

The Wagging of Keithus

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

EN-UARL-01 | AC9E5LE02

Learning intention:

I am learning to use appropriate metalanguage so I can present a point of view of literary texts.

Success criteria:

- I can identify narrative conventions that engage an audience in a text.
- I can analyse characterisation in a text.
- I can use metalanguage to give a personal response to a text.

Essential knowledge:

- More information about narrative conventions can be found in the English Textual Concepts video [Narrative](#).
- More information about character can be found in the English Textual Concepts video [Character](#).

While reading the story, students work in pairs to make note of what questions might arise for the reader. For example, page 5 emphasises the mystery of the stranger, giving him odd clothes and an unexplained silence. Students might write things like:

- Who is this stranger?
- Why is he wearing Roman centurion clothes?
- Why won't he talk?

During the last part of the story, students will find they have less questions, as the author has answered everything through dialogue.

Ask students if they were compelled to keep reading throughout the story, and what techniques the author used to engage them. Students might recognise that presenting mysterious circumstances makes the reader want to find out what's going on. Explain that:

1. This narrative convention is called tension.

2. As this is a mystery story, the tension comes from the characters and readers discovering the truth together.

3. When the characters are curious to find out answers, the reader will be too.

Ask students to evaluate whether this technique worked to engage them by:

- Thumbs up, definitely
- Thumbs down, not at all
- Thumbs middle, sort of

Students draw a table in their books detailing the narrative conventions of:

- Characters (Mr Erasmus, Sylphie, the automaton)
- Setting (Mr Erasmus's library)
- Complication (thunking in the library)
- Resolution (automaton got stuck)

Ask students what they've inferred from the text about the characters Mr Erasmus and Sylphie. Encourage them to use quotes to show their reasoning. For example, students might say Mr Erasmus is educated because he knows about automatons and uses words like 'perhaps'. They might also decide he's brave because he approached the automaton even though he was frightened. For Sylphie, they might point out she uses words like 'buster', which shows she's probably younger and more brazen. If you have a digital subscription, complete the interactive activity Characterisation in Illustration.

Students write a paragraph reviewing the text, using opinionated language (e.g., I think... I believe...) and metalanguage discussed in the lesson to explain their reasoning. An example paragraph is below.

The Wagging of Keithus (Part Two), written by Geoffrey McSkimming and illustrated by Gabriel Evans, was an enjoyable tale with high tension to engage the reader. The cool and calm characterisation of Mr Erasmus made me feel safe despite the high tension, while the inquisitive nature of Sylphie encouraged me to be keen to know the answers to the mysterious stranger. I also liked that it was set in a library, as personally I love libraries. The resolution was a little confusing to me, as I didn't understand why anyone would make an automaton to bash salt, but otherwise, I think it was a great read.

Extension: If you completed the learning resource from last issue, compare the events of the story with the students' predictions to see if anyone correctly guessed what was going to happen.

Anagram Magic

article by Lisa Dekeling | illustrated by [Tohby Riddle](#)

[EN3-SPELL-01](#) | [AC9E5LY09](#)

Learning intention:

I am learning to draw on appropriate strategies so that I can spell familiar and unfamiliar words correctly.

Success criteria:

- I can use spelling conventions for derivational suffixes.
- I can apply infrequently occurring graphemes when spelling base words and adding suffixes.
- I can use spelling conventions to spell unfamiliar words.

Before reading the article, write the word SOLIDER on the board. Give students two minutes to find as many small words in solider as they can, using only the letters available. Tell students they should be able to find more than twenty at least. Students write down their answers in their books. At the end of the two minutes, go through answers. For a list of more than a hundred words found in soldier, refer to Byrdseed's [Puzzle: Words Within Words](#).

Write the word THING on the board. Ask students if they can find a word that uses all the letters from thing to make a new word. Depending on what is more relevant to your classroom, one of the following hints can be given:

- It will use a [trigraph](#) OR
- It has the phoneme /igh/

Answer: Night.

Ask students if anyone knows what it's called when we use all the letters to make a new word. Read Anagram Magic as a class and discuss what students thought of the text.

Sort students into groups of four or five and give them the following puzzles to solve:

1. INTEGRAL has five anagrams. Can you find them all? Hint 1 – three words have a suffix that gives you present continuous tense. Hint 2 – the hardest one ends in the suffix 'ier'.

(Answers: altering, alerting, triangle, relating, tanglier)

2. What are two anagrams of the word EDUCATION? Hint – both use the derivational suffix 'tion'.

(Answers: cautioned, auctioned)

3. Find anagrams of the following words that have a common theme: TANG, SUNG, SWANG, MOSHING

(Answers: gnat, gnus, gnaws, gnomish – they all start with the infrequent grapheme gn)

4. What is the relevant anagram for the phrase GREAT ART?

(Answer: anagram)

5. What is an anagram of SPANDEX? Hint - it is an adjective for this stretchy material.

(Answer: Expands)

Extension: Students write their own words or phrases and have a partner find the anagram (Note – anagrams must use all the letters of the word/phrase).

