

# Mr Erasmus and the Irsome Inkwell

story by [Geoffrey McSkimming](#) | illustrated by [Gabriel Evans](#)

EN3-OLC-01 | AC9E5LY02

## Learning intention:

I am learning to pay close attention to action and dialogue in texts so that I can better interpret character roles and interactions when reading and writing stories.

## Success criteria:

- I can identify which parts of a text relate to my character.
- I can interpret character speech and actions from the quotes and information of a text.
- I can work with a group to act out the roles of a story.
- I can adjust reading rate to suit the purpose of the reading.

## Essential information:

For information on differentiating character and narrator point of view of a character, watch The School Magazine video for the English Textual Concept, [Point of View](#).

Allow students to read through the story independently, or if you have a digital subscription, you may wish to play the audio version while the students follow along. Once the students have read or listened to the story, divide them into groups of three. Explain that they will read through the text for a second time. It will be a group reading with each student adopting a character from the story:

- Narrator
- Mr Erasmus
- Sylphie Quicksilver

Tell the students to imagine they are performing the story as a play in front of an audience and should think about what their character would be doing throughout the story. Explain that the narrator may be standing to the side as they read the story out loud for the audience, while Mr Erasmus and Sylphie would be centre stage during their appearances in the story. Ensure students understand that the narrator's job is to tell the story, while Mr Erasmus and Sylphie's job is to act out what the narrator is saying and to say their lines as they appear in the story. Read the following out to students as an example:

'What in tarnation?' he gasped. 'Oh, upon my word, what's been happening here?'

Explain that the student playing the role of Mr Erasmus would say the words 'What in tarnation?' and 'Oh, upon my word, what's been happening here?' while the narrator would say the words 'he gasped'.

Select a few lines at random and ask students to demonstrate how they may act them out while the narrator is reading them. Suggested lines include:

- 'He dropped his peach gathering basket and started shuffling about among the trees.'
- 'Sylphie was battling her way through clouds of ever-shifting buzziness: clusters of tiny, annoying insects.'
- 'He got out of his chair and began making his way to the shelf where he kept his big bottle of ink.'

Once students understand the activity, have them break into their groups and begin reading and practicing together. Allow students to take their time to ensure they are effectively performing their roles as they become more familiar with the text. Following the group activity, some students may wish to perform a scene in front of the class if time allows.

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

The Fluency assessment tool enables teachers to gain an insight into the oral reading fluency ability of their students. The tool has been designed to identify areas of strength and need in order to support decision making when developing teaching and learning programs. Click on the hyperlink for full details of the [Fluency assessment tool](#). You will need to download the document via the Universal Resource hub.

# Next Stop, Mars

article by [Sue Bursztynski](#) | photos by Alamy

[EN3-OLC-01](#) | [AC9E5LA01](#)

## Learning intention:

I am learning how to adopt a role when communicating in a scenario so that I can express my knowledge of a topic in a manner appropriate for an intended audience.

## Success criteria:

- I can use my comprehension of a text to further theorise on a topic.
- I can take on a specific role and answer questions relating to the topic of a text.
- I can consider the intended audience when adopting a role.

After reading the text, watch the BBC News video [NASA Perseverance Mars rover begins key journey to find life](#).

Break students into small groups to have a brainstorming discussion about what life may be like for a crew traveling to Mars based on what they have learnt from the article and the video. Advise them to consider how they may feel leaving their loved ones behind to explore space, how life for them will be different while they are away and what kind of things they will be doing on their journey.

