bagsley wielding the haymakers that had left all his previous opponents bruised and bloodied and ducking for cover. In the white corner was James 'No Fear' Scobie letting the big punches whoosh past his face before moving on to prod and jab. Of course I didn't believe for a second that James Scobie could actually knock Barry Bagsley out, but he was landing some scoring punches and a room full of learned judges were marking them all down.

At this point, Barry Bagsley's patience (if there even was such a thing) had become as thin as the hair on my great-uncle Darryl's head. (Which was pretty thin considering that whatever hair he had was forced to stretch from just above his left ear, right across his bare spotty scalp to the other side of his head.)…

'Mate, if I wanted to, I could snap you in half like a pretzel. So if you're not afraid like you say, you should be.'

Whoosh! Another Bagsley haymaker sailed past James Scobie's nose.

'Look,' said James Scobie with a little impatience of his own, 'I'm sure you are very tough and brave—after all, you have to look at yourself in the mirror every day…'

Jab!

'… and perhaps I should be afraid of you, because if it's true as they say, and "a little knowledge is dangerous", then I suppose that you must be absolutely lethal …'

Jab!

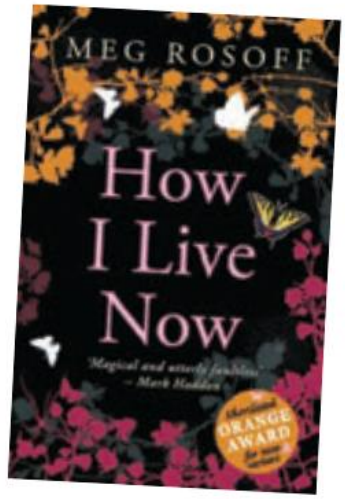
Source: Michael Gerard Bauer, *Don't Call Me Ishmael!*, Scholastic, 2006

The next extract comes from *How I Live Now* by Meg Rosoff. This is a much more serious novel about a group of children and their struggle to stay together and survive when a world war breaks out. The story is narrated in the first person from Daisy's point of view. Note that the author uses capital letters to emphasise certain words, and long rambling sentences that give readers the impression that they are listening in on her thoughts.

HOW I LIVE NOW

By Meg Rosoff

Osbert slid off like a sorry snake and I figured that was the end of it until about five minutes later when some guy who said he was Left Tennant something or other came out and was Awfully Apologetic in an awfully unapologetic way and the gist of it was we were out of here whether we liked it or not. He made it extremely clear that the army was not in any mood to hang around watching some Female American National have a tantrum at this Vital Juncture in History so I took Piper and we went upstairs and packed all the stuff we could think of for a week including some books in case we got stuck with a bunch of local hillbillies, and all I could do was stare at Edmond and Isaac and even Osbert and try to keep from crying and then Edmond kissed me and said Take Jet in a way that no one else except maybe Isaac could hear and I said back I'll find you and he nodded as if to say Likewise.



Source: Meg Rosoff, *How I Live Now,* Penguin, 2004

Breakaway tasks 4

Remembering

1 Define the term 'style' as it applies to novels.

Understanding

2 Explain in your own words how the style of a novel is created.

Applying

3 Reflect on some novels and stories you've read recently. Choose two that you think had very different styles. Present your two choices to the class, explaining how and why the two styles are different. Read a short extract from each to support your presentation.

Analysing

4 The extract from *Don't Call Me Ishmael!* has a humorous style. Explain how characterisation and language have been used to create humour. Use quotes from the extract to support your answer.

5 The extract from *How I Live Now* contains only two sentences. Explain how these long sentences give us the impression that we are listening to the narrator's thoughts.

Evaluating

6 Of the two extracts, which style do you find the most engaging? Explain your choice.

Creating

7 Choose one of the extracts and continue the story by adding the next paragraph. You will need to imitate the author's style so that your paragraph follows on seamlessly.

DID YOU KNOW...

If you suffer from hipomonsteresquipedalophobia you are afraid of long words! A hyperpolysyllabicsesquipedaliast is someone who takes pride in using really long words. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the longest word in the English language is *pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanokoniosis*.

Motifs, metaphors and symbols



To help readers understand ideas or to present ideas in more engaging ways, authors often use motifs, metaphors and symbols.

Helicopter Man by Elizabeth Fensham is about a father and son who are on the run from all sorts of dangers, which come mainly in the form of helicopters. Whenever a helicopter comes near, they hide in fear. In this way, helicopters form a recurring motif in this novel.

Writer's TOOLBOX

In fiction, a **motif** is a central theme or topic that recurs throughout the novel, forming a pattern. For example, a recurring motif of the sea may be used to explore the emotional turmoil and struggle of the main protagonist.

HELICOPTER MAN

By Elizabeth Fensham

Tuesday May 9th, Heritage Hotel

Didn't make it to the fish and chip shop yesterday.
Helicopters.
Today another helicopter.
Snooping round the hills.
Sometimes diving along a gully. Like a hawk after a sparrow is the way Dad puts it. When they are close, Dad freaks.

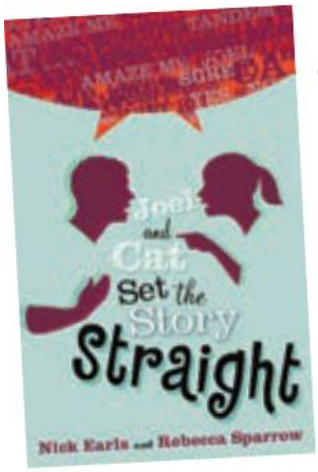


Source: Elizabeth Fensham, *Helicopter Man*, Bloomsbury, 2005

We are used to thinking of metaphors as phrases that describe someone or something as if they were something else. For example 'The girl was a snake and simply couldn't be trusted.' In novels, however, we can also find metaphors on a much bigger scale than this specific example. It is this kind of metaphor that we are interested in here.



A **metaphor** may be used to describe someone or something as if it were something else. It may also be used to describe how one theme or aspect of a story represents another, through ways in which those themes or aspects are similar. This helps deepen our understanding of what is going on in the piece of writing.



In the novel *Joel and Cat Set the Story Straight* by Nick Earls and Rebecca Sparrow, Joel and Cat have to write a tandem story for an English assignment, writing a paragraph each in turn. Joel and Cat despise each other when they begin the assignment and so do their best to sabotage each other's work. As they gradually become friends, they begin to respect each other's ideas and work together more effectively to write a unified story. In this way, their writing process becomes a metaphor for their friendship. The novel is written in the first person, but with Joel's and Cat's points of view alternating. The extract following shows signs of their changing relationship.



Some novels are useful for more than just reading. In 2003, 2 500 000 old copies of Mills & Boon novels were pulped and used in the top layer of the M6 motorway in Britain. They were chosen for their super-absorbency and to strengthen the tarmac and create a long-lasting soundproof layer.

JOEL AND CAT SET THE STORY STRAIGHT

By Nick Earls and Rebecca Sparrow

Cat: Joel has responded to my opening paragraph with complete and utter boy's-own-adventure-style crap.

Joel: So glad we're writing a story about a genius. About a hair brusher. There'd be a whole novel in that if we had the time.

Elizabeth brushes her hair.

Then nothing happens for a very long time.

Elizabeth brushes her hair again.

Cat: When I read it this morning I was incensed. I still can't believe he turned Elizabeth into a man. But I suppose it is kinda funny. And I guess I did kill off his character and cut off his tongue…

Source: Nick Earls and Rebecca Sparrow, *Joel and Cat Set the Story Straight*, Penguin, 2007

In the following extract from *Dogboy*, the second we've seen in this module, a strange, wild boy has come to live in a small village. He is cared for by a servant, Magda, who believes he is a child of nature and so makes him a necklace with a river pebble, a feather and a bear claw. The necklace becomes a symbol of the boy's past and the villagers' beliefs about him.



A **symbol** is something that represents something else. In fiction, symbols are often objects that are used to represent ideas or concepts.

DOGBOY

By Victor Kelleher

Seeing the feather clutched in his tiny fist, Magda felt her heart lurch in wonder. Was this yet another sign, like the pebble and the flame-shaped scar? Proof that he was a child not just of fire and water, but also of the sky—of the air she breathed?

She could not doubt it. Squatting beside him, she eased the feather from his grasp and looped it onto the same string that held the pebble.

Source: Victor Kelleher, *Dogboy*, Penguin, 2005

DID YOU KNOW...

The world's most famous literary prize is the Nobel Prize for Literature, named after Alfred Nobel, who was a brilliant scientist, literary intellectual and philanthropist. The other Nobel Prize categories are chemistry, physics, medicine or physiology, and peace. An associated prize is the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences.

Breakaway tasks 5

Remembering

1 Why do authors use motifs, metaphors and symbols in their writing?

Understanding

2 In the extract from *Helicopter Man* by Elizabeth Fensham on the previous two pages, why wasn't the son able to go to the fish and chip shop?

Applying

3 If you were to create a necklace of your own, like the one in the *Dogboy* extract on the previous page, which three objects would you use? Explain the symbolic significance of each.

Analysing

4 Why is the helicopter motif effective in creating a sense of danger in the extract from *Helicopter Man*?

5 At what point do we know that Cat's feelings towards Joel are beginning to change in the extract from *Joel and Cat Set the Story Straight* on the previous page?

6 There are three objects on the necklace that Magda makes for the boy in the extract from *Dogboy* on the previous page. How are these three objects symbolic of earth, air and water?

7 What is the effect on you as a reader of Kelleher's choice of the word 'lurch' in the *Dogboy* extract?

8 What other word could Kelleher have used in place of the word 'eased' to indicate Magda's action? What effect does his choice of 'eased' have on your understanding of her action?

Evaluating

9 Which of the following words do you think would best describe the story that Joel and Cat are likely to end up with? Explain your answer.

- cohesive
- bizarre
- hilarious
- informative

Creating

10 Write a paragraph that you might find in a short story or novel, describing a character and an object that is of symbolic significance to that character. Before you write your paragraph, plan it by answering the following questions.

a Who is your character? What are they like? How do they live?

b What is the most important thing in your character's life? (This might be a person, a place, a memory, a hobby . . .)

c What object best symbolises this important thing in your character's life?

d How can you show that this object is significant? (Is it on a necklace like Dogboy's? Does the character hold it often, or carry it around with them? Is it the only unusual object in an otherwise normal room? There are limitless possibilities, so let your imagination run wild!)

DID YOU KNOW...

In 1889, the editor of the *San Francisco Examiner* sent a rejection letter to Rudyard Kipling that said the following: 'I'm sorry Mr Kipling, but you just don't know how to use the English language. This isn't a kindergarten for amateur writers.' Eight years later, Kipling was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. Oops!

Themes



As you discovered in the chapter overview, authors generally have two motivations when they write fiction novels. Firstly, they want to tell a great story and secondly, they usually have something to say about what it means to be human and to live a human life. The ideas about life and humanity that authors explore in their stories are called the themes of a novel.



In *Fireworks and Darkness*, the author, Natalie Jane Prior, explores the theme of choices and of responsibility for those choices. In this extract, Simeon is explaining the consequences of his magical choices to his son, Casimir.

DID YOU KNOW...

The world's biggest library is the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, United States of America. It contains 28 million books and has 532 miles of shelving. If you were driving a car at 112 kilometres an hour, it would take you just under six hours to drive past them all.

FIREWORKS AND DARKNESS

By Natalie Jane Prior

'Think of it Cas. That is the sort of power a magician wields. He creates nothing. He merely manipulates what is already in existence, balancing spell against spell, setting up ripples of disturbance, destroying to build anew in his own image. Let me tell you exactly what that means. It means that when you fell from the machine last night and I caught you, somewhere in the world, a boy your own age had to die. I don't know who he was, or where he lived, but his death was necessary to balance out the power I used to pervert the laws of nature and save you. I killed him, and his death will remain on my conscience, but men like Circastes have no conscience. They are trained to believe that all things and people are expendable to their purposes. I, too, once thought like that. That is why I gave up magic. That is why I know what Circastes does is wrong.'

Casimir said nothing. He was still standing behind the shop counter and Simeon was blocking his way out, but he suddenly found he wanted desperately to get out of the room. Simeon reached out a hand to his shoulder and he recoiled as if he had been struck.

'No! Don't!'

'Casimir, listen—'

'No!'

'Listen to me! This is important. Do you think I haven't spent the whole day chasing this round inside my head, wondering what to say? You're upset, Cas, but I have lived with this for twenty years—twenty years trying to be sure in my heart what is right and what is wrong.'

'How can you say that? How can you talk about what's right and wrong when you've just told me you killed someone?'

'Yes. I killed someone, but I did it to save you.'

Source: Natalie Jane Prior, *Fireworks and Darkness*, HarperCollins, 2002

Fighting Ruben Wolfe explores the themes of growing up and discovering identity. In this extract, the second in this module, Cameron is reflecting on the changes he has noticed in his brother Ruben since he started competitive boxing.

FIGHTING RUBEN WOLFE

by Markus Zusak

I notice a deliberate change in my brother. He's harder. He has a switch, and once a fight comes near, he flicks it and he is no longer my brother Rube. He's a machine. He's a Steve, but different. More violent. Steve's a winner because he's always been a winner. Rube's a winner because he wants to beat the loser out of himself. Steve knows he's a winner, but I think Rube's still trying to prove it to himself. He's fiercer, more fiery, ready to beat all loss from his vision.



He's Fighting Ruben Wolfe.
Or is he actually fighting Ruben Wolfe?
Inside him.
Proving himself.
To himself.
I don't know.

Source: Markus Zusak, *Fighting Ruben Wolfe*, Scholastic, 2000

Breakaway tasks 6

Remembering

1 What happens when Casimir falls from the machine, in the extract from *Fireworks and Darkness*?

2 What change does Cameron notice in his brother, in the extract from *Fighting Ruben Wolfe*?

Understanding

3 Why does Simeon give up magic in the extract from *Fireworks and Darkness*?

4 Why is Ruben such a determined fighter in the extract from *Fighting Ruben Wolfe*?

Applying

5 What is the most difficult choice you have ever had to make? Explain why it was so difficult.

Analysing

6 The theme of the extract from *Fireworks and Darkness* is making choices and taking responsibility for them. The following three statements about this theme can be understood from a close reading of the extract. Copy each statement down and then explain how the author has conveyed the message. The first one has been done for you.

- Every choice has a consequence.

