

Leviathan

story by Simon Cooke | illustrated by [Peter Sheehan](#)

[EN3-UARL-01](#) | [AC9E6LY03](#)

Learning Intention:

I am learning to recognise the way elements of genres are blended in a text so that I can understand how characteristics of different genres have influenced a composer.

Success Criteria:

- I can identify the obvious features of a primary genre in a text.
- I can analyse the subtle features of a secondary genre in a text.
- I can explain how characteristics of genres have influenced the composer.

Essential knowledge:

More information about how audiences can expect certain patterns in a text, and how authors can subvert these patterns can be found in the English Textual Concepts video [Genre](#).

More information about how the concept of genre should be addressed in Stage 3 can be found on the English Teachers Association's page on [Genre](#).

Guiding Question:

How do authors and audiences experience genres?

Prior to reading the text, provide students with the Australian Curriculum's definition of [genre](#):

How texts are grouped depending on their social purpose (for example, to recount, to describe, to persuade, to narrate). In literary theory, the term is often used to distinguish texts based on their subject matter (for example, detective fiction, romance fiction, science fiction, fantasy fiction), or their form and structure (for example poetry, novels, short stories).

Explain that in this activity you will be focusing on how genre works in literary theory.

Then, reveal and discuss Peter Sheehan's illustrations and ask students the following questions:

- Based on these pictures, what genre do you think this story best fits? (The answer is fantasy)
- What is happening in the pictures? (A man is staring at a warship, next he is fighting a large sea monster in a small boat, next a large purple sea monster is dragging the warship, next the man is unlocking the chains of the sea monster, finally the man, with another man appear to be stranded on a deserted island.)

- How do these images link to this (the fantasy) genre? (The inclusion of large sea monsters, the behaviour of the sea monsters such as being the boat's engine, the appearance of the warship which looks part old fashioned and part modern.)
- Do these pictures include features from any other genre? (Students may notice the historical details in the images such as the characters' dress, hairstyles and the wood used to build the warship).

Explain that an audience has expectations when they know that a text belongs to a certain genre. Provide students with a checklist of the most common patterns found in both the fantasy and the historical fiction genre (below). Alternatively, the class can construct their own checklists of what they would expect to read in texts from these genres. Then, ask them to read the text and identify which patterns of the fantasy genre appear:

Fantasy Genre

Pattern	Does it appear?	Example
Magic	✓	A dragon appears that breathes fire. Students may debate whether magic is used to control the whales, sharks and leviathans.
Unique setting	✓	In this world, ships are hauled by sea monsters rather than using sails.
A heroic adventure	✓	Jacob must set both himself and the sea monster free from his evil captain.
Mythical or supernatural creatures	✓	It contains dragons and leviathans which are not real, as well as sharks and whales which have been tamed.
Unique language	✗	All words in the story are real words.
Relatable themes	✓	Jacob demonstrates both how to show compassion to another being and the importance of bravery.

Explain to students that the author has used many features of the fantasy genre and therefore has fulfilled the audiences' expectations. However, the author has also taken aspects of a second genre (historical fiction) and blended these into the story. Ask the class why the author has made this decision. (Answers may include: so that the story is less predictable, the narrative is more unique, it creates a richer and more detailed setting, it suits the context of the story as belief in sea monsters was more common 200 years ago).

Display the features of the historical fiction genre and explain to the class the deliberate choices made by the author:

Historical Fiction Genre

Pattern	Does it appear?	Example
Characters act appropriate for the time	✓	Naval recruiters really did prowl and kidnap people (the press gangs).

Specific vocabulary from the time period is included	✓	Leviathan, pleasure ships, trading vessels, cannons
Set in a specific place during a specific time in history	✓	The style of the ship's wooden base and naval uniforms suggests 1700s-1800s.
Includes details, traditions and societal norms of the time period	✓	Hierarchy of the navy, fancy clothing worn by first mate Scupper compared to Jacob.
Combines real details with fictional characters and events	✓	Men were regularly kidnapped to help with the war effort during the Napoleonic Wars. These ships used cannon fire.

As a class, re-read and annotate the story. Highlight the details both in the illustrations and text that reveal aspects of the historical fiction genre. Finally, discuss how the patterns used in the historical fiction genre have impacted the choices made by the author.