After having a few minutes to discuss their thoughts, ask students to share some ideas from their group. If not already covered with previous answers, ensure main points of the hypothetical journey are covered, including:

- It will take several months to reach Mars
- Crews will need to travel to the moon on their way to Mars
- Crews will need to collect water from the Clavius Crater on the Moon's sunlit side to help produce fuel for the spacecraft to reach Mars
- Astronauts will be able to stay on the Lunar Gateway for up to two months
- 'Moon buggies' will be able to travel 10,000km, giving astronauts a chance to explore and learn about the Moon's surface
- Two astronauts will be able to walk on the surface of Mars
- Crews will need to live together for a long time to reach Mars and back

- The planets need to line up for crews to return safely to Earth

Students should then be paired up. Inform them that one person will be playing the role of an interviewer and one will be playing a crew member who has recently been to Mars. Students in the interviewer role should use their knowledge to come up with relevant and interesting questions to ask the astronaut and the student in the astronaut role should give insightful answers based on their understanding from the article and video. Explain that there are different ways of conducting interviews and communicating information, and that some may have a light-hearted feel, while others have a more serious, journalistic approach. View the following videos as examples for the students:

[Astronaut Chris Hadfield Ejected Dirty Underwear into Space](#)

[Crew of Artemis II Sits Down with ABC 2 News in First Live TV Interview](#)

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

Allow students time to brainstorm and write notes prior to conducting their interviews. Interviews should be recorded on a device to allow editing as necessary or rehearsed and performed in front of the class. You may also like to use the digital learning selector [Facts and Claims](#) templates to scaffold the recording of reasoning with evidence.

# Ice Girl

story by Simon Cooke | illustrated by [Queenie Chan](#)

[EN3-UARL-01](#) | [AC9E5LE03](#)

## Learning intention:

I am learning to consider the experience of secondary characters in a story so I can analyse how things may be different from their point of view.

## Success criteria:

- I can use textual evidence to identify the experiences of the protagonist in a story.
- I can identify the experiences of a secondary character in a text and how they may differ from the protagonist.
- I can write a story from the secondary character's point of view.

## Essential knowledge:

For more information on considering point of view when reading and writing, watch the English Textual Concepts video for [Point of View](#).

After reading the text, discuss the emotions that Rosetta experienced at different times throughout the story. These may include:

- Stressed at having to work alone to make enough money for her father's medicine
- Shocked at seeing a girl moving through the ice
- Fear at seeing a man in dark clothing with a snake that appeared from smoke
- Confusion at what she had seen after she returned home
- Desperation as her father's condition worsened and his medicine ran out
- Guilt about selling the ice girl to the clerk
- Remorse as she realised what she had done
- Wonder as the ice girl gave her a gift and rejoined her parents
- Hope as she returned in anticipation of selling the bell and moving somewhere warmer with her father

Discuss how the author has given readers this understanding of Rosetta's experience by making her the protagonist in the story and how this allows the narrator to convey her feelings on a deeper level. Explain that this is done by following her throughout the story as well as exploring her inner thoughts. Give examples from the text, such as:

- 'Not knowing what else to do, she turned her back on the ice wall and made for home'
- 'Rosetta swallowed hard, hating herself for what she was about to do'
- 'I am no better than the man that hunted her, Rosetta thought grimly'
- 'Rosetta wondered if the ice girl had a father and a mother. She wondered if they missed her'

Ask students to consider how the story may be different if it was written from the point of view of the ice girl. Discuss what is known about the girl, based on textual evidence. This may include:

- She was running through the ice in terror to flee from a man in black
- The man released smoke that turned into a snake, which tried to strike the girl until Rosetta cut the ice block away to save the girl
- She was taken on the back of the sled by Rosetta to the ice store and sold to a man
- Rosetta returned early the next morning to take her back to the ice wall
- The girl took a tiny bell from her bag and rang it, making the ice wall shift
- A man and a woman (likely to be her parents or family) appeared and she embraced them before fading into the ice wall

Use these points to discuss what is not known about the ice girl's story. Such as, who the man in black was and why he was chasing her? Why does she live in the ice and how she is able to move through it? How can her bell control the ice and what she was thinking and feeling when she encountered Rosetta?

Explain to students that they are to write the story from the ice girl's point of view, coming up with their own ideas to fill the gaps in what we know about the ice girl's story. They may wish to start with a brainstorm of what these may be before writing a draft and publishing.

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

The School Magazine's [Imaginative text rubric](#) can be used to guide students in writing and assessing their narratives.



