

A Knight for a Day

story by [Kaye Baillie](#) | illustrated by [Craig Phillips](#)

[EN2-RECOM-01](#) | [AC9E4LY05](#)

Learning intention:

I am learning to research information I learn from texts so that I can expand my knowledge on different topics.

Success criteria:

- I can extract information from a story and assess its accuracy
- I can research related information using different sources
- I can create a presentation of my findings

Based on the information in the text, ask students what they have learnt about knights and life in general in the Middle Ages. Ask them to give examples from the story. These may include:

- Knights wore a suit of armour
- Knights had a shield with their family emblem
- Knights rode a horse and used a lance for jousting
- Knights held important meetings at round tables
- There was no hot running water in medieval times
- Beef stew was eaten with a stale piece of bread called a trencher

Discuss whether students believe this information is accurate even though the narrative is a fictional text and discuss their reasoning. Ask if they have any prior knowledge about medieval times from other sources such as books, movies, or documentaries.

Watch and discuss the video [Life in a Medieval Village](#). Instruct students to conduct their own research into what it would be like to live in the medieval times of the Middle Ages. They may wish to choose a particular job to research, such as a knight, farmer, or cobbler, or they may prefer to explore what life was like in general in a medieval village. Students should make notes of aspects that interest them as they are researching. Helpful online sources for this information include:

[Medievalists.net](#)
[History for Kids - Medieval Knights Facts for Kids](#)
[Britannica Kids – Middle Ages](#)

Students should then create a presentation of their research, either in the form of a poster or a computer slideshow. Their presentation should include at least five clear points explaining the ways that people lived and worked during this period.

Will Wonders Never Cease? Stone Cold Lightning

article by [Zoë Disher](#) | photos by [Dreamstime](#)

[EN2-VOCAB-01](#) | [AC9E4LA11](#)

Learning intention:

I am learning to identify the way mineral names are created so that I can develop my understanding of etymology.

Success criteria:

- I can make connections between mineral names and their origins
- I can research and write information about a mineral of my choice
- I can write an explanation of the etymology of my chosen mineral

After reading the article, watch the videos [Strangest Weather on Earth: Fulgurite](#) and [Gemstones Made From Lightning \(Fulgurite\)](#). Discuss what students find interesting about fulgurite. Ask if they have ever heard the word 'fulgurite' before and discuss ideas about where it may originate from. Explain that fulgurite is a mineral and that minerals are naturally occurring solids that are made up of chemicals.

Other examples of minerals that students may be familiar with include gold, copper and zinc. However, many minerals end with the suffix 'ite'. Explain to students that 'fulgur' is the Latin word for lightning, and 'ite' is a common suffix used for minerals that means 'connected with or belonging to'.

Instruct students to research and write an information report of a mineral of their choice. Their report should address the following questions:

- What is the name of the mineral?
- What is the etymology of the name?
- How is the mineral formed?
- What is the mineral used for?
- What else do you find interesting about it?

Helpful websites for this research include:

[University of Waterloo's Earth Sciences Museum](#)

[Mineralogy4Kids](#)

[Britannica Kids - Minerals](#)

Once students have completed their reports, create a class table to display the names of the different minerals researched by students and their etymology.

When Winds Blow Strong

story by [Stephen Whiteside](#) | illustrated by [Cheryl Orsini](#)

[EN2-UARL-01](#) | [AC9E4LA10](#)

Learning intention:

I am learning to combine different elements into my illustrations so that I can show conflicting ideas through visual art.

Success criteria:

- I can identify ways the illustrator shows conflicting ideas in one picture
- I can write a poem using my own ideas that is based on the style of the author
- I can create a visual representation of the conflicting ideas in my poem

Without yet showing the poem to the class, read it aloud to them, omitting the words:

- *I'm outside* in the first stanza
- *I'm in bed* in the second stanza

Let students know that you have left out 5 words in total and indicate where you have done this. Have students suggest which words may have been omitted. Ask them to justify their ideas.

Read the poem again, this time including all the words. Discuss the way the author uses the two stanzas to express their conflicting feelings about strong winds, depending on whether they're outside or tucked up in bed.

Ask students for their suggestions about how these ideas could be captured in one illustration. Discuss aspects such as:

- What the colour palette should be
- How the movement of the wind can be shown
- How the two settings (outside and in bed) can be brought together
- Where the narrator may be in the picture and how they could show their feelings

Hand out magazine copies to the students so they can view the poem and illustration. Ask for student's opinions about the way the illustrator has captured the mood and ideas of the poem, based on the aspects you discussed. Responses may include:

- The use of warm, autumn colours suits the mood and theme of the poem
- The swirling lines and positioning of the leaves show the movement of the wind
- The style of the girl's hair shows that the wind is blowing it
- The expression on the girl's face shows us that she is happy in bed

If you have a digital subscription, you can find this as an interactive below or linked to the digital copy of *When Winds Blow Strong*.