When Plants Attack!

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

[EN3-UARL-01](#) | [AC9E6LA03](#)

Learning Intention:

I am learning to understand how authors experiment with text structures by combining genres so that I can explain what makes a text humorous.

Success Criteria:

- I can define the term sensationalism and identify examples of it in an informational text.
- I can identify the aspects of the text that inform the audience about a topic, and, in contrast, I can also identify the entertaining aspects of the text.
- I can experiment with using sensationalism in my own writing.

Essential knowledge:

More information about how texts are grouped according to form and function can be found in the English Textual Concepts video [Genre](#).

More information about how the concept of genre should be addressed in Stage 3 can be found on the English Teachers Association's page on [Genre](#).

Guiding Question:

How can genres be combined for different purposes?

Before reading the text, introduce the genre of sensational news and sensationalism. First, you may wish to show the Academy for Social Change's (Academy4SC) video on [Sensationalism](#). Next, provide students with the Academy4SC's definition of sensational

news: when news is either released as the story breaks or with flashy content at the expense of accuracy. Explain that the aim of a sensational approach to writing news is to attract as many readers as possible. You may then want to provide students with some of the features of sensational news stories:

- Headlines with big, bolded words and exclamation marks
- Creating fear or preying on the fears of the audience
- Inaccurately quoting an expert or twisting their words
- Not checking the facts before presenting them

You may then ask students to brainstorm examples of sensational news in Australia. Some examples include: television news programs like 'A Current Affair', clickbait articles on the internet and some YouTube channels.

As a class read the text with students assuming the roles of *Sensational News* Reporter, Colin Claptrap and world-renowned botanist, Professor Thorne.

After the initial read-through, explain that texts can be organised into genres based on their social purpose/function (to inform, persuade, entertain etc.) Ask students to identify the purpose 'When Plants Attack!' Students should recognise that the primary purpose of the article is to inform as it contains many interesting facts and details about carnivorous plants. However, as the article is structured as a sensational news segment, the purpose is also to entertain. This is for two reasons. Most obviously, as the article contains lots of jokes in the form of outlandish claims (even the journalist is called Claptrap – absurd talk). The second is that the article is satirising sensationalist news stories and therefore is full of jokes.

Instruct students to conduct a second, independent read through. This time they should highlight all the information that is included to inform in one colour. In another colour they should highlight all the information included to entertain. Ask students what they notice about the structure. After reading, students should be able to visually see that around half of the article is informative and the other half entertaining. As the article concludes, the jokes increase.

Extension: Students could take this activity further by annotating quotations that feature elements of the sensational news genre. For example, the headline 'When Plants Attack!' contains both an exclamation mark and a strong verb to create a sense of fear.

Finally, ask students to experiment with writing their own sensational news story. They should choose an ordinary item in the classroom or playground. This will be the basis of a newspaper report in which the risk posed by this object is exaggerated. For example, Clag glue could be described as having destructive strength, or a blade of grass sharp enough to cause paper cuts.

The Dreamcatcher

poem by Niahm O'Meara | illustrated by Rosemary Fung

[EN3-VOCAB-01](#) | [AC9E6LA08](#)

Learning Intention:

I am learning how a poet uses repetition and imagery so that I can visualise a poem and assess illustrations made by others.

Success Criteria:

- I can identify language forms and features in a poem.
- I can verbally explain the images created by these language forms and features.
- I can compare the mental image I created to the published illustration of a poem.

Essential Knowledge:

More information about how the knowledge of a text's genre creates audience expectation can be found in the English Textual Concepts video [Genre](#).

More information about an author's comparison of objects to create figurative meaning can be found in the English Textual Concepts video [Connotation, Imagery and Symbol](#).

Guiding Question:

How do images contribute to texts fitting a genre?

Read the poem to the class, or if you have a digital subscription play the recording. Only display the text and conceal Rosemary Fung's illustration. After reading, to aid comprehension, ask the following questions:

- Who is the character in the poem? (The Dreamcatcher)
- Where is he? (A 'murky dark lake')
- When is it set? (Nighttime, as he 'sleeps through the heat of the day' and in hot weather as there is a 'soft summer breeze')
- What is he doing? (Catching dreams, both nightmares – 'keeps all our terrors at bay' – and pleasant ones – 'catches our wishes')
- What does he look like? (Students might connect his appearance to that of a wizard: 'a beard that falls down to his boots', 'rag-man cloak and old fisherman's boots')

Ensure that students have a deep understanding of the narrative of the poem: a wizard-like man sails a boat down a murky dark lake throughout the night. He catches the dreams and nightmares that are trapped in the dandelion weeds. At the end of the poem, at sunrise, he sleeps.

