The School Magazine
A world of words since 1916
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Touchdown Issue 1 –
Learning Resource

Dossier of Discovery: Do You See Faces in All Sorts of Places?

article by Melissa Salisbury | photos by Alamy

AC9E6LY09 EN3-SPELL-01

Prior to the lesson, prepare enough hexagonal templates for each group as explained below. Templates can be found on the NSW Education webpage on Hexagonal Thinking

Learning Intention:

I am learning to explore word origins and spelling patterns so that I can spell unfamiliar words.

Success Criteria:

- I can identify and define the prefix of Greek-based words.
- I can identify and define the root of Greek-based words.
- I can connect ideas related to word etymology using hexagonal thinking.

Essential knowledge:

- For more information and templates, visit the NSW Education webpage on Hexagonal Thinking.

Vocabulary

After reading or listening to the audio recording of Do You See Faces in All Sorts of Places? direct students' attention to the first instance in the text of the word pareidolia. Ask what the bracketed information next to the word conveys (answer: how to pronounce the word). Ask students to attempt pronouncing the word using the guide. As a class, brainstorm how the word might be broken up into morphemes (such as prefixes, suffixes and the root word), what the origin of the word might be and what the meanings of each morpheme could be. Students will have a range of answers, but they might consider that "dolia" means face, the word originated from Greek or that "lia" is the suffix.

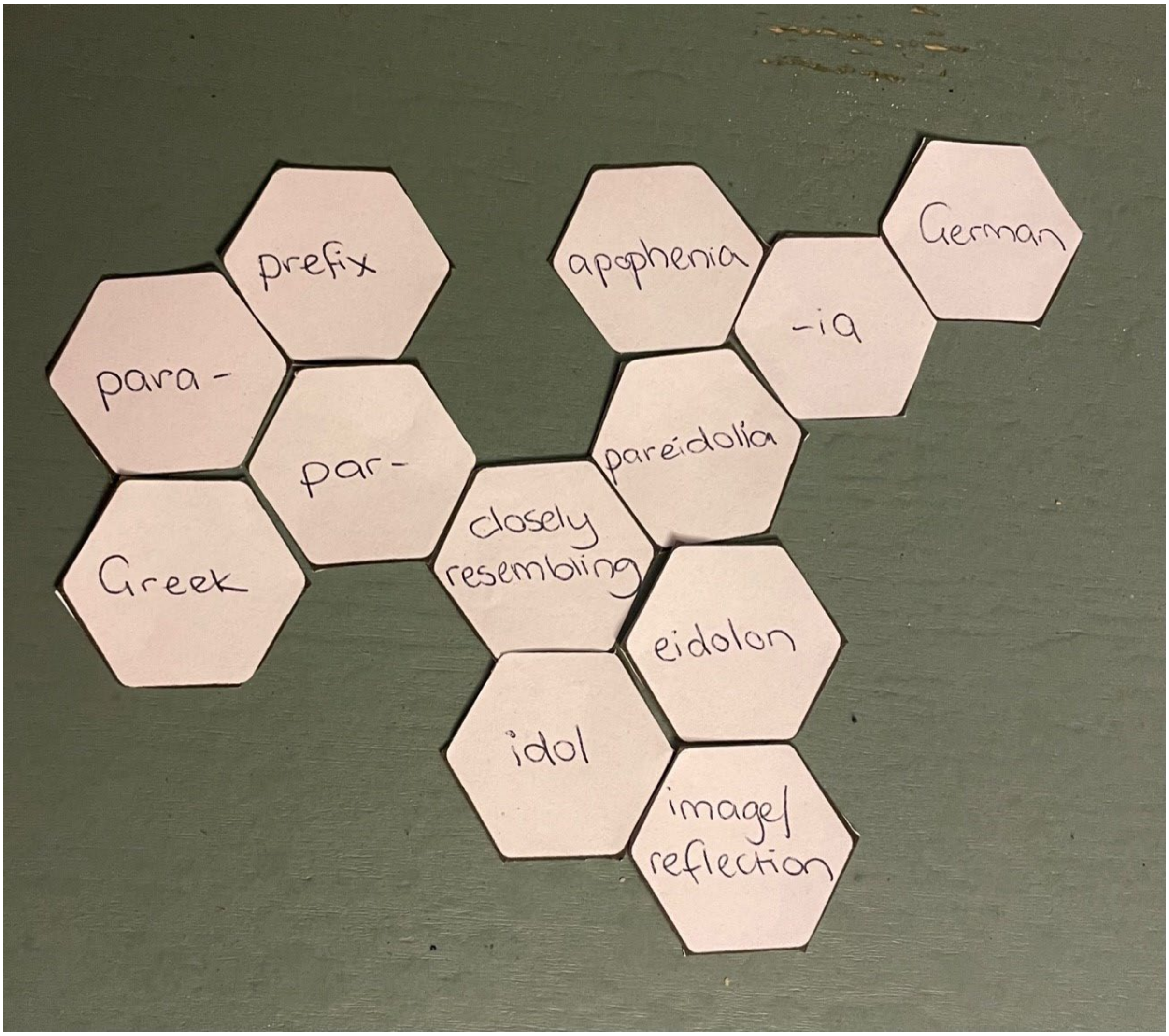
Understanding text:

