

# Mervin the Vermin

part three of a three-part story by [Geoffrey McSkimming](#) | illustrated by [Greg Holfeld](#)

[EN3-3A](#) | [ACELY1713](#)

## Learning intention

I am learning to distinguish between the main ideas and the supporting details in texts so that I can compose summaries.

## Success criteria

- I can identify the main ideas in a text.
- I can summarise the main ideas on each page.
- I can use these to compose a summary.

## Prior knowledge

Ensure students understand terms such as the 'main idea' of a story and supporting details. Tell students that the main idea is what the text is mainly about. Inform students that supporting details add further information to the main idea but are not vital to any text.

Display the following extract:

Last Saturday we went for a day out at the beach. I wore my favourite green hat and my red shoes. It was windy but still nice and sunny. My whole family went, even my grandma and grandad. It was a great day out.

Discuss the following questions:

- What is the main idea of this paragraph? (That they all went for a day out at the beach)
- What are supporting details in the extract? (They wore their favourite green hat and their red shoes, it was windy and sunny, the whole family went)

Note: prompt students further with distinguishing the supporting details from the main idea by informing them that the supporting details could be removed, and the extract would still make sense.

Read the paragraph that begins 'The story so far', found at the beginning of Mervin the Vermin, page 4. Emphasise that the part that appears in this issue of the magazine is part three. Therefore, this summary outlines the main ideas from the previous two parts of the story.

Discuss the following:

What are the main ideas included in the summary?

- Something very peculiar has happened to Mervin.
- His older sister Felicity decides to get to the bottom of it, and so she takes Mervin and his friend Frank Nelson up to the house in the hope that the man who dwells there can solve the mystery.

What supporting details have been included?

- The fact Mervin was briefly trapped inside the old mansion.
- That the mansion is at Fernhurst.
- The man Felicity hopes will help them is a mysterious electro physicist named Doctor Bompas.

Emphasise that limited supporting details have been included.

Inform students that they will be creating a summary of part three of Mervin the Vermin, focusing on the main ideas and including only limited supporting details.

Read this part of the story, Mervin the Vermin or listen to the audio file. Re-read the first page, page 4. Discuss the main ideas on this page and compose dot points collaboratively with the students to summarise them. For example:

- As the characters make their journey towards Fernhurst, Francis shares that she's noticed Mervin's nose is getting longer and that his whiskers are growing
- He was also becoming paler
- Fernhurst is in darkness, only lit by bolts of lightning

Support students who may find it challenging to identify which are supporting details by emphasising how these are not essential to the story, for example:

Mervin half ran, half scurried

Melicent, Milicent and Molicent remained upright, as still as little statues, their beady red eyes watching the rain ahead.

Discuss how to make the main ideas of page 4 expressed in the dot points more concise, for example:

- As the characters make their journey towards a dark Fernhurst, they notice Mervin's nose is getting longer, his whiskers are growing and that he is becoming paler.

Place students with a partner and instruct them to complete the following:

- Re-read each page in turn
- Compose three of four dot points to summarise to main ideas on that page
- Condense the ideas on each page into one sentence.

Students may note their responses in their workbooks or use digital programs such as [Google Jamboard](#).

Bring the class back together and discuss the sentences students have composed to summarise the main ideas on each page. Sample responses are:

Page 5: The characters arrive at Fernhurst, all the while Mervin is looking less and less like a boy.

Page 6: The characters nervously enter the house, and a bolt of lightning reveals strange structures in the foyer.

Page 7: A completely white character appears, terrifying the characters. They label it 'the thing', and when the thing catches sight of Mervin it seems upset.

Page 8: Mum arrives, introduces the thing as Doctor Bompas and informs them he is an albino. Doctor Bompas reveals that what is going on is called 'Transmogrification'.

Page 9: Doctor Bompas informs that that Transmogrification means that a change is happening and that due to a lightning strike Mervin is turning into his rats and they are turning into him.

Page 10: Doctor Bompas attempts to use the lightning to reverse the change, and after strikes of lightning Mervin turns back into a boy and Milicent and Molicent turn back into rats.

Page 11: The characters thank Doctor Bompas and head back home feeling relieved.

Check back to summary of the previous parts of the story at the top of page 4. Emphasise that these two parts of the story were summarised in only one paragraph. Tell students that they will be condensing the dot points they have composed into a brief summary. Inform them that they will need to decide which ideas are essential to the summary and which can be left out. Allow time for students to compose their summaries.

A sample response is:

The characters arrive at Fernhurst, all the while Mervin looking less and less like a boy. Doctor Bompas reveals lightning to cause Mervin and his rats to change into each other. He uses lightning to successfully reverse the change and the characters head off for home, relieved it's all over.

### **Assessment for learning: Peer assessment.**

Instruct students to swap summaries with a peer. Tell students that they will be workshopping their ideas, discussing the following questions:

Note: inform students that there are many possible responses and that the goal here is to reflect on whether they have included any details that might be removed.

- Which information have they included that definitely needs to be there? (Responses may vary)
- Is there any information in the summary composed by your peer that might be removed? (Be specific) (Responses may vary)
- Based on discussions with your peers, how might you edit your summary? (Make the changes if time allows) (Responses may vary)

[Effective Feedback](#) from the NSW Department of Education has more information on the types of feedback.

## **Dossier of Discovery: Australia's Sherlock Holmes**

article by Karen Wasson | illustrated by Fifi Colston

[EN3-5B | ACELY1801](#)

### **Learning intention**

I am learning to identify how authors position readers so that I can influence readers with the texts I write.

