

# The Word Miser

story by author Cathryn Free | illustrated by Sheree Fiala

EN3-5B | ACELY1801

**Examine** how authors use language to position readers by encouraging incorrect inferences to be made.

- Prior to reading the text, display the following words:

Hero

Small old woman

Skinny, young boy

Black hooded cloak

Miser

Crooked little house with dirty shingles

- Place students in groups. Tell students that they have three minutes to list as many words as they can to describe each of the words displayed. You could use an online timer, such as one found on [Online Stopwatch](#), to provide a visual countdown. Students can use a simple table to respond. Example responses are provided in the table below. Leave the final column empty for now.

Word	Other words associated with the word	How it is used in the text
Hero	Brave, strong, gallant	Skinny young boy
Small old woman	Kind, weak, sweet	She is the word miser
Skinny young boy	Weak, nervous, scared	Hero
Black hooded cloak	Witch, evil, scary	Used by the witch
Miser	Unkind, selfish, greedy	Unkind, selfish, greedy
Crooked little house with dirty shingles	Poverty, witch	Poverty, witch

- Discuss the words students have associated with the original word.
- Read the text. Discuss how each of the words have been used. Place a tick next to any inferences that proved true on reading the text (e.g. the black hooded cloak is associated with the evil character, the miser is unkind, selfish and greedy).
- Discuss vocabulary that has been used to create inferences that didn't prove to be correct in this story (e.g. small old woman, skinny young boy).

- Highlight how authors can choose to either support or challenge common inferences readers make. Discuss why the author may have chosen to make the hero a skinny young boy, or the villain a small old woman. Sample responses include:

To surprise readers

To create more support for the skinny young boy in readers, as often we root for the underdog

To convey a message that people can surprise us

To convey the message that we shouldn't underestimate people

Experiment with using language to position readers, by following the steps below:

- Display two classic story characters:

A handsome, young knight

A large alien

- Discuss common inferences readers may make when presented with these characters in texts (e.g. that the knight is a hero and the alien is a villain).
- Tell students they should use language to reveal surprising traits about the characters, making the handsome, young knight abhorrent to readers while making the alien endearing.
- Allow time for students to discuss vocabulary in groups. Sample responses might include, arrogant, conceited and pompous for the knight, and misunderstood, gentle and sensitive for the alien.
- Place students in pairs. Instruct them to create a brief role-play, with one acting as either the knight or the alien and the other as someone interviewing them for a spot on a school team.
- Tell students to imagine the interviewer has seen the name of the character and has made assumptions about them (e.g. that the knight is gallant and that the alien is a threat).
- Instruct the student acting as either the knight or alien to demonstrate their true personality through their actions. For example, the knight may strut in and demand the interviewer make them a coffee or the alien may dash to rescue an ant the interviewer is about to step on.
- Inform the interviewer to include their shock when they meet the character and realise their inferences were false, using the vocabulary identified earlier. For example, they might say to the knight:

Wow, I cannot believe how conceited and pompous you are, there's no way we want you on our team.

- Share responses. Reflect on how challenging commonly made inferences can make stories more interesting.

# Comprehension: 'The Word Miser'

Answer the questions below using full sentences.  
Support your answers with examples from the text.

1. Why do you think the old woman may have wanted to steal words?

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2. What does the word 'miser' mean? Can you think of another appropriate title for this story?

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3. How would you describe Ezra, the young boy? Why do you think he risked being caught?

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4. Why are words so important? What do they mean to people?

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5. Write the next paragraph of the story. What may have happened next?

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# Orion's Way

poem by Charles Ghigna | photo by Alamy

EN3-6B | ACELT1615

**Analyse** poems about stars to guide personal composition of a poem on the northern lights.

- Display the rhyme, [Twinkle Twinkle Little Star](#), found on Speak and Play English.
- Show students the table (with the ticks omitted). Instruct them to place a tick in each column that includes an element featured in Twinkle Twinkle Little Star.