Instruct students to get into groups of two or three. Hand out the following table with each word prepared in a hexagon as shown on the NSW Education webpage on Hexagonal Thinking.

pareidolia	Greek	apophenia
Image/reflection	par-	idol
German	eidolon	prefix
para-	closely resembling	-ia

Give groups time to arrange the hexagons so that related tiles are next to each other. They can find all connections by visiting the Merriam-Webster page on Pareidolia.

An example answer is below.


prefix
para -
par-
Greek
apophenia
-ia
German
pareidolia
closely resembling
eidolon
idol
image/ reflection

Creating text:

Explain that students will be creating another group of hexagonal tiles using a new word and their own key words. Encourage them to look at root words, origins, prefixes, suffixes, definitions and related words when selecting their key words to connect. Students should connect around 5-10 hexagonal tiles and can use online resources to guide them.

Words for students to choose from:
Paraphernalia
Hippocampus
Paraesthesia
Eulogy
Oesophagitis (students may have to look up oesophagus and -itis separately)
Auditorium
Synaesthesia

Diaphanous

Assessment of learning:

When their hexagonal tiles are connected, students do a gallery walk to view others' work. As a class, discuss commonalities and interesting things between the various examined vocabulary.

Elsie and the Fur Coat

story by Paula Thompson | illustrated by Anna Bron

AC9E6LE01 EN3-UARL-01

Learning Intention:

I am learning to describe how the influence of cultural experience helps give meaning to a text so that I can explain my personal response to the characters and events.

Success Criteria:

- I can identify the cultural context of a text.
- I can use my cultural experience to give meaning to a text.
- I can explain how my personal response to characters and events are shaped by my experience.

Essential knowledge:

More information about plot structure can be found at The School Magazine's webpage on Narrative.

Oral language and communication

Ask students to list the mythical creatures they know, such as dragons, goblins, vampires or werewolves. Query whether students know the country of origin of any of these mythical creatures. Explain that there's a Norse and Celtic mythical creature called a selkie and ask if anyone's heard of it before. Introduce students to the topic by viewing BBC Scotland's video The Story of the Selkie Wife and visiting Wilderness Ireland's page on selkies. Scrolling down on the Wilderness Ireland page will give the story of Thady Rua O'Dowd and possible origins of the myth.