### **Success criteria**

- I can analyse a text to identify how authors position readers.
- I can identify vocabulary that authors use to influence readers' opinions.
- I can compose a profile piece about someone I admire.
- I can include emotive and persuasive language to persuade readers.

### **Essential knowledge**

View the video on [Representation](#) from The School Magazine. Discuss the ideas in the video, ensuring students note that the way authors and illustrators represent their subjects is influenced by their experiences, beliefs, cultural backgrounds and the audience for whom

they're making the text. Emphasise that the way an author represents their subject reveals their opinions and often influences readers' perceptions of the topic.

Prior to reading Dossier of Discovery: Australia's Sherlock Holmes, discuss anything students know about the character Sherlock Holmes. Sample responses might include:

- He is a fictitious detective
- He solves crimes
- He lived in England.

Provide students with a little background information to cover elements they didn't identify, ensuring they know that: Sherlock Holmes was a fictitious detective who appeared in novels from 1887, stories featuring the character have seen many iterations over the years, he is known for being a highly intelligent sleuth detective. Identify any of the items on the list that are positive attributes (most likely most elements will be positive).

For those students who have not heard of him, discuss their opinions of detectives in general. Most likely students will conclude that detectives help people by fighting crime. Draw a horizontal line on the board. Mark one end 'a great detective' and the other 'not a great detective'. Discuss where Sherlock Holmes might fall along this line and make a note at the point based on how the students rate him. Label the mark you make on the line 'Sherlock Holmes'. Most likely students will conclude that he is a great detective, marked with a dot towards that end of the line.

Display the following extract:

John Christie was born in Scotland in 1885. In 1863, at the age of 17, he immigrated to Australia. Initially he became a boxer and oarsman, before eventually becoming a detective.

Discuss students' initial reaction to John Christie, emphasising that we only know limited information about him. Rate him along the same line as Sherlock Holmes. Note where the students rate him as 'John Christie 1'. Students may rate John Christie as a little lower on the scale of being a great detective than Sherlock Holmes. Display the following extract:

Detective John Christie was so good at solving crimes, he became known as Australia's Sherlock Holmes.

Discuss whether this changes student's perception of John Christie. Re-rate John Christie along the line on the board and mark this new spot 'John Christie 2'. Emphasise that although readers have very little information about John Christie so far, the comparison to Sherlock Holmes allows us to make a snap judgement about him. Emphasise that making comparisons to well-known characters or people allows readers to draw conclusions about them with minimal information.

Read Dossier of Discovery: Australia's Sherlock Holmes. Discuss the following questions:

- What does the author's representation reveal about their opinion of John Christie? (They hold him in high esteem and believe he is a noteworthy and admirable person from history)
- Do you agree with the author? (Most likely students will conclude that they do)
- Where would you rate John Christie along the line to indicate how much of a good detective he is? (Students might now perceive him as a better detective)
- What language and devices lead you to form a positive opinion? (Note this on the board for students to refer to later)

very real and very clever (Repetition of 'very' and 'clever' used for emphasis)  
good at solving.

help his uncle (The emotive word 'help' is used here to paint a picture of John as a good man)

gifted boxer

natural detective

solving high-profile cases

Place students with a partner and instruct them to identify further examples of emotive and persuasive language used in the article. They may note their observations in their workbooks or use post-it-notes to mark examples in their copies of the magazine. Discuss responses and add the vocabulary to the displayed list. Further examples include:

- The newspapers loved reporting his cases
- The criminals of Victoria began to curse the name 'John Christie'
- Expert
- Master
- Impressive collection
- Cleverly concealed
- John wasn't going to rest completely when there were still criminals to catch!
- Skills
- Rose through the ranks
- Files containing details of his cases are kept safely at the State Library of Victoria (Which implies the information is worth preserving)

Discuss whether students agree with the author's opinions about John Christie. Most likely they will conclude that John Christie was an admirable detective. Emphasise that the vocabulary included in the article guided students to agree with the author.

Inform students that articles that focus on one person are called a profile piece. Inform students that they will be composing a profile piece about someone they admire, using a range of devices to position readers. Tell students that first you will be completing an example collaboratively. Discuss people students admire, such as famous sports players or someone from their own lives such as a family member or sports coach.

Discuss key information about their work. A brief internet search might be useful for obtaining background information. Select an example for students to work on collaborative, such as Cathy Freeman.

Jot down facts about the person. For example, that she excelled in to 400M race, she won a Gold Medal in the 2000 Olympics in Sydney, she was chosen to light the Olympic flame at the Olympics in 2000 and she was the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person to win an Olympic Gold. Discuss who she might be compared to, for example sporting legends from the past or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have secured a place in history. The webpage [Famous Aboriginal People, Activists & Role Models](#) from Creative Spirits has some useful information.

Note: inform students that sometimes there might not be a person with whom a comparison might be drawn. In this case, tell students that they can make comparisons based on the persons attributes, for example: Her dedication and commitment is a common trait amongst those greatest of sporting legends.

Discuss subjective language that might be used to describe Cathy Freeman for example: legend, inspiration, incredible runner, the ultimate sports person, hero, honored. Refer back to the list of subjective language compiled earlier for further inspiration.

Use this to compose a sample profile piece. For example:

Cathy Freeman is a sporting legend, a national hero and an Olympic Gold Winner. Her dedication and commitment to her sport, the 400M sprint, saw her compete in many races on the world stage. As with most of the well-known sporting heroes, her dedication and commitment to her sport goes without saying. Her hard work paid off when in 2000 she won a gold medal at the Sydney Olympic Games, making her the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person to do so.

Place students with a partner and instruct them to compose their own profile piece by completing the following steps:

- Identify someone you admire
- Note key facts about them (you may like to research them on the internet)
- Identify someone they can be compared to, if a natural comparison can be made
- Note vocabulary that might be used to influence readers to agree with your opinion
- Compose a brief profile piece, that uses elements to position readers.