# The River

poem by [Lisa Varchol Perron](#) | photos by [Marjorie Crosby-Fairall](#)

[EN3-CWT-01](#) | [AC9E5LE05](#)

## Learning intentions:

I am learning to understand the language choices and styles of other poets so that I can experiment with these in my own compositions.

## Success criteria:

- I can identify and discuss language and stylistic choices made by a poet.
- I can use an existing poem and illustration to inspire my own ideas.
- I can apply aspects of another poet's style to my own writing.

## Essential knowledge:

For more information on identifying the style of an author, watch the English Textual Concepts video for [Style](#).

Read the text aloud or, if you have a digital subscription, you may wish to play the audio version. Ask students to identify and explain the descriptive language the author has used to convey the feeling of cold winter in the poem. These should include:

- ...breath makes mist in frosty air (something that occurs in cold temperatures)
- ...branches shiver, sharp and bare (trees lose their leaves in winter and branches can become more brittle)
- ...snowflakes shimmer everywhere (indicates recent snowfall)
- Nestles in a snowy mound (suggests it is still too cold for snow to melt)
- A cloak of darkness, thick and full (nights are often darker in winter)

Draw students' attention to the repetition of the last line of each stanza and discuss their interpretations on why the author has chosen to do this in their poem (e.g. perhaps to highlight that the river continues to flow at all times regardless of what is going on around it). Ask for their thoughts on the effect this has on the audience.

Have students study the illustration and imagine how this scene would look different in summer. Discuss their thoughts, which may include:

- Green grass would be in the ground instead of white snow



- Tree trunks would be a stronger brown as they would not be covered in frost
- Trees would be covered in leaves
- The river would be more blue and vibrant due to clearer and warmer skies

**Assessment for/as learning:**

Using their ideas, students should write a poem about the river in summer in the style of the text. This should include the same rhyme scheme (AAAB) and the repetition of the last line, and contain a minimum of two stanzas. Use the success criteria for the lesson as a self-assessment tool for example:

	I achieved this goal independently. What is my next step? How can I extend myself?	There were times in the lesson where I acted independently and times where I leaned on my peers and teacher for further guidance. What is my next step?	I relied on my teacher and peers for guidance for most of the lesson. I might need to ask my teacher for another opportunity to work with this content.
I was able to join in classroom discussion that focused on identifying and discussing language and stylistic choices made by a poet.			
I was able to use an existing poem and illustration to inspire my own ideas.			
I can apply aspects of another poet's style to my own writing. Using the AAAB scheme.			

# The Surprise Party

play by [Belinda Lees](#) | illustrated by [Christopher Nielsen](#)

[EN3-VOCAB-01](#) | [AC9E5LA08](#)

## Learning intention:

I am learning to identify and understand the meanings of unfamiliar words so that I can extend my vocabulary.

## Success criteria:

- I can identify words that are unfamiliar to me in a text.
- I can use phonological (segmenting) orthographic(convention) or morphological (etymology, base or root words) or a combination of these strategies to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words.
- I can search for unfamiliar words to add to my vocabulary (optional).

## Essential knowledge:

Watch The School Magazine video [Connotation, Imagery and Symbol](#) prior to reading the text to ensure students understand the use of symbolism.

Assign roles and read through the play as a class or in groups. Ask students to identify any unfamiliar words and compile a list on the board. These should be words that they are unsure of the meaning of or are completely unfamiliar with. Have the students draw up a bingo card in the book similar to the one below (depending on how many words are in your class list). Have students fill in the bingo card with the words from the list on the board, writing them in whichever spaces they choose.

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		FREE SPACE		

Explain that you are going to read out the definitions of each word and they need to guess which word each definition is for and mark it off their bingo card. Before starting the game, remind students to use strategies such as context clues and looking at any prefixes or suffixes of the words that may help them understand the meaning (e.g. quad in quadrant). Set a criteria for the first round of bingo, such as the first person to mark off all the words in their bottom row wins, then work through subsequent rounds depending on the number of words left.