Using the text as an example, students should write their own poem about how weather affects them differently depending on their location or situation. Discuss different types of weather and how this makes them feel in different places. Some helpful suggestions may be:

Humidity – When they are in the classroom it makes them feel tired and they find it difficult to concentrate, but when they are at the beach they feel energetic and ready to play and swim.

Snow – Walking through it can be difficult and frustrating but playing in it can be hours of fun.

Model a way to show these conflicting ideas in poetry. For example:

When I need to walk straight through the snow

The slushiness makes me very slow

VS

When I get to play games in the snow

I roll up snowballs that I can throw

Once they have written their poem, students should create an illustration that displays the opposing feelings expressed in their poem. Remind them to consider their colours, the placement of their main image and the surrounding elements that frame it.

The Power of Yeti

poem by [Louise Harrison](#) | illustrated by [Queenie Chan](#)

EN2-CWT-01 | AC9E4LE05

Learning intention:

I am learning to understand how our personalities and experiences influence our perspectives so that I can include well-rounded points of view in my writing.

Success criteria:

- I can identify personality traits of the characters, using textual evidence
- I can identify how the characters' points of view may differ
- I can retell the narrative from a different point of view

Essential knowledge:

More information about telling a story from a particular point of view can be found in the English Textual Concepts video [Point of View](#).

After reading the story, create a class list with input from the students about what the main plot points are in the story. These may include:

- Misha noticing something move through the trees when she was out sledding
- Misha discovering Yeti
- Yeti asking Misha for help
- Yeti and Misha working together to create a circle in the snow
- Maya became frustrated with not being able to build the structure with sticks, but Yeti showed her how to weave them together
- They finished the shelter so that Yeti was safe from the snowy weather
- Misha returned home feeling confident and excited for the following day

Discuss the differences in Misha and Yeti's personalities. Ask students to give examples of their personality traits, giving textual evidence to support their claims. Suggestions may include:

Misha

Self-critical – Very quickly thinks and says “I can’t” in different situations.

Easily frustrated – Tossed the stick and threw her hands up almost immediately after the sticks fell down while they were building the shelter.

Caring – Stayed and helped Yeti in the snow despite her own self-doubt, and made sure he was safe for the night before she went home.

Yeti

Collaborative – Asked Misha for help and worked alongside her rather than doing it all himself or asking her to do it for him.

Resilient – Continued building despite the weather conditions and setbacks with the sticks collapsing.

Calm – Patiently shows Misha how to weave the sticks and doesn’t show frustration with any of the challenges in building his shelter.

Discuss with students how the story may be different from Yeti’s point of view. Ask them to consider what Yeti may have been doing before Misha discovered him through the trees and how his perspective may be different when they were together. Instruct students to write a version of the same story from Yeti’s point of view, taking into consideration his personality and how this impacts his thoughts and actions, as well as the way he interacts with Misha. When completed, willing students should share their narratives with the class and compare their interpretations of the story through Yeti’s point of view.

Nancy's Fancy Dancing Ants

article by [Neal Levin](#) | illustrated by [David Legge](#)

[EN2-UARL-01](#) | [AC9E4LY03](#)

Learning intention:

I am learning how to visually organise information in a persuasive manner so that I can convince an audience to take action.

Success criteria:

- I can identify persuasive techniques I have seen on promotional posters
- I can use relevant persuasive techniques to grab people's attention
- I can include relevant factual information in my poster
- I can make design choices that make my poster visually appealing to audiences

After reading the poem, draw students' attention back to the last stanza:

'They're brilliant and so talented'

say critics and informants.

'Be sure to catch this radiant

performing ants' performance!'

Discuss why it would be of interest to an audience whether critics and other people recommend the show and why that may convince other to attend. Ask students to consider posters they may have seen on billboards or plastered to walls or telegraph poles advertising concerts and events, and if they have ever noticed reviews or ratings on these posters.

Discuss the fact that these posters are designed to:

- Grab people's attention
- Inform them about the performance details
- Convince them to attend

For this to work successfully, not many words are used and designers must instead think creatively about how to achieve this all in one poster.

