

Stinky Sid

story by Zoë Disher | illustrated by [Anna Bron](#)

[AC9E4LE05](#) | [EN2-CWT-01](#)

Learning Intention:

I am learning about the way figurative language is used to build an understanding of character traits so that I can incorporate this to develop a stronger sense of character in my writing.

Success Criteria:

- I can identify figurative language used to describe a character in a text and discuss the purpose of its use.
- I can extend on the figurative language used in the model text.
- I can work collaboratively to create a list of descriptions using figurative language to demonstrate a different character trait.

Essential knowledge:

To ensure that students have an understanding of the figurative language used in this lesson, use the [English A to Z glossary](#) to define figurative language, hyperbole, imagery and similes.

Understanding text:

After reading the text, ask students to identify any figurative language, particularly hyperbole, imagery and similes. Answers should include:

- Flowers dropped their petals and the paint peeled off the walls
- Bert's feathers dropped out and fell in his birdseed
- Sid smelt worse than an old sock in the bottom of a rubbish bin
- It was like being in a big hot oven of pong
- Sid raced to the creek like a pink cloud
- He looked like a dirty puddle.

Discuss the way the author has used these figurative language techniques to illustrate just how stinky / fluffy / dirty Sid is at that part of the story and how that increases the enjoyment

for the reader because it is much more effective than just telling the audience that Sid really stinks.

Collaborate with students to come up with three more examples of figurative language that can emphasise just how stinky Sid is, or model some on the board, such as:

- Even skunks ran the other way when they smelled him coming
- He smelled like a garbage truck on a sweltering summer day
- His stench could make onions cry.

Divide students into small groups and give them a large sheet of paper or a pile of sticky notes. Have them collaboratively come up with and write down three more examples, then have each group share their ideas with the class.

Creating text:

Assign a character trait to each group or allow groups to come up with their own one. Some ideas may include:

- Grumpy
- Lazy
- Shy
- Brave
- Annoying
- Stubborn
- Smart
- Sneaky

Inform groups that they should attempt to come up with at least ten examples of figurative language to describe their character trait and write them on their poster or sticky notes. You may wish to start them off with some examples, such as:

- He had more brains than a zombie buffet
- She was steaming like a boiled kettle
- He's as annoying as a rock in a shoe during a long-distance race
- She moved about as much as a sloth in a hammock.

Allow time for students to discuss and formulate ideas. Once all groups have completed their list, have each one take turns in sharing with the class. You may wish to also have students vote on their favourite for each group.

If possible, display these ideas in the classroom to allow students to use them in future story writing or character development tasks.

Assessment for learning:

Using information that can be gathered to determine what students know and can do from this explicit lesson provide the students with an exit ticket with the following questions:

- 1) In your own words describe what figurative language is?
- 2) How does it improve writing?
- 3) Provide an example of figurative language that you developed today.

Using this information determine where the students need to go to next. Do they need more exposure to this topic? Are they ready to progress?

At the End of the Day

poem by Rebecca Gardyn Levington | illustrated by [Hannah Seakins](#)

AC9E4LA08 | EN2-VOCAB-01

Learning Intention:

I am learning about the effects of personification in poetry so I can use it to make my own poems more interesting.

Success Criteria:

- I can create and build on descriptions using personification.
- I can identify personification used in a text and the effect it has on the reader.
- I can use personification to compose my own poem about nature.

Essential knowledge:

Ensure students are familiar with the concept of personification. For more information, a definition with examples can be found in the [personification](#) section of the NSW English Syllabus Glossary.

Vocabulary:

Divide students into small groups of 3-4 and ask them to come up with a collaborative description of a sunset. Have them consider the process involved (e.g. the sun going down, the sky changing) and how it affects the natural surroundings of their geographical area, such as changes in colour and light. Ask students what they think the theme, or 'big idea' is of this poem (e.g. changes in nature, the natural cycle). Have groups share their ideas with the class, then use these to create a list of descriptive phrases on the board. For example:

- The sun goes down behind the horizon
- The sky changes from light to dark
- The ocean turns a darker blue
- Trees gradually appear as silhouettes.

Ask how they could make these more descriptive using personification (e.g. the sun slowly goes to sleep) and write their suggestions next to each phrase on the board.

Read the text 'At the End of the Day' and ask students to identify the use of personification. Answers should include:

- Sun, exhausted
- pulls on pinks
- Mountains yawn
- Drowsy clouds
- Wind sings one last lullaby
- Trees surrender, wave goodbye
- Darkness tucks them all in tight
- Moon stands guard and beams 'Goodnight.'

