Mervin the Vermin

part one of a three-part story by Geoffrey McSkimming | illustrated by Greg Holfeld

EN3-CWT-01 | AC9E6LY06

Learning Intention:

I am learning how to write and punctuate dialogue so that I can consider the text from an alternate point of view.

Success Criteria:

- I can understand and apply the grammar and punctuation rules of direct speech.
- I can track how the primary and secondary points of view are expressed in a text through dialogue.
- I can use my understanding of the purpose and structure of dialogue to compose the story from a different point of view.

Essential Knowledge:

More information about the position from which a text should be perceived can be found in the English Textual Concepts video Point of View.

The NSW Education resource Stage 3 Reading - Text Features provides additional information on the use of speech marks in writing.

Read the story individually or as a class.

After reading, explain the textual concept of point of view to the class by focusing on the idea of the narrator. Ensure that the class understands that a narrator is different to the author and can be a character inside or outside the story. Narrators can usually be identified by looking at whether the story is written in the first, second, or third person.

Provide students with the following quotation from the story and then ask them to identify and describe the narrator:

> I was furious. I was white with rage. I was ready to take my brother Mervin and throttle him until he wished that he'd never been born.

Students should recognise that the narrator is a character inside the story. Her name is Felicity and she is the central character in the narrative which focuses on her brother's (Mervin's) disappearance.

Remind students that a narrator positions us to interpret information in a story. We mainly see Felicity's thoughts and feelings about events. Ask students to construct a list of opinions that Felicity expresses in the text. Some examples are:

- That her scrunchies should not be used as tutus,

- That Francis is deeply annoying,

- That her mum is an excellent cook,

- That Fernhurst is an eerie property,

- That Doctor Bompas is eccentric.

Unpack an extract from the text, identifying the language used by the author to construct Felicity's point of view on one of these topics. Examples of Felicity's thoughts, which include negative descriptions and words with negative connotations, have been identified in the suggested passage:

> 'Enough!' I **snapped**. 'You two live in dream land. One day it's going to catch up with you something fierce.'
> '*Eeee-yeeeeeeessss*,' said Francis loudly (**another** of his **annoying traits**, saying yes like that). 'And then we'll be rich and famous.'
> 'Which is why,' said Mervin, 'Melicent, Milicent and Molicent are becoming ballet dancers. They are our rodent road to riches.'
> 'Look.' Mervin pointed at one of the rats. 'Milicent looks just like Darcey Bussell.'
> 'Who?'
> 'She's a ballerina Frank found when he was Googling.'
> Francis nodded in a ***don't you know anything***? sort of way.
> I **rolled my eyes** and stood.

Ask what the effect of these language choices are. Students should identify that Felicity thinks that Francis is an infuriating know-it-all. The effect on us, as the audience, is that we don't like him either and take Felicity's side (even though Felicity repeatedly threatens him).

Then explain to students that even though Felicity's point of view is the primary way we see the story, the dialogue gives us hints into the points of view of the characters of Mervin, Francis and Mum. Ask students to identify their points of view on the following topics:

1. Using Felicity's scrunchies as tutus on the rats (Mervin and Francis think that the rats will appear on *Australia's Got Talent* and allow them to become rich.)

2. Whether Fernhurst is a spooky place (Mum thinks that it just stands out because it is an older house with period architectural features.)

3. What Doctor Bompas is like (Mum thinks, like Felicity, that he is a bit of a recluse and probably strange.)

Explain that dialogue gives us secondary points of view in a text and alternative interpretations of events.

Finally, consolidate student understanding by considering the story from an alternative point of view (Francis). Instruct students to write a section of the story (after the fight between Francis and Felicity, when the boys go to Fernhurst to photograph the rats) using Francis as narrator. Their story should combine narration which incorporates Francis's thoughts with dialogue between Francis and Mervin. There should be roughly the same amount of narration and dialogue.