At the Museum

poem by Raven Howell | illustrated by [Christopher Nielsen](#)

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

Learning intention:

I am learning to analyse structure and stylistic features of texts so that I can experiment with creating literary texts.

Success criteria:

- I can identify the rhyming scheme of a poem.
- I can identify the rhythm of a poem.
- I can create my own poem using the same rhyme and rhythm.

Essential knowledge:

More information about style can be found in the English Textual Concepts video [Style](#).

After reading the poem as a class, have a general discussion about students' thoughts and feelings about the text. Encourage students to think about both the content and structure of the poem. Answers might include its short and snappy nature, that it rhymes and that it's about the past.

Display the following nursery rhyme on the board:

Hey diddle diddle
The cat and the fiddle
The cow jumped over the moon
The little dog laughed to see such fun
And the dish ran away with the spoon.

Have students identify the rhyming words at the end of each line (answers: diddle/fiddle, moon/spoon). Explain that when we study rhyming schemes, we assign each rhyme a letter. Demonstrate by writing the assigned letter next to each line. Answer is below.

Hey diddle diddle (A)
The cat and the fiddle (A)

The cow jumped over the moon (B)

The little dog laughed to see such fun (C)

And the dish ran away with the spoon. (B)

Explain that moon and spoon have the same letter because they rhyme, while fun is the only one with the letter C because it doesn't rhyme with any other line ending.

Give another example of a nursery rhyme for students to practise identifying a rhyming scheme, such as Mary, Mary Quite Contrary (ABCB – not including internal rhymes) or The Incy Wincy Spider (ABACBB). Note: The rhyming scheme will change depending on how you structure the lines.

Display *At the Museum* on the board and instruct students to identify the rhyming scheme (AABBCCDC). Then go through the poem again, having students identify how many syllables there are in each line (3, 3, 2, 3, 3, 3, 5, 3). Information about syllables can be found on the NSW Department of Education webpage [Phonological Awareness](#).

Explain that students are to write their own poem with the same rhyming scheme and syllable count as *At the Museum*, but about libraries instead. Spend some time as a class brainstorming words they could use when writing about libraries. Sample answers include fantasy, authors, pages, binding, librarians, shelves, words, sentences, imagination, borrow. Once they've accumulated a large vocabulary list, students can find words that rhyme in their list or use a rhyming dictionary to assist them.

A sample rhyme is below.

Pages, books

Shelves and nooks

Themes, words

Minds are stirred

All is free

Get the key

Libraries unlock

Fantasy.

Dinosaur on the Move

story by Katie Aaron | illustrated by [Sarah Davis](#)

[EN3-UARL-01](#) | [AC9E5LY03](#)

Learning intention:

I am learning to analyse text structure so that I can explain how authors use character development to create interest for the reader.

Success criteria:

- I can identify how an author creates a sympathetic character.
- I can explain how a character develops through a text.
- I can present my understanding of character development in an oral presentation.

Essential Knowledge

More information about character can be found in the English Textual Concepts video [Character](#).

After reading the story, sort students into groups of three or four and give them time to discuss how the author was able to make Martha a sympathetic character (a character who the reader can identify with) despite the fact she isn't human. The following questions can be used as prompts:

- What human characteristics did the author give Martha?
- How do you know how Martha felt during the course of the story?
- Can you identify with these feelings?

Encourage students to find direct quotes and think of personal experiences to support their answers. Once groups have had a chance to discuss, come together as a class to share answers. Students might identify that Martha was lonely and give an example of a time they also felt lonely. They might connect with her perseverance while she tried to walk or her embarrassment when she fell. Some students might relate to Martha's joy at finding friends.

Explain to the class that while Martha is a T-Rex, the author was able to make the audience sympathetic to her situation by giving her the universal experience of loneliness, which all

people feel at one time or another. This sympathy is what connects the reader to the character.

Write the following on the board (notes in brackets can be explained orally):

1. Character desire (what is a problem in the main character's life/what does the character want?)
2. Inciting incident (what moment sparks the character to make a change?)
3. Obstacles (what keeps the character from getting their desire?)
4. Character actions (what does the character do to overcome the obstacles?)
5. Climax (what is the biggest thing at the end that gets in the way of the character achieving their goal?)
6. Solution (how does the character overcome this final obstacle?)
7. Resolution (how has life changed for the character?)