Understanding text:

Read the first paragraph of Elsie and the Fur Coat then ask students if they can predict what the story will be about. When students recognise the facets of selkie mythology, ask them to consider whether they could have predicted this without learning the cultural context first. Do a think, pair, share where students predict the possible plot points of the story. Having heard The Story of the Selkie Wife and read the story of Thady Rua O'Dowd, students may predict that:
- Elsie will keep the coat and find a mysterious girl
- Elsie won't know the coat belongs to the girl OR Elsie will keep the coat to keep the girl
- The girl will eventually steal the coat back and return to the sea

Have students write down their predictions. Continue to read the story until the end, either out loud or by listening to the audio recording, with students ticking each plot point they correctly predicted. When complete, compare answers as a class. Ask students what surprised them and what they confidently expected from the story.

Creating text:

Display the following reflection questions for students to answer orally and then in written format:

1. How many predictions did you get right?
2. Do you think you would've made the same predictions if you didn't know about selkies?
3. How do you think the mysterious girl felt when she was looking hungrily at Elsie?
4. What would you have liked to tell Elsie when she marched angrily away from the girl?
5. How did you feel when Elsie realised the coat was gone?
6. What do you think was going through Elsie's mind when she saw the seal?
7. How do you think learning about selkies beforehand affect your responses to the characters? Would you have responded the same way if you didn't know about selkies?

Assessment for/as learning:

Have students compare their answers with a partner and give them time to discuss similarities and differences in their thinking.

Night Basketball

poem by Adrian Flavell | illustrated by Michel Streich
AC9E6LA08 EN3-VOCAB-01

Learning Intention:

I am learning to examine how metaphors can be used to create meaning so that I can explore metaphors in my own writing.

Success Criteria:

- I can identify metaphors in a text.
- I can describe how metaphors create meaning.
- I can use metaphors to create vivid and less predictable shades of meaning.

Essential knowledge:

Information about metaphors can be found in the NSW Education's glossary.

Oral language and communication

Ask students to define a metaphor (a comparison of two things without using "like" or "as"). Brainstorm some example metaphors as a class, such as "She has a heart of gold" and "It looks like a dog's breakfast". If you have a digital subscription, complete the interactive activity Metaphor Mania!

Before students view the poem, read the title "Night Basketball" aloud and ask them to predict what metaphors might be used in the poem. Students might predict that basketball will be compared to nighttime. Encourage them to stretch their thinking further, such as comparing basketball to stars, owls, silence, sleeping or a play on knight/night.

Understanding text:

Read Night Basketball as a class or listen to the audio recording. Ask students what metaphor is being used for night basketball (answer: outer space). In pairs, students note all the instances of metaphor in the written text and illustration.

Answers:
- Movement on the court (under floodlights) are being compared to spinning galaxies
- Players are being compared to orbiting celestial bodies
- Players are being compared to comets and stars
- The basketball is being compared to a full moon (both in the text and illustration)

Go through answers as a class then ask students to write down eight reasons why they think the poet decided to compare night basketball with outer space. Give them time to massage out more creative explanations than the obvious ones such as the fact you can see the stars during night basketball and that a basketball is round like the full moon. Encourage them to think of the way basketball players move on the court and spin around their opponents, or that the word "star" can refer to a celestial body as well as a famous person. Ask them what the poet might be trying to say about night basketball by comparing it to outer space, such as that it's as vibrant and delightful as shifting galaxies or it's as complicated as rocket science. Invite willing students to share their most creative answers with the class.

Creating text:

Explain that students will be creating their own metaphors. Encourage them to think of two unlinked nouns that they could use as a metaphor, such as swimming pools and mountain climbing, or earthworms and car racing. Some students may be able to use abstract nouns with a noun, such as summer and housework. Before students begin to work on their own, use a metaphor generator to show how to connect two seemingly unconnected things. The metaphor generator comes up with answers such as:

1. Perseverance is a garden.
2. Anger is a spoon.
3. Sympathy is a hammer.
4. Honesty is a wolf.

Use one of these to model on the board. For example, modelling "Honesty is a wolf" would mean brainstorming wolf descriptions, habitats and behaviours as well as positive and negative things about honesty. Find ways to link wolves and honesty from the brainstorm. Explain to students that generating a wide range of ideas will allow them to creatively extend their metaphor and form less predictable shades of meaning. Some possible answers are:

