The Lonely Lion Club

story by Kathryn England | illustrated by David Legge

EN2-UARL-01 | AC9E3LE04

Learning Intention:

I am learning about how characters are created by what they say, what they do, and what people think about them, so that I can make my own unique characters.

Success Criteria:

- I can read a model text closely for meaning.
- I can identify and describe the different character traits shown in a model narrative.
- I can create my own character outlines.
- I can explain why it is useful to include characters with opposing character traits in a story.

Essential knowledge:

More information about developing characters can be found in the English Textual Concepts video Character.

Understanding text:

Read the text from the beginning up until ''There are three other cubs over there, and they're all lonely like me!' Cub said.'

As a class create a mind map listing information about the character Cub.

Use the following questions as prompts to encourage students to contribute to the mind map.

- What kind of creature is Cub? What does that suggest about his personality? (A lion cub. As a cub he might be playful, naïve, boisterous, fun loving)
- What kind of character traits do you see in Cub? (curious, trusting, adventurous)
- How is Cub feeling? (He is lonely – he doesn't have friends or family)
- When Cub hears the echoes, how does he respond? What does this tell us about his personality? (He thinks there are three cubs for him to play with. This shows that he is an optimistic character, looking on the bright side.)

Ask the class the following questions:

- As a reader, how do you feel about the character of Cub at this point in the story? (Students may suggest that they feel sorry for Cub, they feel empathetic, they might connect with the idea of not having somebody to play with or feeling bored and lonely.)
- What do you hope will happen for Cub in the story?

Continue reading the story up until ''By the time it goes all the way over the lake, hits the wall and comes back, it's going to ssssound a little different, isn't it'?

Create a mind map for the character Snake. Use the discussion questions below to draw answers out from the class:

- What kind of creature is Snake? What connotations does that have for his character?
- What attitude does Snake have towards Cub and his response to the echo?
- Do you think Snake is a trustworthy character? Is he a villain? Is he dangerous or harmless?
- What do his actions tell us about him? (He is not enthusiastic; he is not unkind, but he is disinterested in others)
- What further action do you expect from Snake in this story?

Look at the dialogue for the two characters in this section. Organise the class into pairs. Have one student read the lines of Cub and the other read the lines of Snake. Pairs are to practice reading the lines with the kind of tone of voice and expression that the characters of Cub and Snake would. They are to experiment with different ways of saying the line until they feel like they have the right attitude, emotion and tone for their characters.

After this activity discuss what pairs discovered as a result of their experiment with the dialogue.

- How did you choose to deliver Cub's lines? Why?
- How did you choose to deliver Snake's lines? Why?
- What did you notice about the way that Snake's lines are written? Why? (Suggested answer: Lots of sss sounds. This imitates the hissing of a snake)

Continue reading the story until ''I'm busy.' He closed his eyes and went to sleep.'

In pairs, have students talk about Snake's character further by asking them to talk about the following questions:

- Does Snake help or hinder Cub? (Snake helps Cub)
- Is he a friend or a foe? (Possibly a friend or neither – a neutral character, a bystander)
- Why do you think the author chose a Snake to be this character? (The author may have wanted to choose an animal type that made the reader question whether or not the character could be trusted.)
- Did you get tricked into thinking the snake might be a 'baddie'?
- What is Snake's purpose in the story? (Snake prevents Cub from going into danger, Snake also offers wisdom)

Read the rest of the story as a class. Ask the class the following questions:

- What is the surprise twist at the end?
- How do you feel, as a reader, about the new information revealed at the end of the story?
- The main two characters are Cub and Snake. Both are quite different, why do you think authors like to include characters with opposing character traits in stories? (Suggested answer: It creates conflict, it creates interest, it helps develop characters more deeply when you compare characters)

Creating text:

Have students create a pair of animal characters. Students used the table below to plan their characters. The first character should be a naïve, young character and the second should be older and wiser. The two characters are not the same kind of animal and are not necessarily friends.

	Character 1	Character 2
Name		
Animal species		
Personality/character traits		
Sample piece of dialogue		
What does your character want? Do they have a goal?		
How would you like a reader to feel about this character?		

Extension task: Students requiring extension can use these two characters as the launching point for writing the full story.