### **Assessment for/as learning:**

Discuss criteria students may use to peer assess the work of their peers. For example:

- Includes persuasive/emotive vocabulary
- Makes a comparison where appropriate
- Features the persons attributes
- Persuades readers to agree with the author.

Instruct students to assess their peer's work using the criteria and to provide oral feedback to their peers.

[Effective Feedback](#) from the NSW Department of Education has more information on the types of feedback.

# Jonquil Chesterton's Definitive Guide to Fun and Funniness

play by Belinda Lees | illustrated by [Tohby Riddle](#)

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

## Learning intention

I am learning to experiment with humour and structure when creating imaginative texts, so that I can develop my skills with crafting humorous plays.

## Success criteria

- I can analyse the types of humour in a play.
- I can identify jokes I find humorous.
- I can analyse the structure of a play.
- I can compose a humorous scene.
- I can adopt the correct style for composing a play.

## Essential knowledge

Watch the video [Perspective](#) from The School Magazine. Discuss the fact that perspective influences what we see in texts and the way we see it. Emphasise our personal attitudes, values and beliefs all shape our perspective.

Discuss types of humour with students, including they are aware of the following terms:

- Satire: irony, pun or exaggeration used to criticise someone's shortcomings
- Slapstick: where people trip over or make themselves look silly to make others laugh
- Parody/spoof: making another person look silly for comedy.

To find more on humour view the page [Comedy Facts for Kids](#) from Kiddle.

Discuss which of these types of humour others might find insulting or upsetting, such as satire or parody.

Read once through the play, Jonquil Chesterton's Definitive Guide to Fun and Funniness, assigning roles of characters from the play to students. Discuss the following:



- Why are the Funsters holding the Festival of Overbrimming Fun? (They meet regularly to share jokes and find fun together, something that began after the Ferocious Fire of Frenzy devastated their community)
- What type of humour is their hot coals dance? (Slapstick as the dance most likely looks humorous)
- What type of humour does Chesterton use? (Satire/parody, he tries to make the audience laugh by insulting them)
- How do the other characters react to this? (They do not like it and they ask Chesterton to leave)
- What lessons could Chesterton learn? (That often people don't like having jokes made at their expense)

Emphasise the difference in perspective between Chesterton and the Funsters, with Chesterton believing the jokes to be funny while the Funsters do not. Discuss ways comedians might anticipate any differences in perspective of how their jokes might be received. For example, they might avoid making jokes that might insult others or hurt their feelings.

Discuss other jokes Chesterton could make instead, instructing students to share their favourite jokes. For example:

- Why don't cats like online shopping? They prefer a cat-alogue.
- What do you call a lazy baby kangaroo? A pouch potato.
- When do monkeys fall from the sky? Ape-ril showers.

Note: Jokes from [150 Funny Jokes for Kids that will get the Family Laughing Together](#) from the Today show.

Jot some of these ideas on the board. Place students in groups of four or five and instruct them to discuss their favourite jokes. Tell students to note their favourite jokes in their workbooks or on digital programs such as [Google Jamboard](#). Instruct students to search online for further ideas of kid-friendly jokes.

Inform students that they will be developing the play to include humour that the Funsters will find amusing. Refer back to Jonquil Chesterton's Definitive Guide to Fun and Funniness and draw students' attention to the fact that it features only one scene. Tell students that they will be composing a second scene where Chesterton returns to the Festival of Overbrimming Fun, this time making jokes that entertain the Funsters. Gradually release responsibility by composing an example text collaboratively first. To do this, complete the following:

Discuss how the play is structured, ensuring students note the following:

- The play includes a list of the characters names written in capital letters at the beginning
- The play is given a title, and the scene number is written at the top of the scene

- The characters names are written along the left side of the page, with the lines of dialogue directly next to them
- Action is written in brackets as stage directions.

Discuss some of the students' favourite jokes and collaboratively compose a brief scene to be added to the play. For example:

## Scene 2

(Chesterton returns to the stage and the Funsters watch nervously, hands in front of their eyes)

CHESTERTON: Hello again Funsters, this time I have some really funny jokes for you.

JOY SMILEY: We do hope so.

CHESTERTON: Here we go, so why don't cats like online shopping?

JOY SMILEY: Hmm, this is off to a good start. I don't know Chesterton, why don't cats like online shopping?

CHESTERTON: They prefer a cat-alogue.

(Funsters hoot with laughter)

JOY SMILEY: Very good Chesterton, that's more like it. Anymore?

CHESTERTON: Oh, I have plenty. What do you call a lazy baby kangaroo?

JOY SMILEY: I don't know, what do you call a lazy baby kangaroo?

CHESTERTON: You'll like this one... A pouch potato.

(Funsters fall about laughing, clutching their stomachs)

JOY SMILEY: More! More! More!

CHESTERTON: Oh, this is going well. OK then, when do monkeys fall from the sky?

JOY SMILEY: Oh, do tell us, please!

CHESTERTON: Ape-ril showers.

JOY SMILEY: Oh Chesterton, you are the best!

(The Funsters erupt into applause while Chesterton looks on, smiling widely)

Place students with a partner and instruct them to complete the following:

- Identify your favourite jokes
- Consider how you might include these in a play
- Compose a scene with Chesterton sharing at least three of these jokes
- Include the Funsters' and Chesterton's reactions
- Use the correct structure when writing your scene.

Allow time for students to compose their scenes.