Ensure that students are familiar with the grammar and punctuation rules of dialogue before commencing this task:

- Each speaker gets a new line.

- Each paragraph is indented.

- Punctuation for the direct speech goes inside the quotation marks; for example, if the character is yelling, the exclamation mark goes inside the quotation marks.

- Quotation marks are placed outside the direct speech and its punctuation. "Mervin, your sister is entirely unreasonable."

- If using dialogue tags (she said/whispered/hollered, etc.) after the direct speech, then the dialogue tag goes outside the quotation marks, while the comma goes on the inside. "Francis, do you think she'd really kick us?" queried Mervin.

- If using dialogue tags before the direct speech, the comma goes before the quotation marks. Mervin whimpered, "Francis, I am getting a weird vibe from this house."

Assessment as/of learning:

Imaginative Text Rubrics can be found on The School Magazine website. Students can use these rubrics as success criteria in the crafting of their imaginative writing via anchor charts. The rubrics can also be used to provide structure for peer or teacher assessment.

Cricket Gang and Gingerfang

poem by Sioban Timmer | illustrated by Christopher Nielsen

EN3-OLC-01 | AC9E6LY02

Learning Intention:

I am learning about the conventions of scriptwriting so that I can turn a narrative poem into a playscript.

Success Criteria:

- I can understand the narrative expressed in a poem.
- I can understand and apply the conventions of a playscript.
- I can adapt the narrative into a playscript told from the point of view of the narrator.

Essential Knowledge:

More information about the position from which a text should be perceived can be found in the English Textual Concepts video Point of View.

More information on the commonly understood arrangement of text types can be found in the English Textual Concepts video Code and Convention.

NB: This activity supports the skill development of playscript comprehension, development and performance. This skill also underpins the learning resource for "Reach for the Stars" (Issue 8, 2023).

Read the poem to the class. If you have a digital subscription you may like to listen to the poem as an audio recording. After reading, summarise the poem's narrative using a 'Who, What, Where, When, Why, How?' chart. An interactive version of a WWWWWH chart is available on the Digital Learning Selector in the section on Graphic Organisers.

Outline the task: students will turn the narrative poem into a playscript. To do this, they must identify the point of view in the poem, convert this point of view into the play's narrator and include the dialogue of the other characters. (This step builds upon the skills developed in the Learning Resource for 'Mervin the Vermin' – this issue.)

Construct the playscript using the following steps:

1. Unpack a model text (such as the playscript 'Reach for the Stars' – this issue). Identify the textual features of a play including: a character list, a scene description in italics, dialogue expressed through the character's name, an indent and then their line (a colon is optional; note the absence of quotation marks), parentheticals/stage directions written in present tense and in italics.

2. Explain that plays often contain a narrator. The narrator provides their point of view of events and we get more insight into what the narrator is thinking and feeling.

3. Reread the poem and as a class work out the point of view that is expressed (it is written in first person from the point of view of a young boy who plays street cricket). Explain that this character will be both the narrator and a character in the play. This will allow the audience to see his point of view of events.

4. Construct a character list for the play. Characters should be drawn from the personalities in the poem (Gingerfang, the friend Jack, mum, the vet nurse and the unnamed narrator) as well as original characters to flesh out the narrative. Students may wish to give the narrator a name, or include more members of the cricket gang.

5. Work out the settings required to tell the narrative (the street where they play cricket, the narrator's house, the vet's rooms). Students should include at least four scenes in their play, with each scene occurring when the setting changes. For example:

    i. Scene 1: the street playing cricket

    ii. Scene 2: the narrator's house

    iii. Scene 3: at the vet

    iv. Scene 4: back on the street playing cricket

Each scene should contain a description of what the stage looks like, the set and the props.

6. Under each scene description students write dialogue between the characters, following the narrative of the poem. Encourage students to incorporate the dialogue from the poem into their script. Students should use the narrator to express thoughts, feelings and opinions as the events unfold.