Assessment for/as learning:

Students answer the following question as an exit ticket:

- Explain why it is important to develop contrasting or different characters in a story.

Captain Ahab's Weird Wide World The Hunderfossen Troll

article by Geoffrey McSkimming | images by Dreamstime and Alamy

EN-CWT-02 (Informative) | AC9E3LY06

Learning Intention:

I am learning about the features of an information text, including heading, tone and use of paragraphs, so that I can plan and write my own informative text in the style of the model text.

Success Criteria:

- I can identify key features of an informative text in a model text

- I can gather information from a source to be used in an informative text

- I can plan and write an informative text

Essential knowledge:

More information can be found in The School Magazine's Code and Convention video.

Vocabulary

Explain to students that the character Captain Ahab and his crew often use words associated with nautical activities. Provide the following list of words and phrases from both the article The Hunderfossen Troll and the story The Mystery of Teardrop Island:

- Ahoy, me hearties! (Hello, my friends)

- Sail (To use a sailboat or a ship as a form of transportation)

- Full throttle (Accellerate as fast as possible)

- Land ho! (There is land!/ I see land!)

- Forty nautical miles (nautical miles is a measurement used by people who are navigating the oceans)

- drop anchor (The anchor stops the ship – it is putting on the brake so it stops and doesn't move)

- Aye, aye, Cap'n (Yes, Captain)

As a class, go through each word or phrase on the list and discuss its meaning (suggested answers in brackets). Then engage the class in a discussion about the effect of this style of language in these two texts. Use the prompts below:

- Why do Captain Ahab and his crew speak like this? (It reflects their life on the sea)

- Why did the author decide to include this type of language? (It helps create a detailed character and an authentic voice for them)

- How does using a nautical style of language help us to understand the character and the setting of the stories being told? (The reader is immersed in the story through the use of nautical language, and it supports the setting and the plot which usually revolves around ocean exploration or sailing related antics)

Understanding text:

Engage students in a discussion around the structure, visual features and style of the article. Ask the following questions:

- How many paragraphs are there in the article (3)

- What is each paragraph about? (The first paragraph introduces the who, what, where, when. The second paragraph gives background information. The third paragraph gives the crew's reaction and leaves readers with something to think about)

- What kind of images have been used? Why? (A map and a photograph. These support the factual information found in the article)

- This article is written in first person. Whose perspective is shown? (Captain Ahab)

- Which word best describes the tone of the article: Formal or casual? Explain? (informal, casual, excited)

Creating text:

As a class, read the story The Mystery of Teardrop Island on page 7 of this issue of Countdown, or if you have a digital subscription listen to the audio recording.

After reading, ask students to create a mind map in their workbooks showing the information the story reveals about Teardrop Island. Consider recording this information using the headings Who, What, Where, When (suggestions: coconut trees, sand hills giant faces made from stone)

Have students imagine that they are writing a new edition of Captain Ahab's Weird Wide World about Teardrop Island. Students are to:

- Include the information they have gathered in their mindmap

- Write in the same style and voice as the article about the Hunderfossen Troll (For example first person from Captain Ahab's perspective, the use of nautical words, use of the word 'we', include the crew's reaction to the Island, use of exclamations)

- Draw a map and an image to accompany the article

Students who need further support may like to use the scaffold below:

Title	
Paragraph 1: who, what, where, when	
Paragraph 2: background information	
Paragraph 3: The crew's reaction. Leave reader with something to think about	

Assessment for/as learning:

Complete a self-assessment, answering the following questions with a number from 1-3. Use the key below:

1. I aced it

2. I'm almost there

3. I'm still working on it

- I included a heading

- I wrote three separate paragraphs

- I included information/facts gathered in my mind-map

- I wrote in first person from Captain Ahab's perspective

- I used nautical language to make Captain Ahab's voice authentic

The Mystery of Teardrop Island

story by Geoffrey McSkimming | illustrated by Douglas Holgate

EN2-UARL-01 | AC9E3LE03

Focus question:
How does an author's use of language help engage an audience?

Learning Intention:
I am learning about the ways in which authors create emotion, tension and develop characters so that I can use these strategies in my own descriptive writing.