Ask students what genre this poem belongs to, in terms of its literary content. Students should recognise that this is a fantasy poem based on the setting, appearance of the main character, mention of mythical beasts and inclusion of magic.

Explain the task to students: they will be creating their own illustration of the poem, based on the visual images created by the language techniques.

The first step is that they must reread the poem with a focus on key language forms and features. This includes the repetition of the noun group 'the murky dark lake' and the use of imagery in quotations:

'He sails through the stories we weave'
and he catches our wishes on dandelion weeds'.

Ask students to consider the mental image created by these language forms and features. Students should explain how they see the image of the lake in their mind and how they would visualise a story woven into a blanket and a wish trapped in a white dandelion blossom. Once students have discussed their mental visualisations, they individually synthesise these images into one overall illustration for the poem. Students may wish to conduct a [gallery walk](#) to critically engage with the representations created by their peers.

After completing their original illustration, they will self-assess whether it fits the audience's expectations of a fantasy text. Create a class criteria of patterns in the fantasy genre (including some of the features discussed above). You may wish to show students a range of fantasy images through a search engine such as [Flickr Creative Commons](#) to assist in the depth of student responses. If you have a digital subscription, a deep dive into a fantasy image can be done as the interactive activity Find the Fantasy Features.

Finally, reveal the official illustration of the poem by Rosemary Fung. Ask students to assess the illustration on two points:

1. Does the illustration match their expectations for what an image in the fantasy genre should look like?
2. Does the image represent the language techniques used in the poem in a similar way to themselves, or has the illustrator visualised the poem in a completely different way?

The Children of Yesterday

part two of a two-part story by John O'Brien | illustrated by Queenie Chan

[EN3-OLC-01](#) | [AC9E6LA01](#)

Learning Intention:

I am learning to use a range of strategies for interaction in role play scenarios so that I can appropriately adjust levels of formality and social distance.

Success Criteria:

- I can understand the relationships between characters in a text.
- I can compose a series of conversations between characters based on details in the story.
- I can use the appropriate language register and tone based on the relationships of characters.

Essential Knowledge:

More information about how an author constructs a character through dialogue can be found in the English Textual Concepts video [Character](#).

Read the story to the class, or if you have a digital subscription you may choose to listen to the audio recording. It may also be a good idea to reread and review the events of part one prior to reading part two.

At the story's conclusion, write a list of all the characters that appear. They include: Matthew, Jacques, Lisa, Charlotte, Charlotte's mum (only mentioned in passing), Matthew's family (only briefly referred to). Then provide students with a Character Map: one large circle in the middle with three circles positioned around the outside. Ask students which character should be placed in the middle (Matthew as he is the narrator and protagonist). Then ask students to arrange the remaining three characters in the outside circles.

Students complete the character map in two steps. First, inside each circle they should list all the key details of characterisation about each character. For example:

- Matthew: appears as a 12-year-old and 52-year-old in the story. Interested in time and time travel. Highly educated.

There should be arrows connecting each of the circles to one another. On these arrows, students write the relationship each character has with the character in the neighbouring circle. For example, in the arrow drawn between Matthew and Lisa, the relationship would be father/daughter. In the arrow drawn between Matthew and Jacques, the relationship would be close friends who spent January 6, 1974, together. In the arrow drawn between Lisa and Jacques, the relationship would be never met, but Matthew may have spoken about him.

Once students have created a Character Map, introduce the concept of formality and social distance. Explain that we modify the language (verbal and gestures) based on our relationship with the person we are communicating with. Factors include: how well we know the person, the relative power of the two people in the conversation, the age difference and the purpose of the communication. For more information, refer to the BBC Bitesize webpage: [Knowing when to use formal or informal language](#).

