

# Sylphie's Squizzes: The Drip Rifle

article by [Zoë Disher](#) | illustrated by [Marjorie Crosby-Fairall](#)

[EN3-3A](#) | [ACELY1702](#)

**Constructs** labels for a diagram by summarising key information from a text.

Read the first paragraph, that appears under the subheading 'A clever contraption.' Draw students' attention to the illustration at the bottom of the page, emphasising that this drawing shows how a self-firing rifle is set up. Inform students that often explanation texts include a labelled diagram.

Tell students you will be using the information in the text to add labels to one of the illustrations. Display a copy of the first illustration that accompanies the article (found on page 4).

Model checking back to the text using the [think aloud](#) strategy to share key words that help you to identify the beginning of the extract, explaining how to set up a self-firing rifle ('to set it up'). Read the first step aloud.

A tin full of water was placed over another tin, which was empty.

Use this information to add the first two labels to the illustration, 'a tin full of water,' referring to the tin at the top, and 'an empty tin,' referring to the tin at the bottom. Emphasise how you have paraphrased the information from the text, summarising what you have read and rewriting it into your own words rather than copying the information in the article, word for word. Labels can be attached using post-it-notes or written on a photocopy of the image.

Continue reading and again use the think aloud strategy to emphasise the discovery of additional information:

A small hole was punched in the top tin to allow the water to slowly drip through.

Return to the first label for the tin full of water and add the additional information 'a small hole punched in the top to allow the water to slowly drip through.'

Continue following this process, adding the labels to the diagram based on the remaining information. Sample responses are provided below:

- The tin tips over when all the water trips to the bottom tin (as a separate label referring to the top tin)
- This pulls on a string connected to the trigger of a rifle (directed at the string)
- When the sting is pulled, the rifle fires (referring to the rifle)

Read the second paragraph together before placing students in small groups. Instruct them to read the final paragraph under the subheading 'Slipping away' with their group. Tell

students to use this information to label the illustration at the bottom of page 5. Students can use Worksheet 1 for this task. Remind students to scan the text for relevant information before summarising the details in their own words.

A sample response is provided below:

- Final evacuation took place on 19 December 1915 (referring to somewhere in the sky)
- The troops muffled their boots and covered anything that might reflect the moonlight (directed at the troops boots)
- The troops marched silently in a single file across the trenches (referring to the troops)
- The boats were waiting for them (directed at the boat in the background)
- The Turkish soldiers did not realise they were leaving as William Scurry's self-firing rifle was still shooting at the enemy (referring to the distance, far right, where the shadows might be the enemy troops)

## Rat Rod vs Magpie

story by Gisela Ervin-Ward | illustrated by [Greg Holfeld](#)

[EN3-5B](#) | [ACELY1701](#)

**Composes** questions to be resolved in a narrative.

Read the first column of the text, up to the end of the following sentence:

'I can't believe that Dad said no,' said Grim, squashing ants with a stick.

Discuss questions students have about what has been revealed so far in the story. Sample responses include:

- What has dad said no to?
- Why are the characters so desperate to get to the creek?
- Why did dad say no?
- What are the characters going to do next? Will they go to the creek without dad's permission or not?

Discuss the impact on readers of leaving these questions unanswered for now. Guide students towards concluding that it makes them wish to read on to discover the answers to these questions. Inform students that raising questions is one-way authors engage readers.

# Sylphie's Squizzes: The Drip Rifle

article by [Zoë Disher](#) | illustrated by [Marjorie Crosby-Fairall](#)

Worksheet: 1

[EN3-3A](#) | [ACELY1702](#)

Use the information from the article to add labels to the image below. Consider the questions then write the answers inside the boxes.

What is the boat in the background there for?

When the evacuation took place?

What prevented the enemy from realising the troops were evacuating?

What was special about the troop's boots?



How did the troops evacuate?

Place students in pairs and instruct them to continue reading the text, identifying any questions raised in their minds as they read. These can be noted on a separate piece of paper. Sample responses include:

- Why has dad never let them near the Rat Rod before?
- Why does Grim and his big brother wish to go to the creek?
- Will the boys be tempted to use the Rat Rod?
- Will dad catch them if they use the Rat Rod?
- Will the boys be able to go fast enough to avoid the magpie?
- Will the bike and the helmet be enough to protect them from the magpie?