  Prior uses the dialogue between Simeon and Casimir to convey the idea that every choice has a consequence. Simeon explains how magic works by telling Casimir that every spell a magician casts has a consequence somewhere for someone, to maintain a balance in the laws of nature. From this we understand that the same rule applies to the choices we make.

- Not taking responsibility for the choices you make is wrong.
- Sometimes a person has to make a difficult decision.

7 How can boxing be read as a metaphor for growing up and discovering your identity?

Evaluating

8 Do you think Simeon is justified in his choice to save Casimir in the extract from *Fireworks and Darkness*? Explain your answer.

Creating

9 'Novels are worthy of study as there is a lot we can learn from them.'

Using evidence from the extracts or from novels you have studied in class to support your ideas, write a three-paragraph argument in response to this statement.

DID YOU KNOW...

All the novels mentioned in this chapter make excellent reading for young people. Happy reading!

Strands in action

Core task

Creating a graphic representation of a complex concept can make that concept much easier to understand. For example, thinking of the novel as a house can help you understand how novels are constructed.

Is there another way that you can think about novels that would be useful in helping you to remember how they are constructed? Create your own graphic representation of the concept and then make a class display of your ideas.



Extra tasks

1 Choose a novel you have read recently or that you remember well, and identify the features that have been used to construct it. In small groups, present your analysis of your novel. Your presentation should include:

- a brief summary of the plot
- an explanation of how the plot has been structured
- identification of the narrative point of view and setting
- a discussion of the characterisation of the main character
- a brief explanation of the style and any motifs, metaphors or symbols that may have been used
- identification of two themes explored in the novel
- an evaluation of the effectiveness of the novel in conveying its themes.

2 In small groups, devise a jingle to help you remember the correct terminology used for the features of the novel.

3 Devise a plot for a short, short story using the scaffold below. Your plot should have only six main events.

1 Orientation (the setting, the main character's name and the situation they are in)
2 Main plot event 1
3 Main plot event 2
4 Main plot event 3
5 Climax
6 Resolution (how the story ends)

Now roll a dice. Whichever number the dice lands on, from 1 to 6, is the point at which you must begin your story. Devise an effective structure that enables you to tell your entire story. Write your story.

4 Extracts from twelve different novels have been used in this module. Based on your reading of these extracts, order the novels in a list from the one you would most like to read, to the one you would least like to read. For the novel you would most like to read, explain why this is your first choice.

2

The novel: case studies



Now that we have looked closely at how authors construct novels, it's time to examine some novels in depth. *If I Stay* by Gayle Forman and *Inventing Elliot* by Graham Gardner are both dramatic, gripping reads with engaging characters and intriguing plots.

Case study 1: *If I Stay*

If I Stay is the story of seventeen-year-old Mia, whose life is changed forever when she is involved in a car accident that claims the lives of her parents and younger brother. She is badly injured and must decide for herself whether she will 'stay' in the world of the living with her boyfriend, her grandparents and best friend, or whether she will 'leave' the world of the living and join her family. It might sound like a bleak, sad novel, but it is actually an uplifting story about life, love and hope!

The story is narrated in the first person, from Mia's point of view. While she is lying in a coma in the hospital, Mia's spirit leaves her body and observes everything that happens to her, as well as her friends' and relatives' reactions to the tragedy. So in fact we are reading the events of the plot from Mia's spirit's point of view.

As Mia struggles to make her decision, she narrates memories from her past, which ultimately help her to make her choice. The events of the plot, which take place in the hospital, are interspersed with these flashbacks. The flashbacks make up the majority of the novel.

Through Mia's journey, the author, Gayle Forman, explores many central concerns of human life, including discovering identity and making choices. These are two key themes of the novel.

In the following extract, a flashback explores the idea that our choices shape our identity. In this extract, Mia is asking her father about his decision to quit his rock band and become a school teacher.

IF I STAY
By Gayle Forman

'Want to play some chess?' he asked. He was always trying to teach me to play, but I thought it was too much work for a supposed game.

'How about checkers?' I asked.

'Sure.'

We played in silence. When it was Dad's move, I'd steal looks at him in his button-down shirt, trying to remember the fast-fading picture of the guy with peroxided hair and a leather jacket.

'Dad?'

'Hmm.'

'Can I ask you a question?'

'Always.'

'Are you sad that you aren't in a band any more?'

'Nope,' he said.

'Not even a little bit?'

Dad's gray eyes met mine. 'What brought this all on?'

'I was talking to Gramps.'

'Oh, I see.'

'You do?'

Dad nodded. 'Gramps thinks that he somehow exerted pressure on me to change my life.'

'Well, did he?'

'I suppose in an indirect way he did. By being who he is, by showing me what a father is.'

'But you were a good dad when you played in a band. The best dad. I wouldn't want you to give that up for me,' I said, feeling suddenly choked up. 'And I don't think Teddy would, either.'

Dad smiled and patted my hand. 'Mia Oh-My-Uh. I'm not giving anything up. It's not an either–or proposition. Teaching or music. Jeans or suits. Music will always be a part of my life.'

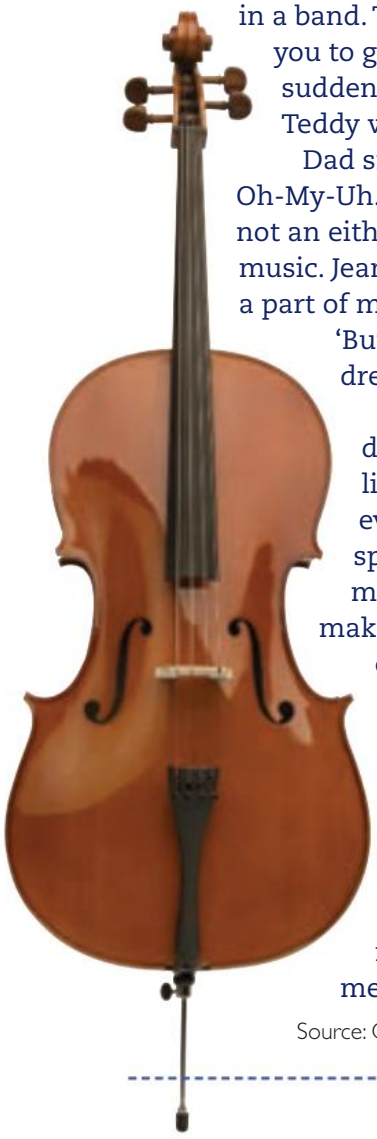
'But you quit the band! Gave up dressing punk!'

Dad sighed. 'It wasn't hard to do. I'd played that part of my life out. It was time. I didn't even think twice about it, in spite of what Gramps or Henry might think. Sometimes you make choices in life and sometimes choices make you. Does that make any sense?'

I thought about the cello. How sometimes I didn't understand why I'd been drawn to it, how some days it seemed as if the instrument had chosen me.

I nodded, smiled, and returned my attention to the game. 'King me,' I said.

Source: Gayle Forman, *If I Stay*, Random House, 2009





Breakaway tasks 7

Remembering

1 What is Mia concerned about in this extract?

2 While they are playing checkers, Mia steals glances at her father. She sees him as he is now and as he looks in her memories. What are the two contrasting images she has of her father?

Understanding

3 How does Gramps help to shape Mia's father's identity?

4 How does Mia misunderstand the role music plays in shaping her father's identity?

5 Why is giving up the band an easy choice for Mia's father to make?

6 What is the connection between making choices and identity?

Applying

7 Describe a major decision that you have made in your life and explain how it has helped to shape the person you are today.

Analysing

8 a How would revisiting her memories help Mia to better understand who she is as a person (her identity)? How might this affect her decision to stay or to leave?

b What structural device is used to convey Mia's memories to the reader?

9 As a class, work out the rules for writing dialogue, as reflected in this extract. Consider such questions as:

- How do you insert narrative with dialogue?
- How do you include thoughts?

Then have a go at writing dialogue following the rules.

Evaluating

10 How true is Mia's father's statement that, 'Sometimes you make choices in life and sometimes choices make you'? Use examples from the extract or your own experiences to support your answer.

Creating

11 Create a mind map, either by hand or electronically, that maps everything you have learnt about identity and making choices from the *If I Stay* extract, your own life experience and other novels you have read.

Case study 2: *Inventing Elliot*

Elliot Sutton is in Year 9 and about to start at a new school. He was the target of violent bullying at his last school and so this time he'll do anything to fit in, even if it means completely reinventing himself.

Elliot does such a great job of appearing strong and indifferent, standing out just enough to fit in, that he is soon noticed by a group of senior boys known as 'the Guardians'. The Guardians are responsible for terrorising the rest of the students. From behind the scenes, the Guardians run the school by setting up 'punishments' to keep students in their places and the Guardians want Elliot to be one of them.

Being a bully is the last thing Elliot wants, but if he says no, he could end up being one of their victims. Elliot has a tough choice to make: which Elliot will he be?

Inventing Elliot explores identity and making choices. The following extract details two major decisions that Elliot faces.

INVENTING ELLIOT

By Graham Gardner

He felt a lot worse after the Guardian session that evening.

All the Guardians had been present, but there had been no training. Instead, they'd given him an order. He had two weeks to decide on someone to be a punisher, a punishment, and someone to be punished.

I have to make a selection.

The first two decisions weren't going to be so hard. There were plenty of kids only too willing and able to terrorise someone, and thinking of a punishment was hardly an effort.

It disturbed him that he thought like that. A few months ago the very idea of making such decisions would have been alien and repugnant—and impossible. But as Richard had said, he was beginning to see the world differently, to think differently. He was beginning to see the world as a stage, filled with actors who obeyed his directions, did what he told them.

Their roles are decided in advance, but you have to make sure they keep to them. Put them back in their place if necessary. It was going to take a lot of getting used to; he wasn't sure he would ever be totally comfortable with it.

But the third decision … He felt cold and hot at the same time, a shivery ache running through him. So far, he had watched and learned. He hadn't thought about the reality of being responsible for a selection, *for a punishment*. It was on another level altogether. *He* was going to decide. Someone would suffer because *he* ordered it. How did he live with that?

What does it matter? the voice hissed. *Just choose someone, anyone, and get it over with. What do you care who it is? Remember: if it's someone else, it isn't you.*

And it wouldn't be Ben either. He could at least hold on to that thought. The first thing he was going to do when he became a fully-fledged Guardian was take Ben's name off the List. *I'll have that power.*

But it didn't make him feel good. Somehow the thought of that power—power over life and death—was almost as awful as not having power at all.

Almost.

'You can see it as an initiation rite,' Richard said. 'To be fully one of us you have to prove yourself. You have to prove you have the strength and the authority to organise this and see it through.

'Then we'll truly know who you are—and so will you.'

Who you are?

Which of me is that?

He had started out as one person—the original Elliot, the ordinary boy with a normal life. Then had come the second Elliot: bullied, weak and helpless. And the third Elliot: cool, indifferent, untouchable, Guardian-in-training. Now, to add to these, was the Elliot he was with Ben—and the Elliot he was for Louise.

Which of them was him? Which was the real Elliot?

Maybe I'm all of them.

Source: Graham Gardner, *Inventing Elliot*, Orion, 2003

Breakaway tasks 8

Remembering

1 How have Elliot's experiences with the Guardians begun to change him?

2 What is the one advantage Elliot can see about becoming a Guardian?

Understanding

3 Why does Elliot want to reinvent himself?

4 Why is choosing a student to be punished such a difficult decision for Elliot?

5 Why doesn't Elliot refuse to make the choice?

Applying

6 Imagine that Elliot has approached you and asked for your advice about his dilemma. What advice would you give him?

Analysing

7 a What simile does Elliot use to describe how he is beginning to see the world?

b What does this simile suggest about Elliot's beliefs about his place in the world?

8 Richard's dialogue reveals what he believes is a true test of a person's identity. What does Richard believe?

9 How can you tell that Elliot is confused about his identity? Give at least two examples.

Evaluating

10 How effective is the use of italics throughout this extract? Support your answer with details from the extract.

Creating

11 Write an inspiring motto that Elliot can repeat to himself to help him through this challenging time in his life.

Writing a text response

The text response is the text you'll probably be asked to write most often as you make your way through high school English. It might seem tricky at first, but if you approach it step by step and plan it carefully, you'll soon see that it is not so difficult after all.

At the start of this chapter, you explored how novels are constructed by thinking of them as houses. The text response is just another type of house! And if you know all the tools and equipment you'll need, and the steps involved in building one, you'll be building strong and sturdy text responses in no time.

There are five steps involved in constructing a good text response:

1 think
2 brainstorm
3 plan
4 write
5 edit.

Let's take a look at each of these steps in detail.

Step 1: Think

Just as a builder begins by thinking about what sort of house they would like and where they might build it, you need to begin by thinking about the question you've been asked and your point of view about it.

In order to do this effectively, you will need to:

- read the question carefully
- underline the key terms and define them
- rephrase the question to be sure you understand exactly what it is asking
- think about the topic and develop your point of view about it.

Step 2: Brainstorm

Next, a builder might brainstorm the types of materials they will need to build their house. You'll need to do this too, brainstorming your ideas about the question, gathering evidence from the text to support your ideas and working out how they might all fit together.

In order to do this effectively, you will need to:

- brainstorm arguments that support your point of view
- find evidence from the text to support your arguments
- organise your arguments into a logical order (your strongest argument usually goes first).

Step 3: Plan

A builder would never start building before they had drawn up the plans for their house—and you should never start writing until you have drawn up a plan for your text response. You need to spend time planning your response by working out which bits of information go into which paragraphs.

In order to do this effectively, you will need to know and understand the structure of a text response. A text response has an introduction, a series of main body paragraphs and a conclusion.

The purpose of your introduction is to prepare your reader for the point of view you are about to argue. Therefore, it should:

- briefly explore the question, showing your understanding of what it is asking, and define any key terms
- clearly state your point of view about the question
- introduce the text(s) you will be discussing
- indicate what will follow in the main body.

The main body of your text response contains your arguments and the evidence you have gathered to support your arguments. The main body consists of a series of paragraphs. As a paragraph should only ever contain one main idea, you should have as many paragraphs in your main body as you have arguments. This is where your brainstorming comes in handy!

Each main body paragraph should include:

- your argument, which forms the topic sentence of your paragraph
- evidence from the text to support your argument
- your understanding or interpretation of the evidence
- a statement that explains how this argument is relevant to your point of view about the question.