Success Criteria:
- I can make connections between character behaviours/movements and the emotion they are feeling

- I can discuss the different tension level/mood in different sections of a narrative

- I can analyse an extract of a narrative in terms of the creation of emotion and tension

- I can write my own descriptive paragraph in which I show the emotion a character is feeling through their actions and dialogue

Essential knowledge:
For more information, view The School Magazine's video on Connotation, Imagery and Symbol.

Oral language and communication
Engage class in a discussion surrounding the following question:

- Can you tell how a person is feeling from observing their behavior or movements?

Ask students to elaborate and explain or give examples as the discussion progresses.

Take students outside for a drama activity. Call out different emotions. Students are to silently act out what that emotion looks like. Use the following list of emotions for the activity:

- Angry

- Frightened

- Sad

- Excited

- Happy

- Calm/content

Return to the room and explain that when authors are writing a story, they will try and describe character emotions through showing what it looks like, rather than telling the reader 'They felt ____.'

Understanding text:

Read The Mystery of Teardrop Island. (As this is part two of a two part story, it may be helpful to also re-visit part 1 from Issue 6 of Countdown.)

Note for the class that part two is divided into sections – numbered beginning with the number 3.

Organise the class into 4 groups and assign each group one section to look at. Ask the group to complete the following tasks before reporting back to the class.

- Read the assigned section

- Summarise the main action in the section

- On a scale of 1-5 (1 being calm, 5 being extremely tense) describe the level of tension in this section of the story. Explain this rating.

- What is the main emotion felt by the characters in this section of the story, how do you know? (give examples)

Have groups report their findings back to the class. Then take a vote, which section of the story has the most tension?

Provide the following example from the story, project it onto the board:

> Then the view stopped being marvellous. His eyes went big, his fur went clammy and his paws began to tremble. 'Aaaaaaaaaaargh!' he wailed, almost falling out of the tree.
>
> 'Bob? What's wrong?' called Ahab.
>
> 'O-o-over y-y-yonder,' stammered the otter. 'On t-t-the other s-s-side of them hills! There be g-g-giants!'

Show students the beginning of the video Connotation, Imagery and Symbol, up until 1:51. Then ask the class to discuss the connotations of the following words/phrases from the example above:

- His eyes went big (surprise)

- Clammy (sweaty, sick, frightened)

- Tremble (nervous, scared)

- Wailed (upset, disappointed)

Now look at the dialogue in the example. Ask students to identify an unusual feature of this dialogue from Bob. (stammering/stuttering). Ask the class to identify the emotion with which people associated this way of speaking (fear).

Creating text:

Ask students to choose one character from the first column in the table below, and then choose an emotion from the second column. Have students write a paragraph in which they show that character feeling that specific emotion. Students may include dialogue as well as actions/behaviours. Encourage students to draw upon the physical characteristics of their chosen character – for example Ahab is a spider, Shasta is a brolga, Bob is an otter.

Character	Emotion
Captain Ahab	Anger
Shasta	Fear
Bob	Surprise
	Loneliness
	Disappointment
	Annoyance
	Happiness
	Excitement

Assessment for/as learning:

Have students swap their descriptive writing with a partner. Students read their partner's work and then complete a peer assessment using the two stars and a wish feedback system.

The Monster in My Cupboard

Story by Abigail Stiles | illustrated by Aśka

EN2-CWT-01 | AC9E3LE05

Learning Intention:

I am learning how short stories are put together and how to make interesting characters so that I can create my own story in the correct structure.

Success Criteria:

- I can analyse a 'monster' character in relation to the connotation of the word monster

- I can separate and summarise a short story into orientation, complication and resolution

- I can plan a short story, using a narrative structure outline and stimulus questions

- I can compose a short story in first person

Essential knowledge:

For more information, view The School Magazine's video on Connotation, Imagery and Symbol.

Vocabulary:

Write the word 'monster' on the board. Have students create a mind-map of words they associate with 'monster.' What are the connotations of this word?