Discuss questions students identified, reflecting on which questions students found most interesting or exciting. Sample responses include:

- Will Grim and his brother make it past the magpie?
- Will dad find out they have used the Rat Rod?

Consider where each of the questions appeared in the plot, at the beginning, middle or end. Inform students that often the most exciting questions come right before the resolution of a story. Discuss how the answers are revealed in the story, emphasising it seems as though the characters will not make it past the magpie, before they eventually do. Highlight how this adds to the tension.

Once students have considered the questions in Rat Rod vs Magpie, inform them that they will be generating their own story questions. Display the [Story Starter Generator](#), from Scholastic. Ignore the first spinner, which is used to generate the style of writing. The second spinner generates a theme. Select one at random before focusing on the character and plot elements that are revealed through the remaining two spinners. Spin the wheels and discuss the suggestions. Sample answers include:

- A suspicious engineer who has colonized the moon
- A giant sailor who is searching for a 100- year-old crown

If working offline, provide students with a list of characters and plot ideas for them to select from at random, including:

- characters (a queen, a fairy, a troll)
- adjectives to describe them (mean, scary, kind)
- missions they wish to undertake (to save the universe, to take over a chocolate factory, to save their family from an evil prince)

Discuss questions that could be generated, based on the story elements identified. Sample responses include:

- Will the engineer manage to keep control of the moon?
- Will the sailor find the 1000-year-old crown? What challenges might they encounter along the way?

Once you have settled on a question, discuss ways to weave this into a story, without revealing the answer right away. Remind students of the observations they made relating to Rat Rod vs Magpie, that the questions they identified often remained unanswered until later in the story.

Model composing a brief story, where the answer is raised, and it almost seems it will not be answered before it is finally resolved. A sample response might be:

The engineer surveyed the scene. All around him his workers were following orders. His nerves began to dissipate, despite a nagging doubt that had been plaguing him, whether he could manage to keep control of the moon, and its rebellious inhabitants. Little did he know, a small team of brave and dedicated workers were meeting in private, plotting to overthrow the engineer. But they had one major problem they could not get past; how to steal the key to unlock the portal that would return their strength to them.

Place students in groups and instruct them to jointly compose their own story, using the questions they generate to guide the direction the plot takes.

## Winning

poem by Robert Schechter | illustrated by Gabriel Evans

EN3-1A | ACELT1795

**Compares** two poems, reflecting on the impact of using enjambment.

After reading the poem, discuss the lack of punctuation, emphasising that the poem is made up of one long sentence. Tell students that this style of poetry that features a sentence which continues over multiple line without punctuation it is called 'enjambment.' View the video, [What is Enjambment?](#) from Oregon State University. The video can be paused after the first 29 seconds.

Discuss reasons why a poet may choose to use enjambment, citing reasons outlined in the video, such as: to create urgency and pace, to encourage the reader to keep reading due to their curiosity about the part of the phrase that is missing and to create a sense of surprise.

Share your personal response to the poem, focusing on the following:

- Did the poem inspire a sense of urgency and pace?
- Were you curious about what the rest of the phrase included, so that you kept reading?

- Did you find any parts of the poem surprising?

A sample answer might be; the poem had good pace due to sense of urgency it inspired, making readers keen to discover the narrator's feelings about winning. The journey from losing to winning, that resulted in the narrator grinning, was surprising and unique because you did not expect the narrator to win after losing.

Use the **Think-Pair-Share** strategy, placing students in pairs and instructing them to think about their responses to the questions, before sharing them with their partner.

Once students have had time to share their comments on winning, inform them they will be comparing this with another poem, one that does not feature enjambment.

Collaboratively read *Sport Retort*, found on page 32 of this issue of *Orbit*. Discuss the structure and use of punctuation, noting that most lines feature one complete sentence, with some sentences continuing over two lines.

Using the same questions as before, share your response to the poem. A sample response might be:

The short, snappy sentences helped create pace. There was less urgency to read on, as most sentences were fully explained in the specific line. The content was surprising, with Sally expending a great deal of energy, enthusiastically painting the wall.