### **Assessment for/as learning: Self-assessment.**

Instruct students to re-read their plays. Tell them to use the list of criteria they were provided with when composing to self-assess their plays. Students should discuss their ideas before responding to the following questions in their workbooks:

- Which of the criteria were you successful with?
- What did you find challenging?
- How might you develop your scene further?

View [Effective Feedback](#) from the NSW Department of Education for further information on the types of feedback.

## **Right Way Up**

poem by Sarah Ziman | illustrated by Gabriel Evans

[EN3-8D | ACELT1613](#)

### **Learning intention**

I am learning to make connections to the cultural experiences of characters represented in texts so I can consider how texts are influenced by the author's perspective.

### **Success criteria**

- I can identify the language that reveals the perspective of characters.
- I can discuss the cultural values represented in texts.
- I can identify things I value.
- I can represent what I value in a text.

### **Essential knowledge**

Watch [Representation](#) from The School Magazine. Ensure students note that representation refers to how we depict things or ideas when we compose a text and that we are influenced by our interests, beliefs and cultural backgrounds.

Discuss the context we are viewing texts from (from Australia).

View the video [Perspective](#) from The School Magazine. Ensure students note that our perspective influences how shape what we see in texts and the way we see it. Emphasise that our perspective depends on our personal attitudes, values and beliefs.

Prior to reading Right Way Up, discuss the geographical position of Europe compared to Australia (they're pretty much at opposite sides of the globe). Inform students that often

there is jovial debate over which continent is the right way up and which is the wrong way up. Ensure students note that the sides people take in this debate usually depends on their perspective, based on which continent they reside in. Inform students that being the wrong or the right way up also refers to timing, with the two continents being opposite each other in terms of what time of day it is.

Read Right Way Up. Ensure students identify that Ally is most likely somewhere in Europe (revealed through the fact she cannot get hold of Milo cereal), and Jo is in Australia (shown through the fact she was woken by cockatoos). Identify references to each of the characters' perspectives that the other is the wrong way up, both in terms of geographical position and the time of day:

For geographical position:

Just imagine if jumping at the same time, caused a crack to open up between us!

I know we're 'Down Under' but you're the ones walking on the ceiling!

I guess we're like a playing card, each of us the right way up from our angle.

For time of day:

But wait—your tomorrow has already arrived!

You are probably still asleep though, which is funny to think about, as while you are snoring away.

...so that's something that matches, even if we are at the opposite ends of the day.

Hmm, maybe you're actually a cockatoo, crashing around up there at the crack of dawn.

Discuss the perspective each character is viewing the others home from (from an outsiders' perspective). Identify language that reveals this, for example:

...pouring your Milo cereal that we don't get here.

Inform students that the ideas represented in texts often reveal the cultural and social contexts they are written from. Discuss the following questions, encouraging students to refer back to the text where necessary:

What does each character value? Note: inform students that some of these ideas might be explicit, based on what the characters include in their emails, and some may be inferred based on their actions and the comparisons they make.

Ally:

- The sunshine, with her commenting on the fact she likes it getting dark later,

- Cricket as she compares the sun to a cricket ball
- Food, with her mentioning her eating spaghetti bolognese and the fact she can't get Milo cereal there.

Jo:

- She longs for her own phone, but Mum won't let her get one until she goes to high school.

Both:

- Their friendship, as they are taking the time to email each other.

What further information does the representation of ideas reveal about the cultures the characters reside in?

- Ally leaves for school at 8:30
- Jo eats dinner at 6:30pm

Inform students that they will be composing their own text that represents their values and culture. Gradually release responsibility by completing an example together first.

Discuss things students value, food they eat, activities they enjoy and any other elements of their life they view as important. For example:

- They eat Vegemite
- Their favourite meal is Nasi Goreng
- They play netball
- They collect Pokémon cards.

Place students with a partner and instruct them to note their own ideas of things they value in their workbooks to assist them with composing a text shortly.

Inform students that they will be creating a text in a similar style to Right Way Up. Refer back to the poem and discuss the following:

- What style is the text written in? (Emails)
- What are some of the elements of this style? (They might include the sign off 'love', and an X for a kiss)
- What is unique about this style? (It provides an insight into the personal thoughts of the characters)
- Although it is a poem, written in lines, it does not follow a set rhyming scheme.

Select ideas from the students notes to compose in an email. Students may address their email to Ally as she is in a different country to the students. Tell students to include the idea

that they are on opposite sides of the world to each other, both geographically and in terms of time. A sample response is:

Dear Ally,

I keep thinking about how you are tucked up in bed right now,  
while I'm preparing for netball training.  
If only you were the right way up too,  
Then we'd be the same.

I bought some new Pokémon cards this week,  
using my pocket money.  
Would you believe I actually got two rare cards in the pack!  
I felt like a queen.

Mum made me Nasi goreng for dinner again,  
Hmmm, my favourite!  
It's a little different from your spaghetti bolognaise,  
At least we both have ice cream for dessert.

What do you put in your sandwich,  
If you can't buy Vegemite?  
I have to know; I've been wondering for hours.

Enjoy your sleep and I'll email soon,  
Catch you later x

Instruct students to use the notes they made on the things they value to compose their own emails to Ally.

### **Assessment for/as learning:**

Discuss criteria for students to use to self-assess their emails. For example:

- Included elements students' value
- Wrote in the style of an email
- Included references to being upside down/the right way up.

Display the following sentence stems and instruct students to note their responses in their workbooks:

In my email, I did well with \_\_\_\_\_ (Responses may vary)

I would like to improve \_\_\_\_\_ (Responses may vary)

The way authors represent ideas in texts depends on \_\_\_\_\_ (their experiences, beliefs and their cultural backgrounds)

Allow time for students to edit their emails, based on their observations in the self-assessment.