Read each definition from your list and give students time to consider which word this may relate to and mark it off. This list is likely to include:

- Transmogrify (change or transform especially in appearance)
- Infiltrators (someone who moves undetected into an organisation)
- Quadrant (the quarter of a circle or
- Hostile (relating to an enemy)
- Combustible (something able to catch fire)
- Edible (something able to be eaten)
- Retrieve (to recover)
- Contaminants (something unclean or harmful to its surroundings)
- Insubordination (not obeying authority)
- Maniacally (in a way that suggests insanity)
- Teletransport (transferring matter from one place to another without visible movement)
- Elaborate (done in a way with careful or excessive detail)
- Antennae (a conductor that sends out or receives electromagnetic waves)

When a student calls out 'bingo', check that they have selected the correct words that you have read the definitions of to ensure they have the correct understanding of each word.

If time allows, you may wish to break students into groups to come up with their own list of words and definitions to swap with another group for smaller bingo games. Their words may come from another text, a dictionary or an online [random word generator](#).

### Assessment for/as learning:

As teachers we aspire for our students to have high levels of automaticity when applying taught phonological, orthographic and morphological strategies at their disposal. We want students to have access to a range of strategies and be able to choose the strategy that will be most helpful. This assessment rubric asks students to reflect on the strategy that worked and think about another strategy that could be possible.

Try it!	Have Another try! What other strategy is possible?	Visual Digraph/ Trigraph/ Diphthong	Meaning Base word,	Connecting Known - unknown	Checking resources	Correct spelling

## Old Outback Shack

poem by Karyn Savage | illustrated by [Tohby Riddle](#)

[EN3-UARL-01](#) | [AC9E5LE04](#)

### Learning intention:

I am learning about the way composers use descriptive language to create imagery in the reader's minds so that I can enrich my own writing.

### Success criteria:

- I can identify and make note of descriptive language in a text.
- I can use descriptive language to create an interpretive illustration.
- I can recognise and discuss the artistic interpretations of others.

### Essential knowledge:

For more information about creating imagery in your writing, watch The School Magazine's video for the English Textual Concept of [Connotation, Imagery and Symbol](#).

Without showing students the illustration, read the poem aloud, or if you have a digital subscription, you may wish to play the audio version. Allow students to just listen the first time. When the poem is finished, ask students if there are any unfamiliar words and clarify meanings as necessary to ensure students have a full understanding of the vocabulary used. This may include words such as decrepit (old and run-down) and tinderbox (dry and easily flammable).

Explain to students that they will be sketching their interpretation of the old outback shack based on the author's description. Ensure students have their books as well as pencils and paper, then read or play the poem again, this time pausing after each stanza. Students should jot down key descriptors as they listen. These are likely to include:

- decrepit, silvered and bare
- tinderbox stack
- old outback shack
- storehouse
- rotted and worn your roof hangs slack
- rusted tin sheets
- creaking beams
- light filters through each gap and crack
- Barely standing
- Fading alone, the bushland your view

Once the poem has finished, students should have a few minutes to brainstorm how to bring the descriptors together to form one picture. They should then begin sketching the old outback shack and may wish to also add background and colour to their picture.

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

Once completed, conduct a [gallery walk](#) to compare and discuss students' interpretations of the poem and reveal the illustration. Discuss the magazine artist's interpretation of the poem and what similarities and differences it may have with the students' pictures, explaining that all are equally valid.

# The Way to Be

Poem by [Jenny Erlanger](#) | illustrated by [Amy Golbach](#)

[EN3-UARL-01](#) | [AC9E5LY01](#)

## Learning intention:

I am learning to empathise with and relate to the viewpoint of a narrator so that I can better understand myself and others.

## Success criteria:

- I can identify and discuss the way that narrative style affects the reader.
- I can summarise the author's message in a text and consider how it relates to my own feelings and experiences.
- I can create a set of instructions in a chosen format to communicate my own message.