Have students use their collaborative sunset description to match the way the author has personified each aspect. Discuss the way this makes the descriptions more effective for the readers.

Creating text:

Discuss different occurrences in nature in line with the themes the class has discussed and create a list on the board. These may include:

- A thunderstorm
- The flowing of a river
- A volcanic eruption
- A sunrise
- A drought
- The movement of clouds

Inform students they are going to write their own poem about nature that incorporates personification. To do this, students should choose one of the natural occurrences that you have listed and write a list of descriptive phrases about it. Using each point, they should then think of opportunities for personification. Help them get started with a few examples, such as:

- The volcano trembled with anger
- The clouds drifted lazily across the sky
- The dry, cracked earth whispered breathlessly.

Assessment as learning:

Use the success criteria to enable students to self reflect on their learning through out this lesson. Provide students with a reflection rubric where they can rate their learning 1-5 for each success criteria, with 1 requiring further support from classroom teacher through to 5 feeling confident and able to help support and clarify learning with other students.

- I can create and build on descriptions using personification.
- I can identify personification used in a text and the effect it has on the reader.
- I can use personification to compose my own poem about nature.

Aunt Ali's Alligator

Poem by Jonathan Sellars | illustrated by [David Legge](#)

[AC9E4LA10](#) | [EN2-UARL-01](#)

Learning Intention:

I am learning to analyse the effects of salience on images so that I can use it effectively in my own illustrations.

Success Criteria:

- I can identify the salience of an image.
- I can create a series of illustrations for a text with a focus on salience.
- I can create a digital storybook that combines a text with my accompanying illustrations.

Essential knowledge:

Ensure students are familiar with the meaning of salience. A definition and explanation can be found on the [Australian Curriculum Glossary](#)

Understanding text:

Prior to reading the text, ask students to analyse the salience of the image and by identifying what they first notice when they look at the page of the poem. Answers are most likely to be the alligator's face, particularly its eyes, or the lady's face. Discuss the way the illustrator has achieved this by having the faces in the centre of the picture, having the alligator's face appear slightly more in the foreground with its eyes even more so, and having the lady's eyes looking directly at the audience.

Read the poem together, or if you have a digital subscription, you may wish to listen to the audio version. Ask students which auntie in the poem the artist has illustrated. They should identify that it is Auntie Rita.

Break students into pairs and inform them they are going to be working together to brainstorm the way they would illustrate the rest of the poem. Have a class discussion to come up with some ideas for the first two lines. For example:

- 'Auntie Ali had an alligator' – a woman in a wide brimmed hat and an alligator lying on sun lounges by the pool
- 'Until the alligator ate her' – The alligator still lying there but now with an empty sun lounge next to it and the lady's hat hanging out of its mouth.

Inform students they should come up with at least ten additional pictures for the poem with their partner, with a focus on salience, that illustrates each part of the text in order. To do this, they should consider what they want the audience to focus on for each picture, and experiment with ways to draw the reader's eye to this. Encourage them to be creative with their illustrations by putting the alligator and the aunties in different settings and situations as the alligator goes on its eating spree.

Allow time for students to practice and experiment with their illustrating during their brainstorm session.

Creating text:

Inform students they will be using the illustrations to turn the poem into a digital storybook. Once they have completed their brainstorm, they should take the time to draw and colour their final illustrations. They should then take a photo of each illustration and upload it onto a device using a software program such as Canva, PowerPoint or Google Slides. Once they have all their illustrations uploaded and arranged into the order of the poem, they should record a voiceover reading the poem to accompany the illustrations so that it is structured like a digital storybook.

If possible, have students spend time with a younger class to play their digital storybooks to an audience.

Assessment for/as learning:

Provide the students with the following 5 questions, which they are to reflect and provide a written response to:

1. What are you learning?
2. How are you doing?
3. How do you know?
4. How can you improve?
5. Where could you go to for help?

Collect student's responses and review who requires additional support or extension on this topic.

Behind the Camera

article by Cheryl Bullow | photos by [Alamy](#)

[AC9E4LA03](#) | [EN2-RECOM-01](#)

Learning Intention:

I am learning to identify and extract key points for a specific purpose so that I can arrange the information in a logical structure to meet that purpose.

Success Criteria:

- I can answer questions based on my understanding from the text.
- I can use this information to contribute to a collaborative plan for a wildlife photographer.
- I can create my own plan independently / with a partner.

Understanding text:

Read the article, or if you have a digital subscription, you may wish to listen to the audio version. Afterwards, have the students think, pair and share using the following questions:

- Why does it require patience to be a wildlife photographer?
- What are some ways to blend into different surroundings? (e.g. jungle, desert, ocean)
- In what ways can a photographer be a risk to wildlife?