1. A wolf prowls/stalks its prey = sometimes it's surprising that honesty can get you into trouble.
The metaphor: I told my mum the truth about what happened to the toaster, unaware of the danger prowling behind my words.
2. A wolf has fangs = sometimes honesty hurts.
The metaphor: Her comment about my hairstyle sank its fangs into me.
3. Wolves howl together = the truth can be stronger if it comes from more than one voice.
The metaphor: The four of us howled to the principal about who truly stole the winner's medallion.
4. Wolves are hunted in forests = sometimes you have to search for the courage to be honest.
The metaphor: I hunted for the courage to tell the truth in the dark forest of my fears.

Give students time to brainstorm their own comparisons in their workbooks – ideally, one noun on each page to encourage lots of ideas. Once they've linked the two nouns, students can create their metaphors. If they're having difficulty with this task, encourage them to harvest ideas from Night Basketball. Also remind them they can create a metaphor by using relevant verbs (such as howled and prowling from the wolf example).

Assessment for/as learning:

In small groups, students read their metaphors aloud to see if their peers can identify what two things they are comparing. Peers can give feedback in the form of two stars and a wish.

Extension: Students write a poem using their metaphors.

London’s Great Stink

article by Melissa Miles | illustrated by Fifi Colston

AC9E6LA02 EN3-VOCAB-01

Learning Intention:

I am learning to identify how language choices evoke emotion and judgements so that I can use subjective language to position the reader in my own texts.

Success Criteria:

- I can define and identify subjective language.
- I can explain how subjective language can be used to position the reader.
- I can describe how language choices convey the position of a text.

Essential knowledge:

For more information about word choices and connotation, view the Textual Concepts Video Connotation, Imagery and Symbol.

Oral language and communication

Prior to reading the text, display the following sentence on the board:

1. The house on the corner of the street has brown bricks and an overgrown garden out the front.

Ask students:
- what kind of impression this sentence gives of the house (good, bad, well-kept, neglected?)
- who might live there (an old lady, a busy family, no one?)

Now display the following sentence on the board:

2. The house hunches in the corner of the street, its tangled, overgrown weeds suffocating any native plants that might be trying to grow.

Ask students what the difference is between the two sentences. Prompt the class to think about connotations for the words “hunches”, “tangled” and “suffocating”. Ask what tone the sentence is conveying. Students might recognise a negative tone to the text. Telling them to keep that in mind, ask the same questions:
- What kind of impression does this sentence give of the house (good, bad, well-kept, neglected)?
- Who might live there (an old lady, a busy family, no one)?

Ask students what they have noticed about their answers. Have they changed? Why? Explain that subjective language is people’s thoughts and opinions (as opposed to objective, factual language). Tell students that subjective language can be subtle – the sentence doesn’t have to say: “The house is disgusting” for the reader to understand that the house is disgusting.

If you have a digital subscription, complete the interactive activity Subjective Language to Position the Reader.

Understanding text:

Read London's Great Stink as a class or listen to the audio recording. Explain to students that even though this is a non-fiction text, the author has used subjective language to position the reader to feel a certain way about the facts. Pose the following questions to the class:

1. How do you think the author wants you to feel about London's situation in 1858?
2. How do you think the author wants you to feel about Joseph Bazalgette and his designs?
3. Can you find subjective language to back up your answers?

After students have identified several instances of subjective language (Examples for question one: worst, grossest, disgusting, nasty, putrid, feculent; examples for question two: marvel, greatest, hero, meticulous), guide them to the sentence on page 16:

> These pumping stations used the biggest steam engines in existence.

Ask students if this sentence uses subjective language. Explain that the word biggest can be verified by research and evidence, so it is classified as objective language.