Finally, divide students into groups of four and assign each member a character. Provide a list of scenarios. For example:

- The conversation Matthew and Jacques have while surfing.
- Jacques asked Matthew's family for more pancakes. (Group members will need to adopt additional characters.)
- An adult Matthew talking to Charlotte while he cooks pancakes.
- Charlotte and Lisa talk about horses.

Students must adopt their character and use the appropriate degree of formality in the conversation. Students can rehearse and present their conversations to the class. Alternatively, students can write their conversations as a script, using 'The Great Granolo' (this issue) as a model text.

Dossier of Discovery: Bird the Builder

article by Karen Jameyson | photo by Alamy

[EN3-RECOM-01](#) | [AC9E6LA04](#)

Learning Intention:

I am learning how to replace or omit words in the drafting process so that I can compose a short cohesive text.

Success Criteria:

- I can extract information from a nonfiction article.
- I can select information from a list to use in a different text type (a song).
- I can use the drafting process to replace or omit words so that my song fits the rhythm of the original song.

Before reading the article, draw students' attention to its title: Bird the Builder. Ask students what they think of when they hear this heading. Students should recognise that it is a pun and based on the title of a popular children's show: Bob the Builder.

Next, play the Bob the Builder song [Can We Fix It?](#) and provide students with a copy of the [lyrics](#). Ask students to describe the professional qualities of Bob the Builder. (He has a positive attitude and good teamwork skills, ensures he finishes his tasks, has excellent workmanship and works long days.)

Next, read the article as a class. Discuss why the article has the heading 'Bird the Builder'. (It is both a pun, but it also suits the subject matter. The crow is remarkable because it is one of only three animals that makes and uses tools.) Then ask students to read the article independently, extracting the important facts about the New Caledonian crow and its abilities as a builder. Examples include:

- It has figured out how to make its own tools.
- Tools are made from sticks and plant stems.
- These tools are used to hunt food, such as hooking insects inside trees.

Once students have created a list of facts about the crow, explain the task. They will use these facts to write their own version of 'Can We Fix It?', this time called 'Bird the Builder'.

Explain to students that they will need to make multiple drafts to create a song that:

1. Contains relevant facts about the crow's building abilities,

2. Fits the rhythm/metre/beat of the original song.

Model the drafting process involved in creating a chorus. First, decide on the information to include in the chorus:

Bird the Builder -

Can they make tools from sticks and stems?

Bird the Builder –

Yes, they are one of the only animals able to.

Discuss with students why this doesn't really work as a chorus. It doesn't fit the rhythm and it isn't catchy. Words will need to be identified to either replace or omit entirely. Workshop a second draft:

Bird the Builder -

Can they make hooks?

Bird the Builder –

What a cool crow!

Discuss the omissions and replacements made. Sticks and stems has been omitted, as has the entire final line of the original chorus. This was too much detail to include in this short section and can be incorporated into one of the verses instead. Tools have been replaced with hooks – this adds a greater amount of specificity and is the real reason why the crow is so remarkable.

Once students have composed their versions, they can record themselves singing it, or turn it into a multimodal presentation with images of the crow, its tools and sound effects.

The Great Granolo

play by John O'Brien | illustrated by [Christopher Nielsen](#)

[EN3-VOCAB-01](#) | [AC9E6LA02](#)

Learning Intention:

I am learning how authors use a range of objective, subjective and biased language so that I can critically analyse the representations of characters in a play.

Success Criteria:

- I can define objective and subjective language and bias.
- I can identify examples of objective, subjective and biased language in a text and justify my categorisation.
- I can use language to compose my own text which uses bias and subjective language.

Essential knowledge:

More information about how language choices impact the representation of a thing, person or idea can be found in the English Textual Concepts video [Representation](#).

Read the play aloud as a class. Alternatively, if you have a digital subscription listen to the recording on The School Magazine's website.

After reading the play, define the following terms for students, taken from the Australian Curriculum [glossary](#):

- Objective language: A language that is fact-based, measurable and observable, verifiable and unbiased. It does not include a speaker or writer's point of view, interpretation or judgement.
- Subjective language: Use of language which reflects the perspective, opinions, interpretations, points of view, emotions and judgment of the writer or speaker.
- Bias occurs in text where a composer presents one perspective, favouring one side in an argument or discussion, often accompanied by a refusal to consider merits of alternative points of view.