Poem/rhyme	Repetition	Metaphor
Twinkle Twinkle	✓	
Orion's Way		✓

- Read the poem, Orion's Way. Again, instruct students to complete the relevant row in the table.
- Discuss students preferences. Most students will likely select Orion's Way. Refer to the table, identifying the language choices included in the poem students preferred. Discuss students preferences, guiding them with sentence starters such as:
  - I particularly like poems that feature language choices such as... (e.g. metaphor)
  - I find language choices such as... (e.g. repetition) really help me to connect to the subject matter in a poem.

Experiment with adopting their preferred style by following the steps below:

- Place students in pairs, based on their preferences (e.g. metaphor or repetition). Tell students to examine what they like about the example of language choice in the poem they chose in more depth. For example, if discussing the metaphor in Orion's Way, students may identify that the unique comparison, of the night sky as star crumbs, really helped create a vivid picture in their mind.
- Discuss the northern lights (aurora polaris), ensuring students are aware that they are a natural phenomenon of shafts of coloured light that are sometimes visible in the sky. More on the northern lights can be found on the [Everyday Mysteries](#) page on the Library of Congress site.
- Discuss the term, time lapse videos, informing students if they are not aware that they are videos shot at regular intervals then speeded up to show changes over time. Show students the video, [Night of the Northern Lights](#) on YouTube, informing students that this is a time lapse video.

- Refer back to Orion’s Way, highlighting that the poem features one sentence spread across multiple lines.
- Instruct students to create a poem, outlining their response to the video of the northern lights. Tell them to include their preferred language choice in their poem. Provide an example, featuring the language choice of metaphor, such as:

Those scattered lines,  
Of bold and bright light towers,  
dance across the sky,  
in a vivacious, jaunty rainbow.

Display the following success criteria to guide students’ poems:

- Describes response to video on the northern lights
- Includes one single sentence spread over multiple lines
- Features preferred language choice, either repetition or metaphor

# The Rhythm of Time

poem by Wendy Fitzgerald | illustrated by [Christopher Nielsen](#)

[EN3-2A](#) | [ACELY1714](#)

**Compose** a rap to express what can be seen and heard in the school playground.

- Instruct students to read the poem to themselves. Highlight that the poet describes it as a rap. Discuss what students know about raps. Highlight that they are often performed with a fast reading pace.
- Experiment with reading the poem out loud, adopting the pace of a rap.
- Identify the rhyming pattern (rhyming couplets).
- View the YouTube video, [The School Kids' Rap](#). Highlight that music has been added to the words.

Compose a rap about what can be seen and heard in the playground, by following the steps below:

- Take students on a walk around the playground at the beginning of recess by asking them to close their eyes and remember what they saw. Note what students saw as they walk (for example, students playing handball, swapping trading cards, or sitting eating in small groups).
- Using recording software such as Voice Memos for IOS or [Rev Voice Recorder](#) for android, record sounds students heard.
- Collaboratively compose a brief rap, featuring rhyming couplets, titled The Playground Rap.

An idea to get you started is:

Games and trading cards, we mustn't bend,  
Playing handball, chatting with friends,  
That child is lonely, they're feeling left sad,  
Sit on the buddy bench, you'll feel glad.

- Place students in groups and instruct them to jointly compose their own raps. Instruct each student to compose a rhyming couplet. Provide access to rhyming dictionaries, such as [Rhyme Zone](#), to support with identifying rhyming words.
- Encourage students to read their lines aloud to the rest of the group to see how they sound. Instruct the rest of the students to provide feedback. Tell students to edit their lines, based on the feedback before collating the couplets together to form a rap.
- Instruct each student to deliver their own couplet as part of a performance.

# Kukur Tihar

story by [Jane Jolly](#) | illustrated by [Anna Bron](#)

EN3-8D | ACELT1613

**Compose** a vlog review of the story, reflecting the responses of different people based on their cultural and societal experiences.