(suggested answers: evil, scary, disgusting, naughty, angry, horror movie, noisy, big)

Ask students if they can think of any examples of monsters that do not fit the ideas presented in the mind-map activity. (suggested answer: The Sesame Street monsters including Elmo and Grover; The Monsters Inc characters)

Understanding text:

Read the story or listen to the audio if you have a digital subscription. Have students summarise the story into the narrative structure table below (suggested answers included)

Orientation	Complication	Resolution
The child and their mother are eating ratatouille for dinner. The child wishes to eat in her room.	The mother says that the child must tidy the cupboard because it is terribly messy. The child must have blamed a	The child strikes a deal with the monster that the monster will keep the cupboard clean in return for

	monster on the mess previously. The child opens the cupboard and the monster eats the ratatouille.	the child brining ratatouille once a week.

Ask students to answer the following questions about the monster:

- How does the main character know that a monster has moved into the cupboard?

- Is the visual appearance of the monster ever described? Why/why not? (The child does not see the monster, the reader can imagine the monster's appearance themselves, people have in their minds what a monster is already - a description is not required)

- What sounds does the monster make? List the words used.

- Look at the mind-map of words associated with the word 'monster.' Do any of these words describe the cupboard monster in the story?

Creating text:

Ask students to imagine that they have a monster in the cupboard at home. Have students complete the following planning tasks:

- Which cupboard is your monster hiding it at home? (eg. bedroom, office, pantry, spare room)

- What kind of mischief does your monster get up to?

- What does your monster look like, sound like?

- What does your monster like?

- Will your monster be friendly or frightening?

- What deal will you strike with your monster? (making sure that everybody wins as a result)

Have students plan a short story based on their planning. Provide a scaffold such as the one below for them to outline their plan for the story:

Orientation	Complication	Resolution

Allow students time to write a short story, in first person, about the monster in their cupboard at home and the deal that they will strike with that monster.

Assessment for/as learning:

Have students share their narrative with a partner. Students are to read their partner's story and then complete the following peer feedback form by ticking the items that apply to their partner's narrative.

- My partner wrote in first person narrative

- My partner's story followed the orientation-complication-resolution structure of a narrative

- My partner described a monster character in a cupboard

- I was able to imagine the monster in my partner's story

- I was able to identify whether the monster was friendly or frightening

A String

Poem by Diana Murray | illustrated by Astred Hicks

EN2-RECOM-01 | AC9E3LY05

Focus question: How does imagery help an audience connect with a text?

Learning Intention:

I am learning how pictures created with words in poems can make readers feel different things, so I can write my own interesting poem using these word pictures.

Success Criteria:

- I can identify examples of imagery in a poem

- I can discuss the connotations of certain images

- I can plan and compose my own poem, using imagery

Essential knowledge:

For more information, view The School Magazine's video on Connotation, Imagery and Symbol.

Teaching resources relating to literary devices can be found in the NSW Department of Education curriculum resource, Literary devices Stage 2.

Oral language and communication

Students complete a think-pair-share activity in which they are to think of and share some ordinary objects they use almost every day. Examples include: toothbrush, hair elastic, spoon, pen or pencil, sticky tape, paper clip.

After the think-pair-share activity, discuss the following questions with the class:

- Are the items discussed exciting things? (often not)

- Are the items discussed important? (usually yes)

- If these items are not celebrated as exciting or fun, what kind of items are celebrated or admired?

Inform students that they will be reading a poem about an ordinary object: string.

Ask students to use a scrap of paper and a pencil and either write or draw what they see in their mind when they think of string. When students are finished their drawing or description, ask them to turn to the person next to them and compare their drawing/ description before answering the questions below:

- What was similar/different about the images you saw in your head when you thought about string. Why were the images in your mind similar or different?

- Is string something you find interesting or exciting?

- What do you think the poem might say about string?

Understanding text:

Before reading the poem, write the word 'imagery' on the board. Point out the word 'image' within the word 'imagery' and explain that imagery is a technique used by writers to help the readers form a picture in their mind as they read.

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

After reading, as a whole class compose a shared list of images relating to string presented in the poem. (Suggested answers: gift, cats, paddle ball game, guitar, kite, balloons, shoes, kite, pearls, curly hair, knots)

Have the class form pairs/threes. Assign each pair an example of imagery from the list on the board, ask students to work with their partner to create a mind map (possibly on mini whiteboards or an A3 sheet of paper) showing the different connotations associated with their image from the poem (view The School Magazine's video on Connotation, Imagery and Symbol for more information about connotations).