Summarise that in subjective writing the author presents their own personal judgements and opinions, whereas in objective writing the author is neutral and presents facts and details without judgement. Ask students the following questions:

- What are some examples of subjective writing? (Persuasive writing, editorial in a newspaper, social media posts, advertisements)
- What are some examples of objective writing? (News reports, government websites - for example the Bureau of Meteorology - dictionaries, textbooks)
- What are some things that you are biased about? (Sporting teams, your city/state, your school, your siblings)

Ask students to apply their knowledge of these terms to 'The Great Granolo'. First, establish the following points:

- Are the characters biased or neutral? (All the human characters are biased. The Announcer and Owner are biased towards Granolo and have unrealistic expectations of his potential. Chris wants to believe that Granolo really is great. Robin begins the play biased against Granolo and as events unfold, her biases are confirmed.)
- Does this play mostly rely on subjective or objective language? (The play mostly uses subjective language. This is used to represent Granolo as supernaturally smart and having human capabilities: ability to read and do mathematical problems.)

Then ask students to reread the play independently. While rereading, they need to identify three examples of subjective language: two that provide a positive representation of Granolo and one that provides a negative representation either of Granolo or the other human characters.

In groups, students then need to justify why they think that this language is subjective. For example:

I think it is subjective when the Announcer states, 'A fine performance indeed.' This is because he is making a positive judgement about Granolo's ability, even though Granolo couldn't do the task accurately.

Other group members should correct a student if they misidentify a quotation. For example:

I do not think that Robin is using subjective language when she says, 'But ... but he got it wrong.' In this quotation she is stating a fact. When she says, 'You fools!' She is using subjective language as she is making a judgement about the audience.

Finally, to consolidate students' understanding of subjective and objective language ask students to identify a pet or toy they own that could be a candidate for the class mascot. Ask students to write a paragraph that tries to persuade their peers to vote for it during a class mock-election. While they may include some objective facts and details about their candidate, their speech should mostly reveal their bias through their use of subjective language.

Students could present their pitch to the class and a mock election could be conducted to conclude the activity.

The Other Troilus

story by E J Delaney | illustrated by [Tohby Riddle](#)

[EN3-UARL-01](#) | [AC9E6LE02](#)

Learning Intention:

I am learning how to compare texts on a similar topic so that I can analyse their audiences, purposes and level of authority.

Success Criteria:

- I can identify the differences in form and content between a fiction and nonfiction text on the same topic.
- I can analyse and justify the intended audience and purpose for each text.
- I can evaluate which text has more authority as a historical source.

Essential knowledge:

More information about how to group or contrast text types based on form and function can be found in the English Textual Concepts video [Genre](#).

More information about the features that make a text, or point of view trustworthy can be found in the English Textual Concepts video [Authority](#).

Guiding Question:

How can different text types on the same topic be used to inform an audience?

Prior to reading the story, build students' field of understanding around the Trojan War. (Suggested resource: [Britannica Kids: Trojan War](#). Please note the differentiated reading levels.) Students should understand the following points:

- An idea of the who, what, where and when. The Trojan War took place between two ancient kingdoms: Troy and Sparta. They were fighting over trade routes and a beautiful Queen named Helen, who escaped her husband in Sparta and moved to Troy. This fighting occurred in the Hellespont (modern day Türkiye and Greece) around 3000 years ago.
- The main historical source for the battle, a poet called Homer. They should also know that he is an unreliable source and much of his poems are based on mythology.
- The aspects of mythology in the poem: gods and goddesses are involved and interfere in the battle; the ten-year siege ends with soldiers hiding in a giant wooden horse.
- There is, however, archaeological evidence that Troy was a real city and there is evidence there really was a war based on disputes over the trading routes.