Once students have had time to discuss *Sport Retort*, instruct them to discuss a final comparison question:

- Which poem did you prefer and why?

Again, share your own response though think aloud, such as: I preferred *Winning*, as it inspired a real sense of curiosity through the use of enjambment that kept me wanting to read on. I enjoyed the element of surprise at the end.

Place students in small groups and instruct them to discuss their responses.

## Not Your Ordinary Egg

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

[EN3-6B](#) | [ACELA1507](#)

Composes a fictitious article about a lost Fabergé egg featuring complex sentences.

Remind students that complex sentences feature a main clause (that makes sense on its own) and a subordinate clause (that adds detail to the main clause, but that does not make sense on its own).

Discuss reasons for using subordinate clauses (to add more detail, to provide a reason, a purpose or to express a condition).

Display the following complex sentences, discussing the type of additional information each provides:

- She walked home because she needed fresh air.
- She ran to the playground, to play with her friends.
- If you are not careful with it, it will not last.

For each, identify the main clause and the subordinate clause. Answers are provided below.

Main clause	Subordinate clause
She walked home	because she needed fresh air
She ran to the playground	to play with her friends
it will not last	If you are not careful with it

Refer students' attention to the article. Collaboratively identify examples of complex sentences, such as:

It was crafted in 1885 for the Russian ruler Tsar Alexander III.

He ordered this very special Easter egg for his wife.

The egg was crafted from gold, and the shell was made out of white enamel with a little band of gold around the centre.

Those with a digital subscription can complete the interactive activity now.

Draw students' attention to the fact the article mentions that many of these eggs have been lost. Identify the extract that mentions one of the locations where a Fabergé egg has been found ('when a man tried to sell one for scrap metal!').

View the list of Fabergé eggs found in the article, [Fabergé Egg Facts for Kids](#), on Kiddle. Scroll down to the list of eggs, referring to the fifth column of the table, labelled 'owner' to identify those eggs that are still lost.

Select one of the eggs from the list that is labelled as lost, for example: Hen egg with sapphire pendant. Discuss suggestions of where it might be found. Provide examples, such as in someone's basement or hidden in a chicken hutch. Model composing a brief fictitious article about the chosen egg being found. Include complex sentences in the article, striving to include a mixture of each of the three types discussed earlier.

A sample response is provided below:

The strangest things happen when you least expect it. Farmer Jones has worked on his farm, in the town of Bendigo, for over twenty years. In that time, he often cleaned out the hen coop, but never thought to look under the chickens. Then one chilly autumn morning, Farmer Jones made a shocking discovery. As he was cleaning out the coop, one of the hens jumped and he saw under where she was sitting for the first time. There, hidden away, was a golden egg. It was later identified as the missing Hen egg with sapphire pendant, a one-of-a-kind Fabergé egg. The egg was made in 1886, for Alexander III to give as a gift to his wife,

the Empress Maria Feodorovna. How it found its way in Farmer Jones' farm will remain a mystery because no one can identify a logical reason.

Place students in pairs or small groups, or they may prefer to work independently. Instruct them to select an egg from the list and compose their own brief fictitious article about their chosen egg being found. Remind students to include complex sentences in their writing.

## Jack's Bike

story by Philippa Kaye | illustrated by [Sylvia Morris](#)

[EN3-2A](#) | [ACELT1609](#)

**Discusses** opinions about character's behaviour, considering personal responses to similar situations.

Prior to reading the story, display the following list of scenarios:

- You are upset as your bike is old, and even the sight of it makes you feel frustrated. Out of frustration, you kick your bike and it falls over.
- A teacher informs you that year 5 students will be allowed to bring their bikes to school. You feel embarrassed about your bike as it is very old, and you don't want to bring it to school.
- Someone offers to help you repair your bike, but you long for a new bike and are unsure whether to accept the help.

Select one of the examples to work through collaboratively with the students. Discuss the following:

- How might the character be feeling?
- What advice could you give the character?
- How could they have acted differently?