By your conclusion, your reader should have already been persuaded to share your point of view, so your conclusion should do more than just summarise what you've already written. An effective conclusion will also make some sort of judgement about the importance of your ideas.

Finish this planning step by organising your ideas from your brainstorming into this structure.

Step 4: Write

Now comes the fun part of actually building your house. Working from your plan, it's time to begin writing your text response.

In order to do this effectively, you need to know what sorts of words to use to express your ideas. A text response should use formal language. That means that the sort of informal words and phrases that you might use when chatting with your friends are not appropriate.

The sorts of words you will need are:

- the correct terminology for the features of the text
- useful verbs for discussing ideas in texts
- effective linking words to join your ideas together.

Step 5: Edit

Lastly, it's time to edit your response. A builder would never let a family move into the house before checking that everything was safe and sturdy and just as it should be. You should make sure that your response is sound, with everything just as it should be, before you let your teacher read it. You do this by carefully editing your work. Careful editing also means that you can be confident of your success before you hand in your response. Use the information provided in the planning and writing steps to create an editing checklist.



Another useful way to construct a main **body paragraph** is to ask yourself these four questions. Each one relates to the four steps listed in the text.

1 What do you know?
2 How do you know it?
3 What does it mean?
4 Why is this relevant?

Strands in action

Core task

Choose one of the questions that follow and write a text response, using either *If I Stay* or *Inventing Elliot*—or both if you feel like a challenge! Use carefully selected examples from the text(s) in your response. The following sample introduction has been provided to help you get started. Use it as a model for your own introduction.

a How do the choices you make in life reflect who you are?

b Difficult situations help us to learn who we really are. Do you agree?

c Every choice has a consequence that we must be prepared to accept. How has this idea been explored in the text you have studied?

Be sure to follow all the steps for constructing a text response carefully. Hand in your planning notes and draft with your final copy.

exploration of question

definition of key terms

When people talk about who they are, they are referring to identity. A person's identity is shaped by family and friends, what they know and believe, and the sorts of experiences they have had in the past. The sort of person they are will influence the choices they make. Smaller decisions might reveal their likes and dislikes, but it is the bigger, more difficult decisions that get to the heart of what they think and believe, and truly reflect who they are as people. Elliot Sutton, the main character in Graham Gardner's novel *Inventing Elliot*, faces some really difficult decisions, such as what sort of image to project and whether or not to become a bully in order to avoid being a victim, when he moves to a new school. The choices he makes when confronted with these decisions help Elliot to discover his true identity.

clear statement of point of view

introduction of text

indication of what will follow in the main body

Extra tasks

1 Consider the themes of the last novel you studied in class. Write three suitable essay questions for exploring these themes.

2 Choose a novel that you have read for pleasure and you think is worthy of study in class. Present a speech in which you justify your choice by explaining the significance of its themes and the details of its construction.

3 Create a glossary of new spelling and vocabulary words from the two extracts provided. Design two activities that your classmates could complete to help them learn these words.

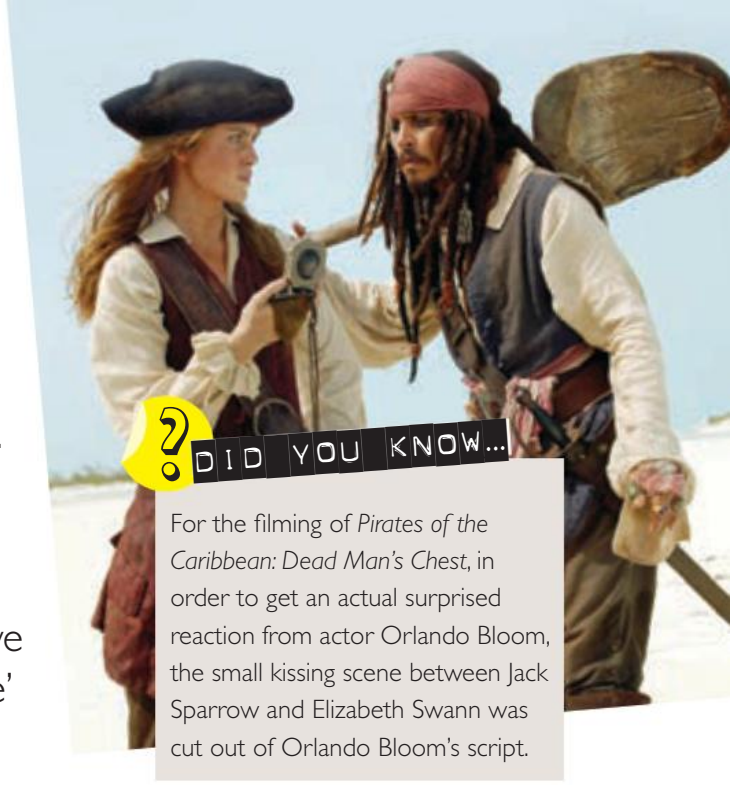


Suitable activities for learning new words include crosswords, find-a-words, quizzes, cloze activities, spelling bees and true or false games.

4 Choose one of the two extracts in this module, or a scene from a novel you have read recently, and present a reading of it to the class. Create a suitable soundtrack as background to enhance the atmosphere.

3

Focus on film



DID YOU KNOW...

For the filming of *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest*, in order to get an actual surprised reaction from actor Orlando Bloom, the small kissing scene between Jack Sparrow and Elizabeth Swann was cut out of Orlando Bloom's script.

Films are also works of fiction, just like novels. They tell entertaining stories and usually show us something about ourselves; that is, what it means to be human. And again, just like novels, films are often carefully constructed to give you the impression that you are watching 'real life' captured on the big screen.

As you have discovered, authors use features such as plot, structure, narrative point of view, characterisation, setting, description, style, metaphors, symbols and so on, to construct novels. Film makers use some of these features too, but as film is a visual medium—not a written medium—film makers also have other tools at their disposal. These include camera work, lighting, music, sound, special effects, costumes and props.

French film maker Jean-Luc Godard once said, 'Cinema is the most beautiful fraud in the world.' Keep this quote in mind as you explore how films are constructed and see if you can explain what he meant!

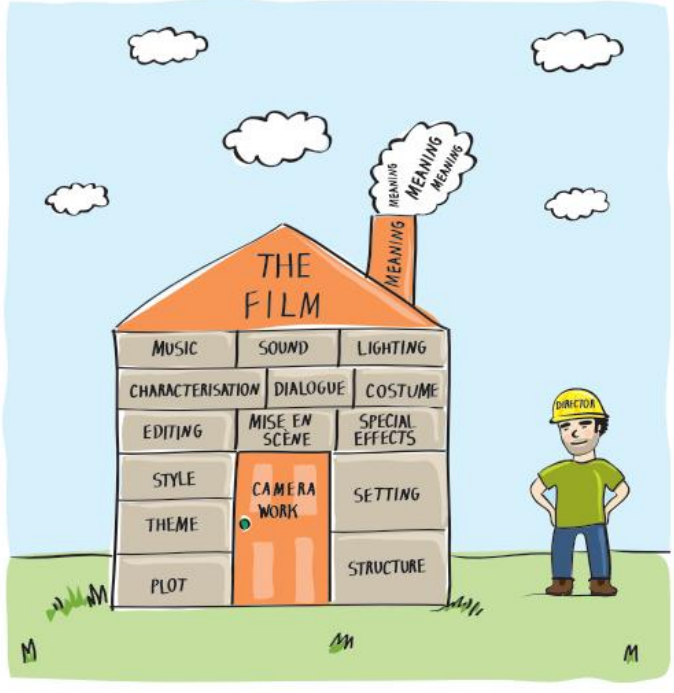
How are films constructed?

Films are constructed by hundreds, sometimes thousands, of people all working in different areas. There are producers, editors, actors, cinematographers, make-up artists, set designers, extras and many more. The most important person on a film set, however, is the director. This is because the director is responsible for the overall vision of the film. Even though different teams of people are responsible for different parts of the film, the director has the final say in every decision that is made. This is why the director is always referred to when analysing a film.

DID YOU KNOW...

The first film to gross more than $100 million at the American box office was *Jaws* in 1975.

In order to understand how novels are constructed, the metaphor of a house was used, with each brick representing a different feature of the novel. This is also a useful way to think about films. In this case, the builder of the film is the director. Examine the graphic below carefully. Which 'bricks' or features of the film are the same as for the novel, and which are unique to film?



Camera work forms the door of this house because it is through the eye of the camera that viewers experience the story. Now let's take a closer look at each of these features by examining how they've been used in Steven Spielberg's *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*.

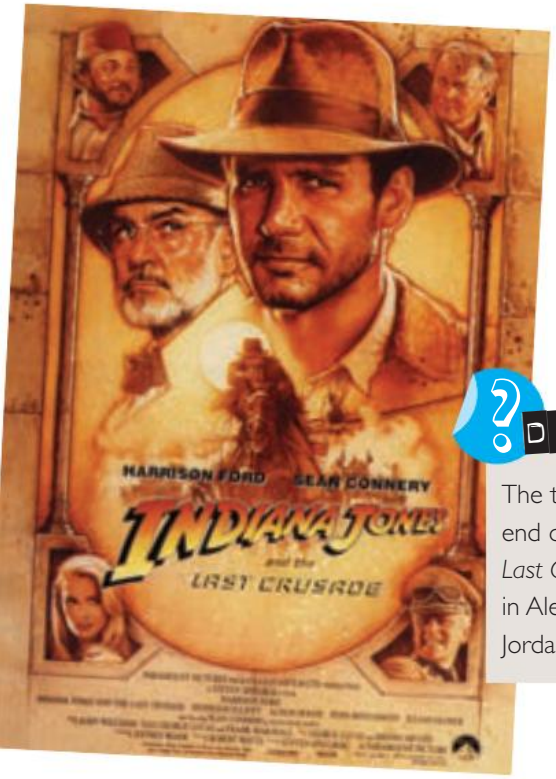
Plot, structure, setting and style



Just like a novel, a film has a plot, structure, setting and style. The plot is written into the script by the scriptwriter before it is brought to life visually by the director. The director and editors choose the order in which the events from the plot will be shown, which creates the structure of the film.

The setting in a film works in much the same way as the setting in a novel. However, the novel is a written text, so the setting must be described for the reader, but a film is a visual text and so instead of description, we 'see' the setting as it is conveyed to us through the camera work.

Just as the language choices an author makes when writing a novel determine the style of the work, the choices a director makes about the camera work, lighting, music and so on combine to create the style of the film.



DID YOU KNOW...

The temple shown at the end of *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* exists, but not in Alexandretta. It is in Petra, Jordan.

DID YOU KNOW...

The character of the one surviving knight in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* is at least 800 years old. He hasn't had any contact with anybody since the Middle Ages, so it's very surprising that he is able to speak modern English!

Characterisation



As you discovered when examining the novel, the process by which a character is created is called characterisation. Characters in film are created through:

- their dialogue (the things they say)
- costume and make-up (their visual appearance)
- gesture and expression (acting)
- responses to, and reactions from, other characters.

The images on the next page show many of the elements of characterisation at work.

Indiana is an adventurer: brave, reckless and quick-thinking. This is reflected in his dress (the leather jacket and wide-brimmed hat); the props he carries (whip and gun); even his sun-bronzed skin. As you watch the movie, you will also notice that Indiana's voice and tone, choice of words, and facial expressions and gestures reflect his adventurous nature and lack of formality.

Indiana's father, Henry, on the other hand, is a scholar: conservative, stubborn and intellectual. He dresses in tweeds and a wool hat, wears glasses, and in some scenes can be seen carrying an umbrella and a briefcase. His speech is more formal and his facial expressions, gestures and movements are all much more restrained than Indiana's.

DID YOU KNOW...

Indy's trademark hat, jacket and whip are currently kept in the Smithsonian National Museum of American History.



In these images, we can see the costumes of the two central characters in the story. Their costumes tell us much about the types of characters they are.



Henry, Indiana's father, the scholar. He wears a tweed suit and a wool hat, a bow tie and glasses. His personal props (not shown) are his umbrella and briefcase.

Indiana Jones, the adventurer. He wears a leather jacket, a wide-brimmed hat and a necktie. His personal props are weapons—a whip and a gun.

Breakaway tasks 9

Remembering

1 List the features of the film.

2 Why is the director always referred to when analysing film?

Understanding

3 What did Jean-Luc Godard mean when he said, 'Cinema is the most beautiful fraud in the world'?

Applying

4 Working in pairs, conduct an interview about the characterisation of the central characters in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. One partner takes the role of the interviewer, the other the role of Steven Spielberg, the director.

Analysing

5 Consider the plot, setting and characterisation in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. Write a paragraph explaining how these features are interdependent. Use examples from the film to support your ideas.

Evaluating

6 If you were to award an Oscar to *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* for one of the following categories, which would you choose? Explain your choice.

- best direction
- best original screenplay
- best set design
- best costume design

Creating

7 Design a web page for a large media distributor to advertise the film *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. Annotate the page showing its features. Explain your choices.

8 Pretend you are Steven Spielberg accepting an award for the category you chose in Question 6. Prepare and present your acceptance speech, outlining your intentions in relation to that category as you directed the film. Remember, you need to sound like a man who has just won an Oscar!

DID YOU KNOW...

India's film industry, Bollywood, is the largest in the world, producing over 800 films a year. Hollywood produces only half of this number in the same time.

The features you have explored are common to both novels and films. Those that follow are unique to film texts. You will look at some definitions first, and then examine how they have been used to construct the final scene of *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*.

Lighting



Lighting refers to the way in which a scene has been illuminated. The lighting indicates what time of day the action is taking place but can also have the important effect of creating atmosphere and mood, or focusing attention on a specific aspect of the scene. Consider, for example, the many dark, poorly lit scenes in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, which help to create the sense of mystery and danger, and the extensive use of firelight, which adds to the historical atmosphere of the plot.

Music and sound



Dialogue forms a crucial part of the sound of a film but an effective analysis of the sound should also consider sound effects and music. The sound effects are fairly easy to recognise, such as the screeching of the rats in the scene in Venice, when Indiana and Elsa find the tomb of the knight, or the whoosh of the fire as the match hits the petroleum. The music, however, sits in the background and viewers are often not conscious of it.

Music is important in films as it helps to create the mood and atmosphere of the various scenes. Note, for example, when the theme song for *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* plays during the film. It is an upbeat and triumphant melody and is usually played when Indiana has escaped from or outsmarted his enemies.