[Effective Feedback](#) from the NSW Department of Education has more information on the types of feedback.

# Asli and the Bear

story by Susan Hall | illustrated by Rosemary Fung

EN3-7C | ACELT1617

## Learning intention

I am learning to investigate how imagery builds emotional connection and engagement with characters so that I can inspire readers to connect with the characters' experiences I create.

## Success criteria

- I can experiment with using 'show don't tell' to express emotions.
- I can construct examples of imagery.
- I can discuss how imagery encourages readers to connect with characters emotions.
- I can compose a short story about a character who overcomes nerves.
- I can include imagery in my story.

## Essential knowledge

Discuss the term [imagery](#), ensuring students understand that it means to use language to create a description that evokes the senses of readers. For more information on imagery, view the video [Connotation, Imagery and Symbol](#).

Prior to reading *Asli and the Bear*, display the following statements:

- I am angry.
- I am excited to meet my favourite celebrity.
- I am sad.

For each example, discuss how you might show this, such as, stomping your feet for anger, running up to someone hands clasped in a swoon to show you are meeting a famous celebrity, or miming crying, sniffing and rubbing your nose, to show sadness. Collaboratively compose sentences to describe the actions, for example:

- The girl stomped her feet, turned her heels and marched out of the room.
- The boy sprinted towards the celebrity, hands clasped in a prayer and a wearing a wide smile.

- The girl sniffed, rubbed her nose and dabbed at her eyes.

Discuss which of the two sets of statements created the clearest image in the students' minds. Most likely they will include that the second set of statements was more descriptive. Inform students that this is called 'show don't tell', where authors show emotions without having to explicitly state them. Tell students that this can be done using descriptions of how the characters act, and through inner dialogue, showing how the characters think. Inform students that using imagery and show don't tell allows readers to experience how characters are thinking and feeling, which often causes readers to engage more deeply with characters.

Read *Asli and the Bear*. Discuss how Asli feels at the following points in the story and identify language that reveals this:

Entering the cave: apprehensive, revealed through extracts such as,

His father spoke convincingly, but Asli noticed that he looked around for bear tracks as they walked up the hillside. He tried not to think about bears.

When he sees the paintings: impressed, , revealed through extracts such as,

He was sure he could hear beating hooves and horses neighing. Their eyes were glinting, their legs flashing as they ran.

When the torch goes out and he hears the bear: scared, revealed through extracts such as,

Suddenly there was a roar of anger and pain, a noise that seemed to bounce off the walls and through Asli's head. Fear shook Asli from head to toe. He panicked and without thinking he started to run back out of the cave.

When faced with the bear: petrified, revealed through extracts such as,

Asli swallowed.

Asli froze as a bear came out of the shadows. It was a young bear, not that much taller than he was.

Asli's throat tightened with fear, waiting to feel the bear's teeth crunch down on his fingers.

When Asli faces the bear: Asli and the bear form a connection, revealed through extracts, such as,

Finally, he had the courage to look the bear in the eye. They stared at each other, boy and bear, neither moving. The only sound was their breathing and water dripping down the rock walls.



When he helps the bear: relief and pride, revealed through imagery such as,

He was safe!

And by the fact he paints a bear on the wall.

Inform students that they will be experimenting with composing imagery to create an emotional connection with readers. Compose an example with the students first.

Discuss common feelings experienced by characters:

- Fear
- Excitement
- Happiness
- Pride

Discuss how each of these emotions might be expressed using show don't tell and inner dialogue. Collaboratively compose examples of imagery that engages the readers senses to express each of the emotions. Sample responses have been provided in the following table:

| Emotion    | How to express the emotion using show don't tell | Example of imagery   |
|------------|--|--|
| Fear       | Knees knocking, shaking hands                    | She took a deep breath and tried to stop their hands from trembling. Her throat felt tight. The bear could be here at any moment. She should hide but her knees were like jelly. |
| Excitement | Waving hands around, dancing on the spot         | A bubble pushed against his chest, and he clenched his fists, waving them in the air. This was really happening! Everything he'd dreamed of.                                     |
| Happiness  | Smiling  | She looked around, surveyed the crowd. Laughter filled the air. Everyone she loved here, in one room, sharing a meal. Her cheeks ached from the permanent smile on her face.     |
| Pride      | Buffed out chest                                 | He took his space on the stage, chest puffed out, and held his certificate aloft.  |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  |  | He'd done it, all that hard work had paid off. |
|--|--|--|

Refer back to Asli and the Bear and discuss the emotional journey Asli experiences through his interaction with the bear. Ensure students note Asli's feelings go from fear to pride when he is able to assist the bear. Inform students that they will be composing a short story about a character who is initially nervous about something but who through being able to help is feels relief or pride.

Discuss sample ideas of scenarios and display these for students to refer to if they need support in this area. For example:

- A character who meets a wolf cub and is nervous initially but realises it needs help with finding its family.
- A character who stands up to someone at school who is being unkind to their friend and feels proud for helping.

Instruct students to complete the following to compose their own short stories. Students may work independently or with a partner for this task.

- Decide on a story idea where a character goes from feeling nervous to feeling pride.
- Experiment with 'show don't tell' to express this emotion.
- Compose examples of imagery.
- Includes the imagery in a brief story.

### **Assessment of learning:**

Discuss the following [exit ticket](#) question before instructing students to respond to it in their workbooks:

Authors can assist readers to engage with the characters they create by\_\_\_\_\_ (Using imagery and show don't tell to express the emotions a character experiences.)

[Effective Feedback](#) from the NSW Department of Education has more information on the types of feedback.