- Display images of dogs found on [Unsplash](#).
- Discuss students' opinions about dogs, posing questions such as, do they view them as domesticated pets or working animals.
- Place students in groups and allocate each group a person from the following list:
  - a dog handler in the police force
  - a farm worker
  - a pet owner
  - a parent whose child has been bitten by a dog
  - someone who has wild dogs attacking the animals on their property
  - an astronaut working to send a dog into space
- Instruct students to discuss the following in their groups:
  - What might the individual they have been allocated think about dogs? For example, viewing them as working animals or domesticated pets.
  - What function do the dogs play in their lives? For example, as a companion or conducting essential work.
  - How might that person they feel about dogs in general? For example, do they view them as part of the family or as commodities.
- Students may prefer to conduct more research on dogs, using the article, [Dog Facts For Kids](#), from Kiddle.
- Read the story. Identify the opinion of dogs put forth in the story. Sample answers include, that they are faithful and loyal companions who protect the family, they are revered and are considered very special and as members of the family.
- Discuss students responses to the text, considering whether the views put forth by the author echo or are in contrast with their own opinions on dogs.
- In character as the person each group has been allocated, instruct students to consider how they might respond to the story. Provide examples, such as the pet dog owner may identify with the author's thoughts about dogs while the farm worker may think the reverence shown to dogs is over the top.

- Discuss how each person may view the story, depending on their societal and cultural differences (e.g. the pet dog owner may love the story while the parent whose child has been bitten by a dog may not enjoy it). Highlight to students that our cultural and societal experiences influence our opinions about literature.
- Students can record the opinions of dogs held by the author, themselves and the character they have been allocated, using a digital [Venn Diagram](#), found on Class Tools, to compare and contrast the opinions. Discuss responses.
- In character as the person allocated to each group, instruct students to compose a short vlog, orally reflecting on the merits of the story. Students can record their vlogs using video recording software and share these on Google Classroom.

### **Extension**

- Students could write their own short story about dogs, from the point of view of one of the people who has an alternate opinion to the one presented in the story. Provide an example such as writing from the perspective of a police dog handler who, while appreciating how hard their dog works, sniffing out illicit substances at airports, believes that dogs need very strict training and should know their place is beneath humans.
- These can be presented as a digital story, inserting images found using internet searches and text into programs such as PowerPoint. Sounds such as dogs barking could be located on sites such as [FindSounds](#) and added to the presentation.

# Dossier of Discovery: Takhini Hot Springs

article by [Anne Renaud](#) | photo courtesy of Takhini

EN3-7C | ACELT1618

**Create** an informative presentation for a wacky competition.

- Read the article. Discuss whether students might like to enter the competition and their reasons. Provide sample answers, such as the contest seems fun, unique and something different to try or that it must be cold when competing and students wouldn't want to get their hair wet.
- Identify vocabulary in the text that may inspire readers to wish to compete, such as:
  - unusual, winners, hair not damaged
- Place students in groups. Instruct them to locate facts in the text. Provide students with post-it-notes and tell them to label each fact with the piece of information it provides. Provide examples, such as labelling the following:

Takhini Hot Springs\* in Canada's Yukon

with the label, *where the event takes place*

thousands of patrons annually

with the label, *how many competitors*

- Discuss the information students have identified.
- Instruct students to research wacky competitions around the world, suggesting articles such as [20 of the World's Most Bizarre Competitions](#), found on TheTravel.com.
- Instruct students to select one of these or to create their own idea for a competition. Provide examples such as, an annual school bag balancing on your head distance race or a school canteen competition to eat as many ice-blocks as you can in one minute.

Create an informative presentation about the competition students select.

- Refer back to the notes on the post-it-notes made earlier. Identify the types of information included (e.g. where the event takes place, how many competitors take part). Instruct students to use these headings to guide what they include in their presentations.

- Remind students that the writer included inspirational language, that made the competition seem attractive and encourage them to use this in their own presentation.
- Tell students to make brief notes on what they wish to include, before recording an oral presentation of their report, using video recording software.
- Instruct students to add images and videos to the presentation, filming each other pretending to compete in the competition. Provide examples such as, videoing students balancing school bags on their heads in a race. Share responses.