As a class, answer the first point together by:

1. Discussing what the problem is with Martha's life (she's lonely)
2. Discussing what would solve the problem (companionship)
3. Have students find quotes from the text to support their answers. Sample quotes are below.

Martha had been put at the dead end of a long corridor away from the room,
on her own.

No-one had ever said anything nice to Martha before.

'You must be lonely...' This boy was a mind-reader.

She'd like to say *thank you* to him for knowing she was lonely.

He pointed up the wide corridor with its shiny floor and wall of glass windows.

(Note: the author selects vocabulary like wide and shiny, and uses the desirable

description of a wall of glass windows to imply that there is a nicer place for Martha.)

Martha watched the boy run to join his friends. She wished he'd stay. (Note: the author is comparing Martha's solitude to the boy's group of friends to emphasise her loneliness and highlight her need for companionship.)

Once character desire has been discussed, each group fills out a table or a list completing the other headings using information from the text to plot Martha's character arc. Encourage students to use quotes from the text to support their answers. Once complete, each group presents their findings to another group. They can use a visual aide such as Prezi, PowerPoint or a poster to assist with their presentation.

Sample answers:

2. Inciting incident (Ryan suggests Martha should be with the other dinosaurs)
3. Obstacles (Martha can't walk/getting there would cause pandemonium)
4. Character actions (Martha practises walking/selects a time she wouldn't be seen)
5. Climax (Martha falls over and is stuck upside down)
6. Solution (Ryan suggests Martha use her tail to get up)
7. Resolution (Martha is now with the other dinosaurs)

Sylphie's Squizzes: Gobblers on the Go

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

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

Learning intention:

I am learning to read and use vocabulary in context so that I can develop greater precision in my writing.

Success criteria:

- I can define the term droving.
- I can use the term droving in context.
- I can apply the term droving to my own writing.

Before reading the article, write the word DROVING on the board and ask students to think about a possible definition. Have them write their definition in their books. Then, display the sentence 'Farmers are droving their cattle to new pastures' on the board and again ask students to write a definition, using new contextual understanding to change their answers if necessary.

Define the term droving as 'To move farm animals on foot from one place to another' (from [Cambridge Dictionary](#)). Highlight the words farm and foot and discuss the specificity of the definition. Display the title of the article on the board, 'Gobblers on the Go', and ask students to predict what the article will be about.

Read the article as a class. Ask if anyone was surprised by the content of the article after learning what droving meant. Did anyone expect turkeys to be the farm animal moved on foot?

Hand out a page with the below questions and view ABC's video [Historic Cattle Droving Journey](#), with students answering the questions as they watch.

Questions for Historic Cattle Droving Journey:

- How many cattle are being moved?

- Where did the cattle come from?
- Where are the cattle going?
- Why are the cattle being moved?
- How far did the cattle walk?
- What are the challenges of droving?
- What are the benefits?

Answers:

- How many cattle are being moved? 18,000
- Where did the cattle come from? Western QLD and NT
- Where are the cattle going? Southern NSW (Riverina)
- Why are the cattle being moved? Lack of rain
- How far did the cattle walk? 1500km
- What are the challenges of droving? Cattle at the back don't get much food, traffic, wellbeing of cattle.
- What are the benefits? Education for cattle, they'll not stress, be easy to muster, easy to handle.

Students write a short article in the style of 'Gobblers on the Go' about the video, using the information from their answers. Ensure they use the term droving in their article. Give students the below checklist for writing their article.

1. Has a heading
2. Has a by-line (who the article is written by)
3. Has interesting and relevant subheadings (Moving out! A long walk; Dangerous droving)
4. Has at least one relevant paragraph under each heading
5. Can include photographs/illustrations

Mystery of the Missing Echidna

play by A. J. Armstrong | illustrated by [Michel Streich](#)

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

Learning intentions:

I am learning to analyse and interpret information in a text so that I can create a diary entry using the characters and world from that text.

Success criteria:

- I can infer character personalities based on dialogue.
- I can write a diary entry based on the characters and the world of an existing text.
- I can create an illustration to portray characterisation in a text.

Essential knowledge:

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

After reading the play as a class, students write a list of the characters in the play and their personalities. Encourage students to look at the dialogue for clues. As an example, direct students to Judge Powerful Owl's dialogue on page 21 stating that 'owls are not fowl, despite the spelling and rhyme.' This suggests Owl is a clever character who knows about the world.

Once students have an idea of the characters' personalities, they are to choose one character and write a diary entry from that character's point of view of the events of the day. Remind students that diary entries are:

- written in first person point of view
- written in the past tense
- informal and can therefore contain colloquial language.

Remind students that their language choice will change depending on their character's personality. For example, as a clever character, the Powerful Owl's diary might start:

There was a murder case in court today, and as such I had to rise well after my bedtime to adjudicate.