# Why do Mummies Get Such a Bad Wrap?

article by Angela Toniolo | photos by Alamy

EN3-1A | ACELY1710

## Learning intention

I am learning to plan, rehearse and deliver presentations, selecting and sequencing appropriate content so that I can represent different representations clearly.

## Success criteria

- I can analyse a text to see how a topic might be represented in different ways.
- I can research another topic that might be represented in multiple ways.
- I can analyse a text to identify its structure.
- I can compose a presentation.
- I can represent the topic in more than one way in my presentation.

## Essential knowledge

Watch [Representation](#) from The School Magazine. Discuss the ideas presented in the video. Ensure students note that the way authors and illustrators represent their topics is influenced by their experiences, beliefs, cultural backgrounds. Emphasise that it is also influenced by the audience for whom they're making the text.

Prior to reading the article, complete a mind-map, noting everything students know about the topic of mummies. Note: ensure students are aware you are discussing the ancient Egyptian mummies as opposed to mothers. Jot students' ideas on the board or use programs such as [Canva](#). Place students with a partner and instruct them to compose their own mind-maps.

Discuss responses. Sort the ideas into those that are positive and those that are negative, for example, the idea that mummies are scary would be negative, while the idea that they are interesting or historical would be positive.

Read the article, Why do Mummies Get Such a Bad Wrap? Refer students back to the opening paragraph:

Mummies often appear in horror movies as creepy creatures, chasing after terrified teenagers or tomb raiders.

Discuss the following:

- What does this reveal about how mummies are often represented in texts? (As something to be feared)
- How does the author of the article represent mummies differently? (They represent them as treasures from the past that can teach us about the 'lifestyles, traditional and cultures of ancient civilisations')
- What vocabulary does the author use to represent mummies positively? (Emotive vocabulary and subjective descriptions such as, fascinating, shed light on, privilege, famous, wealth of treasures, popular, best-preserved, enlisted help, perfectly preserved condition, invincible, intelligence)

Refer back to the mind-maps students have created. Discuss which of the students' ideas agree with the representation of mummies as something to be feared and which agree with how the author of *Why do Mummies Get Such a Bad Wrap?* has represented of them. Discuss how representing mummies in a way that might be unexpected generates interest and engages readers.

Ensure students are familiar with the term archetype in relation to character and that they know it means a typical type of character that readers are familiar with. Discuss archetypes of characters that often appear in texts such as, the tortured villain, an evil witch or a kind Fairy Godmother.

Tell students that they will be representing one of these archetypes, witches, in a way that may be surprising or unexpected to readers. Inform students that first you will be planning their ideas collaboratively. Discuss common representations of witches and note these on the board, for example:

- Scary
- Evil
- Have a pet cat
- They put spells on people.

Ensure students are familiar with the term witchcraft (the magic practiced by witches). View the webpage [Witchcraft](#) from Kids Britannica. Discuss the following questions:

- In what ways did people use to believe witchcraft might help them? (To heal people who were sick, to bring wealth and to help crops to grow)
- How and when did representations of witchcraft become more negative? (From the 1300s to the 1700s people carried out witch hunts when witches were believed to be linked to the devil)
- In which parts of the world do some people still believe in witchcraft? (The Mapuche people of Chile, the Navajo of the southwestern United States, and the Zande of central Africa)

Note: Teachers should be mindful of the cultural backgrounds of the students in their class when discussing this question

Inform students that they will be using this information in their presentations. Tell students that they will need to demonstrate two opposing representations of witches:

- How they are commonly represented in modern culture as evil
- The way they were viewed in the past, as being able to help heal the sick and bring about wealth.

Refer back to the article, *Why do Mummies Get Such a Bad Wrap?* and discuss its structure, ensuring students note the following:

- It includes a heading and subheadings
- Some of the sub-headings are structured as questions, for example: 'What is a mummy?'
- Ideas are grouped according to topic
- Photos are included with captions
- A box features interesting facts about mummies.

Inform students that they should include similar elements in their presentations.

Display the following criteria and instruct students to use this when creating their presentations:

- Includes two opposing representations of witches
- Information is grouped by similar ideas and organised under headings
- Images may be included
- Interesting facts might be added.

Allow students access to digital technology for creating their presentations. Students may use programs such as Google Slides or Microsoft PowerPoint. Instruct students to use image searches to collect photos to include in their presentations. Place students in groups and instruct them to create their presentations.

### **Assessment for/as learning:**

Provide students with the following peer-assessment questions for them to note observations on while the other groups perform:

- Which of the criteria has been addressed well?
- Which area/s could be improved?
- How did the group engage you in the topic?
- Could you clearly identify the different representations of witches?

Once students have presented, instruct their peers to share comments on what worked well and what might be improved, using the peer-assessment questions to guide their feedback.

See [Effective Feedback](#) from the NSW Department of Education for more information on the types of feedback.

# Gerenuk

poem by Diana Smith | illustrated by Sarah Davis

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

## Learning intention

I am learning to experiment with making deliberate word choices so I can express more than one way a topic might be perceived when composing texts.

## Success criteria

- I can identify extracts to show the author realises a topic might be perceived differently depending on the audience.
- I can identify a topic of interest to me.
- I can consider how others with a different opinion to me might perceive it.
- I can identify vocabulary that expresses my awareness that perception may differ.
- I can include this vocabulary in a poem.

## Essential knowledge

View The School Magazine video [Perspective](#). Ensure students note that our perspective influences how shape what we see in texts and the way we see it. Emphasise that our perspective depends on our personal attitudes, values and beliefs.

Inform students that when constructing texts, authors will often consider the perspective of others, to enable them to communicate their message in a way audiences will respond to and that they can connect with.