7. Once students have written their playscripts give groups the opportunity the opportunity to read and perform them to the class.

Sample playscript:

CHARACTERS:

Gerry/Narrator	Gingerfang
Jack	Mum
Milly	Vet Nurse
Auguste	Orlando

Scene 1: on the street

Curtains open. On the stage are bins about 2m apart. JACK *and* MILLY *are standing at each milk crate, both with a plastic cricket bat.* AUGUSTE *holds a tennis ball poised and ready to bowl. Downstage are some plastic trees arranged in a semi-circle to suggest a cul-de-sac. As the lights come up* AUGUSTE *throws the ball at the makeshift stumps.* MILLY *thwacks the ball. Characters freeze.*

GERRY   On Saturday mornings all the kids on our street, Jack, Milly, Auguste, Orlando, get together. Sometimes a few others join too, or the dads stop by. It's a pretty casual affair. Anyone can join. Any human, I mean. You see, one day we had a visitor …

(*Characters unfreeze.* MILLY *and* JACK *run between bins.* ORLANDO *points.*)

ORLANDO   Woah, look at that! Is that the most hideous cat I've ever seen? Sitting there, right in the middle of the pitch.

MILLY (*stopping and dodging* GINGERFANG) Oh my goodness, it almost tripped me.

JACK (*crouching for a closer look*) He's a bit worse for wear isn't he. So scrawny and hey, is he missing an ear … OW! He scratched me!

GERRY   Sure, he wasn't going to feature on any cat food tins, but he didn't look too bad. And he scratched Jack, so what? He shouldn't have got so close up!

The Treasure of Red Nelly

story by Simon Cooke | illustrated by Sylvia Morris

EN2-UARL-01 | AC9E6LY03

Learning Intention:

I am learning how narratives can be structured to include a plot twist so that I can plan my own highly engaging narratives.

Success Criteria:

- I can define a plot twist and explain why authors use them.
- I can use prediction strategies to identify the stages of a plot twist in a model text.
- I can plan my own narrative that incorporates a plot twist.

More information on the conventions of narrative form can be found in the English Textual Concepts video Narrative.

Prior to reading the story, revise the basic features of narrative structure (beginning, middle, end; orientation, complication, resolution). Brainstorm ways that composers alter this basic structure to engage their audience, such as use of flashbacks, an unresolved ending or a plot twist.

Read the story as a class, or if you have a digital subscription you may wish to listen to an audio recording. Read the story in sections. A suggested list of sections are:

1. Page 14 before the dinkus (***).
2. Page 15 after, "I need a pile of what Red Nelly had."
3. Page 15 after, "Pop around tonight and we'll have a look."
4. Page 16 after, "The book fell onto his lap as he drifted off."
5. Page 17 before the dinkus (***).
6. Page 17 after, "under the nose of the Law."
7. Page 17 after, "inside was a pile of..."
8. Page 18 before the dinkus (***).
9. Page 18 after, "a treasure preserved in ink on a single piece of paper."

At the conclusion of each section, pause reading and ask a series of prediction questions:

1. What happened in this section? Did it match your prediction, or did it surprise you?
2. What do you think will happen next?
3. What clues suggest this?

After reading, identify the main points in the narrative where students made incorrect predictions. It is likely that these will include section 8 (students will not predict that the box contains pebbles) and section 10 (students are also unlikely to predict that Red Nelly's treasure was a jam recipe).