Creating text:

Explain that students will now be writing a similar article as London's Great Stink, but from the point of view of blowflies. Ask what they might think of the stink, sewerage situation and death, and what their opinion might be of Joseph Bazalgette. Students should recognise that, from a fly's point of view, the opinions will be reversed.

Ask what subjective vocabulary flies might use for London's situation in 1858 (e.g., wonderful, delicious, marvellous, golden age) and what they might use for Joseph Bazalgette (e.g., monster, villain) and his designs (e.g. ruinous, awful, horrendous).

Assessment for/as learning:

Display the following questions for students as they're writing:

- Am I considering how blowflies would want to position the text?

- Am I using appropriate subjective language?

A marking rubric for informative texts can be found on The School Magazine website. Students can use this rubric to inform their writing, and it can be used for peer and teacher assessment.

Pompeii

story by Susan Hall | illustrated by Greg Holfeld

AC9E6LE05 EN3-CWT-01

Learning Intention:

I am learning to identify plot beats so that I can adapt a plot structure to create my own narrative.

Focus question: How does researching facts (e.g., historical events) help us craft fictitious characters and situations?

Success Criteria:

- I can identify plot beats in a story.
- I can use research skills to find the warning signs of a natural disaster.
- I can compose a text on the natural disaster based on adapted plot beats.

Essential knowledge:

More information about plot structure can be found at The School Magazine's webpage on Narrative.

Oral language and communication

Prior to reading the text, ask students what they know about Pompeii. Ensure students understand that the entire ancient city was buried under a volcanic explosion.

Understanding text:

After reading Pompeii as a class or listening to the audio recording, ask students to list the main events of the story using the following questions (display these plot beats on the board):

1. What was the first sign something was wrong in the story? (Dog barking)
2. What was the next sign? (No animals in the forest)
3. What prompted Lucius to feel something was wrong? (The air was too quiet)
4. What was the next sign something was wrong? (Small landslide)
5. What prompts Lucius to think about earthquakes? (There's a small tremor)
6. What prompts Lucius to think about the 'plain of fire'? (A small, hot mound)
7. Why does Lucius become alarmed? (Several larger tremors)
8. How do the other characters react to Lucius's worry? (Laughs, doesn't believe him)

Explain to students that their knowledge of Pompeii along with the slow build-up of increasingly worrying warning signs creates tension in the story. Tell students that the tension reaches its peak when Lucius realises midway through the story what's happening, but when he tries to warn others, no one believes him. Ask students what would compel a reader to continue reading the next part of the story. Students might recognise that, because they know what happens to Pompeii, they know Lucius is right and want to see him survive.

Creating text:

Explain to students that they will be creating their own narrative based on the plot structure of Pompeii using a different natural disaster. Give them time to research a famous natural disaster, but to focus on the warning signs rather than the event itself. They will also need to have some understanding of the location to write their story.

Suggested topics:

2004 Indian Ocean tsunami
Information on warning signs for tsunamis can be found on American Geosciences Institute's webpage What are the natural warning signs for a tsunami? and NSW's State Emergency webpage Natural warning signs of a tsunami.

1960 great Chilean earthquake
Information on warning signs for earthquakes can be found on Toowoomba Region's webpage Preparing for an earthquake and Scientific America's webpage on Subtle Movements Preceding Earthquakes.

The Black Saturday Australian bushfires (Note: If this suggested activity is too close to home for your community, you may leave it out)
Information on warning signs for bushfires can be found on the Australian Bureau of Meteorology page Bushfire Weather (under the subheading How does weather influence fire behaviour?)

1974 Cyclone Tracy in Darwin
Information on warning signs for hurricanes can be found on Direct Energy's page on Storm Warnings (under the subheading What is the life cycle of a hurricane?).

2005 Hurricane Katrina in the United States
Information on warning signs for hurricanes can be found on Direct Energy's page on Storm Warnings (under the subheading What is the life cycle of a hurricane?).