Have pairs report back to the class. After each pair has reported back as the class whether the images in the poem mostly had positive connotations or mostly negative connotations (answer: positive). Follow up with asking them why? (Suggested answer: the poet suggests that string is 'fantastic' and 'remarkable' and is aiming to convince the reader to appreciate string too.)

Creating text:

Ask students to choose one of the ordinary objects from the think-pair-share activity and write a poem about this ordinary item. Students are to use imagery to convey a certain feeling about the object to readers.

Students can plan their poem by creating the following:

- A list of things that the object is used for

- A list of images associated with the chosen ordinary object

- A feeling that the student connects with the chosen object

Once the planning is complete, students can use the ideas from the plans to compose their own poem.

Assessment for/as learning:

Students complete an exit ticket, answering the following question:

- Why is using imagery important in poetry?

My Amazing Brain

Poem by Rebecca Gardyn Levington| illustrated by Gabriel Evans

EN2-UARL-01 | AC9E3LY03

Learning Intention:

I am learning to understand why different texts are written and how authors create them in a purposeful way, so I can understand the reason for a text being written.

Success Criteria:

- I can compare and contrast different text types
- I can investigate the purpose of texts
- I can read and comprehend informative texts in different formats
- I can question the common features of different text types

Oral language and communication

Prior to reading the poem, ask students the following questions:

- If you were going to write a factual text about the human body, what kind of text would it be?
- What might it look like on the page? Would there be images? What kind?
- Would the text be organized in a particular way?

Discuss the answers given as they are offered, asking each student why that text type is suitable for a factual text about the human body.

Then ask a follow up question:

- Can you write a factual text in the form of a poem?

Conduct a class vote in which students raise their hand to indicate their vote as either 'yes' or 'no.' You may wish to add a third option 'unsure.'

Tally the results on the board.

Ask students on each side of the room to offer an explanation for their answer. Hear arguments from all sides.

Understanding text:

Students are now ready to read the poem 'My Amazing Brain.' Read the poem as a class.

After reading ask students to identify whether the text is a poem or an information text. Discuss why.

Return to the previous question: Can you write a factual text in the form of a poem?

Ask students to now vote again with their new answer. (The expected response should now be that most, if not all, students will answer 'yes.' This is because they have seen an example of an informative poem.)

Students are to complete the following table in which they place examples of factual information from the poem in the first column, and then re-write that information in a more typical information text style. The first two are completed with sample answers:

Example from poem	Written in standard information text style
My brain tells my body to strengthen and grow, explains to my limbs how to run, catch and throw.	The brain is responsible for sending messages to the body. These messages include instructions on different movements like throwing and catching a ball. The messages can also signal growth and development.
Keeps my facts in one place—all the lessons I've learned in one hard-headed case.	The brain is the part of the body where knowledge is stored. That is why it is protected so well with the hard skull.

Engage the class in a discussion comparing the style of the examples in the first column, with the style of the writing in the second column. You make like to use the following prompts:

- What do you notice about the narrative 'voice' in the poem column, compared with the information text column? (Suggested answer: The poem is in first person, the information text in third person – it is non-personal, disconnected)

- Do any of the examples in the information text column offer figurative language to describe the brain? Why/Why not? (Suggested answer: A factual text is more likely to offer literal explanations of the topic, rather than encourage the reader to infer meaning. The factual texts are more direct in delivering the information)

- Do any of the examples in the information text column rhyme? (No) Why is rhyme not well-suited to an information text? (Suggested answer: Rhyming is associated with playful texts, for children while information texts offer a more serious tone as they are providing factual information.)

- Do both text types offer any opinions or judgements? (suggested answer: It is possible for both to provide an opinion)

Creating text:

Have students choose a part of the human body (suggested ideas include: heart, lungs, skeleton, muscles, feet, hands, eyes) to use as the focus of their own writing. Students are to conduct research using the internet or books from the school library or classroom to find out more about their chosen subject matter. They will need to find out:

- What the body part does

- Why the body part is important

- How the body part works

Once students have gathered information about their chosen body part, instruct them that they are going to create two short texts about this body part. They are both going to be informative and provide correct information to readers, but one will be in the form of a poem and second will be in the form of an article.