Explain to students that the story uses a plot twist to maintain audience engagement. Define the term plot twist: an unexpected change in the direction of the story that surprises and entertains the reader. You may create a class list of texts that employ a plot twist (the Harry Potter series, Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back). You may also wish to read a range of picture books that showcase a plot twist:

- The Monster at the End of this Book (Jon Stone)
- I Want My Hat Back (Jon Klassen)
- Sam and Dave Dig a Hole (Mac Barnett)
- Baghead (Jarrett J. Krosoczka)

Finally, challenge students to write their own narrative with a plot twist. Use some of the following strategies to help prompt student thinking:

- Extended brainstorm. After students have worked out their characters, setting and problem, ask them to brainstorm ten possible endings. Instruct them to discard the first five (the obvious ones) and then direct their peers to select the best ending from their remaining options.
- Mislead the audience through red herrings (a distracting clue or piece of information). Identify the red herring in 'The Treasure of Red Nelly' – when the audience hears about pirates and treasure they expect gold. Instruct students to plant red herrings throughout their story.
- Use foreshadowing (warnings or indications about a future event). Identify foreshadowing in 'The Treasure of Red Nelly' – Red Nelly gave her victims her famous peach and mango jam; the greedy man was the only customer in the café. Also suggest that students plan where they will use foreshadowing in their story.

Provide students with a narrative planner. Ask them to plan their narrative incorporating a surprise ending, red herrings and foreshadowing. Students must colour code these elements within their plan.

Assessment as/of learning:

Imaginative Text Rubrics can be found on The School Magazine website. Students can use these rubrics as success criteria in the crafting of their imaginative writing via anchor charts. The rubrics can also be used to provide structure for peer or teacher assessment.

Dossier of Discovery: A Sign of Our Times

article by Anne Renaud

EN3-OLC-01 | AC9E6LY07

Learning Intention:

I am learning how to use new digital tools so that I can plan, draft and publish multimodal texts.

Success Criteria:

- I can read and consider the ideas presented in a text.
- I can learn how to use a range of features in a new digital tool (Canva).
- I can turn my ideas into a multimodal text that displays a range of judicious design features.

Essential Knowledge:

More information on how symbols are a shortcut to a bigger idea can be found in the English Textual Concepts video Connotation, Imagery and Symbol.

A suggested sequence for introducing symbolism to Stage 3 can be found on the NSW Education webpage Connotation, imagery and symbol Stage 3.

The NSW DoE has a site license to Canva Premium. Information about using Canva in the classroom can be found on the Canva page of the Digital Learning Selector, Canva for Education on the Technology 4 Learning Page, or the Teacher Resources page in Canva itself.

Read the article as a class. If you have a digital subscription you may wish to listen to the audio recording on The School Magazine website. After reading, discuss the content of the article. Suggested discussion points include:

- What is this article about? (The origin and history of the peace sign.)

- What is the main idea of the text? (Prompt students to look at the last paragraph. The article is about the legacy of the peace sign.)

- What are some important details from the article? (Answers will vary. Students are likely to identify names, events and dates.)

- What are some interesting details from the article? (Again, answers will vary. Some examples are the origins of the sign, use of the semaphore code.)

Once students have a secure understanding of the article's content, introduce the task. Explain that students will create a poster for an anti-nuclear protest using the peace sign. The audience is the general public and the purpose of the poster is to convince people to attend the protest.

Unpack the two model placards that appear in the article's images. Explain the difference between a poster and a placard: a poster informs people about the protest and persuades them to attend, while a placard conveys a short, generally political, message. Identify the components of these placards: the prominence of the peace symbol, the use of contrasting colours (black and white), strong modality and the organisation's name.

Use these features to commence a class success checklist for the poster. Suggested criteria include:

- The peace symbol with a prominent size and place

- A use of contrasting colours

- Different sized fonts

- High modality

Discuss other features that would appear on a poster, but do not appear on a placard. Remind students of the purpose of a poster. Add these features to the success checklist (topic of the protest, a short explanation of the problem, date, time and location).

Introduce students to the digital tool Canva by unpacking a template of a protest poster (templates are available within Canva itself) and showing students how to utilise a range of features. These include the text function and the elements tab. Explain to students that photos sourced through Canva fit copyright restrictions. You may wish for students to create digital posters, with multimodal features (for examples gifs and sound).