Next, read the story as a class. After reading, use a compare/contrast [graphic organiser](#) to identify the similarities and differences in the two texts. If using a Venn Diagram, you may wish to divide the circles into three segments using horizontal lines. Then you can have three topics to compare: story, form, purpose. Some suggested areas of comparison include:

Story / Events	Both the Britannica summary and modern myth include the names of the key characters, the kidnapping of Helen and mention Homer. However, the Britannica summary references the wooden horse, whereas the modern narrative contains a carved limestone horse. Also, the modern myth contains lots of amusing small details, such as the Trojans throwing eggplants at the Spartan soldiers.
Form	The Britannica summary is written as an objective informative text. It is not told as a chronological narrative but structured around a series of topics. It contains multimodal features (images, clips) and discusses the facts and myths around the Trojan War. While modern myth also explains that there are many myths around the Trojan War, it presents itself as the true story told by an anonymous narrator. The story is told chronologically, and it uses hand drawn illustrations, rather than historical sources.
Purpose	The purpose of the Britannica summary is to inform an audience. The purpose of modern myth is to be entertaining. However, it also highlights how the Trojan War story, in its original form, is mostly a myth. The narrator cleverly says that the information came from the great historian 'Viki Pedia'. This suggests that Homer, like Wikipedia, is an unreliable source.

After completing the graphic organiser, ask students who the intended audience for each text is. Students should recognise that both texts are written for primary school age children. Then ask students how reading both texts, from different genres, may deepen the understanding of the Trojan War. Make the analysis process for students visible. First, they read a purely informative text to get a big picture understanding of the Trojan War. Next, they read an entertaining and highly fictionalised version of the Trojan War. This gave them the opportunity to be skilled text detectives as they had to sift through fact and fiction as they read the story. This is what a reader also must do when they read Homer's epic poem *The Illiad* on the Trojan War.

Finally, as a class identify which text has greater authority as a historical source. First identify all the features of the Britannica summary that give it authority: it is from a highly respected encyclopedia, it is written using objective language, it contains sources and a list of respected websites that corroborate its account. Compare how the story tries to establish authority: it claims to be the true story of the war, it claims that the better-known version was written by poets, not historians, and finally it claims to be based on the account of the great historian Viki Pedia.

The Great Migration

poem by Diana Smith | illustrated by [David Legge](#)

[EN3-CWT-01](#) | [AC9E6LY06](#)

Learning Intention:

I am learning how to plan my creative writing so that I can write in a style appropriate to the audience and purpose.

Success Criteria:

- I can complete a five senses chart based on a nature clip.
- I can complete a descriptive paragraph based on a series of writing steps.
- I can compare my paragraph with a poem based on the same topic.

Essential Knowledge:

More information about how texts with different forms and functions can cover the same subject matter be found in the English Textual Concepts video [Genre](#).

Prior to reading the poem, introduce the topic of 'The Great Migration' to students using the information provided on the webpage: [The Magic of the Mara](#). Then show students the YouTube clip: [The Great Migration - Wildebeest Migration from the Serengeti to the Masai Mara](#), [Crossing Mara River](#). After showing the clip, complete a five senses sensory description chart (an interactive version can be found on the Digital Learning Selector page on [graphic organisers](#)).

Explain that students will complete a piece of slow writing based on an image of The Great Migration. They need to imagine that they are the photographer and can zoom in on

different parts of the picture with their lens. They need to write a descriptive sentence based on each “zoom”.

As the teacher, sequence the slow writing process as follows:

1. Select an image of The Great Migration with multiple components. For example, image 15 in the second slideshow on the ‘Magic of the Mara’ webpage. This long shot contains wildebeests and zebras crossing the Mara, clouds of dust, and a split background – half river and half riverbank.
2. Decide on four to five components that students will “zoom” in on. For example: the river, a wildebeest, a zebra, a cloud of dust and the riverbank.
3. Create five slides using Microsoft PowerPoint or Google Suite. Each slide should have the same image, with a yellow or red rectangle highlighting the part of the image to zoom in on.
4. Each slide should also have instructions for students explaining how to write the sentence for that zoom. Each sentence should include a language technique. You may wish to imitate the techniques used in the poem. For example:
 - a. Look at the whole picture of the great migration. Now zoom in on the river. What can you hear? Write a sentence with three examples of onomatopoeia describing the sound the river is making.
 - b. Now shift your focus and zoom in on the two wildebeests leading the herd in crossing the river. Use a metaphor to describe them.
5. At the end of the activity, students should have a paragraph of descriptive writing. They can compare their paragraph with their peers.

Finally, reveal Diana Smith’s poem and read it to the class. Students should identify the similarities and differences between their paragraph and the poem. They should identify the advantages of writing a paragraph (for example, the ability to include lots of details) compared to the advantages of writing a poem (for example, easier to remember).