Suggested lengths for each text are:

- Poem 6-10 lines (2-3 stanzas)

- Article 2-4 paragraphs (with a heading and subheadings)

Before students begin writing, revise the features of each text type. Some dot points are provided below for reference during this class discussion:

Poems:

- Use imagery and figurative language

- Can rhyme

- Are divided into stanzas

- Can be lighthearted, whimsical

- Can offer an opinion

Articles (For a sample turn to 'Gobbleguts' on page 32-33 of this issue of Countdown – do not use the article 'Our Special Brains' for this purpose):

- Make use of technical language

- Are divided into sections using subheadings

- Can be written in first or third person

- Focus on the facts

For students requiring a scaffold for planning their writing, they might like to draw up the same table as they completed earlier with their ideas about the poem in the left column and the associated ideas for the information text in the right column.

Assessment for/as learning:

Students are to complete a self-reflection answering the following questions:

Looking at your poem and your article:

- What is the main difference between the two texts you wrote?

- Which is most effective in informing the reader about the topic? Why?

- Which is more interesting or fun to read? Why?

- Which did you enjoy writing more? Why?

- Is it ok write a factual text in the form of a poem?

Our Special Brains

article by Dr Nikki-Anne Wilson | illustrated by Michel Streich

AC9E3LY07 | EN2-OLC-01

Focus Question: How does an author's use of language help engage an audience?

Learning Intention:

I am learning how using creative and interesting language, like metaphors, similes, and rhetorical questions, can make a presentation more interesting so that I can give a fun and engaging presentation.

Success Criteria:

- I can work in pairs and small groups to discuss important vocabulary and language choices in a model text

- I can engage respectfully in informal conversations with a peer

- I can plan and present a short oral presentation using engaging language to help my audience to visualize the story

- I can listen attentively to my peers during their presentations

Essential knowledge:

For information on how to deliver a speech confidently, view the video Tips for improving your manner from the Arts Unit.

For more information, view The School Magazine's video on Connotation, Imagery and Symbol.

Vocabulary

Prior to introducing any information about the text to the class, write the following words/phrases on the board. Tell the class that these words/phrases are in the text they are going to read.

- primary motor cortex

- nerves

- occipital lobe

- cells

Ask students to work with a small group to discuss:

- What the text will be about based on the words/phrases above

- Whether the text will be fiction or non-fiction

- Whether students are familiar with any of the words/phrases from the list

Ask small groups to report back and then reveal the name of the article: Our Special Brains.

Read the article as a class or listen to the audio if you have a digital subscription. After reading the article, return to the vocabulary list above and work together as a class to write the definition of each. Encourage students to use words from the article to explain the meaning of each item on the vocabulary list.

Understanding text:

If you have a digital subscription, have students complete the interactive.

Explain to the class that the article has used a number of figurative language techniques to engage readers. Explain that they will need to identify these in the model texts and then when they go on to the next part of the lesson they will need to use these figurative language techniques in their own writing.

Organise students into pairs. Ask them to go on a 'figurative language hunt' and underline or highlight examples of each of the following techniques in the article 'My Amazing Brain.' Their goal is to find at least one of each.

- Rhetorical questions

- Comparison

- Imagery

- Direct address

- Exclamation

- Inclusive language

NESA's K-10 glossary can be used to check the meaning of each of these techniques.

Some suggested answers are presented in the table below, please note there are other examples in the text that do not appear in this table.

Figurative language device	Example from text
Rhetorical question	How do brains work? What is going on inside our heads when we do different things?
Comparison	The signal from our brains to our muscles is a bit like this, only our bodies can do it even faster than dominos!
Imagery	The primary motor cortex helps to send the signals all the way from our brains along special pathways called nerves which travel all over our bodies.
Direct address	Your brain is a very special part of you.
Exclamation	Maybe people sang 'Happy Birthday' and you laughed because they were very out of tune!
Inclusive language	Our brains work VERY hard all day, every day —even while we're asleep!

Ask pairs to choose one of their examples from the model text and explain why this type of figurative language is engaging for a reader.

An example answer could be that rhetorical questions such as 'How do our brains work?' cause readers to think about the answer to this question. It also uses the word 'our' which makes readers feel included in the article.