### **Extension**

View the official site, for the competition, the [Takhini Hot Springs, Hair Freezing Contest Winners](#). Highlight how the page includes a list of rules. Instruct students to create fictitious rules for their competition and add these to their presentation.

# Winter Sun

poem by Jackie Hosking | illustrated by [Marjorie Crosby-Fairall](#)

[EN3-2A](#) | [ACELT1800](#)

**Compose** a poem adopting the style of the poet, to express summertime as represented in an artwork by Ken Done.

Analyse the representation of the winter sun in both the poem and the illustration and connect this to an image by the same illustrator, by following the steps below:

- Prior to reading, examine the illustration accompanying the poem. Emphasise that the use of light portrays the time of day. Highlight the fact the low-lying sun implies it is the early morning or late afternoon.
- Discuss the time of year portrayed, guiding students towards concluding the dappled light shown with lighter coloured lines across the trees implies it is winter. Highlight the use of shadow, with much of the foliage in the foreground shown in black and dark green tones.
- Connect to another illustration by the same illustrator, found in issue 4 of Countdown, 2021, to accompany the poem 'Not A Single Lorikeet'. Discuss how the illustrator has used light to portray the time of day, with the light appearing overhead and with less of the image shown in shadow. Ensure students conclude this image is more likely to represent the middle of the day. Discuss the time of year depicted in the image, highlighting that the colour of the leaves and grass imply it is winter time also.
- Read Winter Sun. Identify the mood (admiration and appreciation for the winter sun). Place the students in groups. Allocate each group one of the stanzas and with it, a different element to focus on: how the sun feels for the group focusing on the first stanza, how it looks for the group analyzing the second stanza, and how it behaves for those focused on the third stanza. Discuss responses.

Experiment with creating a stanza for a poem, representing feelings of summertime expressed in an image.

- Display [Chinamans Beach, 1985](#), by the artist Ken Done, found on the artist's website. Identify the time of day (middle of the day) and the season (summertime). Discuss the use of light (e.g. using lighter tones to create ripples in the water and much of the beach scene is painted in the same tone, implying the sun is not causing shadows due to it being directly above the beach). Identify the mood of the artwork (summer, fun, enjoying time outdoors).
- Using the same groups as before, instruct students to identify what they can feel, see and the kind of behaviour expected in the image. They can use a Y chart to guide responses. Sample answers may include, feeling the blazing sun scorching on skin,

seeing dripping ice-creams and expect to see behaviour such as people frolicking in the water, splashing and playing or floating on inflatables.

- Discuss what the idea of summertime sun means to students and list vocabulary they share on the board. Sample answers might include, freedom, burning heat, ice-cream, sunblock, school holidays etc.
- Place students in pairs. Instruct them to create a stanza for a poem about summer, to accompany the Ken Done painting. Encourage students to use the vocabulary listed on the board for ideas.
- Instruct students to use the repeated lines,

It's a ... sun, the summer sun,

at the beginning of their stanzas. Share responses.

- Stanzas can be collated into a collaborative poem, and displayed alongside the image, or orally recorded and played over a video of the painting.

### **Extension**

If you have a digital subscription, students can complete the interactive activity for this poem.

# Exploring multi-sensory imagery

Read the poem 'Winter Sun'.

## Part A

Record imagery from the poem that appeals to each of these senses.

Sight	Touch	Emotions

## Part B

Now come up with your own examples for a topic of your own choosing. Can you think of imagery that appeals to *all* of these senses?

My topic:

Sight	Sound	Taste	Smell	Touch	Emotions

## Part C

Use your sensory imagery to write a description of your topic. Use imagery that appeals to at least three different senses.

# Testing the Truth About Snow

article by [Kate Walker](#) | illustrated by [Sylvia Morris](#)

EN3-3A | ACELY1713

**Analyse** information from a variety of sources, using comprehension strategies to draw conclusions.

Prior to reading the text, display the statements that are featured in the introduction:

Snow is made of water. Snow is always white. Snow makes everything around it freezing cold.

Alongside, display opposing statements, e.g. snow is made of air, snow isn't white, snow doesn't make things cold.