Allow students to design their posters independently before conducting a gallery walk. Use the success checklist to structure peer feedback.

Assessment as/of learning:

Persuasive text rubrics can be found on The School Magazine website. Students can use these rubrics as success criteria in the crafting of their persuasive texts via anchor charts. The rubrics can also be used to provide structure for peer or teacher assessment.

Crazy Celebrations

article by John Lockyer | illustrated by Fifi Colston | photos by Alamy and Dreamstime

EN3-UARL-01 | AC9E6LY03

Learning Intention:

I am learning how language positions the way a reader interprets a text so that I can analyse strategies authors use to influence readers.

Success Criteria:

- I can identify the narrator in a text and explain how they position a reader to interpret a text.
- I can explain how the structural decisions and language choices suit the purpose of a text.

Essential Knowledge:

More information about the position from which a text should be perceived can be found in the English Textual Concepts video Point of View.

Prior to reading the text, complete a See, Think, Wonder protocol. (An interactive template use is available on the Digital Learning Selector's Thinking Skills page.) Consider the following features in each step:

1. What do you see? Students should identify and list the textual features such as images, captions, headings, subheadings, different coloured font, italics.

2. What do you think about that? Without reading the text, students should start to make links between the features and synthesise elements into meaning.

3. What does it make you wonder? Again, without reading the text, students should generate a list of questions they have about the text. These questions can be monitored and answered during reading.

Then read the text as a class. After reading, discuss the audience (primary school age children), purpose (to inform and entertain), form (a combination of an article and a listicle) and main idea of the article (first paragraph: while festivals might seem crazy, they are a joyful opportunity to bring people together).

Once the text has been unpacked and students have a thorough knowledge of its content, structure and purpose, introduce the concept of analysing a text through its point of view. Explain that good readers can detect point of view in a nonfiction text and identify how the author has used language features to influence the way a reader thinks about a topic.

First, ensure that students can differentiate between an author and narrator. Ask students to identify the narrator of this article (Fran). Then ask whether Fran is presenting facts and

details, or her opinions and beliefs about the topic (opinions and beliefs). Review the "See Think Wonder" activity and discuss the class observations about Fran's significance. Observations could include: the use of a different coloured font, the accompanying image of Fran, questions about who Fran is (you can remind the class that she is a fictional member of the Touchdown team, introduced in Issue One).

As a class, decide why the author has commenced the article with a narrator who gives their opinions. Students should recognise that this language feature frames the whole article as a discussion about crazy festivals. The audience will immediately assume that a festival on the list is crazy, even if it is commonly celebrated, such as Holi.

Then discuss how word-level language features also impact a reader's position on the subject. The author's deliberate word choice frames Fran's point of view. Introduce/revise the concept of denotation and connotation. Ensure students understand that words can have positive, neutral or negative connotations. Words with neutral connotations are mostly simple/general terms. Students may dispute whether a word has a positive or negative connotation.

Conduct a close reading of the introductory paragraph. Highlight the key words and place them in a connotation table. Some examples are included, below:

> Many **celebrations** are quite **ordinary**: while some might seem **unusual** or **strange** and others are just downright **crazy**. But it doesn't matter what the celebration is—it always gives people a chance to have a <u>**great time**</u> **together**!

Positive	Neutral	Negative
celebrations great time together	ordinary	unusual strange crazy

By tracking the connotations of the words used, students should recognise that Fran's attitude seems to shift from skeptical (through use of negative connotations) to embracing crazy celebrations. This once again positions the reader to view crazy celebrations in a positive light.

To consolidate understanding of this concept, conduct a similar sequence of close reading activities on another article featured in The School Magazine. Suggested articles include:

- The Secret Seed Vault (Touchdown, Issue 2, 2019) which does not use a narrator.

- Delightful Dogs (Blast Off, Issue 4, 2020) which also does not use a narrator.

- Bee Your Best (Orbit, Issue 5, 2020) which uses a Queen Bee as the narrator.

