

# Will wonders never cease? Ships in bottles

Article by [Zoë Disher](#) | illustrated by Michel Streich

[EN2-1A](#) | [ACELY1687](#)

**Create** a video revealing facts with three different levels of detail with a partner.

Prior to reading the text, ask students to complete a [Think, Pair, Share](#) activity in response to the following question: How do you get a ship into a glass bottle?

It may be helpful to project an image of a ship in a bottle on the board to support students with their thoughts.

Read the article and discuss the actual methods of placing a ship with tall masts into a glass bottle.

Visit the [Nelson's Ship in a Bottle](#) page on the Royal Museums Greenwich website. Scroll down to the second video in which Senior Curator, Dr Robert Blythe answers the question "How do you get a ship in a bottle?" with three different times intervals allocated.

Students form pairs. Each pair chooses one of the following investigation questions to research. Ideally there would be an even spread of students working on each question.

- Where did the craft of building ships in bottles begin?
- When did the craft of building ships in bottles become popular and why?
- In the past, who would build ships in bottles?
- What are the ships in bottles made from?

Once they have conducted the research, pairs take on one of the following roles:

- Camera person
- Expert

The camera person is to use a tablet, video camera or phone to record their partner (the expert) answering the question three ways as follows:

- Answer the question briefly in just five seconds
- Answer the question with slightly more length in 15 seconds
- Answer the question in detail in 30 seconds

Further materials may be required to keep to the time limits – an oven timer, a phone or a stopwatch. After the answers have been filmed, the class can enjoy a film festival in which the films are viewed.

# Writing a literary description

Read 'Will Wonders Never Cease? Ships in Bottles'. Yinka Shonibare created a wonderful image with his large artwork. You are going to create a wonderful image with words.

Look at the photo of the world's largest ship in a bottle.

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

To create an image with words we need to use a range of descriptive vocabulary.

1. Make a list of any adjectives to describe the ship, e.g. lifelike, detailed. You may wish to use a thesaurus to help you.

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2. Now imagine the ship can move. Can you think of any interesting verbs (action words) and adverbs (words that give more information to the verb) to describe how it could move? For example, 'glided' (verb) and 'effortlessly' (adverb).

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3. Artists create pieces of work to inspire the viewer to feel something. Think of any feeling verbs (words that describe our feelings) you could use to describe how this enormous ship in a bottle makes you feel. For example, 'amused', 'delighted', 'interested'.

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4. Use the vivid vocabulary you have written above to help you to write one paragraph describing the large display. Remember to include what it looks like, how it could move, what it makes you feel—as well as any interesting similes.

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# The Mango Tree

story by Pam Greatorex | illustrated by Amy Golbach

EN2-10C | ACELT1607

**Compose** a sensory poem

Before reading the story, write the word Mango on the board. Set a timer for 3 minutes. Students are to silently write down everything they can think of that relates to the word 'Mango' until the time is up. Discuss the ideas that students wrote during the timed writing exercise.

Some samples answers might be:

- Fruit
- Delicious
- Juicy
- Summer
- Ice cream
- Grows on a tree
- Tropical

Read the story 'The Mango Tree.' After reading, students use a highlighter or coloured pencil to underline descriptions of the Mango tree and the other plants in the garden. Sample words and phrases that should be underlined include:

- cool shade of its leaves
- smelled almost as good as a ripe mango!
- sweep her hand through the leaves and feel almost nothing.
- spiky grass
- smooth trunk
- canopy of leaves
- a beautiful scent filled the air.

Organise these words and phrases into three groups based on the sense the author is appealing to (some samples have been included in this table):

Sight	Smell	Feel/Touch
Canopy of leaves	A beautiful scent filled the air	Smooth trunk

Discuss why including appeals to multiple senses is more interesting for readers than just describing what things look like.

Suggested ideas for this discussion include: Readers can feel like they are there in the garden with Maggie because they can imagine what Maggie can see, smell and feel.