Special effects



'Special effects' is the term used to describe any visual elements of a film that are either impossible or impractical to produce during actual filming. Special effects are added to a film during the editing process. Since *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* was made in 1989, there have been huge advancements in digital technology and, as a consequence, amazing new effects are possible in modern films. Nevertheless, Donovan's transformation from a healthy man to a rotting skeleton when he drinks from the false cup in the final scene is still highly effective!

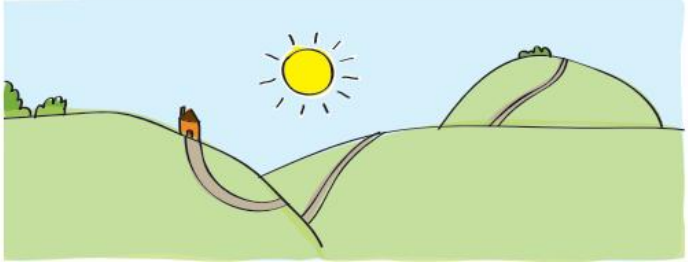
Camera work

Camera work refers to any decisions made about the placement or movement of a camera during filming. There are numerous different possibilities available to film makers. Here are some of the more common ones.

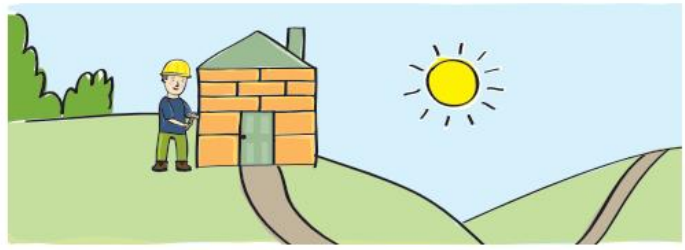
Camera shots

The type of camera shot is the result of the distance between the camera and the subject being filmed. You have probably used the zoom button on your camera to get closer to or further away from a subject you are photographing—camera shots in films work much the same way. The three basic camera shots that feature a specific subject are long shot, mid-shot and close-up, but there are a number of variations, some of which are shown here.

1 Establishing shot: usually contains a lot of landscape and is used to show the setting of the film or a particular scene.



2 Long shot: shows a character within a setting. This helps us to understand what the character might experience physically in this setting.



3 Mid-shot: shows the characters from the waist up and is usually used when conversations are being filmed. The mid-shot helps to focus attention on the action.



4 Close-up: focuses on the face of a character or a particular object. It is used to show emotions or to tell us that this object is important.



5 Extreme close-up: focuses attention on part of a character's face or an object. The eyes and mouth are most commonly captured in extreme close-ups as they can reveal a lot about the character's emotions. When used on objects, it focuses attention on a particularly important detail.



6 Point-of-view: sometimes when we are watching a film, we get the impression that we are seeing exactly what the character is seeing; that the camera and the character's eyes are the same thing. This is called a point-of-view shot and works much like the narrative point of view of a novel.

Camera angles

As well as altering the distance between the camera and the object being filmed, film makers can also choose the angle from which the object is filmed. This is just like squatting down, or standing on a chair to take a photograph. There are three common camera angles used in film making.

1 High angle: the object or character is filmed from above, with the camera looking down. This can make the object or character appear small, vulnerable, powerless or insignificant. A birds-eye view shot is a more extreme version of this.



2 Eye level: the camera is positioned level with the object or character being filmed. This gives a 'real life' effect to the shot.



3 Low angle: the object or character is filmed from below, with the camera looking up. This can make the object or character appear large, powerful or majestic.



Mise en scène

Mise en scène is a French term that translates as 'place in scene'. Films are deliberately and carefully constructed and this extends right down to the very last prop. This means that whatever is in a camera shot has been deliberately placed there for a particular purpose. When you analyse the significance of the props in a particular shot, you are discussing mise en scène.



Editing



Editing a film is an important part of the film-making process and is usually part of the film's 'post-production' phase, although it may start earlier, while the filming is still taking place.

The editor receives all of the raw footage that has been captured by the camera operator during the production process. From here the editor's job is to select from it, organise it and modify it according to the instructions given by the director or other key production staff.

As you can imagine, editing a film is a time-consuming job. Not only does the editor need to sort through often hundreds of hours of footage, they must also match up dialogue, music and sound effects to the appropriate footage.

When assembling the footage, the editor must be very conscious of the story and edit the scenes in a way that is appropriate to the genre. For example, a car chase scene will usually require a sequence of rapidly changing shots, with camera angles shifting every few seconds. The editor will probably include wide shots and long shots so that the context of the car chase is achieved. They may also include close-ups of the drivers' faces or the smoke coming off their wheels as they turn a corner. By using quick cuts and variations in shot type, the editor can create a sense of speed and urgency. By contrast, when editing a dinner scene in a romantic film, the editor may choose to use more close-ups and will often allow for longer pauses in conversations.

For something like a car chase, the editor will also often include loud and dramatic music, plus the inevitable tire screeches and smashing of metal and glass. For a romantic scene, the music will be much softer, and you might also notice that the lighting and sound is deliberately subdued in order to create the right mood.

Film techniques in action

The frames below are from the final scene of *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. The scene begins with the discovery of the Canyon of the Crescent Moon and the resting place of the Grail, and finishes with the destruction of the temple and Indiana, his father and Brody's narrow escape. Note the various camera shots and angles used and the way they help to shape meaning.

Breakaway tasks 10

Remembering

1 What three elements constitute the sound of a film?

2 What is mise en scène?

Understanding

3 What is the difference between camera shots and camera angles?

Applying

4 As the director, you have been asked to film a scene of the following action:

> A young man arrives at the beach to go for a swim. He drops his towel on the sand and walks towards the water. He wades into the shallows. Then he begins to swim. A shark is in the area. The shark swims towards the man and attacks him. The man disappears under the water.

Create a storyboard for the action as you would shoot it, indicating which camera shots and angles you would choose and how you would edit the frames together. Choose some music to go with it.

Analysing

5 Complete an analysis of the film techniques used to create meaning in the final scene of *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. Use the frames provided as the basis of your analysis.

Evaluating

6 Choose a film that you have seen recently, or one that you know well, and write a review of it, evaluating at least three different features of the film.

Creating

7 Work in pairs to design a small action sequence. One of you will perform while the other captures the action with a digital camera in a series of photographs. Use suitable software to create your own moving scene. You might like to add some music to enhance the atmosphere of your sequence.











Strands in action

Core task

Stage your own Academy Awards.

a Using what you have learnt about film construction in this chapter, as a class decide on the range of awards you will present.

b Form small groups and choose one of the awards, making sure that no two groups choose the same award. Each group must then nominate three films that are worthy of that particular award.

c Using suitable software, create a presentation that highlights the merits of each nominated film, thereby justifying the film's inclusion as a nominee for this particular award.

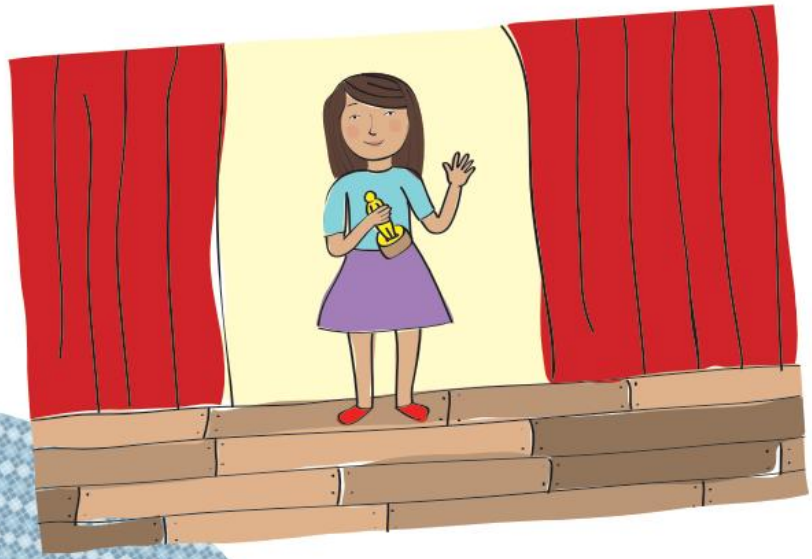
d After viewing each presentation, the class votes on the winner of the award.

Extra tasks

1 Working in small groups, write, film and edit your own film. If you don't have the time or equipment to actually make a film, write the script of a film and create a storyboard that shows how it should be filmed. Don't forget to include the camera shots and angles you would use and the appropriate sound that accompanies each frame.

2 Make a list of your ten favourite songs and find a copy of the lyrics of each. Invent a story for a musical film that uses all of your songs in an authentic way. Write the story, making sure to indicate at what moments the songs would play. (You could watch the film *Mamma Mia* for inspiration.)

3 Create your own film discussion chat room and chat about your favourite films.



4

Case study: *Son of Rambow*



Now that you have explored how films are created, it's time to apply what you've learnt. As you watch the case study film, *Son of Rambow*, remember that as well as enjoying the story, you need to be actively engaged so you can spot all the visual and auditory techniques employed by the director.

Son of Rambow is the story of two young boys, Lee Carter and Will Proudfoot, two outsiders who form an unlikely friendship when they make a short film together. Will uses his imagination to escape his stifling home environment and Lee resorts to being the school bully to deal with his anger over his isolated home life.

Inspired by *Rambo: First Blood*, the two boys set out to make an action epic of their own. Along the way they make new friends, learn about loyalty and brotherhood and get themselves into more than a little bit of trouble.

After viewing the film, complete the following activities.



Breakaway tasks 11

Remembering

1. What does Will give to Lee for taking the blame at school?
2. Which country is Didier from?
3. What is the name of the film Lee and Will are making?
4. List five features of Didier's costume that make him a cool teenager of the 80s.

Understanding

5. Both Lee and Will face significant challenges in their home lives. What are these challenges and how are they different?
6. Lee and Will could be considered outsiders in their community. How are you shown that they are outsiders? Provide two examples for each boy.
7. Will lives in a world of imagination. Give two examples from the film that support this statement.
8. Why do you think *Rambo: First Blood* captured Will's imagination so completely?
9. What factors bring the two boys together?

DID YOU KNOW...

Fifty-seven men are killed by Rambo during the course of the film *Rambo: First Blood*.

10 At different points in the film, each boy tells the other that 'this has been the best day of all time'. Describe what is happening in both these moments of the film and explain why those days are so important for each boy.

Applying

11 The inspiration for Lee and Will's film, *Son of Rambow*, comes from Will's drawings. Watch the final scene again, where their film is shown at the cinema. Choose a scene from their film and draw the illustrations that might have formed the inspiration for that scene.

DID YOU KNOW...

During the 'Flying Dog' scene there is clearly no wind, but the kite holding the dog has no problem flying. That's odd!

Analysing

12 The two boys are very different in personality. How can you tell? Using what you know about characterisation, analyse how Lee and Will have been characterised. Justify your analysis by offering examples of costuming, dialogue, gesture and expression.

13 Clocks and watches form a recurring motif throughout the film. Explain three ways in which they are significant.

14 What is ironic about the scene on the bus when Didier and the other students leave England?

15 The film that Lee and Will make has a huge impact on both their lives. How are their lives changed as a result of this film?

Evaluating

16 Lee and Will's friendship grows over the course of the film, but it also faces many challenges. The frames in the following film strip show several key moments in their friendship.

- a Explain what is happening in each frame.
- b Comment on the status and nature of their friendship in each frame.
- c Evaluate the moments and decide which two are the most significant in the development of their friendship. Explain your choices.

17 What have you learnt about the value of friendship and brotherhood from this film? Write three clear statements and then share your ideas with the class.



Creating

18 Keep a notebook by your bed every night for a week. When you have had a particularly vivid dream, take a few moments to jot down some notes about it. Use your notes to create a five-panel comic strip of your dream. If you don't dream, or struggle to remember your dreams, create a comic strip of a dream you would love to have!

Strands in action

Core task

Using the scaffold for writing text responses provided earlier in this chapter, write a text response for *Son of Rambow* that explores the following idea: 'Friendship takes an ordinary life and makes it extraordinary'.

Word banks

Creating word banks that you can access while you are writing is a useful strategy for making the writing process quicker and easier. Use the following word banks as a starting point for creating your own.

Terminology word bank: plot, characterisation, narrative point of view, dialogue, setting, structure, motif, symbol, metaphor, style, theme, lighting, music, sound, camera shots and angles, mise en scène, editing, special effects

Useful verbs word bank: shows, suggests, examines, explores, implies, emphasises, illustrates, demonstrates, influences, develops, explains, criticises

Effective linking words word bank: consequently, for this reason, therefore, thus, however, although, but, yet, despite, whereas, while, similarly, likewise, furthermore, in addition, in contrast, alternatively

Extra tasks

1. Imagine yourself as the son or daughter of your favourite film character. Write a diary entry that covers a typical day in your life.
2. Choose a film that you have seen that explores the theme of friendship. Analyse a key scene that explores this theme in detail. Present your analysis in a slide presentation.

DID YOU KNOW...

The spider used in the 2002 film *Spider-Man* was a Steatoda spider, not a black widow. The spider was given an anaesthetic, and was then painted blue and red.

3. Make a list of your five favourite films. Choose characters, settings, plot events and themes from all of them and merge them together to create a brand new story. Present your new story as a picture book.



FOCUS ON LANGUAGE

Chapter overview

We can learn a lot about the craft of writing from listening to successful authors talk about their own writing process. Here, in a magazine interview, well-known author J. K. Rowling shares her insights into what it takes to be successful at writing, and explains what motivated her to write the Harry Potter series.

'You have to resign yourself to wasting lots of trees before you write anything really good. That's just how it is. It's like learning an instrument. You've got to be prepared for hitting wrong notes occasionally, or quite a lot. That's just part of the learning process. And read a lot. Reading a lot really helps. Read anything you can get your hands on.'

About her own writing, Rowling says that, in some ways, she just writes what she sees in her mind. 'I have a very visual imagination. I see a situation and then I try to describe it as vividly as I can. And I do love writing dialog. Dialog comes to me as though I'm just overhearing a conversation.'

The author maintains that she's not really surprised by the fact that adults enjoy her books as much as children do. 'When I write the books, I really do write them for me. Very often I get asked, 'Who do you have in mind when you write? Is it your daughter or is it the children you've met?' No. It's for me. Just for me. I'm very selfish: I just write for me. So the humour in the books is really what I find funny.'