On the other hand, Professor Katie Kookaburra's diary entry might start:

Cor blimey, I got to testify in court today! It all started with a call during my morning cackle.

An illustration will accompany the diary entry. Students should consider what kind of clothes their character would wear depending on their personality, as well as their body language and facial expression. They can use the illustrations from the play to assist them. If you have a digital subscription, the class can complete the interactive activity *Characterisation in Illustration* for ideas.

All Aboard the Cockle Train

poem by Julia Wakefield | illustrated by [Fifi Colston](#)

[EN3-RECOM-01](#) | [AC9E5LY05](#)

Learning intentions:

I am learning to use comprehension strategies to analyse texts so that I can link ideas through intertextuality.

Success criteria:

- I can use comprehension strategies to analyse the meaning of texts.
- I can identify language features in texts.
- I can compare texts with similar themes.

Essential knowledge:

More information about linking texts can be found in the English Textual Concepts video [Intertextuality](#).

After reading the poem either as a class or listening to the audio recording, ask students the following questions:

- What is the poem about? (A train ride)
- What is the Cockle Train? (A train in South Australia – see the [Cockle Train](#) webpage)
- Whose point of view is the poem from? (A passenger's)
- What is the monster referenced in the second stanza? (The train as seen by the roos)
- What is the meaning of the second-last line? (The passenger has gotten off the train and is waving goodbye)
- What is the meaning of the last line? (The steam train made the passenger feel like they were in the past, but now they are home and returned to the present, though the lovely memory, the 'dream' will stay with them)

Ask students if the poem reminds them of another poem. View the Scottish Poet's Library page on Robert Louis Stevenson's poem [From a Railway Carriage](#). Brainstorm ways this poem is the same as All Aboard the Cockle Train and ways it is different. Students can use a [Venn Diagram](#) or other graphic organiser to arrange their ideas.

Ask students to find examples of the following in both poems:

Onomatopoeia
Metaphors
Imagery
Similes

Discuss as a class how both poems use these techniques in a similar way. Ask why Wakefield might have written a poem so similar to Stevenson's. Examine the difference between the Australian imagery (tin roofs, withered trees, roos) and the British (meadows, driving rain, brambles), and how Wakefield might have wanted to make a version of the poem for Australia.

Extension: Select relevant sections of the NSW Education Department's Word document [A Framework for Responding to Poetry](#) for students to complete.

Mia's Key

story by Pam Greatorex | illustrated by [Ana Maria Méndez Salgado](#)

[EN3-UARL-01](#) | [AC9E5LE01](#)

Learning intention:

I am learning to analyse various descriptions of literary texts so that I can identify specific historical details.

Success criteria:

- I can identify objects from the past included in texts.
- I can describe how life was different in Australia in the 1950s.
- I can explain how details in texts can give information about historical context.

After reading the story, ask students to identify what objects Mia discovers that are from Grandma's past (the old brass key with intricate designs, clothes, dried lavender sachets, watches, hatpins, coins, leather case with satin lining, pearl necklace - she also recalls the button tin). Ask students what these objects have in common. Students might identify that they are important to Mia's memory of her grandmother.

Watch ABC's [Back in Time for Dinner](#) part one, the 1950s. Ask students what things surprised them about the video. Some students might notice the connection between the hats mentioned in the video with the hatpins in Mia's grandmother's possessions. Explain that as hats were part of the etiquette dress code during much of Mia's grandmother's life, it wouldn't be unusual for her to own hatpins.

Ask students why the food in the video was wrapped in paper and string. When they have an answer (plastic bags weren't used back then), discuss society's move to 'throwaway culture', where many items are disposed of rather than repaired. (More information about throwaway culture can be found on National Geographic's article [Why our Throwaway Culture Has to End](#) and BBC Future's article [The High Cost of our Throwaway Culture](#).) Explain to students that Mia's grandmother lived in a time where torn clothes or faulty products like watches were repaired rather than replaced, that items weren't made from plastic and that things were created to last. With this information in mind, encourage students to have another look at the list of Mia's grandmother's possessions and discuss why they think she had them. For example, the button tin was because she repaired clothes rather than throw

them away. The same could be said for the old watches. The dried lavender sachets could be an example of people from the past using nature to fragrance their homes because no aromatic sprays were available. Finally, the pearl necklace is not cheap plastic that will be tossed in the bin once it's broken – it's a precious heirloom that's meant to be kept and passed down through the generations.

Have students write a reason why they believe each of Mia's grandmother's possessions were included in the text, using the information above.

Explain that additions in literary texts like the examples above give clues to a broader historical context. Encourage students to include specific details in their own writing to expand their world-building.