After discussing the questions, model role-playing one of these scenarios. Invite a student to join you for the role play. Instruct them to mime kicking their bike in frustration. Role-play acting as a guide, offering advice on how the character might act. Sample responses include:

- Maybe take a break, do another activity and give yourself time to calm down.
- Rather than focusing on the things you don't like about your bike, consider how fortunate you are to have a bike.

Instruct students to reflect on the advice and decide which advice they would choose to follow. Discuss alternative choices the character could make when faced with a bike they dislike. Again provide examples, such as:

- Showing respect for their property
- Deciding to save up for a new bike

Discuss which of the reactions students relate to and which reaction most aligns with how they might personally act. Instruct the student taking part in the role-play to decide how they might act and to act out their decision. Follow the steps below, to consider the scenarios:

- Place students in small groups.
- Allocate one student the role of advisor and the other the role of acting as the character featured in the scenario.
- Instruct them to role-play one of the scenarios, with one student providing advice while the other decides which course of action they might take.
- Allow time for each student to have a turn in both roles.
- Once students have had time to work through a few role-plays, match groups together and instruct them to discuss the advice they gave and the choices they made for each scenario.

Read the story. Reflect on which of the choices Jack made that were similar to students ideas on how they would react. For each of the choices, instruct students to stand on one side of the room if they would have acted in the same way as Jack and the other side of the room if they would have acted differently.

Conduct a quick poll, instructing students to orally rate the story out of 5, based on how much they enjoyed it, with 5 being that they loved it, and 1 being that they didn't enjoy the story. Compare responses, commenting on any correlation between students relating to Jack's choices and their personal enjoyment of the story.

Complete an exit slip, answering the following:

I think Jack acted appropriately when...

If I was Jack I would have acted differently when...

## Bush Garden

story by Taylah Needham | illustrated by Amy Golbach

[EN3-8D | ACELT1608](#)

**Composes** a story as a digital narrative, incorporating historical details from Australia's early convict settler history.

Read the first page of the story. Discuss evidence in the text that allows readers to identify what time period the story is set in. Draw students' attention to vocabulary such as, 'convict,' 'master,' and facts such as the master's daughter eating plain bread and that James is worried his master might beat him black and blue if he argued with the master's daughter. Ensure students correctly identify that the story is set in the past, around the time of the early convict settlement in Australia.

Tell students that this story is an example of historical fiction. Inform students that historical fiction is a genre of writing that incorporates historical facts into a narrative. Tell students that often authors writing historical fiction will conduct in-depth research to ensure the accuracy of historical details.

Read the story Bush Garden. Use a table to record insights students can obtain from the story about the time period, focusing on the characters of James and Jiemba.

Treatment of James	Treatment of Jiemba
Working in a physical job under the hot sun	Forbidden from visiting certain areas in the town
Unable to challenge his master and their family for fear of being beaten	Being threatened by children with rocks and sticks
Having a rock thrown at him by other children	
Coins stolen from him by the other children	
Fearful he would get into serious trouble for losing the money	

Discuss how these examples support students own understanding of how both convicts and Indigenous Australians were treated in the past.

Draw students' attention to the fact that James and Jiemba bond and become friends. Using these same historical details, tell students to construct a story, outlining an interaction between a convict, an Indigenous Australian and a settler. Discuss ideas about the type of interaction the trio might have based on the information gathered from the text. Ensure students conclude it is most likely the settler will treat the convict and the Indigenous Australian unfairly in some way. Sample answers have been provided below:

- The settler might accuse the convict of stealing something and the indigenous Australian might jump in to help.
- The settler may be unkind to the Indigenous Australian and the convict might protect them.

Inform students that there is no need for them to write their story down. Rather, the goal here is to role-play the interaction. Once students have had time to rehearse their

interaction, instruct them to video it using video recording software. Students can edit the video clips, using [iMovie](#) for IOS or Adobe Rush for Android.

# Indigo

poem by Elena de Roo | illustrated by Ana Maria Méndez Salgado

[EN3-2A](#) | [ACELY1705](#)

**Composes** a poem featuring imagery, workshopping poems and supporting their peers to edit.

Ensure students are aware what the concept of [imagery](#) is (figurative language to represent objects, actions and ideas in a way that appeals to the reader's senses). Read the poem and discuss the various images relating to the colour indigo that the poet has managed to evoke.