After reading the poem, discuss the narrative style the author has written in (second person) and how this affects the audience (it is though they are being addressed directly and given advice or instructions). Ask students why the narrator may be giving this advice (e.g., they may have experienced anxiety and have found the methods in the poem helpful) and to summarise what they are suggesting.

Sample answer:

They're saying that if you lie down on the grass and stare at the clouds in the sky you can focus on the way it feels and sounds out in nature and clear your mind, which will help you feel calmer.

Watch the video [Brain Basics: Anxiety for Kids](#). Ask students to think about what helps them to feel calmer when they are feeling overwhelmed or anxious. Have them close their eyes and think about how their body reacts to stress (e.g., feeling tight in the chest, legs shake, shoulders tense) and how they can help ease their anxiety both physically and

mentally. Have willing students share their thoughts with the class, particularly about helpful strategies, explaining that their suggestions may help someone else (e.g., they may have found that listening to their favourite song or playing with their pet helps to calm their mind).

Refer back to the text and point out that the author has written it in such a way that not only is it poetic, but it also gives a set of instructions in order and has an accompanying illustration to demonstrate. Reread the following lines to highlight this point:

- Find a comfy place to lie beside your favourite tree
- Cast your eyes up to the sky
- Watch the clouds that slowly drift
- Pay no heed to thought balloons, release them one by one
- Fill your head instead with tunes awakened by the sun (ensure students understand that this is referring to the singing of birds in the context of this poem)
- Feel the breeze caress the skin, dance lightly on your face
- Close your eyes and bask within this moment's soft embrace
- Give your mind the space to rest, it's time to simply be

Ask students to choose a preferred method of calming and think about how they would best communicate this. This may be through a poem, a set of point form instructions or a diagram. Remind students to use second person language, as is used in the text. For example:

Sit down and put your earphones in

Look out the window, let's begin

Go and select your favourite tune

As you stare out at the stars and moon

Listen to the words and beat

And if you want to, move your feet

Feel the rhythm and sing a long

Absorb the feeling of the song

Let it relax your worried mind

And help your anxious thoughts unwind

Drift away with the melody

Take your woes and set them free

# Sylphie's Squizzes: Terrific Toothpaste

article by Zoe Disher | illustrated by [Tohby Riddle](#)

[EN3-CWT-03](#) | [AC9E5LY06](#)

## Learning intention:

I am learning to understand the way advertising is used to persuade people to use products so that I can use effective persuasive methods in my work.

## Success criteria:

- I can identify aspects of an advertisement that are designed to attract and persuade an audience
- I can create an effective advertisement for a product
- I can give and receive constructive feedback

After reading the article, ask students to recall what kind of materials have people used throughout history to clean their teeth. Answers should include:

- Burnt animal parts
- Salt, pepper and mint
- Crushed eggshells and pumice
- Charcoal and brick dust

Discuss what effect this may have had on the way teeth looked and felt. Inform students that they will be creating an advertisement for one of these 'products'.

Have students research examples of toothpaste advertisements by visiting relevant websites and if planning time allows, ask students to bring in any toothpaste packaging they may have at home.

Pair students up and ask them to discuss the following questions with their partner:

- What is the company wanting to communicate about this product?
- How have they made the packaging appealing to buyers



- What words do they use to convey their message?
- What visual images are used to make their point?
- Do they have a slogan?

Draw their attention to the illustration in the text and ask how it is being advertised (name, picture etc). Students should then come up with their own toothpaste advertisement to promote one of the 'toothpaste' types from the text. To do this they should consider:

- How they will convey their message
- What their slogan will be
- What their accompanying image will be
- What the toothpaste packaging will look like and how it can be incorporated into the advertisement.

Students should begin by creating a brainstorm or mind map of their ideas in their book and use this to create an advertisement either on a blank sheet of paper or design software such as Canva or PowerPoint.

If time allows, have students share their advertisements with the class and give constructive feedback to each other based on the effectiveness of the messaging and the creativity of their designs.

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

To assist with independent construction of the persuasive text, self-assessment or teacher assessment refer to [The School Magazine Persuasive Text Assessment Rubrics](#).