- Instruct students to sort the statements into those they believe are true and those that are false.
- Instruct students to quietly read the text to themselves. Tell them to label any facts that are surprising to them with wows, written on post-it-notes and attached to the relevant parts of the text.
- Instruct students to identify which of the statements examined earlier are not true (all of those from the introduction). Discuss any surprises for the students with this.
- Provide students with access to the internet to research more surprising facts about snow. They may like to research whether snow can go grow, using sites such as [Fun With Frozen: Making Ice Grow](#), on Teach Preschool, and whether a piece of wire can cut through ice, in articles such as [Ice Cube Versus Wire](#), on KiwiCo.
- Invite students to visit a younger grade in the school. Alternatively, they could talk with younger siblings.
- Instruct students to provide those in the younger years with the following two statements, snow cannot grow and you cannot cut through ice with wire. Instruct them to ask the younger students whether they believe these statements are true or false.
- Instruct students to conduct the experiments, as outlined on the websites. Tell them to photograph the results. Instruct students to identify the scientific reasons why the outcomes occurred (more on the science behind making ice grow can be found on the YouTube video, [Instant Ice](#), and the scientific facts that allows wire to pass through an ice cube can be found at the end of the article [Ice Cube Versus Wire](#), on KiwiCo). Tell students to summarise the factual information and add this to the images as captions.
- Instruct students to share their own articles with the students they initially questioned. Identify any wow moments.

# Testing the Truth about Synonyms

Synonyms are words that have the same meaning.

List as many synonyms as you can for the words below. Then write a sentence using one of your words.

1. Breeze

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2. Trapped

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3. Freezing

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4. Tiny

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# Gone Fishin’

play by Steve Taylor and Kevin Densley | illustrated by [Tohby Riddle](#)

EN3-7C | ACELA1518

**Compose** jokes to add to the text adopting the styles of humor featured in the play.

Examine the humor in the play, by completing the following steps:

- Allocate students characters from the play. Provide the rest of the students with individual whiteboards. Instruct them to draw a smiley face on their whiteboard. Tell students to raise their whiteboard aloft every time they hear something humorous in the play when their peers conduct a read through. Instruct the students allocated characters to read the lines. Note down lines students identify as humorous.
- Place students in groups. Divide the lines that students identified as humorous between the groups. Tell each group to identify which of the following caused the humor in the lines they have been allocated:

Misunderstandings

Puns

Situation

Character

Students may need each type of humor defined in more detail. To do so, you could provide examples, such as the misunderstanding between Chris and Tom about the worms, from the lines below:

Chris: What about my worms?

Tom: You can get tablets for that.

Experiment with composing jokes to add to the play by doing the following:

- Match groups, based on the style of humor features in their allocated joke.
- Provide the students with a list of specific stages in joke development, such as generating ideas, testing humor, revisiting jokes, editing, deciding on their final idea and adapting the joke into lines to be spoken by one of the characters in the play.
- Instruct students to compose a joke in a similar style to the one they were allocated, using the stages of development above.
- Provide an example, such as a misunderstanding joke, mishearing the word lice instead of rice, e.g.

Chris: I think I’ve got rice in my hair.

Tom: You need to get a special shampoo for that mate, otherwise it will become very itchy.

- Instruct students to write their chosen joke or example of humor on a post-it-note and attach these to the play.
- Share jokes. Audience members can use their humor whiteboards to identify lines written by their peers that they find amusing.

# Sleeping Beauty

story by Ian McHugh | illustrated by [Jenny Tan](#)

[EN3-7C](#) | [ACELT1614](#)