Emphasise that each line of the poem features a new image. Sample responses include:

An inky hue  
The line where violet turns to blue  
A shadow in the fading light

Display a colour palette, such as [The Martian Colour Wheel](#), found on the WarrenMars site. Discuss students favourite colours. Select a colour to focus on, such as red. Collaboratively compose ideas for descriptions of the chosen colour to conjure imagery. For example:

Red

- The colour of fire trucks, flashing lights and fast cars
- Shiny shoes, a winter coat,
- Leaves in autumn, rustling on the ground
- Hot lava cascading down a volcano

Model incorporating these into a brief poem. Refer to Indigo, to identify the rhyming structure (mostly rhyming couplets).

Edit the lines composed to form rhyming couplets. A rhyming dictionary, such as [RhymeZone](#), might be useful here. For example:

The colour of fire trucks, flashing lights and fast cars  
Shiny shoes, a winter coat, the glowing sight of Mars  
Leaves in autumn, rustling on the ground at night

Hot lava, cascading down a volcano, causing a fright.

Place students with a partner and instruct them to compose lines of imagery about a colour before composing a poem, incorporating the imagery.

Once students have completed their poems, tell them that they will be workshopping each other's poems. Display the following success criteria:

- Incorporates multiple lines of imagery to describe a colour
- Includes rhyming couplets

Tell students to decide which of these two criteria they feel they were most successful when composing their poems. Instruct those students who feel they were successful with incorporating imagery to stand on one side of the room. Tell these students that for now they will be the 'experts.' Match these with students who identify that they found incorporating imagery challenging. Tell these students that for now they will be the 'students.' Form small groups, aiming for equal amounts of 'experts' and 'students.' Instruct the students to workshop each other's poems, with the 'experts' supporting and guiding the 'students.' Allow time to workshop the 'students' poems.

Repeat this process, this time having those who felt they were successful with composing rhyming couplets acting as 'experts' while the others act as the 'students.' Allow time for the rhyming couplet 'experts' to support and guide the 'students,' assisting them to improve their poems.

Reflect on the process, discussing how students felt their work improved by identifying their challenges and collaborating with others to improve their work.

Success criteria

- Identifies which element of composing the poem they felt most successful with
- Works with a guide to improve their work
- Assists others to improve their work, while acting as a guide

## This is Your Bug Life!

play by [Marian McGuinness](#) | illustrated by [Tohby Riddle](#)

[EN3-1A](#) | [ACELY1796](#)

**Experiment** with using tone, volume, pitch and pace to present lines from a play.

Make a statement to the class, deliberately speaking in a monotone voice with minimal expression. Make the content of the statement as exciting as possible in contrast with the dreary tone of voice, for example sharing that you have won \$1 million.

Discuss how the tone, volume, pitch and pace doesn't match the content. View the video, [Pace, Emphasis, Diction, Tone, and Volume](#), on YouTube, for more information on this topic.

Invite students to share examples of how the statement should be presented, ensuring they identify it would suit a presentation style with increased volume, quick pace, and an excited tone. Discuss key words to emphasise with expression, such as 'one million'.

View a video of [Funny Kids Roast Quiz Show Host | Hard Quiz Kids Special](#), on YouTube. Discuss the way the presenter, Tom Gleeson, varies how his voice sounds.

Examples include:

- Speaking quickly and with expression when saying the names of the contestants
- Extending pauses before making dramatic statements, such as the contestants chosen specialist subject
- Slowing down when asking a question
- Using an excited tone when one of the contestants says they own the Hard Quiz board game and book

Place students in pairs and display a range of statements, including:

- I am worried about you.
- This is the best day of my life.
- I am so excited to be here.
- I am dreading this.

Instruct students to experiment with saying each of the statements, using the most appropriate tone, volume, pitch and pace. Students may prefer to experiment with saying the line, 'I love cheese pizza' in a variety of ways based on the punctuation found on the resource [Reading with Expression Practice! I Love Cheese Pizza](#).