Explain to students that they are going to be designing promotional posters for the ants' upcoming performance and they need to use persuasive and informative techniques to

ensure as many people attend as possible. These can be designed on paper or online using a free graphic design tool such as Google Slides or Canva.

Discuss the information that is required to appear on the poster so that audiences understand exactly what is being advertised. This should include:

- The name of the group (Nancy's Fancy Dancing Ants)
- The location and date of the performance (students can make up these details)
- How tickets can be purchased (This may be as simple as 'tickets available at the door' or students may include a fictional ticketing website)

Ask students to give suggestions of persuasive techniques that may be used in a poster of this nature. Suggestions may include:

- Using a quote to convince audiences that the performance is worth seeing, such as the one in the last stanza.
- Including an image that gives the audience a sense of what they would be seeing.
- A clear call to action (e.g. Get in before they sell out!, You don't want to miss it!, Bring your friends!).
- Visually appealing design. This should take into consideration colour scheme and using different fonts to break up different sections (e.g. the critic's quote should be a distinctly different font type and colour from the venue and date information).
- Font size should ensure that the writing the designer deems most important should be bigger than less important information.

Once posters have been completed, students may wish to present them to the class and should give a brief explanation of their design choices.

In Camelgrot

story by [Bill Condon](#) | illustrated by [Christopher Nielsen](#)

[EN2-UARL-01](#) | [AC9E4LE04](#)

Learning intentions:

I am learning to identify and interpret the use of word play in narratives so that I can experiment with it in my own writing.

Success criteria:

- I can identify a variety of wordplay examples in a text
- I can write my own scene for an existing text
- I can use wordplay humour in my writing

If possible, borrow some books from your school library prior to this lesson to provide students with background information to relate to the story and understand its intertextual references. Age appropriate fiction that would be of benefit include Camelot by Colin Thompson or King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table by Sasha Morton, or relevant non-fiction books may be found in the 398.2 (folk tales, fairy tales and fables) section of your library. Otherwise, background information can be found on [Britannica Kids – Kind Arthur](#). More information about intertextuality can be found in the English textual Concepts video [Intertextuality](#).

Discuss students' familiarity with the legend of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. Explain that the traditional story takes place in the court Of Camelot and that knights hold the title of 'Sir'.

Discuss the concept of wordplay, giving general examples such as puns (e.g. the cheetah was in a spot of bother), rhymes (e.g. Llama drama) and irony (e.g. A large bulldog being named Tiny). Ask students to make a note of each example of wordplay they notice in the text as they are reading along. After reading the story, ask students to give their answers on word play that they noticed throughout it.

Examples may include:

- The use of Camelgrot instead of Camelot
- The rhyming names of King Arthur and Queen Martha

- The names of the knights – Sir Prised (surprised), Sir Rounded (surrounded), Sir Loin (sirloin) and Sir Cumference (circumference)
- The irony of the big fiery dragon being called Fluffy
- Ernesto Presto – the rhyming of the name and the association of presto with magic (Hey presto!)

Discuss students' opinions about the ways this wordplay makes the writing more interesting and humorous, and how this suits the comedic style of the story. Instruct students that they are to create their own character for the 'In Camelgrot' story and write a scene that includes their new character. This may be a continuation from the ending in the text that sees Bertie become Sir Whataclot, or they may take the story in a different direction of their choosing.

Remind students that the tone should be light and humorous and their character's name should include wordplay in some form.

What is a Poem

play by [Philippa Werry](#) | illustrated by [Marjorie Crosby-Fairall](#)

[EN2-UARL-01](#) | [AC9E4LE04](#)

Learning intentions:

I am learning to identify ways that language devices are used in poetry so that I can go beyond literal meanings in my own writing.

Success criteria:

- I can identify connotations, imagery and symbols in the text and illustration
- I can recognise the way the author has written each stanza based on one aspect of poetry
- I can apply the author's style to my own piece of writing

View the English Textual Concepts video [Connotations, Imagery and Symbols](#), and discuss students' understanding of the idea. Reiterate that it relates to words extending beyond their literal meaning, and that figurative language may be a way that they are already familiar with these concepts. It may be helpful to use examples such as metaphors (e.g. he cried a river), personification (e.g. the branches danced in the breeze) and similes (e.g. the snow covered the town like a blanket).

Read the poem as a class and ask students to identify words and phrases in the poem that go beyond their literal meaning. These may include:

- Words on an empty stage
- Words that shout like a storm in the night
- Words that like to be stroked by your tongue
- You'll find them prowling around in your mind

Ask students to share their own interpretation of those that they identify.