J. K. Rowling, in an interview with Lindie Richards, *January Magazine*, 2003

1

Spelling rules



Good writers know that they have to work hard to make sure their intended meaning is always clear and that the message they want to share is logically expressed. Even the best-selling J. K. Rowling knows that writing is a process that has to be worked through—and it can be a lot of hard work.

Knowing the basics of your language makes writing a simpler task because you are playing by the rules. J. K. Rowling's idea of language as an 'instrument' recognises that you have to be able to 'play' the simple notes before you can 'compose' more sophisticated pieces of work. She also says that you have to keep reading to keep learning from other writers, whether it is the way they construct their sentences, the stories that they tell or the words that they use. Even a good writer can keep developing their craft. After all, you don't stop listening to other people's music when you become a musician!

DID YOU KNOW...

Even though she had completed the Harry Potter books, J. K. Rowling needed to know 'what happened next' to all her characters, so she drew up a family tree detailing their marriages and children in the future. See her website for more information about the writer and her characters.

Spelling is important

You might ask why spelling is important. As long as people can get an idea about what you are trying to say, surely it doesn't matter if you leave out the odd 'e' or put in a couple of extra letters? After all, SMS text messages can be perfectly well understood and they don't have to follow the rules of spelling.

True enough! But text messaging still operates on a set of established rules and conventions. People who don't understand them simply don't have a clue what others are talking about—really handy if it's your mum and dad who don't understand what you are saying to your friends!

But writing is about including people—not excluding them from a secret code. You want as many people as possible to be able to read, understand and identify with what you have written.

For example, as you read the following message, see if you can work out what the author is trying to say:

> Dere mum and dad,
>
> Ive gone shoping with sonny and sum frends from school. Bee hom bout sevin. Mum ya bos callid she neds a copy of the riporet fist thin in the mourning. Suses skool ranged to tull us that she had to go to hopsital. She broked her too. Ken you plese rung her principal?
>
> Luv Ed

By the time Mum and Dad work out what's happening, Susie's toe will have been set and Ed will be back from the shops!

The reason you have to learn to spell properly is simple. Letters are the individual notes that form the pieces of language. Hitting the wrong note will change your meaning and send discordant messages.

Spelling rules, therefore, are crucial for good writing and clear meaning.

The *ei* and *ie* rule

One of the best rules to remember for spelling is this one:

> *i* before *e* except after *c* (fr*ie*nd; rec*ei*ve) and if the sound made is *ay* (as in v*ei*n)

While this is a general rule, there are some words that are exceptions to the rule. For example:

> Neither foreign sovereign seized (the) counterfeit (and) forfeited leisure.

You might like to learn the exception words as a sentence!

As a general guide, the rule applies when the word is a base word. When suffixes or prefixes are added to the word, exceptions to the rule may occur.

Breakaway tasks 1

Understanding

1 Copy the following words into your notebook, inserting *ie* or *ei* into each to complete the word.

- ach__ve
- bel__ve
- c__ling
- ch__f
- conc__t
- f__ld
- n__ce
- perc__ve
- rec__pt
- rec__ve
- r__gn
- surv__llance
- th__r
- v__l
- v__n

Evaluating

2 Below are words that are exceptions to the *ie* and *ei* rule. Find the patterns in the spelling and develop a statement that covers the exceptions.

reinvent	ageing	ancient	fancies
reissue	being	science	mercies
reiterate	canoeing	efficient	policies
reignite	fleeing	sufficient	pharmacies
reinstall	tiptoeing	conscience	currencies
reinstate	singeing	proficiently	emergencies
reinforce	dyeing	conscientiously	fallacies

Sh words

You know that words are broken up into syllables and that when you come to spell them you try to match your spelling to those sounds. In English, however, there are some sounds that can have a number of spellings and this can, at times, become confusing.

The sound (or phonogram) *sh*, for instance, can be made by combining the following letters:

- *sh*—ship, dish, wash
- *ti*—nation, rational
- *ci*—crucial, magician
- *si*—tension, session

Try to remember these rules for the *sh* sound to help you with your spelling:

1 *Sh* is used at the beginning or at the end of a base word or at the end of a syllable, for example 'polish'.

2 *Sh* is not used in the middle of a word, except as part of a word ending '-ship', for example 'relationship'.

3 You should look at the original base word to help you determine whether the middle sound should be a *ci* or *ti* sound. For example, 'music' becomes 'musician'; 'collect' becomes 'collection'.

4 *Si* is used for the sound *sh* when the syllable before it ends in an *s*, for example 'session'.

Breakaway tasks 2

Applying

Explain which of the rules (1–4 above) apply to the following *sh* words:

Word	Rule	Word	Rule
condition		infection	
national		rational	
partition		patience	
impartial		magician	
confidential		musician	
session		action	
torrential		proficiency	
physician		section	
comradeship		discussion	
division		comprehension	

Silent *e* rules

To understand the spelling rules associated with the letter *e*, you first need to understand some rules concerning vowels and consonants.

Vowels (*a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*) make more than one sound:

Vowel	First sound (short sound)	Second sound (long sound)	Third sound
a	bat (*a* sound)	make (*ay* sound)	vast (*ar* sound)
e	egg (e sound)	me (ee sound)	pretty (*i* sound)
i	if (*i* sound)	ice (*eye* sound)	
o	ox (*o* sound)	open (*owe* sound)	do (*oo* sound)
u	up (*uh* sound)	unicorn (*you* sound)	put (*ooh* sound)

Note that the second sound for vowels is the name of the letter.

Most consonants (letters other than vowels) make only one sound. For example, listen to the sound *b* in the following words: banana, rub, bicycle, bereft, ruby. They all make the same sound.

There are two consonants, however, that make two sounds:

Consonant	First sound	Second sound
c	cat, carrot, click	cent, cinder, cycle
g	garage, goanna, glib	gent, ginger, gymnasium

When the letters *c* or *g* are followed by the letters *e*, *i* or *y*, they make the second sound.

In English, the letter *y* is used as both a consonant and a vowel.

Letter	Consonant sound	Vowel sound 1	Vowel sound 2
y	yacht, yoyo (*yeh* sound)	baby (*i* sound; same as the first vowel sound for *i*)	my (*eye* sound; same as the second vowel sound for *i*)

There are five generally known spelling rules for the silent *e*.

Rule 1: the bossy *e* rule

The presence of the silent *e* tells you to make the vowel say its second sound. Look at what happens to the vowel in the following examples:

rat + e = rate pip + e = pipe

In both cases, the silent *e* makes the vowel say its second sound.

Rule 2: English words do not end in the letters *u* or *v*

Since English words do not end in *u* or v, you use a silent *e* at the end of the word for spelling. For example:

blue glove

Rule 3: A silent *e* makes *c* or *g* say its second sound

'Chanc' and 'chang' don't make much sense on their own, but look what happens when you put a silent *e* on the end of the word.

chance change

The silent *e* forces the consonants to say their second sounds.

Rule 4: Every syllable must contain a vowel

There is no vowel in the second syllable of 'li-tl' so it must be given a silent *e*:

lit-tle

Rule 5: The exceptional *e*

English is a funny language! Sometimes we use words that have been adopted from other languages. Or, as time has passed, we no longer pronounce words as we once did. The fact is, in many of these words, the *e* no longer has a function. Examples include:

more are

Breakaway tasks 3

Applying

In your notebook, explain which of the rules on the page opposite apply to the following silent e words:

Word	Rule
glare	
globe	
freeze	
true	
alone	
charge	
excuse	
picture	
unable	
where	
violence	
gentle	
please	
income	
were	
riddance	
noise	
office	
fence	
there	

Double letters: *l*, *r* and *t*

When you are spelling words it is often confusing to try and work out whether you should double the final letter of the word before you add a suffix. In fact, this rule is easy to remember. If a word has one vowel before the last letter, then you need to double the last letter. For example:

expel + ed = expelled
bat + ing = batting
stir + ed = stirred

All these words have one vowel before the final letter; therefore, it needs to be doubled.

Exceptions

For the letters *l* and *r* ...

If there are two vowels before the final letter, then the consonant is not doubled.

prevail + ing = prevailing
moor + ed = moored

The word has two vowels before the *r*; it does not need to be doubled.

For the letter *t*

The letter *t* is a bit trickier. If it is a one-syllable word, but it has two vowels before it then you do not need to double the letter *t*. (Hint: this is the same rule as for the letters *r* and *l*.)

pout + ing = pouting ('pout' has two vowels before the letter *t*; it does not need to be doubled)

However, if the word has more than one syllable then the decision to double the letter *t* depends on whether or not the *t* is emphasised (or accented) when the word is pronounced.

If the emphasis is on the first syllable, do not double the *t*. For example:

ballot = ball-ot; ballot-ed = balloted

If the emphasis is on the second syllable, double the *t*. For example:

submit = sub + mit; submit + ed = submitted

Breakaway tasks 4

Applying

Using the rules above, combine the words below with their suffixes in brackets to correctly spell the new words.

a boil (-ed)
b pale (-ing)
c seat (-ing)
d repeat (-ing)
e fulfil (-ing)
f conceal (-ed)
g expel (-ed)
h cheat (-ing)
i reveal (-ed)
j trot (-ing)

2

Grammar: sentence structures



Just as a good musician composes in movements or sections, so too does a writer plan each section or sentence that they construct so that it has an internal logic and can be read clearly and simply. There are rules that help every writer shape a sentence so that the message is never lost.

Subject and predicate

Every sentence is made up of two parts: the subject and the predicate.

The **subject** is *what* or *who* the sentence is about.

The **predicate** is the rest of the sentence. It consists of a verb and all the words that describe the verb and complete the sentence's meaning. For example:

Amanda answered all of the questions.

Subject — Predicate

The subject might come at the beginning, middle or end of a sentence. For example:

What time does the bus arrive at this station?

In this sentence, 'the bus' is the subject. 'What time does' and 'arrive at this station' are the predicate, even though they have been split by the subject.

Subjects are not always singular; often 'they' or 'we' or 'Sid and Nancy' are the multiple subjects of a sentence.

Breakaway tasks 5

Applying

1 Copy the following sentences into your notebook and circle the subject.

a Julia was excited by the film.

b I ran around the block this morning.

c The elephant trumpeted its pleasure in the water.

d During the press conference the journalist took notes.

e He was honoured to win the award.

f Up and down the hills ran the shepherd and his flock of sheep.

g Running is her favourite pastime.

h Every seventy-six years Halley's Comet can be seen in the night sky.

i How lovely of you to bring the food for the feast.

j Melbourne and Canberra have both been home to Federal Parliament.

2 Using the subjects listed below, write sentences that provide interesting predicates.

- banana
- centre
- choir
- sunglasses
- cereal
- house
- vase
- television
- shirt
- display

Subjects and verbs

There are two main rules about sentences.

Rule 1: Every sentence expresses at least one clear thought about a subject.

Rule 2: Every sentence has a subject and a verb.

Look at the following example:

Kate hugged James.

'Kate' is the subject because she is the one performing the action.

'Hugged' is the verb because it indicates the action.

If a sentence doesn't have both a subject and a verb it is called a fragment or an incomplete sentence. For example, 'hugged James' is a fragment or part of a sentence because it has only a verb (hugged) but no subject (we don't know who hugged James).

Multiple subjects and verbs

What happens when there is more than one subject or more than one verb? These are called compound subjects or verbs. The rule is that they are joined by a conjunction. For example:

Kate and Sofia hugged James.

'Kate and Sofia' is the compound subject because there are two subjects (Kate and Sofia) relating to the same verb (hugged) and they are joined by a conjunction, in this case 'and'.

The sentence 'Kate hugged and kissed James' contains a compound verb because it has two verbs (hugged and kissed) relating to the same subject (Kate) joined by a conjunction (and).



You can locate the **subject** in a sentence simply by asking 'who or what' is performing the action indicated by the verb.

Breakaway tasks 6

Applying

1 Decide if the following are full sentences or incomplete sentences.

- a Mum likes to go shopping on Friday nights.
- b Riding to the swimming pool.
- c Has very heavy rainfall.
- d Eliza did little to change the way she spoke.
- e My Blu-ray collection would be bigger if they sold more Blu-ray discs.
- f Far away from civilisation.

Understanding

2 The extract below is about the famous Australian David Unaipon, whose face is on the Australian $50 note. Copy the extract about David Unaipon into your notebook. In each of the sentences, underline the subject and highlight the verb.

ONLINE ARTICLE

WHO IS DAVID UNAIPON?

By Anita Heiss

A Ngarrindjeri man born in 1872 at Raukkan (Point McLeay) in the Tailem Bend area of the Murray River, David Unaipon was a writer, a scientist and a public speaker.

David Unaipon was the first Aboriginal person in Australia to write and publish a book. His two most famous books are *Aboriginal Legends* (1927) and *Native Legends* (1929). He also wrote another book called *Myths and Legends of the Australian Aboriginals* in 1930, but someone else by the name of William Ramsay Smith published it without David Unaipon's permission, or his name on it.

David Unaipon also wrote his autobiography called *My Life Story* in 1954, but many of the things he wrote didn't get published in books at all, and some of his writings are being kept safe in places like the Mitchell Library at the State Library of New South Wales.

David Unaipon was also known as an inventor! That's right! In 1909 he invented a tool for shearing sheep and then spent much of his

life searching for the secret of perpetual motion, which means something that can run forever without any help. David Unaipon had great ideas but he didn't have enough money to research and develop them.

Some people thought of David Unaipon as 'Australia's Leonardo' because of the great ideas he had. He even thought about how the boomerang was like a helicopter propeller flying through the air. This was way back in 1914 before we even had helicopters! Just shows how smart David Unaipon was and how smart Aborigines were for inventing the boomerang!

Because he was a man with a great talent for writing and a mind for inventing things, David Unaipon was acknowledged by having an image of his face put on the Australian $50 note in 1995. That's when the money changed from paper to that plastic kind of stuff it is today.

Apart from these exciting things that made David Unaipon famous and liked by all, he also worked very hard to make life better for Aboriginal people. He lived most of his life in Adelaide and worked for the Aborigines Friends' Association for a long time. With his job he travelled around a lot of south-eastern Australia, giving lectures and sermons and sharing Aboriginal legends and culture with anyone who wanted to listen.