Read the play. Discuss how the lines might be presented. For example:

For the character of the host, identify the following:

The line: 'Douglas Dung Beetle, This is Your Bug Life,' would be said at a slow pace, emphasising words such as, 'this' and 'your', and with an excited tone and high pitch.

Saying the line that is capitalised, 'THIS IS YOUR BUG LIFE,' in an excited tone, highlighting the use of capital letters to demonstrate extra emphasis.

Note stage directions, such as '(with authority),' informing students this might need a brisk pace, and slightly deeper pitch.

Draw students attention to further stage directions, such as:

Doug Dung Beetle: (gets a little teary) Dad! You adopted me when I was a little larva.

Discuss how this line might be presented (with extended pauses and talking in a whisper as if holding back tears).

Place students in small groups. Instruct them to discuss further examples of how each character may present certain lines. Tell students to each select a character and experiment with presenting their lines.

Once students have had time to experiment with presenting their chosen character's lines, match groups together so each group of students has another group to present to. Instruct students to take turns presenting the lines.

Discuss differences between the way some students may have presented the same lines. Inform students that directors and actors often have their own interpretation of a script, and how lines should be presented.

#### Extension

Students film their performances, using video recording software. Recordings could be viewed by the students to enable them to reflect on their delivery of the lines.

#### Success criteria

- Experiments with using tone, volume, pitch and pace
- Presents lines for a character from the play

## Sport Retort

poem by Jessica Horn | illustrated by Queenie Chan

[EN3-3A | ACELA1511](#)

**Experiments** with creating a sequence of images to tell a visual story.

Before reading the poem, analyse the two different illustrations of Sally. Use a table like the one below to record observations. Collaboratively complete an analysis of the first image of Sally, leaving the second image for students to analyse later with their partner. Sample answers are provided below:

Image	Facial expression	Stance/body language	Accompanying images
1	Chin jutting upwards Eyes closed Eyebrows furrowed	Hand held behind her in a 'stop' sign  Face turned away from whoever she is telling to stop	Various types of bats and balls

2	Wide open smile Eyes glistening	Arm reaching up in what appears to be a gesture of victory Other arm splayed wide/open body language Sweat dripping from her face	Paint brushes in hand Paint flicking around her Other character watching on and sniggering
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Place students in pairs. Instruct them to analyse the second illustration of Sally, using their own table to record their ideas.

Display the following questions:

- How is Sally feeling in the first image?
- How has this changed in the second image?
- What might have caused this change?

Discuss students observations. Read the poem and discuss what causes Sally to change so dramatically (Sally's PE teacher encourages her to paint rather than pushing her to take part in the sport's class).

Guide students through creating their own visual story, following the steps below:

- Share a time when someone has believed in you and encouraged you to do something you love. For example: you were worried about joining a drama group, but a neighbour encouraged you so you gave it a try.
- Role-play the type of body language you might have displayed when you were nervous to try the drama group, for example: slumping your shoulders forward, hanging your head down and avoiding eye contact.
- Instruct one of the students to take a photo of you in this position.
- Role-play how you felt when you were accepted into the drama group, for example: raising your hands in the air, smiling wide and jumping up and down.
- Again, instruct a students to take a photo of you.
- Show students how to upload these two images into a word processing document from this device. Model using the formatting tool to shrink or enlarge both images so they fit on one page. For more information on formatting images, view [Formatting Pictures](#), on GCFGlobalLearnFree.Org.

Discuss examples from students own lives. For those students who struggle with ideas, allow them to select from the following scenarios:

- You were nervous to try out for the soccer team but your sports teacher encouraged you to try and you were delighted when you were accepted.
- You wanted to learn to paint but felt nervous to attempt it. Seeing a peer take a chance, encouraged you to have a go. You tried painting and realized you love it.

Place students in small groups or pairs. Instruct them to create two freeze-frames to reveal the stages in their visual story. Instruct students to photograph their freeze-frames before inserting them into a word processing document and formatting them to fit on one page. If access to photographic equipment is limited, students can show their freeze-frames to another group.

#### Success criteria

- Identifies differences in body language to demonstrate stages in a story
- Creates a sequence of images to communicate their own visual story
- Uses body language to communicate to tell the story