Students choose a fruit or a plant that is stimulating for multiple senses, they should think about something that is interesting to look at, smell, taste, touch or listen to.

Suggestions include:

- Strawberries
- Rosemary
- Gardenia
- Bananas

Students identify three senses and place them in three columns – one for each sense they have identified. In each column, students brainstorm words, phrases and descriptions relating to that sense. A sample is provided below:

Rosemary

Sight	Smell	Touch
Green Tall Long arms reaching to the sky	Strong scent Sweet smelling Reminds me of roast lamb and Christmas time	Rough Spiky leaves When crushed, becomes sticky

Once students have completed their brainstorm, they are to piece together a short poem about their fruit or plant using the sensory descriptions from their brainstorm.

Sample:

Beside me on the path  
long, green arms reach for the sky  
brushing my knuckles with spiky leaves  
releasing a sweet scent.  
It reminds me of Grandma's Christmas lunch.  
I crush a leaf and the scent grows stronger  
And my tummy grumbles for roast.

**Extension Task:** Students create an illustration to accompany their poem.

# Plan a letter from Maggie

Use this worksheet to help plan a letter from Maggie to her mum.

In the table below, brainstorm words and phrases to use in your letter.

Greetings	
Closings	
Describing relationship with Granny	
Describing granny's garden	
Describing things you've been doing each day	

Now it's time to write your letter!

# Dental Plan

poem by Suzy Levinson | illustrated by [Cheryl Orsini](#)

[EN2-10C](#) | [ACELY1690](#)

**Design** an infographic to educate children on tooth fairy etiquette.

Prior to reading the poem, ask students to create a mindmap showing what they know about the tooth fairy. These ideas can be shared with small groups or the whole class.

Read the poem as a class or go to the digital version of the poem if you are a digital subscriber.

Work as a class to develop a set of 'rules' or 'etiquette' around how to appropriately prepare for and behave when expecting the tooth fairy at your home.

Suggested answers include:

- The tooth must be placed in an obvious location, not hidden
- The children should go to sleep before the tooth fairy arrives
- It is polite to leave a note for the tooth fairy
- If you happen to see the tooth fairy, don't shout and frighten her/him away
- Do not try to catch the tooth fairy or trick her/him in any way

Students work in pairs to design a tooth fairy infographic. The purpose of the infographic is to teach children who are expecting the tooth fairy for the first time how to prepare for her/his arrival and what to expect. Take a look at the [6 fun facts about the Easter Bunny](#) infographic as a model.

Students may like to design their infographic using paper and coloured pencils or textas. They may like to complete it digitally using software available at the school.

Three sample ideas for the infographic:

- A flow chart showing different steps from losing a tooth, to preparing for the tooth fairy's arrival, to what to do if you are awake when she/he comes
- A list of dos and don'ts for the tooth fairy – presented in a T-chart or two columns

- A graphic with three sections: The first explaining who the tooth fairy is, the second showing how to prepare for her/his arrival and the third showing how to behave when she/he is there (You should be asleep!)

Students should consider the following choices when developing their infographic:

- Layout
- Colour
- Symbols (including arrows, crosses and/or ticks)
- Font size and style
- Images or illustrations
- Text – minimal

# Harriet and Jack: Best of Enemies

Story by Paul Collins | Illustrated by [Tohby Riddle](#)

[EN2-2A](#) | [ACELY1694](#)

**Retell** the story from the perspective of the family.

Read the story as a class.

Review the structure of a narrative (Orientation, Complication, Sequence of events, Resolution). This step can be completed as an interactive activity. If you have a digital subscription, please go to the story and complete the interactive

Students complete the 'Harriet and Jack' column of the story map table below.