1931 China floods
Information on what caused the floods can be found on Verisk's China Floods page (under the subheading Natural and Anthropogenic Causes)

When students are ready to write their narrative, remind them to use the least worrying warning signs first, and continue to build intensity as the story continues. Ensure their main character recognises what's about to happen, but when they try to warn people, no one believes them.

Assessment for/as learning:

Self-evaluation checklist during and after writing:

- Do I know when and where the disaster took place?

- Have I included warning signs in my story from least dangerous to most?

- Does my main character notice the warning signs midway through the story?

- Does my main character try to warn others, but is not believed?

A marking rubric for imaginative texts can be found on The School Magazine website. Students can use this rubric to inform their writing, and it can be used for peer and teacher assessment.

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Caught in a Sunshower

poem by Jenny Erlanger | illustrated by Amy Golbach

AC9E6LY06 EN3-CWT-01

Learning Intention:

I am learning to experiment with poetic techniques so that I can plan, edit and publish a poem.

Success Criteria:

- I can identify poetic techniques used in a poem.
- I can use at least three poetic techniques in a poem with the same topic.
- I can edit my work for meaning and punctuation.

Essential knowledge:

Information about types of poetic techniques can be found on the NSW Education Department’s page Literary Devices.
For further information on the meanings of the techniques, see the NSW Education’s glossary.

Oral language and communication

Without showing students the illustration, read the poem Caught in a Sunshower as a class or listen to the audio recording. Ask students what the poem is talking about (a spider’s web). If they’re unsure of the topic, guide them to the final line as a hint. Ask students why the poem references construction, artwork and diamonds. Ensure students understand that poetry often compares things using metaphors and similes. For an extended discussion of metaphor, analyse the metaphor in the poem Night Basketball found on page 13 of this issue of Orbit (the learning resource for this poem goes deeper into metaphor).

Understanding text:

Ask students to hunt through the text for examples of the following:

1. Alliteration (creatively constructed; single, splendid)
2. Assonance (dainty stays)
3. Metaphor for the spider web (artwork)
4. Metaphor for raindrops (diamonds)
5. Personification (it elegantly sways)

Creating text: (spelling, creating written text, handwriting, UARL)

Explain that students will be writing their own poem about spider webs. They can decide the poem’s rhyme and rhythm, including free verse, but they must use at least four poetic techniques in their poem. Encourage them to attempt at least one metaphor.

As well as the techniques found in Caught in a Sunshower, students can also use:
Onomatopoeia
Similes

Repetition

Once students have finished a draft of their poem, they need to reread and edit. They can do this by using a coloured pencil to fix any mistakes and underline any words they're not sure they've spelt right. They can use a dictionary or online search to correct their spelling.

Once their draft has been edited, students publish their work either using a computer program such as Word or PowerPoint or by writing it neatly on paper. Students can illustrate.

Assessment for/as learning:

Students present their published work to their peers. Their peers should be able to identify the different poetic techniques they used.

All That Jazz

story by Simon Cooke | illustrated by Tohby Riddle

Learning Intention:

I am learning about the choices authors make to structure their narratives so I can consider the most appropriate and effective ways to structure different styles of imaginative writing.

Success Criteria:

- I can identify the way authors show the passing of time.
- I can speculate on the reasons for the author's stylistic choices and discuss my opinions with others about theses choices.
- I can analyse the way language and sentence structure are used for effect in writing.

Understanding Text: (Close Reading Transcript available for download)

1st Reading:

Look at the title and images. What do you predict this text will be about?

Which image stands out to you the most? Why?

Where are each of the scenes set? Draw a story map.

2nd Reading:

How does the first paragraph set the tone for the story? What expectation does it give readers about the tone of the text?

What narrative style is this text written in? (First person) How might the text be structured if it had multiple points of view? (e.g. Might explore Dad's history with the trumpet and his current sadness, or a bit more about Sweet Lips). Which narrative style do you think suits the story best?