- In what ways can the wildlife be a risk to a photographer?
- Why is it important to leave things such as branches, rocks and logs exactly as you find them?

Visit the Natural History Museum's [Wildlife Photographer of the Year website](#) and scroll through some of the gallery photos with the class. Choose one to focus on and select it to read the description of how the image was captured. Using the information from 'Behind the Camera', ask students to pretend they are a wildlife photographer and discuss a plan for photographing the selected animal.

For example, you may choose a photograph of a lion. As a class, put together a collaborative plan for the photographer using the following questions as subheadings:

- Where is the animal most likely to be found? (The African plains)
- How can I hide myself in that environment? (Camouflage clothing, find a covered spot a safe distance away)
- What equipment do I need? (A camera with a telephoto lens)
- What danger could I pose? (A mother abandoning her cubs if she senses my presence)
- What danger could they pose to me? (Being eaten!)
- What kind of photos might I be able to get of this animal? (Sleeping, fighting, chasing prey, eating, running)

Inform students that they should now choose one of the photos from the website's gallery that they would like to be the photographer for. Have them read the information for the photo, then put together a plan using the questions above. They may wish to do this with a partner or independently.

Assessment for/as learning:

Conduct a Gallery Walk of the students completed work. Peers will be provided with post it notes to provide 3-4 specific points of feedback to other students. Peers providing the feedback will use the sentence stem "Have you considered.....?" to begin the peer review.

E.g. A point of feedback might include "Have you considered the environmental impact you might have by going into this pristine environment? What steps are you going to include to ensure that you leave the area the way you found it?"

Allow students time to review their peer feedback and to include this into the written responses. You might also like to provide opportunity for students to verbally respond to this feedback and suggest how they might incorporate it into their responses.

How to Wash Your Sheeps

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

[AC9E4LY03](#) | [EN2-UARL-01](#)

Learning Intention:

I am learning to experiment with narrative structures and conventions such as unpredictable endings as a way of engaging the reader and demonstrate my own growing control of these techniques creatively in my own writing

Success Criteria:

- I can engage with a mentor text, analyse elements such as humour, unexpected endings by identifying and discussing the techniques used by the author and trying to emulate them.
- I can brainstorm Tier 2 word pairs that sound similar but have different meanings, and use these to craft a narrative focusing on humour and creativity.
- I can share my writing and receive feedback which I can use to develop the clarity of the twist, effectiveness of the narrative structure and overall creativity.

Understanding text:

Read the text as a class, pausing before reading the final letter addressed 'Dear Me'. Ask students how the writing made the instructions for washing sheep interesting and funny to the reader. Points may include:

- Not to put sheep in the washing machine (or any animals – even rabbits!) even though there's a wool setting
- Not to use detergent because the oil will come out of their wool and they won't be waterproof anymore, then they'll soak up too much water and fall over
- Wash them in colour order because white sheep reflect the light, but brown and black sheep absorb heat, so they dry faster
- Use warm water because even sheep don't like cold baths!

Read the final letter from EJ, then discuss the way this ending changes the point of the whole text and makes it funny in a different way. Explain the concept of a 'twist ending' and ensure students understand that this is a technique that authors use to create a surprise that completely changes the direction of the story from what the expected outcome was. Ask students what the cause was of the twist in this text. They should identify that it was the confusion from EJ writing sheeps instead of sheets. As a point of reference, you may like to share the text published in Countdown Issue 8, 2023 **Scooter for Sale**, which is another excellent example of a text with a twist ending.

Creating text:

Explain to students that they are also going to write a set of letters asking for help with something but will apply the same concept of mixing up similar words. To do this, build a word list on the board together of words that are either pronounced the same but have different meaning, or sound similar but aren't quite the same (like sheeps and sheets). Use this list to get started and have students build on it:

- flower / flour
- class / glass
- meet / meat
- night / knight
- fairy / ferry
- jam / jamb
- storey / story
- break / brake

Have students use this word list to discuss ideas that they could use for a mixed-up instruction letter. For example, they may write a letter asking for advice on how to catch a *fairy* when they really meant to ask how to catch a *ferry*. Encourage students to make their ideas as silly and funny as possible.

Students should brainstorm their ideas by choosing their word pair and creating a mind map on how they might get mixed up, and what instructions may be given in the mixed-up situation. Using this information, they should then write their three letters:

- The first asking for the instructions
- The second giving the instructions

- The third correcting their original error.