Story map	Harriet and Jack	The family
Orientation		
Complication		
Series of events		
Resolution		

Now students are to consider how the family who accidentally left Harriet and Jack at the petrol station must have reacted when they discovered their beloved pets had been left behind and were lost. What did they do while Harriet and Jack were making their way home and how did they feel when Harriet and Jack arrived at home in the end? Students complete 'The family' column in the table and write down what happened for the family and what steps they might have taken to try and find Harriet and Jack.

Once students have completed their plan in the story map table, they are ready to retell the story from the perspective of the family.

Consider the following:

- Which family member will you be writing as? A parent or a child?
- Include dialogue and description of actions
- Show how the family is feeling and what they are thinking

# Changing 'Harriet and Jack: Best of Enemies'

'Harriet and Jack: Best of Enemies' is written from Harriet's point of view. It shows the cat's thoughts and feelings about events. Try rewriting the ending from one of the children's point of view. Use the sentence starters below to begin. You need to write in complete sentences.

1. What I love most about having a cat and dog:

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2. My favourite games to play with my pets:

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3. When I realised my pets were missing I felt ...

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4. I tried to look for my pets but ...

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5. When I heard Jack barking outside the door and Harriet meowing I felt ...

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6. To make sure they never get lost again I will ...

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7. If you would like to add anything else, do so here:

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# The Pharaoh's Passport

article by Mina | illustrated by Fifi Colston | photos by Alamy

[EN2-2A](#) | [ACELY1694](#)

Conduct research and **write** an article about the ancient site of Abu Simbel built by Rameses II.

Read the article as a class. Students write a short reflection on what surprised them the most when they read the article. To do so they can answer the following questions:

- Write down three surprising facts about Rameses from the article
- Of these three facts, which is the most surprising?
- Why do you think this was such an unexpected piece of information?

Students can then work in small groups to share their reflections with one another.

Small groups then work together to re-read the section under the heading 'Unravelling facts' and write a list of Rameses II's main achievements in his life.

Sample answers:

- Reined for over 60 years
- Reached a very old age – 90
- Defending Egypt against many enemies
- Ordered construction of Abu Simbel and the Ramesseum

Explain to students, that his mummy was not the only artefact related to Rameses II that travelled. The word of the month is 'excursion' and on the contents page, Vern says 'This month we're going places as are many of the characters in our stories.' The temple that Rameses ordered to be built, Abu Simbel had to be moved in 1960 to make way for the Aswan dam project. View the short clip [Moving Abu Simbel National Geographic](#).

Students form pairs and conduct further research about how Abu Simbel was moved to prepare to write an information text about this moving monument. They should take notes using the following prompts:

What happened?

Who was involved?

Where did it happen?

How did they do it?

Why did they do it?

Did it work?

Were there any complications?

What other interesting facts did you come across?

Some useful websites include:

[Abu Simbel the temple that moved](#)

[Abu Simbel relocation](#)

[Egypt's exquisite temples that had to be moved](#)

Once students have conducted research and collected information based on the prompts above, they are to imagine that Jools and Vern have asked them to write another article for this issue of Blast Off with a focus on 'going places' or excursions using Abu Simbel as the focus.

Success Criteria:

- Use correct structure for an information text – including headings and subheadings
- Use engaging language features like questions, exclamations
- Include information about Abu Simbel and its move
- Include images (with captions) to support the information in the text

# Comprehension questions

Answer the following questions in full sentences, using information from the text to support your responses.

1. What is another word for a pharaoh?

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2. What is meant by the subheading 'The most unusual 'passport' in the world'?

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3. Why do you think it was so important to preserve the mummy of Rameses II?

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4. Why was Rameses considered to be such a successful king?

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5. What was the cause of the mummy's rapid deterioration?

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6. How important was that 'unusual' passport? Explain why.

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# Chihuahuas

poem by Annaleise Byrd | illustrated by [David Legge](#)

[EN2-10C | ACELT1606](#)

**Create** an illustrated dictionary of misheard words.

Give students a definition for [eggcorn](#) from the Merriam Webster dictionary online. Ask students to share if they have ever misheard a word or phrase, they can share their experiences of this with a partner or in a small group.