David Unaipon was married to Katherine Carter (nee Sumner), a Tangani woman from the Coorong. He died on 7 February 1967 and was buried in the Point McLeay cemetery. Since then he has been honoured by posthumously winning (that means he won it after he died) the FAW Patricia Weickhardt Award for Aboriginal writers in 1985. Then in 1988, the University of Queensland Press established the 'David Unaipon Award' to honour him and to support new Aboriginal writers to get their books into print too.

Source: ABC website, 2004

Connecting ideas: clauses and sentences

Clauses

A clause is the basic grammatical unit of a sentence. It usually contains a subject and a predicate. While a simple sentence consists of a single clause, a clause does not always form a complete sentence. For example, the following are both examples of clauses:

When the storm broke (requires more information to complete the sentence)

The small boat drifted in to port. (a complete sentence, requires no more information to make sense)

Simple sentences

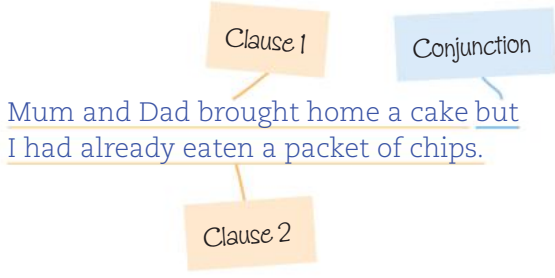
A sentence should form a complete thought, an idea, and make sense regardless of how many or how few words it contains.

Simple sentences are made up of one clause; that is, they contain a subject (a noun or pronoun) and a verb. For example:



Compound sentences

What if you have more than one thought or idea that you want to communicate? Then you use a compound sentence. A compound sentence is made up of two or more equally important clauses and is usually joined by a conjunction. For example:



Complex sentences

A complex sentence contains a main clause and subordinate clause. The subordinate clause does not make sense by itself; that is, it can't stand on its own. For example:

I climbed the lighthouse because the keeper let me.

Main clause

Subordinate clause

Using clauses

Clauses come in two broad categories: finite and non-finite.

- A finite clause contains a clear subject and is usually the main clause in a sentence. For example:

  I was eating my dinner …

  Finite clause

- A non-finite clause is always a subordinate clause but usually lacks a subject. It generally presents the information in the shortest possible way. For example:

  She asked to eat dinner first.

  Non-finite clause

Using tenses

In English grammar, the word 'tense' means time. The tense of a verb tells you *when* an action occurs. There are three simple tenses—past, present and future.

The **past tense** of a verb suggests that the action has already taken place. For example:

Michael *worked* for the Department of Defence.

This tense usually ends in '-ed' or '-d'. Sometimes the words 'was' or 'were' indicate the use of past tense and in these situations, the verb has '-ing' added to it.

The **present tense** of a verb refers to an action that is currently taking place. For example:

Michael *works* for the Department of Defence.

The **future tense** of a verb refers to something that is yet to happen or will happen in the future. For example:

Michael *will work* for the Department of Defence.

The future tense of a verb can be identified by the presence of the words 'will' or 'shall'.



To make your sentences interesting, try varying the types of sentences that you use. Remember that simple sentences can be just as effective in getting your idea across as complex sentences. The key is to make sure that your sentences are clear and that you use the rules of sentence construction appropriately so that they make sense.

Breakaway tasks 7

Applying

a Using your knowledge of clauses, and compound and complex sentences, convert the following paragraph of simple sentences into a more sophisticated and interesting piece of writing.

Mehindu crept cautiously towards the cave. The sun was setting in the distance. He could hear the muffled voices. He knew that the thieves were lurking in there. They were waiting to capture him. He wanted the jewels back. It was hard being an amateur sleuth. The fire flickered. There were shadows dancing on the cave wall. It was silent. Mehindu held his breath. He reached carefully into his backpack. The small torch felt comfortable in his hand. Out of the darkness a voice boomed. 'Stay where you are!'

b The paragraph above is written in the past tense. Rewrite it in the present tense.

c See if you can write the paragraph in the future tense. What kinds of changes will you make to the narrative to achieve that?

d Now continue the story in whichever tense you choose, using a variety of sentences to make your writing interesting.



3

Vocabulary: making it more interesting



A good piece of writing, like a good piece of music, needs both technique and creativity. All the instruments must play together in harmony to make the piece readable. A skilled music composer uses emotion and technique and their deep knowledge of their craft to enhance the experience for the listener. A writer does this by varying their vocabulary and taking advantage of the many nuances and subtleties that the English language offers.

How can I improve my creative writing?

Few people can produce a polished piece of writing that accurately and concisely conveys their intended meaning without going through the process of drafting and editing. Indeed, some authors can take many years to labour over their words, refining and refining again until they feel that their work is in the best form that it can be.

As students, you do not always have the luxury of days, hours, weeks or even years to produce your work. It is important, therefore, that you are aware of as many techniques as you can be and that you try to incorporate them naturally and effectively into your own writing.

Similes

As the name suggests, a simile indicates that one thing is similar to another thing. It is an effective tool as it helps to create pictures in the reader's mind, by leading the reader to make a comparison. You can determine whether a sentence includes a simile by the presence of the words 'like' or 'as (something) ... as'. For example:

She devoured her food *like a boa constrictor*.

He sat at the table *as regally as a king*.



Breakaway tasks 8

Applying

Develop similes for each of the following. Remember that they must make a comparison and contain the words 'like' or 'as ... as'.

a The way in which the trees stand in the forest

b The way he searches for a car park

c The noise from a rock concert

d The taste of a chocolate bar

e The colour of her sports car

Metaphors

A metaphor describes one thing as another thing. The original object, person or thing is given the qualities of another thing. For example:

Her words were *weapons designed to wound*.

His teeth are *tombstones* in his mouth.

The leaves were *tears* from *mourning* trees.

Personification

When you describe objects as having human qualities and characteristics, you are using personification. For example:

The wind *blows us a kiss* and *lifts us into the air*.

The car *coughs* into life and *shudders* in the cold.

The storm *marches* across the plains and *beats its heavy drums*.

Alliteration

Alliteration is the repetition of the initial sound of a word. It can be an effective tool in your writing as it helps to give a natural rhythm to your writing. Many headlines in newspapers use alliteration to grab the attention of their readers. For example:

The soldiers stand silently before their sergeant.

The flags fly furiously above the fort.

Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeic words are simply words that sound like what they mean. For example:

The bicycle wheels *screeched* as he hit the brakes.

The rain *plip-plopped* upon the pavement.

The kettle *whistled* its morning song.

The air mattress *wheezed* inside the tent.

Breakaway tasks 9

Applying

1 Use metaphors to describe the following:
   a a lighthouse
   b a person who is lonely
   c shoppers on Christmas Eve
   d the smell of your friend's feet
   e suburbia.

2 Use personification to describe the following:
   a city buildings
   b classroom furniture
   c the mountain range
   d the vacant house
   e an orchestra.

3 Work your way through the letters of the alphabet and see how many interesting alliterative sentences you can come up with.

4 Write sentences that use onomatopoeic words to describe the following:
   a rain on a tin shed
   b the sound of electricity
   c the sound of falling books
   d the sound of a car accident
   e the take-off of a plane



Using interesting vocabulary

The best way to make your story interesting is to use interesting words. Even if you do a lot of planning, drafting and development, it won't save your story if you keep describing the hero as brave and the heroine as nice! If the structure of your writing piece is its underlying framework, then the language you choose, and how you use it, is the visible form that makes it appealing and uniquely yours.

Try to select words that most accurately convey what you mean. You may need to look the words up in a print or online dictionary or thesaurus to ensure that they mean what you think they mean. Just because a word sounds impressive does not mean it is appropriate for your context.

Breakaway tasks 10

Applying

1 Change the words in italics in the sentences below in order to make them more interesting. Use a print or online dictionary or thesaurus to help you with these vocabulary tasks.
   a The gravy was *yuck*.
   b The rain was *falling* from the sky.
   c Tuan is a *cool* person.
   d She *laughed* out loud.
   e A lion is a *big* animal.
   f She was in a *bad* situation.
   g The cathedral was *old* and *big*.
   h The glass was *dirty*.
   i She was *angry*.
   j They were *noisy*.

2 Rewrite the following paragraph to make it more interesting.

It was a cold day. Michael was feeling sad. He had just buried his dog. The earth was hard and the wind was blowing. He had had that dog for a while. He had to tell his twin brother that there had been an accident. Simon would be upset. He was not looking forward to telling him.



Remember that slang and swearing are rarely appropriate in a writing piece.

Using adverbs

One of the best ways to make your writing more interesting and to make sure that your ideas are clearly and logically expressed is to use a variety of different describing words. Words that tell you more about the action taking place are called adverbs.

Adverbs add something to the verb; that is, they modify the verb in some way. They create more meaning about the verb by telling us something extra.

Adverbs are particularly good for answering the key 'when, where, how and how much' questions that we should ask whenever we begin a piece of descriptive writing.

What does it tell us?	Key adverbs
Time (when something happened)	immediately, never, occasionally, often, sometimes, soon, then, today, tomorrow, usually, yesterday
Place (where something happened)	above, away, below, down, far, here, in, outside, there, up, within
Manner (how something happened)	rapidly, swiftly, slowly, quickly, aggressively, greedily, suddenly, well, silently, noisily
Degree (to what extent something happened)	almost, nearly, quite, just, too, enough, hardly, scarcely, completely, very, extremely, enough, too

Breakaway tasks 11

Applying

1 In your notebook, write sentences that use 15–20 of the key adverbs listed in the table above.

2 In the box below is a collection of adverbs. Use all of them in a piece of imaginative writing. You may need to look some of them up in a dictionary to find out what they mean.

animatedly	bracingly	carefully	blackly	callously
incessantly	cryptically	justly	joyously	kindly
malevolently	oafishly	roughly	romantically	studiously
separately	tragically	tumultuously	unashamedly	widely

Writing: practice makes perfect

Once you know how a sentence should be structured and what interesting vocabulary or literary tricks you can use, it is time to put it all together. Like a maestro conducting an orchestra, a writer who is sure of all the basic rules and knows how to create moods by using the right instruments will find writing a challenging but satisfying pursuit.

Planning your writing

The importance of planning a creative piece of writing cannot be overemphasised. Planning will help you to structure your work and to provide a logical and entertaining sequence of events. It will also enable you to write with direction and purpose. Remember that every paragraph should have *one* main idea.

A good story will keep its reader interested until the very end. Although the climax is the high point of the tale, the author needs to keep the reader reading beyond the climax through to the resolution of the story. Each paragraph should raise the tension in the story.

Take a look at the following story plan:

The Train Platform

Introduction: I struggle onto the deserted station with my heavy backpack and settle uncomfortably on the hard bench. The clock on the platform clicks over to midnight. I am alone.

Paragraph 1: I am jolted awake by the sound of violent voices from the end of the platform. I stir and see a gang of youths trashing the platform. I huddle in the shadows and try to keep quiet.

Paragraph 2: Another passenger arrives on the platform. He is surrounded by the youths and they begin to harass him. I am torn between wanting to help and the fear of being attacked. I step from the shadows and call out to the gang. Suddenly, I find myself in a brawl.

Paragraph 3: A piercing whistle blows as the train pulls into the platform. The light from the train sweeps the platform and the startled gang scatter into the dark night. The man has disappeared.

Conclusion: I am seated in the carriage. As the train pulls from the platform, I see under a street lamp the man talking to the gang. I reach for my money belt and find that it is missing. I have been duped.

Breakaway tasks 12

Creating

Using the structure outlined above, write plans for each of the following topics:

a The Christmas gift
b A walk in the rain
c The secret garden
d My secret
e The date from hell
f They did not fit in anywhere
g I sympathise but ...
h The mystery of the ...



Introductions

As a general rule an introduction should aim to introduce the following:

- **characters**—the protagonist and the antagonist
- **place**—the location where the action takes place
- **time**—for instance, the time of day or the future or past
- **'the problem'**—some issue that the characters have to face.

Look at the introduction below. Each part has been labelled for you.

SHIPWRECK

Anthony lay on his hammock watching the shadows merrily dance around the floor. The timbers of the boat whispered their creaking protest as the waves gently caressed the hull. The sails breathed in and out and the ropes and pulleys chimed in a gentle chorus of approval. 'Heaven,' he said to himself and lolled onto his side.

Suddenly, the radio kicked into life. 'This is an urgent announcement,' it splattered. 'There are severe storm warnings off the southern coasts. All ships should head for a safe harbour immediately.'

A cold shiver ran down Anthony's spine. He scanned the horizon. In the distance, he could make out the ominous dark clouds. Anthony knew that he was in trouble.

Character

Time of the day

Place

Personification

Mood change

The problem

Vocabulary creates calm mood

Personification

Vocabulary creates calm mood

Breakaway tasks 13

Creating

Write introductions for the following topics, making certain that you remember to cover each of the four elements—characters, time, place and 'problem'—in your work.

a The robbery

b Lost

c I turned around and …

d The shopping incident

e And then she said …

f The voyage

Paragraphing

Paragraphs are made up of sentences that are all about the one main idea. This main idea is usually summed up in a topic sentence. Any sentence that is not about the main idea does not belong and should go in a new paragraph.

Look at the example following. Each part of the paragraphs has been labelled for you.



Breaking free

Emily's mind raced. She must get free. Her hand clenched into a fist. He was almost upon her. As he knelt to plunge the knife into her slumped form, she suddenly sprang to life. With an almighty whack she smashed the full force of her weight against his jawbone. The blow took him by surprise and the knife flew from his hand.

'She's alive!' yelled the mystery woman from the far side of the room. Emily staggered to her feet. The sweat rolled down her brow and her heart thumped in her chest. Desperately, she lunged towards the door. Escape was near but Michael had read her mind.

'Don't make another move!' he said menacingly.

Emily froze. In the darkness, she heard the distinctive click of a gun. Michael moved towards her menacingly like a predator. There was nothing to be done. She was trapped. Not even her own FBI training could get her out of this one. She had failed. Her husband was a traitor and she hadn't even seen it coming. She felt the anger welling in the pit of her stomach. Her whole married life had been a lie. She backed against the wall. In the darkness, she saw him raise the barrel. It was her last chance. With lightning speed, she flicked on the light switch and in the temporary blindness, she threw herself out the open window.