**Examine** the impact of unpredictable stories on readers and experiment adopting this style.

- Read or view an original version of Sleeping Beauty, such as [Sleeping Beauty Fairy Tale](#) on Stories to Grow By.
- Reveal the title of the text in the magazine. Ask students to rate their desire to read this story from 1 to 5, with 1 being not really interested to 5 being very interested. It's quite likely that most students will rate their interest towards the lower end of this scale.
- Discuss students reasons for selecting the rating they have. Sample responses may include, that they expect the story will be predictable and they know what will happen.
- Read the story. Place students in groups and instruct them to discuss the differences between the original story and the text from the magazine. Tell them to identify which difference they liked most. Provide examples such as, the fact that sleeping beauty was a man, the fact the ogre was kind or the fact the hero was in fact nervous to fight.
- Instruct students to score their interest in the story now that they have read it. Most likely, students will select a higher score. Discuss reasons for the students new chosen scores. Sample responses include, the score increased because the story was surprising and unexpected, it challenged stereotypes, or as the characters acted differently from how the students assumed they would.
- Discuss predictable elements from texts. Provide examples, such as the protagonist winning, and the villain losing. Jot suggestions on the board.

Experiment with composing an unpredictable story:

- Provide students with a number of story elements relating to the characters, setting, and plot, for example, a talking tree, an enchanted land and a broken ladder. A digital story element generator such as the [Scholastic Story Starters Adventure](#) could be used here.
- Ensure students are aware improvisation means responding to events through drama with minimal preparation. Tell students that they have five minutes to orally create an improvised story, featuring each of the elements from the story element generator. Students may make notes on what they wish to include while rehearsing. Inform students that they must avoid everything listed on the board as predictable. Start a timer, such as an interactive one found at [Online-Stopwatch](#).

- Match each group with another. Tell students to share their responses with the other group, while the rest of the students to listen carefully to ensure everything on the list has been avoided in the story. Highlight how original and unique the stories are.

# Fractured fairy tales

Fractured fairy tales turn traditional stories on their heads.

List the common characteristics of the traditional 'Sleeping Beauty' characters and setting. The first few have been done for you.

Make a list of how those traditions are interrupted in the fractured version. Find the evidence in the text.

Repeat the task for ogres in the bottom table.

Traditional 'Sleeping Beauty'	Fractured 'Sleeping Beauty'	Evidence in the text
Handsome male hero who is dashing and strong.	Juan doesn't know how to hold his sword and shield.	He flailed wildly with his sword.
Hero is brave and fearless.	Juan is scared.	Juan backpedalled with a squawk.

Traditional ogres	'Sleeping Beauty' ogress	Evidence in the text
Live in dirty, dark caves littered with human bones.	Lives in a beautiful oasis which she keeps very clean	It really was idyllic. ... trickling waterfall feeding a little pool.

# Bus Stop People

poem by poem by Carol Millner | illustrated by [Kerry Millard](#)

EN3-7C | ACELT1617

**Examine** free verse poetry and experiment with this style.

- Discuss the style of poetry featured in the poem. Question students about the rhyming pattern and rhythm, guiding them towards concluding that there is neither a rhyming pattern or clear rhythm. Inform students that this is a free verse poem. Inform students that free verse poems do not follow any rules of content, rhythm or rhyme. More on free verse poetry can be found on Your Dictionary, in the piece [Examples of Free Verse Poems](#).

- Discuss the descriptions of the people in the poem. Identify sensory language used to describe them:

how they look, in lines such as:

apple-like, the pink lady boards

how they sound:

crunches her shoes down the aisle

smells identified:

I catch a whiff of sweetness in the heat

- Discuss traits that may make someone's personality like a particular fruit. Provide examples such as someone who is kind and sweet may be like a mango while someone who is tough on the outside and can be a little sharp with what they say may be like a pomegranate.
- Select one of the stories from this issue of the magazine. Sleeping Beauty may be a good choice. Identify a fruit for each of the characters, e.g. a mango for Juan and a pomegranate for the ogre.
- In pairs, instruct students to compose a free verse poem about the characters, using fruits to describe them. Provide an example, such as, with his sticky smelling, sweet nature, Juan is the juiciest of all who attempted to save sleeping Beauty. When he meets the ogre, with her tough outer skin, Juan is sure he's met a pomegranate, until the sensitive ogre reveals she is more of a strawberry.
- Instruct students to use sites such as [Be Funky](#), to create a digital collage, featuring the fruits identified for the main characters in the story. Students should add their free verse poems to the collage.