Creating text:

Have students discuss with a partner the following:

- Favourite memory

- Earliest memory

- Vivid memory

After discussing these three types of memories with a partner, students can choose one memory they talked to their partner about and prepare an oral presentation covering the following:

- An outline of the memory

- Why the student remembers that particular experience well

- An image or object associated with the memory

- How the memory connects with the senses (What can students see, hear, feel, taste, smell when they think of that memory)

When preparing for their presentation, encourage students to use some of the language choices used in the article to engage their audience (rhetorical questions, comparisons imagery, direct address, exclamations, inclusive language). Tell students that their goal is to explain their memory in a way that will help the people listening to visualize that memory as they listen to the presentation.

Provide time for students to plan and rehearse the pace, volume and pauses required to tell the story of their memory in an engaging and interesting way.

Assessment for/as learning:

Prior to listening to the presentations, engage the class in a discussion about active listening. Create a list on the board showing what active listening might look like:

- Eyes/body directed towards presenter

- Reacting to the speaker appropriately (for example by nodding or smiling at appropriate moments)

- Not speaking or calling out while a presentation is being delivered

- Gentle applause when a speaker is finished

Students take turns to present their memory to the class. After all students have finished their presentations, they are to complete the following lesson reflection:

My presentation:

- I was proud of my presentation because…

- Next time I would try to improve…

Listening to other people's presentations:

- I found it (easy/difficult) to visualize a speaker's memory when they…

- I liked it when my classmates… in their presentations because…

Speaking with my classmates in pairs/small groups

- I like having discussions with a partner/small group because…

- Working with a partner or small group is different to presenting to the whole class because…

- I prefer speaking (with a partner/to the whole class) because…

Say 'Yes' to Brain Breaks

persuasive piece by Cheryl Bullow | illustrated by Michel Streich

EN-CWT-03 (Persuasive) | AC9E3LY06

Learning Intention:

I am learning about the important elements and the reasons for choosing to write a persuasive text so that I can use a range of persuasive strategies in my own writing.

Success Criteria:

- I can make arguments, giving evidence to support my ideas

- I can identify and analyse the effectiveness of persuasive features in a model text

- I can compose a persuasive piece of writing using a range of persuasive strategies

- I can make use of structural features such as headings, topic sentences and call to action to persuade readers

Essential knowledge:

Prior to reading the text, slow the class the video Argument on The School Magazine website.

Oral language and communication

Engage the class in a warm up activity involving a game called 'speed debating.' Have students form two concentric circles facing each other (as though they are about to do barn dancing). Assign the inner circle as the affirmative team (agrees with topic), and the outer circle as the negative (disagrees with topic).

Call out a debate topic (use the list below for samples). Then set a timer for 1 minute. Have students talk to the person they are facing giving arguments for their side of the debate in an informal way. When the timer goes off, call 'stop.' Have the outer circle rotate to a new 'partner' and then repeat the process with a new topic. Do this three or four times.

This will get students into the mindset of making arguments before they read the persuasive article.

List of sample debate topics:

- That we should ban school uniforms

- That cooking lessons should be compulsory at school

- That seating plans should be banned in classrooms

- That students should be able to choose their teacher

- That school aged children must do a weekend sport

Understanding text:

Introduce students to features used in a persuasive text including:

- Rhetorical questions

- Topic sentences

- Direct address

- Evidence to support the argument

- Call to action

Read the article 'Say 'yes' to brain breaks' out loud to the class, of if you have a digital subscription, listen to the audio. While listening, ask students to follow along and underline or highlight examples of the features of persuasive texts as listed above.

After reading, engage the class in a class discussion in which students report back on the features they identified in the article as they were listening. As each example is discussed ask the class 'why does this work?'

Looked closely at the two topic sentences from the article:

- Brain breaks should be an essential part of learning today.

- The key to brain breaks is not to overthink them.

Ask students to identify which of the topic sentences is providing an opinion (the first one) and which one is providing further information (the second one).

Ask students to choose one of the debate topics from the 'speed debating' warm up activity and choose whether they are agreeing with the topic or disagreeing with the topic. Have students write two topic sentences. The first, to present an opinion and the second to provide further information.

Model an example using the topic 'That we should ban school uniforms.' Choose to disagree with the topic.

Topic sentence 1: School uniforms are an important part of school culture and should not be banned.

Topic sentence 2: School uniforms provide students with a sense of belonging.