Assessment as/for learning:

Using the success criteria, ask students to reflect upon their own learning by placing their own Avatar or Emoji that reflects where they place themselves on a scale of learning:

- **I can identify the narrator in a text and explain how they position a reader to interpret a text.**
    1) I had difficulty identifying the narrator and would like another opportunity to revisit the focus of this lesson with my teacher.
    2) I could locate the narrator in the first text but had difficulty finding it in additional texts.
    3) I was able to complete this task independently and across all examples of text.
    4) I am confident in this task and would be able to assist others.
- **I can explain how the structural decisions and language choices suit the purpose of a text.**
    1) I had difficulty explaining how structure and language suited the text. I might need another opportunity to revisit the focus of this lesson with my teacher.
    2) I can identify the structural decisions and language choices but I am unsure how this is different to other types of text.
    3) I can identify the structural decisions and language choices and can explain how they suit the purpose of the text.
    4) I am confident that not only can I explain how the structural decisions and language choice suit the purpose of the text, I could teach my peers.

Once children have placed their avatar or emoji on the success criteria scale, randomly select children to explain why they have assessed themselves at this level. (NB; this type of assessment requires mature, safe and empathetic relationships to be established within the classroom to function effectively. Set high, clear expectations for acceptable forms of communication and feedback. Be clear as to why it is necessary to support each other in order to become lifelong learners)

Feathered Fanfare

poem by Jenny Erlanger | illustrated by Michel Streich

EN3-VOCAB-01 | AC9E6LA02

Learning Intention:

I am learning how vocabulary choices can express feelings and opinions so that I can experiment with multiple points of view in my own writing.

Success Criteria:

- I can define the term evaluative language and find examples of it in a text.
- I can contrast two points of view in a text.

- I can experiment with evaluative language in my own writing.

Essential knowledge:

More information about how an author controls what we see can be found in the English Textual Concepts video Point of View.

Prior to reading the poem, build the background knowledge of students by showing the YouTube clip Male Peacocks Head Off to Love Arena to Attract a Mate. After the clip, ask students to write a review of the male peacocks' dances. Share the reviews in small groups.

Provide students with a definition of evaluative language. Make sure that they understand the following points:

- Positive or negative language that judges how successful or good something is.

- Provides a judgement, opinion or point of view on something.

- Can be explicit by using adjectives, adverbs or verbs, or implicit, requiring inference.

- Evaluative language also includes modality, comparatives and superlatives.

You may wish to provide students with a positive and negative adjectives evaluative word mat .and ask them to refine the clarity of their initial evaluation of the peacock's dance.

In groups, students revisit their reviews of the peacock. Instruct them to identify whether their evaluation was positive or negative and the language features they used to make their evaluations (adjectives, adverbs, verbs, modality, comparatives or superlatives).

Read the poem, or if you have a digital subscription you may choose to listen to the audio recording.

After listening to the poem ask the class to identify the speaker/narrator (unnamed observer, possibly a person watching the peacock in a park). Explain that we first see the point of view of the speaker. There is a twist at the end of the poem as the reader witness another point of view. Ask students to identify and explain the point of view of this character. (It is the pea hen who is unimpressed with the peacock's display).

Provide students with a table, such as the one below. Students record the evaluative language used in the poem. For example:

Speaker/Narrator		Pea hen	
Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Special dance Finest way Shimmies Much pizazz			Eyes (verb) That's all Struts

Show students the YouTube clip Bird Of Paradise Courtship Spectacle | Planet Earth | BBC Earth. After viewing explain that they will write a poem in a similar style to "Feathered Fanfare". They will choose to be an observer of either the Six Plumed Bird of Paradise or the Superb Bird of Paradise. They must give their point of view of the bird's attempts at courtship, before revealing the negative opinion of the female bird.