Assessment for/as learning:

Once their letters are written, students share their work and conduct a peer review so they can assess each other's work using the [warm and cold feedback method](#).

Model this type of feedback strategy if you have not employed it previously in your classroom.

Allow time for students to take on board the feedback they have received and incorporate it into their compositions if time allows.

Juliana – a Truly Great Dane

article by Mina | photo by [Alamy](#)

[AC9E4LE04](#) | [EN2-UARL-01](#)

Learning Intention:

I am learning to experiment with figurative language so that I can use it in creative effective and humorous ways.

Success Criteria:

- I can understand the purpose of figurative language.
- I can take information from a text and use it to brainstorm figurative language.
- I can use this to create catchy headlines and test their effectiveness with my peers.

Essential knowledge:

The English Syllabus A to Z Glossary can be used to ensure students are familiar with the use of [figurative language](#), particularly [idioms](#), [alliteration](#) and [assonance](#). Explain that consonance follows the same rule as assonance, but using the consonant sounds (e.g. tick tock, she sells seashells).

Understanding text:

After reading the text, ask students to identify the points that make the story interesting. Answers should include:

- The bomb that dropped through Juliana's roof but didn't explode

- Juliana urinated on the bomb and deactivated it
- Juliana was awarded a Blue Cross Medal for her bravery
- Juliana warned her owner about a fire three years later and received another medal.

Discuss the fact that Juliana's actions were considered so heroic that the newspapers of the time wrote about it. Explain to the students that in order to get people to read such articles, a catchy headline is important to grab the readers' attention. Inform them that often figurative language and humour that focuses on the main point of the story is used to do this.

Display the following articles:

1. [Fundraising funnyman pulls a UNO card after penalty at charity game](#)
2. [Video of giant bull riding shotgun in the family car goes viral](#)
3. [Dashing dachshunds, elephant doing yoga and otters shooting hoops are all making news](#)

Skim through each article with the class to gain an understanding of the content, then identify the figurative language and humour used in each headline. For example:

1.

- Alliteration - fundraising funnyman
- Humour - a player pulling a UNO reverse card to avoid a penalty.

2.

- Idiom - riding shotgun (meaning to ride in the front passenger seat)
- Humour – a bull riding in the front passenger seat!

3.

- Alliteration, assonance and consonance – dashing dachshunds
- Idiom – shooting hoops (meaning to play basketball)
- Humour – imagery of elephants doing yoga and otters playing basketball.

Creating text:

Inform students that their job is to come up with a headline for the newspaper articles that were written about Juliana's heroic acts when they happened. Divide the class into small groups and explain that they should work together to find opportunities for figurative language. To do this they should take the three main subjects from the article (the bomb, Juliana and urinating) and create a mind map of words for each one. For example, words for Juliana may include dog, great dane, canine, pooch. Once they have created their group of words for each one, they should look for possible combinations that may create alliteration, assonance, consonance or other figurative language they are familiar with. Next, they should collaborate on a way to include humour in the headline.

Tell students they should experiment in writing out their combinations and testing headline ideas by reading them out loud to each other to assess how catchy they are. Encourage them to be fun and creative and write as many headlines as they can think of.

Assessment for/as learning:

If possible, create a display wall or board for their headlines and facilitate a class discussion that allows them to assess the effectiveness of the devices used in the different headlines that were created.

Provide class with post it notes, where peers can highlight examples of figurative language such as idiom, alliteration, humour, assonance and consonance in the examples on display. Students can record positive statements such as " I like the use of idiom in this headline because....." or " This is a great example of humour because.....". This type assessment allows for peer review and confirmation of understanding of the concepts explored in the lesson.

Pondering

poem by Jesse Anna Bornemann | illustrated by [Sylvia Morris](#)

[AC9E4LA03](#) | [EN2-RECOM-01](#)

Learning Intention:

I am learning to read and understand different kinds of texts by paying attention to how they are structured and the words they choose to include. I am also learning to connect my own feeling and experiences with what I read so that I can produce new ideas through my writing.

Success Criteria:

- I can openly discuss the choice of words, the impact they have on me through the way they are structured within phrases, sentences, and paragraphs.
- I can contribute to a class discussion relating to the idea of the text, sharing my thoughts and ideas about the purpose and perspective of the narrator.
- I can connect my personal interests as meaningful themes to explore through writing.

Understanding text:

After reading the text, discuss the idea of pondering, ensuring that students understand that pondering means thinking carefully or deeply about something. Ask students when they do the most pondering. Point out that this is likely to be when our minds are not otherwise busy with tasks that require thinking, such as engaging in schoolwork, reading, or talking with our friends. Answers are likely to include quiet times when there are opportunities for reflection, such as in the shower, lying in bed or walking home from school.