Read the poem Gerenuk or listen to the audio file. Draw students' attention to the final stanza, and note the following word choices the author has made:

My world seems harsh when others look, but not to me, a gerenuk.

Discuss what this stanza reveals (that the author is aware others may perceive the topic differently from the gerenuk). Instruct students to consider how this enables the reader to connect to the topic (instead of there being the opportunity to feel the gerenuk's perception is too different from their own, they are invited into the gerenuk's world and are more likely to connect with them).

Re-read the poem and discuss further examples where the gerenuk is aware that their perception may differ from those of others. For example:

That leaf up in the ficus tree, too high for most but not for me.

Emphasise that the author demonstrates through careful selection of the words they choose that they are aware creatures experience the world in their own unique ways.

Discuss things the students enjoy, for example, the board game Monopoly or playing basketball. Instruct students to share what they like about their chosen topics and note ideas on the board. Sample responses include:

- Monopoly: It is a game of strategy, requiring full concentration
- Basketball: It requires hours of practise to become good at shooting the ball in the net, it is a game of skill

Discuss people who may not feel the same about the student's chosen topic, such as younger siblings or their parents. Instruct students to share how these people may perceive the activity, for example:

- Younger siblings: they may find it too challenging to concentrate for long enough for a game of Monopoly, or they might find it challenging adding up the money that is won during the game.
- Parents: might find it difficult to find the time to practise shooting hoops in basketball to get good at this skill.

Inform students that they will be composing their own poem about a game, sport or hobby they love. Tell students that they should make deliberate word choices to demonstrate that they are aware others may not share their love for the chosen topic. Gradually release responsibility, completing an example collaboratively first, by completing the following:

- Select a topic (Basketball)
- List reasons why the students love it (It's fast paced, it requires great skill, it keeps you fit and agile)
- Discuss who might have a different perception of the topic (A younger sibling)
- Discuss how they might perceive the topic (The hoop is too high, they might dislike taking long shots, they could all the running around timing)

Refer back to Gerenuk and examine how the poem is structured, by discussing the following questions:

- How many lines feature in each stanza? (Two)
- What is the rhyme scheme? (Rhyming couplets, with pairs of lines that rhyme)

Inform students that they can choose to follow the same style or to make adaptations, for example using a different rhyme scheme in their poem. Prior to composing the poem, discuss vocabulary students might include to show they are aware the topic can be perceived

in a way different to their own viewpoint. Identify rhyming words using a thesaurus or an online rhyming dictionary for the vocabulary identified. For example:

- Shooting hoops: loop, droop
- Run: fun, sun
- Basketball court: fort, snort, wart
- Drills: skills, kills
- Face pace: race, space

Use the ideas and the vocabulary to compose a collaborative poem, for example:

Nothing better than shooting hoops,  
Round the court I like to loop.

Taking part in regular drills,  
For some it might really kill.

I feel at home on the court,  
But my younger brother says it's like a wart!

Playing basketball is such fun,  
Even if some don't like to run.

Instruct students to compose their own poems by completing the following:  
(Note: students may work independently or with a partner for this task)

- Select a topic
- List reasons why you love it
- Identify who might have a different perception of the topic
- Consider how they might perceive the topic
- Identify vocabulary that relates to your chosen topic
- Identify rhyming words (if you wish)
- Compose a poem that expresses your perception, and the fact others may perceive the topic differently.

### **Assessment for/of learning:**

Instruct students to respond to the following exit ticket question in their workbooks:

Perception depends\_\_\_\_\_ (On our personal, values, experiences and beliefs)

Considering how readers might perceive texts\_\_\_\_ (allows me to consider how others might feel about my chosen topic.

[Effective Feedback](#) from the NSW Department of Education has more information on the types of feedback.



# A Puzzling Tale: The Brother with Building

story by Cheryl Bullow | illustrated by Niña Nill

EN3-1A | ACELY1709

## Learning intention

I am learning to participate in group discussion, using listening strategies such as repeating back key points so that I can develop my skills of being an active group member.

## Success criteria

- I can identify good and bad listening techniques.
- I can reflect on why it is important to listen during discussions.
- I can develop criteria for listening strategies.
- I can use these when discussing a topic with a group.

Before reading A Puzzling Tale: The Brother with Building, inform students that you will be examining approaches to the skill of listening. Tell students they will be aiming to identify what to do and not do when working with others. Display the following script and invite two students to read the script aloud to the rest of the class.

Sandy: I'm unsure whether to sign up for gymnastics or not.

Zayd: Can you pass my ball?

Sandy: Sure, so on the one hand...

Zayd: Not that ball, the basketball.

Sandy: Oh, OK, sure. So, I like gymnastics usually, it's just that this class is on a Monday, and I usually do my homework on Mondays.

Zayd: Have you seen me bounce my ball? I've been practising...

Sandy: Oh, yes, you're getting so good. So, I was thinking...

Zayd: Watch, watch now! Check out this hoop!

Sandy: Oh right, well done. What shall I do about gymnastics?

Zayd: What? Since when did you mention anything about gymnastics? What's going on?

Discuss the following:

- What did Zayd do that showed he wasn't listening to Sandy? (He interrupted her, he didn't respond to her questions, he hadn't realised Sandy was talking about gymnastics at all)
- How do you think this made Sandy feel? (Hurt, unheard)
- What did Sandy do that showed she was listening? (She responded to what Zayd said)

- What advice would you give to Zayd? (Listen to what the other person is saying, try to avoid interrupting)
- Why is it important to listen to the ideas of others? (Because everyone has something to contribute to class discussions)

Introduce students to active listening. Tell them that active listening allows people to feel that their ideas are valued and that they are contributing to the group. Outline strategies such as:

- Eye contact
- Nodding
- Repeating back what the other person said

More on listening strategies appropriate for Stage 3 can be found on the page [Interacting Description](#) from the National Literacy Learning Progression.