Read the poem 'Chihuahuas' as a class. After reading ask students to identify the eggcorn in the poem.

Discuss the following:

- What words did Dad say when he was eating the chips?
- What mood or feeling is created by the misheard word or eggcorn in the poem?
- Are there any other interesting techniques or word play in the poem that help develop this mood or feeling?
- Do you think the girl ever works out what her dad said?

View these [Eggcorn examples](#) from Your Dictionary online.

- After reading the section titled 'Eggcorn Explained' ask students to consider whether the word 'chihuahuas' from the poem is truly an eggcorn or not, giving reasons.
- Read through the examples on the website, then consider the earlier discussion about words students have misheard.
- Students suggest other 'eggcorns' that they could add to the list of examples

Students work as a class to create an eggcorn illustrated dictionary. In order to do so complete the following steps:

- Develop a 'shortlist' of eggcorn examples – one per student
- Assign each student an eggcorn or misheard word or phrase
- Each student is to create an A4 sized illustrated dictionary page for the class eggcorn dictionary

Success criteria:

Each A4 page will include:

- The misheard word or phrase (eggcorn)
- The correct word or phrase
- The meaning of the correct word or phrase
- An explanation of why it is misheard
- An illustration that combines elements of the word and misheard word.

After each A4 page entry is completed, students take turns to present their page to the class. After explaining their page, students place themselves in a line alphabetically until every student is arranged alphabetically in terms of their eggcorn page for the dictionary. The pages can now be collected and bound for the class.

# In the Jungle

play by [Philippa Werry](#) | illustrated by [Greg Holfeld](#)

EN2-10C | ACELT1605

**Investigate** the characteristics and personality of a character at two different points of the plot and how this adds interest to the story.

Before reading, look at the illustrations accompanying the playscript. Ask students to pay close attention to the character of the professor.

In pairs students answer the following questions using the illustrations ONLY as a guide.

- Describe the professor's character using clues from the images
- Describe how the professor feels in these illustrations
- What makes you think that she is feeling that way?
- Do you think the assistants are feeling the same emotions as the professor?
- Why do you think this?

Assign roles to volunteer students and read through the play until the Professor says:

That's what people think. But I've suspected for a long time that there might be some leftover dinosaurs living in this bit of jungle

As a class discuss words to describe the personality, character traits and attitude of the Professor, refer to the earlier examination of the illustrations. Distribute this comprehensive list of [Sample Character Traits](#) from Read Write Think to students and instruct them to use a highlighter or coloured pencil to identify which of these words are appropriate for the Professor.

Suggested answers include:

Leader

Adventurous

Positive

Expert

Calm

Foolish

Students imagine they are the professor at this point in the story. Write a recount from the perspective of the professor about the expedition thus far, including your thoughts and

feelings about the jungle, the various bones that have been found (including human) and how you feel about potentially discovering a real dinosaur.

Continue reading the playscript until:

Professor: (calls from offstage) You can have it! I'm going to start studying small animals! Like insects!

Return to the Sample Character traits list. Students use a different colour highlighter to describe the Professor at this point, when she is running away.

Suggested answers include:

Cowardly

Discouraged

Foolish

Hopeless

Inconsiderate

Nervous

Thoughtless

Before reading to the end and finding out what happens, imagine time has stopped for long enough for the Professor to write a short recount at this point in the story. Write from the Professor's perspective, paying close attention to how her attitude, emotions and character have changed as a result of discovering a live dinosaur.

Read to the end of the playscript and discuss what happened to the Professor. Use the following prompts:

- What happened to the professor?
- Why did this happen? (What were her personality features that led to this end)
- Why is it more interesting to a storyline to have a character that changes?
- Why is it more interesting to readers to give a character a 'fatal flaw'?