Short sentences create tension

Topic sentence

Onomatopoeia

New line for speech

Attention to detail

Interesting words create mood

Simile

Tension is carried to the end of the paragraph

Conclusions

There is nothing more frustrating for a reader than a story that ends disappointingly—perhaps it ends unexpectedly or maybe it just peters out without resolving 'the problem' central to the tale. As your conclusion is your last chance to impress your reader, you should always aim to bring the story to a satisfactory ending. Avoid introducing new material and leaving too many of the elements of the story open-ended.

Look at the following example. Note that it brings the story to a satisfactory conclusion.

MY LIFE AS A SHOE

Finally, his stinking feet are lifted from my aching back. I am thrown into the laundry to drip dry after my hard day in the city. The other shoes murmur their hellos. Molly Moccasin whinges about my doggy odour. I mumble a half-hearted retort about the fact that at least my smell is my own. My sides ache and I am wrinkled across my front. As the mud hardens on my tongue, I no longer have the ability to complain.

Strands in action

Core task

Review the introductions that you created in the last Breakaway task. Choose the one that interests you the most and then develop a short story from it. Be sure to follow the rules on paragraphing and conclusions. Your final piece should be 400–500 words in length.

Extra task

This task requires you to be part of a writing circle of three or four students. Just like Chinese whispers, where a story is passed on verbally (and often changed!) your group will pass a short story from one member to the other until it is concluded. You may wish to put your desks together so it is easier to pass stories to each other. Sitting in a circle will also make it easier.

Step 1: Write an introduction on a topic of your choice.

Step 2: Once your introduction is complete, pass it on to another group member. If you are sitting in a circle, pass everything to the person on your right.

Step 3: At this stage everyone in the group should have another group member's introduction. From this point the real fun begins! Your job is to write a body paragraph to support and extend the introduction. Be sure to follow the conventions of paragraphing here. Once you have completed the paragraph, pass the story on again to the next group member.

Step 4: Keep passing the story on, adding a paragraph each time, until it makes its way back to the original author of the introduction.

Step 5: Once you receive your story back from your group members, re-read it carefully. You're not allowed to change their paragraphs! Take time to consider how your short story evolved from your introduction to its current state. Then, one by one, discuss the decisions made by each author. Write your conclusion.

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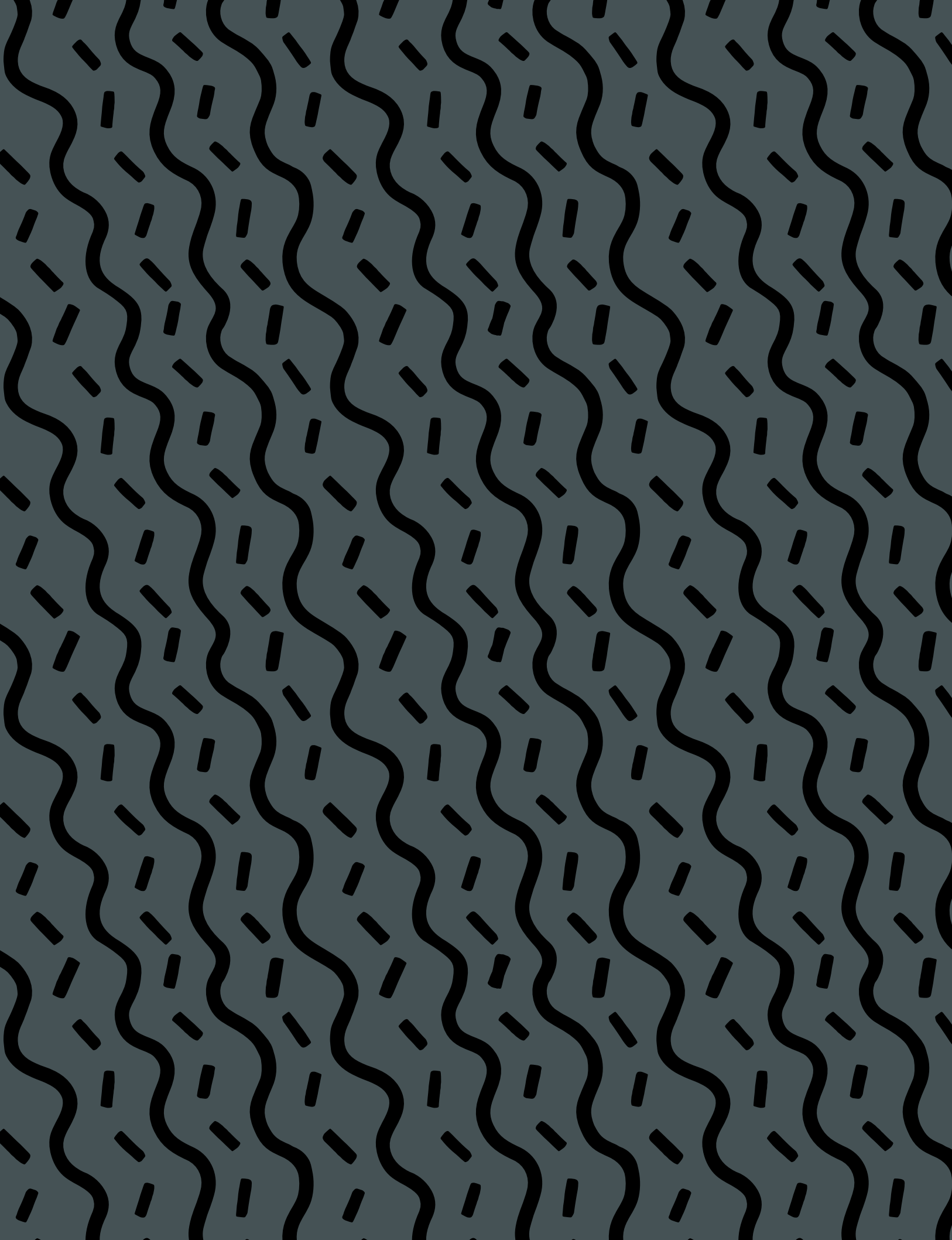
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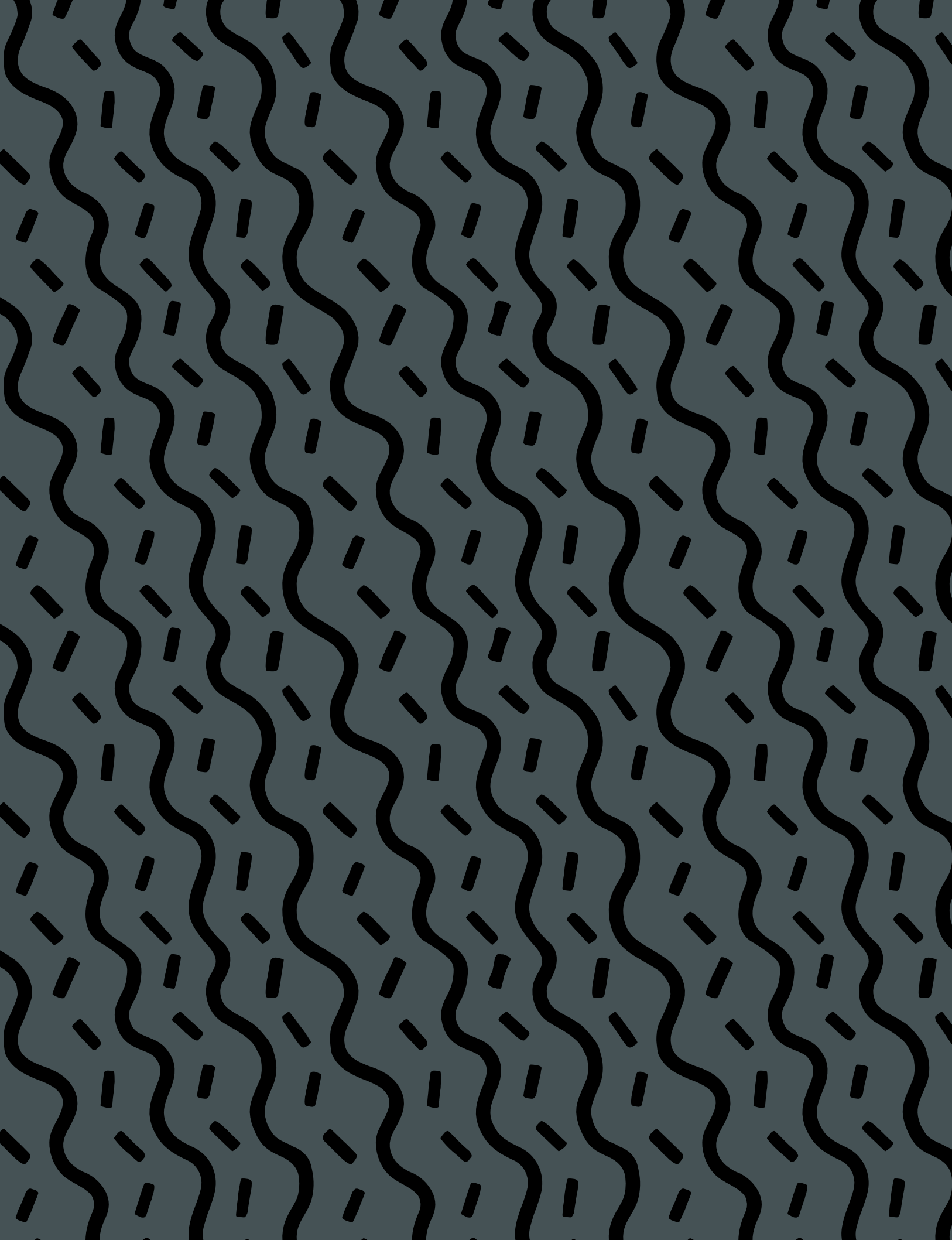
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Index

A

Aboriginal *see* Indigenous Australians
'About Boris Karloff' [article], 257–259
'About *Coraline* the book' [article], 237
About Morris, 53
abstract nouns, 194
  see also nouns
A Christmas Carol, 191
acrostic poems, 30
acting/actors
  blocking, 174
  see also drama
action (story ingredient), 115
adjectives, 57, 195, 304
  three degrees of, 122
adverbs, 195, 281, 342
Aesop, 118–119
alliteration, 341
  persuasion, 33
  poetic device, 30, 145–146, 168
  writing technique, 199
alphabiography, 61
analysing, 38–41
  analysis response, 40
  how to analyse, 39–40
ancient Greece/Rome, 125–127
ancient tales, 124–130
anecdotes, 19, 33, 156
Any Prince to Any Princess, 120
apostrophe, 189
appreciating fiction, 299–330
Assistant, the (*Frankenstein* character), 253
audience (speeches), 156, 171
  see also drama; speech
Australia, 268
authors *see* autobiographies
autobiographies, 19–20, 52–60
Away, 178–179

B

Ballad of the Loathly Lady, The, 112–114
ballads, 148, 151
'Be Careful What You Wish For' [article], 246–249
Beckham, David, 56–57
Beck Talks, 29
being creative, 22–30
  characters, 24, 27
  literary text key elements, 23–24
  openings, 27–28
Beowulf, 127–128
bias, 33
biographer, 62
biographies, 62–66
biography (described), 62
biopic, 67
Bird, The, 30
Blabbermouth, 171, 172–173
blocking, 174
blogs, 16, 44
blurbs, 51
body language, 162, 166
body paragraph, 318
Boke of Margery Kempe, 52
Boy in the Striped Pyjamas, The, 262, 304
  book, 262–264
  film, 264–265
Boyne, John, 262
brackets (punctuation), 189
brainstorm (writing a text response), 39, 317–318

C

camera
  films, 324–325
camera angles
  eye level, 325
  high angle, 325
  low angle, 325
  see also camera shots
camera shots
  close-up, 324
  establishing shot, 324
  long shot, 324
  mid-shot, 324
  point-of-view, 324
  see also camera angles
capital letters, 190
cartoons
  manga, 216–223
  structure, 211–212
  see also comics and graphic novels
characterisation
  films, 321–323
  novel, 305–306
characters
  literary text key elements, 24
characters (story ingredient), 115
  building through dialogue, 174–180
character traits, establishing, 178–179
chatrooms, 16–17
Chinese Cinderella: The Secret Story of an Unwanted Daughter, 268, 269–270
Chinese creation myth, 110
Churchill, Winston, 62
Cirque du Freak, 306
Clancy of the Overflow, 151
clichés, 71
Clockwork Forest, The, 71
collective nouns, 194
colon, 189
comics and graphic novels
  manga, 216–223
  storytelling, 209–211
  see also cartoons
comics as serials, 224
comma, 189
common audiences, types of speech, 157
common nouns, 194
comparative adjectives, 122, 195
computer games, *Coraline,* 246–249
concluding statement (speeches), 171
concrete nouns, 194
concrete poems, 30
conflicts (story ingredient), 115
connections chart, 81
contention, 156
context, 274
Coraline, 236
  book, 236, 237–239
  computer game, 246–249
  film, 242–246
  graphic novel, 239–241
  website, 250
'Corroboree', 168, 169
craft of writing, 11–42
  see also writing
creating
  poems, 29–30
  poem shapes, 30
  short stories, 25–26
creation myths, 108–110
creative
  characters, 27–28
  openings, 27–28
creative writing, improving, 340–341
culture
  and fables/fairytales, 118
  and myth, 108

D

Darius Bell and the Glitter Pool, 302
Darwin, Charles, 52
debate, 272
Defoe, Daniel, 76
dialogue
  novels, 305–306
  building a character, 174–180
  delivery, 166
diaries, 44
  Anne Frank, 45–46
  Cyril Lawrence, 47–48
  Zlata Filipovic, 18, 50
Dickens, Charles, 74, 191
direct textual evidence, 102
Dogboy, 303, 309
Don't Call Me Ishmael!, 307
dragons, 128–129
drama
  blocking, 174
  character traits, 178–179
  establishing relationships, 178
  in speeches, 156–161
dramatic tension, 168
Dreading the Dreadlocks, 115

E

edit (writing a text response), 318
editing, films, 325
emoticons, 16, 17
Epic of Gilgamesh, 124–125
epic sagas, 124–130
establishing character traits, 178–179
Euripides, 126
'Evidence,' 129
evidence, textual, 102–103
exclamation mark, 188, 189
explanation texts, 40–41
expository text, 40–41