To scaffold the task, instruct students to rewatch the clip multiple times and construct a detailed list of the actions of their chosen bird. Students then select the actions that they believe are most effective in the courtship ritual. For example, students may focus on the cleaning habits of the Six Plumed Bird of Paradise, especially the bird scrubbing the branches.

Next, generate a list of phrases with positive evaluative language that captures aspects of the birds' behaviour. Encourage students to use the full range of language features and parts of speech.

Finally, students should write two or three stanzas offering a glowing evaluation of the bird's attempts at wooing a female. Their poem concludes with the negative evaluation and rejection of the female bird.

Night of the Sand People

story by Paul Malone | illustrated by Lesley McGee

EN3-UARL-01 | AC9E6LY01

Learning Intention:

I am learning how to identify the type of narrator in a story so that I can understand how point of view creates a personal or distant relationship with the reader.

Success Criteria:

- I can compare the use of narrator in two texts with a similar subject matter and plot.
- I can explain how different types of narrators evoke stronger or weaker emotional responses from the reader.
- I can express a personal preference for types of narrators.

Essential Knowledge:

More information about the position from which a text should be perceived can be found in the English Textual Concepts video Point of View.

Read the story as a class, or if you have a digital subscription listen to the audio recording. Discuss how students feel after the conclusion of the story. You may wish to collate and display answers on interactive software such as Mentimeter.

Next, read Raymond Brigg's novel "The Snowman". (You may wish to watch a YouTube recording of the novel: The Snowman by Raymond Briggs with Music & EFX.) Again, ask students to record their initial emotional response to the story. Prompt them to consider whether they found this story more or less emotional and why.

Present students with a Venn Diagram divided into three sections. In the top section, compare and contrast the plot of the two narratives (Night of the Sand People and The Snowman). In the middle section compare and contrast the structure and form of the narratives.

Finally, in the bottom section, compare and contrast the point of view of the two narratives. Spend the most time on this level of discussion. Introduce students to the concept of a third person limited narrator. This type of narrator is not a character in the story, but is an observer who is watching events unfold. Third person limited means that they can see what is happening, but not peek inside characters' heads (this is omniscient). Ask students to identify which of the two texts has a third person limited narrator (Night of the Sandpeople). Explain that in "The Snowman" we see all events from the point of view of James, the young boy. This means that Raymond Briggs has used first person narrator.

Using a table (suggested formatting below) instruct students to consider the benefits and detriments of different types of narrators. Some possible answers are included.

Third Person Limited Narrator	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Can give lots of information on a range of characters. Allows the narrator to focus on events and actions while the reader can speculate about emotions.	Prevents the reader from developing a close relationship with a character. May make a story less emotionally impactful.
First person narrator	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Narrator and reader can develop a close relationship. Spend more time with one character. Can see what someone is feeling as well as what they are doing.	Limits the amount of information in the story. You only get to see one side of the story. Might have questions about the other characters.

Assessment as/of learning:

To conclude the activity, conduct a class poll (another feature of Mentimeter) on which type of narrator students prefer. Call on volunteers to justify their choice. On the next library visit, students can locate a variety of texts written from the point of view of a third person and first person narrator.

Reach for the Stars

play by Darcy-Lee Tindalle | illustrated by Tohby Riddle

EN3-CWT-01 | AC9E6LE05

Learning Intention:

I am learning how to work as a group to adapt a playscript into a performance so that I can create an entertaining experience for my peers.

Success Criteria:

- I can understand and explain the conventions of a playscript.
- I can demonstrate groupwork skills when developing and rehearsing our performance.
- I can demonstrate how to be a respectful audience member.

Essential Knowledge:

More information on the commonly understood arrangement of text types can be found in the English Textual Concepts video Code and Convention.

NB: This activity supports the skill development of playscript comprehension, development and performance. This skill also underpins the learning resource for "Cricket Gang and Gingerfang" -this issue.

Before reading the text, explicitly teach the components and conventions of a playscript to students.