Draw students' attention back to the text and discuss the things the narrator ponders, pointing out that these are related to big concepts like galaxies and dinosaurs through to small, personal things like freckles. Ask students what kind of things they ponder in their quiet times and give them a few moments to think about (or ponder) their answer.

Ask willing students to share their thoughts and create a class 'poster' on the board by writing answers in the form of 'I like to ponder...' from the poem and drawing a simple illustration to accompany each one. For example, if a student says they ponder why dogs like to sniff each other, you might write 'I like to ponder dogs sniffing' and draw a simple picture of two dogs sniffing each other.

Creating text:

Once you have created a collaborative poster with some student examples, inform students that they are going to make their own personal one. To do this, they should think about more things that they ponder and write and illustrate at least ten on their poster. Explain that perhaps someone else's answer during the class discussion has prompted them to think about something or they might want to take a few moments to look out the window or think about what else interests them and ponder something new. Encourage them to be as colourful and creative with their poster as they like. Once completed, have students read through their posters and look for opportunities to find answers to their ponderings. They might find these by asking questions or doing some online research if possible, allowing their minds to make room for more ponderings.

Assessment as learning:

Allow time for reflection on key learning from this lesson:

Provide an exit ticket for the students with the following question:

- Why do you believe the author chose to write about this topic?
- How can you use this concept to connect to the process of writing?
- What are your personal interests?
- Which of these topics do you feel motivated to write about?

Clever Cresta

story by Katie Aaron | illustrated by Sarah Davis

AC9E4LY07 | EN2-OLC-01

Learning Intention:

I am learning how to perform a story in the form of a play so that I can practice relevant skills such as fluency, tone, pace and pitch in a cooperative group setting.

Success Criteria:

- I can create a voice for a character based on my interpretation of their personality.
- I can learn and rehearse a particular role by drawing understanding of dialogue and actions from a story.
- I can perform in a play for an audience.

Understanding text:

Read the text as a class, or if you have a digital subscription, you may prefer to listen to the audio version and have students follow along. Following this, have students identify the characters who speak in the story. These should include:

- Barny the crab
- Cresta the crab
- Opal the mermaid
- Pinch the crab.

Ask students to consider each of their personalities in the story and think about what they imagine each character to sound like. Revisit the following lines and have students take turns of reading them out in what they perceive to be the characters' voices:

- 'Of course you do. Every great band has a singer. (Opal)
- 'We don't need a singer, Opal. And we don't WANT one either. (Barny)
- 'Hmm. She'll probably play it so loud no one will hear the rest of us.' (Pinch)
- 'It's an instrument for her to play. It can make a nice sound. Opal will have to blow into it and that will stop her singing. (Cresta)

If you have a digital subscription, you can use the interactive audio recorder to have students record their voices and playback as a comparison of interpretations.

Oral language and communication:

Explain that students are going to perform this text as a play by reading the dialogue, narrating the story and performing the actions. To do this, they will need to learn their lines and actions and know when to say and perform them.

Divide the class into three groups. Assign the roles of Barny, Cresta, Opal and Pinch and explain that these students will read the lines of their characters that appear in quotation marks. Further explain that the rest of each group will be narrators, which means they read all the other words that tell the story. To do this, narrators should take turns of reading a paragraph each.

Narrators should also be assigned non-speaking roles to act out when it's not their turn to speak, including Boris Octopus to perform his whirling dance, the band members to play, some seagulls to swoop, soar and screech, some kookaburras to cackle and the other sea creatures to gather and listen to the music.

Once all roles have been assigned have students sit with their groups and read through the story together. While doing this, each student should use a highlighter to mark their own lines. Remind students to pay attention to the way things are said in the story, where necessary (e.g. mumbled, moaned). Have groups read through the story aloud a few times with their group until they are fluent in their lines.

Next, draw students' attention to the action of the story, such as:

- The ocean swirled with creatures jiving, bopping, spinning.
- Barny was furious. He swam out to the rock.
- They dashed about. Searching under and over rocks.
- Then she kept checking her reflection until she was satisfied.

Students may wish to use a different colour to highlight the action they will need to do as part of their role. Have them continue to rehearse together, incorporating the actions required to act it out as a play. Once groups have had enough time and are ready to perform, bring the class back together. If possible, move desks aside so that groups can have an open space to spread out and perform their play.

Assessment for/as learning:

Have each group act out their play for the rest of the class and encourage feedback from the audience using the [Two Stars and a Wish](#) method for the overall performance of each group.