F

fables, 118–119
fact file, Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker), 63
facts (persuasion), 33
fairytales, 120
famous diaries, 45
fantasy *see* modern fantasy
Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, 63
Fighting Ruben Wolfe, 305, 312
films, 138
  Boy in the Striped Pyjamas, The, 264–265
  characterisation, 321–323
  construction, 320–321
  Coraline, 242–246
  editing, 325
  Frankenstein, 257–258
  lighting, 323
  mise en scène, 325
  musical accompaniment, 323
  plot/structure, 321
  setting, 321
  sound, 323
  special effects, 324
  style, 321
  techniques in action, 326
Filipovic, Zlata, 18, 50
Fireworks and Darkness, 311
first person viewpoint, 302, 303
first person writing, 73
formal language, 12, 13, 35, 156
formal persuasive speech, 157
Fox and the Goat, The, 119
Frank, Anne, 45–46
Frankenstein (book), 252
  author, 252, 253
  chapter 20, 256–257
  characters, 253
  covers, 254–255
  summary, 254
Frankenstein (film), 257–258
  Boris Karloff as the Monster, 257–258
Frankenstein (2004) (TV mini-series), 259–260
free verse, 153
full stop, 188, 189
future tense, 196, 339

G

Gaiman, Neil, 236, 237
'Gaiman Talking About Craig Russell' [article], 239–241
Gallipoli, 47–48
Ganesha, 227–228
Gleitzman, Morris, 171, 174
Google, 286–289
  PageRank, 287, 288
  ranking, 287, 288
grammar, 194–197
  adjectives, 57, 122, 195
  adverbs, 195, 281, 342
  nouns, 71, 194
  paragraph, 274
  sentence structure, 336–345
  subject, 336, 337
  tense, 196
  verbs, 54, 195, 337
  verb 'to be,' 196
  see also punctuation; sentence structure
graphic novels, 224–234
  adapted fiction, 230–233
  comics as serials, 224
  Coraline, 239–241
  Ganesha, 227–228
  instruction, 226–228
  original fiction, 230–233
  Persepolis, 58–59
  reporting, 228–229
  superheroes, 225
  Treasure Island, 230–232
Grave of the Roti Men, 271
Gulliver's Travels, 187

H

haiku (poetry), 149
Helicopter Man, 308
Hemingway, Ernest, 68
Henri, Adrian, 120
'Henry Selick in Conversation' [article], 242–246
Herman, Mark, 264
Home and Away, 64, 65
Homer, 125, 126
How I Live Now, 307
Hughes, Langston, 142
hyphen, 189

I

If I Stay, 314–315
Iliad, The, 125
images
  combining with text, 208
  see also visual language
improvisation, 179
Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade, 321, 323, 324, 326
Indigenous Australians, 295
  'Corroboree', 168, 169
  use of voice, 168
  visual language, 205
indirect textual evidence, 102–103
inferential understanding (texts), 97–98
informal language, 12, 13, 35, 156
informal persuasive speech, 157
informative speech, 157
Inkheart, 302
internet, 276
interpretative understanding (texts), 99–101
interrogating texts, 96–105
interviewing the subject, 64–65
interview questions, open-ended, 275
'Interview with John Boyne' [article], 264–265
introduction (writing a text response), 344
Inventing Elliot, 316
irony, 282

J
Japanese creation myth, 110
jargon, 16, 33, 156, 289
Jasper Jones, 272, 273
Joel and Cat Set the Story Straight, 309
journals, 19, 44

K
Kath Walker *see* Noonuccal, Oodgeroo
Katz, Danny, 69, 71
King Arthur, legend, 112–114
knowledge chart (novel), 80
knowledge organiser (novel), 80–81

L
LaFleur, Suzanne, 84
language
  focus on, 187–193
  formal, 12, 13, 35, 156
  informal, 12, 13, 35, 156
  punctuation, 188–191
  punctuation marks, 188–189
  visual, 204, 205
  see also persuasive writing
Lawrence, Cyril, 47–48
legend/s, 108
  defined, 109
  urban, 115
Lewis, C.S., 132
lexicon, 182
life
  changing, 286–290
  cultural contexts, 267–298
  curious, 276–285
  diverse, 268–274
  meaningful, 292–296
lighting (visual element), 323
Lindsay, Cynthia, 257
Lion Called Christian, A, 280
literacy, visual *see* visual literacy
literal understanding (texts), 96–97
Little Girl and the Wolf, The, 121
Little Lunch, 69
Lockie Leonard: Human Torpedo, 27
long shot, 324
Long Walk to Freedom, 52
Lord of the Rings, The, 124, 134–135
Love, Aubrey, 84–85
  before reading, 84
  chapters 1 to 3, 86–87
  chapters 4 to 9, 87–89
  chapters 10 to 13, 89–90
  chapters 14 to 17, 90–91
  chapters 18 to 22, 92–93
  chapters 23 to 24, 93–94
  while reading, 86
Lowell, Amy, 144
Lucas, Isabel, 64–65
lyric poetry, 150
lyrics *see* song lyrics

M
Macbeth, 182–184
MacLeod, Doug, 71–72
The Mad Scientist (*Frankenstein* character), 253
Magician's Nephew, The, 132–133
Mahtab's Story, 27
Mandela, Nelson, 52
manga, 216–223
  and storytelling, 218–219
  genres, 217
  how to read, 218
  origins, 216
Maori creation story, 109
masks, 162–163
McDougall, Jill, 146
medieval classic tales, 127–128
Mellor, Robin, 143
Merriam, Eve, 144
metaphor, 341
  poetic device, 142
  writing technique, 119, 199
mid-shot, 324
Miller-Heidke, Kate, 152
mime, 164
mind map, 82
modern fantasy, 132–138
Monster, The (*Frankenstein* character), 253
Montoro, Maria, 246
mood, 168
  see also dramatic tension
Moongalba, 63
Morgan, Sally, 20, 104
Morris, Mary
  Blabbermouth, 171, 172–173
  Two Weeks with the Queen, 174, 175–177
My Place, 20
My Place for Young Readers: Sally's Story, 104–105
myth/s, 108
  defined, 109

N
narrative perspective, 82
narrative point of view (writing), 23–24, 301–303
narrator, novels, 301
Nobel Prize, 310
nonsense poem, 140
Noonuccal, Oodgeroo (Kath Walker), 62–63, 169
Northover, Kylie, 64–65
nouns, 71
  types of, 194
novel, the, 76–82
  after reading, 78
  approaching, 76–78
  before reading, 77, 84
  Blabbermouth, 171, 172–173
  Boy in the Striped Pyjamas, The, 262–264
  case studies, 314–318
  characterisation, 305–306
  connections chart, 81
  construction, 300
  description, 303
  dialogue, 305–306
  graphic, 224
  knowledge chart, 80
  knowledge organiser, 80–81
  Love, Aubrey, 84–85
  metaphors, 308–309
  motifs, 308–309
  Pamela, 76
  Persepolis, 58–59
  plot/structure, 79, 301
  quote me chart, 81
  Robinson Crusoe, 76
  setting, 303
  story map, 80
  symbols, 308–309
  themes, 79, 311–312
  tracking, 79–82
  Two Weeks with the Queen, 174, 175–177
  while reading, 77–78, 86

O
Odd Spot, 282–283
Odyssey, The, 126
onomatopoeia, 341
  poetic device, 30, 144
  writing technique, 199, 213
On the Jellicoe Road, 301, 302
Other Facts of Life, The, 53

P
PageRank, 287
palm cards, 158–159
Pamela, 76
paragraph, 41, 274
past tense, 196, 339
Paterson, Banjo, 151
Pepys, Samuel, 45
performance poetry, 168–181
Persepolis, 58–59
personal experience (persuasion), 33
personal writing, 12–13, 68–73
  autobiographies, 19–20, 52–60
  blogs, 16
  chatrooms, 16–17

diaries, 18, 44
journals, 19, 44
letters, 19
Near-Death Experience, 14–15
netiquette, 17
Netspeak, 16–17
poems, 29–30
SMS, 16–17
social networking, 16–17
personification, 30, 143–144, 199, 341
persuasive writing, 32–36
instructions, 36
reviews, 34–35
techniques, 33
ten steps for creating, 33
photographs *see* camera angles; camera shots
plan (writing a text response), 39–40, 318
plays
Euripides, 126
Sophocles, 126
see also drama; Shakespeare
plot (literary text key element), 23–24
poetic devices, 141–146
poetry, 139–154
and song lyrics, 152
acrostic, 30
alliteration, 30
ballads, 148, 151
concrete, 30
Euripides, 126
experimenting with, 153–154
free verse, 153
haiku, 149
lyrics, 148, 152
metaphors, 29–30
Noonuccal, Oodgeroo, 62–63
performance, 168–181
poetic devices, 141–146
shape poetry, 30, 148–149
similes, 29
sonnets, 149–150
Sophocles, 126
special effects, 29–30
types, 148–154
use of voice, 168–170
see also performance poetry
point of view, 73
see also first person viewpoint; second person viewpoint; third person viewpoint
positive adjectives, 122
predicate (sentence), 336
present tense, 196, 339
propaganda, 208
proper nouns, 194
punctuation, 188–191
see also grammar
punctuation marks, 188–189
purpose (persuasion), 36
purpose (speeches), 171

Q

question mark, 188, 189
quotation marks, 189
quote me chart (novel), 81

R

radio script, 66
ratings, 248
referencing websites, 290
research, 57
resolution (story ingredient), 115
rhetorical question (persuasion), 33
rhyme, 114, 140
rhythm, 114, 140
Richardson, Samuel, 76
Robinson Crusoe, 76
Rome, ancient, 125–127
Romulus and Remus, 126

S

Satrapi, Marjane, 58, 59
script
and setting, 171–174
writing radio, 66
search engine, 286, 287
second person (writing), 73
second person viewpoint, 302
semi-colon, 189
sentence structure, 336–345
clauses, 338, 339
complex sentences, 339
compound sentences, 338
predicate, 336
simple sentences, 338
subject, 336, 337
tenses, 339
verbs, 337
see also grammar; punctuation
Sergeant Cyril Lawrence, 47–48
serials, 224
setting (literary text key element), 23
setting (script), 171–174
settings (story ingredient), 115
Shakespeare, William, 62, 149–150, 182–186, 293
shape poetry, 30, 148–149
Shelley, Mary, 252, 253, 254, 256
shojo (manga), 217
shonen (manga), 217
short stories, creating, 25–26
shot *see* camera angles; camera shots
Shrek, 24, 137
Silverstein, Shel, 145
Silvey, Craig, 272–273
similes, 270, 303, 340
poetic device, 141
writing technique, 71, 119, 199
Sister Madge's Book of Nuns, 71
SMS, 16–17
social networking sites, 16–17
soliloquy, 171
song lyrics, 152
sonnets, 149–150
Son of Rambow, 328–330
special effects
films, 324
poems, 29–30
speech, 156–161
concluding statement, 171
delivering, 158–159
entertaining, 157
formal persuasive, 157
informal persuasive, 157
informative, 157
palm cards, 158–159
pause, pace, pitch, 159, 166
purpose, 171
supporting arguments, 156, 171
the contention, 171
spelling, 200, 332–335
double letters, 335
ei and *ie,* 333
importance of, 332–333
sh words, 333
silent *e,* 334
spiel, 279
stage fright, 156
statistics (persuasion), 33
Stevenson, Robert Louis, 230
stop-motion animation, 244
stories
ingredients of, 115
story map (novel), 80
storytelling, 209–211
manga, 218–219
visual, 220–221
style (literary text key element), 24
superheroes, 225
superlative adjectives, 122, 195
supporting arguments, 156, 171
Swaney, Amanda, 112
Sweet As, 25–26
Swift, Jonathan, 187
symbols (visual element)
novels, 308–309

T

target audience
diaries, 18
television
Frankenstein, 259–260
Tennyson, Lord Alfred, 153–154
tense (grammar), 196, 339

tension *see* dramatic tension
text *see* words; writing
text, expository, 40–41
texts, interrogating, 96–105
  textual evidence, 102–103
  three levels of understanding, 96–101, 104–105
  who, what, where, why, when, how, 103
textual evidence, 102–103
'the contention' (speeches), 171
theme (literary text key element), 24
think (writing a text response), 317
third person (writing), 73
third person viewpoint
  limited, 302
  omniscient, 302
Thurber, James, 121
Tolkien, J. R. R., 134
Tom Brown's Schooldays, 74
transformations
  Boy in the Striped Pyjamas, The, 262–266
  Coraline, 236–251
  Frankenstein, 252–261
Transformers, 64
Treasure Time, 28
Trojan Horse myth, 111
twisted tales, 121
Two Weeks with the Queen, 174, 175–177

U

urban legends, 115
use of voice, 166, 168–170
understanding poetry *see* poetry

V

verbs, 54, 195, 337
  'to be,' 196
vers libre, 153
Victorian era, 276
Viorst, Judith, 141
Virgil, 126
visual language, 205–206
  history, 205
visual literacy, 203
  changing meaning, 207
  combining image and text, 208
  comics, 209–211
  graphic novels, 224
  manga, 216
  storytelling, 209–211
  superheroes, 225
  using the terms, 204
  written language, 207, 213
vocabulary, 200–201, 340–345
voice, use of, 166, 168–170

W

Walker, Kath *see* Noonuccal, Oodgeroo
Wallace-Crabbe, Chris, 153
We Are Going, 63
Web
  crawling, 287–288
  netiquette, 17
  Netspeak, 16–17
  social networking, 16–17
websites
  Coraline, 250
  referencing, 290
Wesley-Smith, Peter, 146
Wikipedia, 286, 289–290
words, 212
  Beowulf, 128
  capital letters, 190
  cartoon structure, 211–212
  Look, Cover, Write, Say, Check method, 190
  persuasive writing, 33
  punctuation marks, 188
  spelling, 200
  see also grammar; punctuation; writing
World Vision, 295
World Wide Web, 286, 291
write (writing a text response), 318
writing
  analysing, 38–41
  being creative, 22–30
  conclusions, 345
  craft of, 11–42
  creating interesting, 198–202
  explanations, 40–41
  first person, 73
  importance of, 187
  instructions, 36
  introductions, 344
  paragraphing, 344–345
  persuasive, 32–36
  planning, 343
  practising, 343
  punctuation marks, 188–189
  second person, 73
  spelling, 200
  techniques, 198–199
  third person, 73
  vocabulary, 200–201, 340–345
  word choice, 201
  see also creating; diaries; language; novel, the; visual literacy

Y

Yang, Gene Luen, 209, 210–211