Inform students that they will be compiling a list of good listening skills. Use the observations made from the role-play to compile a class list of good listening skills. For example:

- Stop what you are doing and pay attention to what the other person is saying
- Listen without interrupting
- Repeat back what the other person says to check you have understood
- Ask clarifying questions where necessary.

Read A Puzzling Tale: The Brother with Building. Discuss the problem Yuki encounters (she needs to move her building materials to the island, but she doesn't have a boat). Tell students that they will be discussing in groups possible solutions to Yuki's problem. Inform students that they should ensure they listen to the ideas of every member of their group before discussing the merits of each idea. Tell students that once they decide on an idea, they should prepare a brief presentation about how they think Yuki should solve the problem. Display the following list of elements that students should include in their presentations:

- A summary of the ideas their group shared
- Which ideas they discounted and why
- The idea they have selected and their reasons for this
- Which of the listening strategies they used
- Any that they found challenging
- How the listening strategies assisted with their group discussion.

Inform students that they should use the list of listening strategies when working with their group. Allow time for students to discuss their ideas before sharing their presentations.

### Assessment of learning:

Instruct students to complete the following sentence stems as part of a self-reflection:

With my group we used the following listening strategies\_\_\_\_\_

These assisted with group work because\_\_\_\_\_

In future, when working in groups I will\_\_\_\_\_

[Effective Feedback](#) from the NSW Department of Education has more information on the types of feedback.

# The Bushman's Clock (the Call of the Kookaburra)

poem by Stephen Whiteside | illustrated by [Marjorie Crosby-Fairall](#)

[EN3-7C | ACELT1618](#)

### Learning intention

I am learning to compose poems that adapt or combine aspects of texts I have experienced so that I may compose a poem which enables my readers to make inferences.

### Success criteria

- I can analyse textual clues.
- I can consider my own knowledge.
- I can combine textual clues and my own knowledge to make inferences.
- I can compose a poem about a native Australian animal.
- I can include textual clues in my poem.

Read *The Bushman's Clock (the Call of the Kookaburra)* to students. Note: do not read the title or allow students to see the illustration that accompanies the poem for now. Inform students that they will be making inferences about the creature that is the subject matter of the poem. Re-read the poem to students and identify textual clues. For example:

As new day is dawning (Reveals the creature rises early)

Raucous (Which means laughter)

Is known as the bushman's clock (Reveals it lives in the bush)

That in town and city (Reveals it also lives in cities)

On that call from the gum tree (Reveals it likes gum trees)

Inform students that when making inferences we combine textual clues and our own knowledge. Discuss knowledge that might assist students with identifying the creature, for example:

- It likes gum trees so it might be a koala, however it makes a lot of noise which isn't like a koala
- It rises early so it might be a bird
- Kookaburras laugh.

Reveal the identity of the creature. Discuss reasons why authors may choose to keep the topic out of a poem (to create interest and engagement, to keep readers guessing, to entertain).

Inform students that they will be composing their own text that keeps readers guessing by requiring them to make inferences about the subject matter. Tell them that first you will be completing an example collaboratively.

Discuss other well-known native Australian fauna and their distinguishing features, for example:

- Kangaroos – distinctive hop
- Koalas – sleep a lot
- Emus – tall with a long neck
- Possums – scratch on rooftops

View [Wacky Weekend: Aussie Animals](#) from Kids Geographic for further ideas.

Select one of these and identify distinguishing features, for example:

- The kangaroo with its distinctive hop

Refer back to *The Bushman's Clock* (the Call of the Kookaburra) and identify how the author has created intrigue (by focusing on one of the birds features and developing this). Inform students that they will be doing the same with their chosen animal.

Collaboratively compose descriptions of the chosen animal without revealing too much information. Inform students that these descriptions will form textual clues that readers can combine with their own knowledge to make inferences. Discuss the fact that if you use the word 'hop' it might give the animal's identity away, as this is a word we commonly associate with kangaroos. Tell students that instead they should be creative with their descriptions, for example:

- It doesn't walk, it's more like a ballet dancer leaping
- It bounds across the outback
- Its tail helps it move
- It could rival an acrobat with agility.

Refer back to *The Bushman's Clock* (the Call of the Kookaburra) to identify the rhyming scheme (mostly rhyming couplets, however this varies in lines 3 and 6 which rhyme with each other. Discuss how to express the scheme using letters (AABCCB). Inform students that they can choose whether to make their poem rhyme or not. Refer students to a thesaurus or a rhyming dictionary to identify rhyming words if they choose to make their poems rhyme.

Feature these ideas in a collaborative poem. Remind students that they should avoid explicitly stating what the animal is. A sample poem is:

The agility of an acrobat,  
But it isn't a domestic cat,  
The outback is its home,  
Like a ballet dancer leaping,  
While we are sleeping,  
Nighttime is its time to roam.

Place students in pairs. Students may also work independently for this task. Instruct students to complete the following:

- Select an example of native Australian fauna
- Identify its distinguishing features
- Identify vocabulary to describe it which can form textual clues
- Compose a poem.

### **Assessment for/as learning: Peer- assessment.**

Place students with each other and inform them that they will be reading each other's poems. Provide them with stop watches and inform them that they will be timing each other to see how long it takes for their partner to correctly identify the subject matter of their poem. Once their partner has correctly identified the creature, students should discuss context clues and prior knowledge that allowed students to make their inferences.

Visit [Effective Feedback](#) from the NSW Department of Education for further information on the various types of feedback.