Look at the illustration together and discuss what it may symbolise. Suggestions may include words dancing across the page to a rhythm, or writers bringing their words together in a pattern.

Read the poem again, pausing after each stanza to discuss the way connotations and imagery are used to describe a different aspect of poetry:

Stanza 1 aspect – Structure

The way that the words of poems fit together and form a pattern to create a new piece of writing (pattern, fresh new page, choir, empty stage).

Stanza 2 aspect – Rhythm

The way the words create different rhythms depending on how they are put together (slither, skip, slide, wriggle, side to side).

Stanza 3 aspect - Language

The way that individual words can communicate elements such as mood and effect (whisper, tingle, bite, shout, storm in the night).

Stanza 4 aspect – Reading

The way that we read poetry aloud in different ways depending on different factors such as rhythm, tone and language (spoken, sung, stroked with your tongue).

Stanza 5 aspect – Impact

The way that poetry has an impact on us personally and can stick with us after we have read it (leap right off the lines, prowling around in your mind).

Instruct students that they are to choose one aspect of poetry and write a stanza about it in the style of the text using figurative language.

Hip Hip Hooray – It's Birthday Cake!

poem by Mina | illustrated by [Peter Cheong](#) | photos by Dreamstime

[EN2-OLC-01](#) | [AC9E4LY02](#)

Learning intentions:

I am learning to give and follow verbal instructions so that I can further develop my ability to communicate ideas through speaking and listening.

Success criteria:

- I can verbally give a description in enough detail for my partner to draw it with reasonable accuracy
- I can create a detailed illustration by following my partner's instructions
- I can reflect on my work with my partner and identify areas for improvement

After reading the text, pair students together so they each have a partner (or group of three if necessary). Instruct them that they are each to think of their favourite birthday cake. This may be one that they have had, one they have seen or one they would like to make.

Explain that one person should describe their favourite cake to their partner, and their partner should draw it based on the verbal description. Each partner should have a turn in each role.

The person drawing may ask further questions and take notes to assist them. Descriptive elements may include:

- The number of cake layers
- The icing type, thickness and colour
- The decorations and where they are placed
- The cake and icing flavours

Labels should also be included with the drawing to clearly mark and describe each element (e.g. 2 layers of chocolate sponge, pink buttercream icing dripping down the sides, chopped rocky road on top). Remind students that their success in this task is not based on artistic ability, it is about how well they communicated.

When both students have had a turn in each role, they should consider how accurately the labelled drawings turned out and reflect on if and how they could improve. This may include asking themselves and each other:

- Did I explain my idea clearly?
- Did I give enough detail?
- Did I listen to all my partner's instructions?
- Did I ask helpful questions?

How to Trick a Thief

poem by [Philippa Werry](#) | illustrated by [Aśka](#)

[EN2-UARL-01](#) | [AC9E4LE03](#)

Learning intentions:

I am learning to identify the way obstacles and goals influence characters so that I can create more complex characters in my writing.

Success criteria:

- I can identify the main character's goal and obstacles in the text
- I can recognise how these factors influence character behaviour
- I can create my own imaginary text based on the author's idea that clearly shows the goal, obstacle and behaviour of my character

Essential knowledge

More information about creating well-rounded characters can be found in the English Textual Concepts video [Character](#).

Read the play aloud as a class. Following this, discuss the idea that as readers, we know that Diamond Jack is a jewel thief, but the students in the story do not, and believe him to be their relief teacher. Ask students to identify Diamond Jack's goal (to escape with the jewels) and the obstacle preventing him from achieving this (he is having to hide in a classroom full of children as the police close in on him), as well as how these things impact his behaviour in the story. Discuss the clues the author has written that help the students in the story figure out Jack's secret.

Students should work in groups to come up with an idea of another person who may hide in a school disguised as a relief teacher. Discuss ideas for what kind of character this may be and offer suggestions such as:

- An art thief

- An elderly escapee from a local nursing home
- A lion tamer who has run away from the circus

Creative decision that students will need to make as authors include:

Why are they hiding?

Who are they hiding from?

How does this affect their behaviour?

What could they teach their kids?

What clues might be given in the story that helps students figure out their true identity?

Would students give them up or protect them when the people searching for them came to the classroom?

Using their own answers to these questions, students should identify their character's goal and obstacles. They should then use this information to plan and write a play, using the structure of the text to assist them. Remind students that plays are written like a script with lines written for each character beside their name, and scene notes or stage directions written plainly in brackets. A brief description of the setting should also be written at the start of the play. Students should retain a copy of the magazine to refer to the text as needed.