How does the text show the passing of time? (e.g. A week later, jumping to the school assembly) Do you think this technique made the timeline easy to follow?

3rd Reading:

On the first page, the author uses the term:
'lots-of-greats-granddad.'
Why did the author choose to write it this way? What does it say about the narrative perspective? (e.g. humorous, likeability of character, appealing to the audience)

Read the last two lines of the narrative:
And my dad put the trumpet with a new soul to his lips and played.
Played like he'd never played before.

Why do you think the author has chosen to put these sentences on their own? (e.g. emotional impact) Do you think it is effective?

The last line of page 27 says the trumpet:
'Sounded like an old car's brakes.'
What type of imagery is this? (simile) What do you think the author is trying to say about how the trumpet sounds?

General Follow up:

How do you know this?

What evidence do you have to support that?

Why do you think this?

What examples can you find in the text?

Assessment for/of/as learning:

Ask students to write a gist statement that responds to the success criteria:

- I can identify the way authors show the passing of time.
- I can speculate on the reasons for the author's stylistic choices and discuss my opinions with others about theses choices.
- I can analyse the way language and sentence structure are used for effect in writing.

Beyond

poem by author Lisa Varchol Perron | illustrated by Christopher Nielsen
AC9E6LA07 EN3-UARL-01

Learning Intention:

I am learning to analyse illustrations so that I can explain how it contributes to meaning of written text.

Success Criteria:

- I can use comprehension skills to analyse a poem.
- I can use visual literacy skills to analyse an illustration.
- I can explain how an illustration contributes to the meaning of a poem.

Essential knowledge: (Shared understanding of Textual Concepts, UARL)

More information about plot structure can be found at The School Magazine's webpage on Narrative.
More information about themes can be found at The School Magazine's webpage on Themes.
More information about visual literacy metalanguage can be found on the Victorian Education's webpage Visual Literacy and the Visual Literacy's webpage Visual Techniques.
For a free virtual excursion from the NSW State Library, visiting their page 'Reading' pictures – visual literacy skills.

Oral language and communication

Prior to reading or viewing the text, discuss the following questions as a class and ask children to share their responses:
1. How does a poem differ from a narrative?
2. Do you find it difficult to make meaning of poetry sometimes?
3. How does an accompanying illustration help make meaning?

Understanding text:

Divide the class in half – Group A and Group B. Send Group A outside with a copy of only the text of the Beyond (not the illustration) for them to read and discuss what they think the meaning is. Encourage them to think about what the poet is trying to say, what themes they can find (such as the endlessness of the universe) and their personal responses. Ask them to discuss with each other what they think the illustration might look like.

Stay inside with Group B and display only the illustration without any of the text. Give students time to study the illustration then ask them to discuss what they think the poem might be about (answers will vary). Allow them to answer without any guidance at this point. When they've given enough answers, start to draw their attention to certain visual literacy points. Examples may be:
- the salience of the eye, suggesting the poem is visual-based
- the abundance of blue, symbolic of contemplation and thoughtfulness

- the repetition of circles, suggesting endlessness
- the diagonal positioning of the eye, representing the fact that the poem is not straightforward
- the universe around the eye, suggesting the poem discusses things outside what humans can see

After discussing these points, give Group B more time to discuss what they think the poem might be about.

Creating text:

Ensure all students no longer have access to the poem or the illustration. Bring students from Group A back into the classroom and have them pair up with a student from Group B. Without the poem or the illustration, pairs compare notes and see if they can make meaning from their joint understandings. Once they've finished the discussion, display the illustration and the text together as it appears in The School Magazine. Ask students if they understand the poem and illustration more now they've seen them together.

Assessment for/as learning:

Ask the following questions for the class to write in their workbooks:

- What was the poem about?
- Did the illustration contribute to its meaning?
- How?
- If you were asked to illustrate this poem, how would you do it?