### **Extension Task:**

Complete the same sequence of activities, but with a focus on the assistants. This task could be altered - instead of writing a recount, students could engage in a hot seating activity in which the assistants are asked questions about their thoughts and feelings of the professor and the situation they have found themselves in at the same two points of the story. Discuss why it is good to have a set of characters with emotions and characteristics that contrast with the main character.

# Amazing Pete's Amazing Feet

poem by Neal Levin | illustrated by [Christopher Nielsen](#)

EN2-7B | [ACELA1780](#)

Students **analyse** the effect of using word play in poetry

Prior to reading, introduce students to homophones (words that sound the same but are spelt differently). Ask students to work in small groups to list 5 examples of homophones. Provide students with some samples before they begin such as meet/meat, sea/see, son/sun. Some more samples can be found at [Examples of Homophones](#).

Read the poem 'Amazing Pete's Amazing Feet'. After reading engage the class in a discussion using the following prompts:

- Which homophones are evident in the poem? Answer: feet/feat
- What do the two words mean? (A dictionary may be required to look up 'feat')
- What else do you notice about the way the poem is written? Sample answer: The poem rhymes with a regular rhyming pattern and the poem uses puns: "re-Pete- ed" and "de-feet-ed" which play with the words repeated, defeated, feet and the name of the character, Pete.
- What kind of mood or feeling do homophones, puns (which often rely on homophone) and rhyme create? Sample answer: The mood is playful and fun. It makes the poem humorous and enjoyable and gives a rhythm or beat to the poem.

Turn to the poem 'Chihuahuas' on page 26 of this issue of Blast Off. Discuss the pun and word-play in the poem. Is the rhyming pattern the same or different to the pattern in 'Amazing Pete's Amazing Feet?' Discuss whether the mood or feeling of the two poems are similar or different. Why or why not?

Direct students to examine the illustration at the top of the page. This illustration blends the 'Chihuahua'/'2 hours' word play. Ask students how these elements have been blended

Students return to their groups and work together to choose a set of homophones from the earlier brainstorm and create an illustration that blends the meaning of the two words together.

Sample ideas:

Sea/See

Illustration – Binoculars with the sea reflected in the lenses

Knight/Night

Illustration – A knight riding a horse in the dark at nighttime

# An Ant's Vocabulary

poem by Beverly McLoughland | illustrated by [Tohby Riddle](#)

EN2-9B | [ACELA1484](#)

Students **analyse** synonyms and rank words based on meaning, before using specific vocabulary choices in their own poem.

Prior to reading the poem brainstorm a list of synonyms for the word 'fast'. Display this list on the board and select 5-10 of the best synonyms meaning 'fast.' Sample answers include: speedy, quick, swift, rapid.

Draw a **cline** on the board and ask students to rank the words along the line showing the levels of 'fast.' The words to the left are not as fast as those to the right of the line.

Students are now ready to read the poem. Ask students to find all the synonyms in the poem for the word 'hurry' and rank them on a line as they did for the word 'fast.'

Take a look at the illustration by Tohby Riddle. How do you know that the ants are moving quickly or hurrying in the picture?

Sample answer: The body movement of the ants is shown through the position of the legs in motion, with ants taking large steps. The shadows on the ground show that some are mid-air, with both feet off the ground. Facial expressions also show a sense of urgency.

Students prepare to write their own poem, this time about a slow animal. Complete the following steps:

- Brainstorm a list of slow animals. Suggestions include: turtle/tortoise, snail, sloth. Students may enjoy looking at these listicles: [Slowest Animals](#) and [Slowest animals in the world](#).
- Choose one slow animal from the list and think about how it moves slowly. Create a list of words that convey slow movement. Sample answers include: crawl, dawdle, glide.
- Compose a poem in the style of 'An Ant's Vocabulary'. The first lines should be:  
In a(n) \_\_\_\_\_'s vocabulary  
There are many words for \_\_\_\_\_
- Design an illustration to accompany the poem, think about how you could convey the slowness of the animal through visual techniques.