The components of a playscript are:

- A character list (sometimes these will include basic details)
- The Act or Scene (not always applicable in *The School Magazine*)
- Setting directions
- When characters enter and exit the scene
- Actions and expressions of a particular character (also called parentheticals)
- Characters' dialogue/lines

The grammatical conventions of a playscript are:

- Stage directions are written in present tense.
- Stage directions are formatted in italics or upper case.
- Character names are written in upper case and their line of dialogue is indented.
- Character names are also written in upper case within stage directions.

Students then label the components and conventions in "Reach for the Stars" prior to reading the script.

Conduct a neutral reading of the script with the class. After reading, explain that they will demonstrate their understanding of the conventions of a playscript through a group performance.

Assign each member of the class a role in the production. There are 21 speaking roles. Students who are reluctant to perform and/or require adjustments can assume other roles in the production. These include:

- Costume designers (the umbrellas, scientist, rocket and moon)
- Sound designers (special effects, music - "2001 Space Odyssey theme")
- Stage managers (designing prompts and helping actors bring them on stage)
- Prompters (helping actors who forget their lines)

Break the class into their roles, allowing the stage crew to develop their components for performance and the actors to rehearse lines and blocking (location of actors on stage and the movements that they make).

Plan a performance of the script at a suitable event with an audience (such as a school assembly or to a class in the same stage). Before performing, create a list of behaviours a respectful audience member would demonstrate. These may include watching the show silently, remaining in seat, polite applause, laughing at jokes.

Tomorrow

poem by Jonathan Sellars | illustrated by Anna Bron

EN3-VOCAB-01 | AC9E6LA06

Learning Intention:

I am learning how ideas can be sharpened through the use of verbs to indicate elaborated tense so that I can experiment with these grammatical concepts in my own writing.

Success Criteria:

- I can recognise the "to be + going" form of the future tense and use it in my own writing.
- I can think critically and creatively about time in a text.

Essential Knowledge:

More information about the grammatical function of verbs can be found on the NSW education website.

Read the poem with the class and discuss its meaning. On a literal level, students should recognise that the speaker of the poem is planning on completing a series of amazing feats in the future but is too tired to currently complete the tasks. Students may also interpret the poem on a figurative level. The feats (facing dragons, turning nightmares into dreams, moving mountains) may be symbolic and represent the challenges that we encounter daily in life. Alternatively, the poem may represent the active imagination of the speaker, and the

speaker's need to have a good night's sleep so that they can continue to come up with creative tales in the morning.

Explain to students that the poem creates meaning by shifting between two tenses: the present tense (in the second stanza) and the future tense (in the first stanza).

Explicitly teach how to construct sentences in the future tense. The formula for simple future tense is *will + [root form of the verb]*. For example, tomorrow I will go to the shops. However, the more common structure for future tense uses the *to be + going*, often expressed as *I am going to [root form of the verb]*. This is how the future tense is constructed in the poem, for example:

> Tomorrow I'm going to face dragons
>
> Tomorrow I'm going to take nightmares
>
> Tomorrow I'm going to seize power

Play the game "Mystery Bag". Sit students in a circle. Using an empty brown paper bag, cloth bag or similar explain that when students hold the bag, they must think of an object that would fit inside it. They then ask the person to their right, "Why do you have an _____ in your bag?" This student must explain their plan for their object, phrasing their sentence using the *to be + going* future tense construction. A sample exchange may go as follows:

> Why do you have three limes in your bag?
>
> Tomorrow I am going to cure three pirates of scurvy!

If students cannot think of an item that would fit in the bag, come up with a response to the student's question or construct a sentence using the future tense then they are out of the game.

Record student responses. At the end of the game display them on the board.

Using the responses as a guide and inspiration, students write their own version of the poem 'Tomorrow', ensuring that they use the *to be + going* construction of the future tense.

Assessment as/of learning:

Use the success criteria from the lesson to give students individual feedback on their learning.