Look closely at the call to action:

- 'It's important to recharge, refresh and reset that incredible brain of yours.'

Discuss the following questions:

- When trying to convince readers to do something, why is it useful to use direct address? (use of 'you') (Addressing a reader directly, makes the reader feel more involved and forges a connection with them)

- Why is it effective to finish a persuasive piece with a call to action? (It leaves the reader with a practical idea of what they can do)

- What other interesting language choice can you see in this sample call to action? (alliteration – 'recharge, refresh and rest'; rule of three – listing three ideas together – recharge, refresh and rest.')

Creating text:

Have students imagine The School Magazine is going to publish a persuasive article every month written by students called either

- 'Say 'yes' to .'

  or

- 'Say 'no' to…'

Offer students some sample topics such as:

Say 'yes' to:

- Free train travel

- Three-day weekends

- Pets at school

- Longer lunch breaks

Say 'no' to:

- Homework

- Single-use plastics

- Eating meat

Once students have selected a topic, allow them time to conduct further research online or using books from the classroom or school library. Encourage students to gather 'evidence' or 'proof' that society/school should say 'yes' or 'no' to the chosen topic.

Have students plan an article using the scaffold provided. This scaffold follows the same structure as the article 'Say 'yes' to brain breaks.'

Headline	Say 'yes'/'no' to …
Introduction (use rhetorical questions to draw readers in)	
Subheading 1	
Paragraph 1 Topic sentence to state case, then provide evidence or proof	
Subheading 2	
Paragraph 2 Topic sentence to state case, then provide evidence or proof	
Concluding sentence Use a call to action to encourage your readers to act	

Assessment for/as learning:

Organise the class into small groups of three or four students. Have students read each other's persuasive pieces (or have them read their work out loud to their group). Use the C3B4Me feedback/peer assessment method.

Thunderstorm

poem by Kristin Martin | illustrated by Hannah Seakins

EN2-UARL-01 | AC9E3LE04

Focus question: How does figurative language help us understand ideas and comparisons?

Learning Intention:

I am learning to find and talk about the pictures made with words in a poem (imagery) so that I can see how they help readers imagine things while they read.

Success Criteria:

- I can find examples of imagery in a model poem

- I can explain the use of figurative language and its impact on the reader

- I can make connections between the illustration and the content of the poem

- I can make my own illustration and justify my visual choices in writing

Essential knowledge:

For more information, view The School Magazine's video on Connotation, Imagery and Symbol

Vocabulary

Explain to the class that this poem uses imagery associated with eating. Read the poem out loud or if you have a digital subscription, listen to the audio.

As students listen, have them underline words associated with eating (answers: hungry, ate, stomach, saliva, tongue, gobbled).

Have students add to the list of eating words from the poem to make a longer list words associated with food and eating (for example gulp, chew, crunch, bite). Set a 3 minute timer and when the time is up, have students share their ideas with the class.

Understanding text:

Lead the class in a discussion using the following prompts:

- What is the poem about? (Suggested answer: The sky during a thunderstorm)

- When the poem states 'the hungry sky just ate the sun but still it yearns for more,' what does this mean in the literal sense? (Suggested answer: when a thunderstorm arrives, the clouds cover the sun so it cannot be seen anymore)

- When the sky is described as 'hungry' and is described as having a stomach, arms and a tongue, what technique is this? (Suggested answer: personification)

- How does the extended personification and eating-related imagery throughout the poem help readers to imagine a thunderstorm? (Suggested answer: The personification of a stormy sky helps bring the storm to life and the suggestion that it ate the sky makes the thunderstorm seem threatening, that it would like to eat more. The sound of thunder is presented as a stomach rumbling allows readers to imagine the sound of a thunderclap. The way the hungry sky ate the sun also helps readers to imagine the sky getting very dark during a storm.

Look at the illustration. If possible, project the illustrated poem on the board.

- What is the salient image (the thing that draws your eye first)? (Suggested answer: The baby bear.)

- Why do you think that this is the part of the illustration that grabs readers attention first? (Suggested answer: lighter colour, close to the center of the page, can see almost the whole face)

- How does the image of the bears add to the impact of the poem? (Suggested answer: The image supports the idea that the stormy sky is threatening because the little bear looks frightened. And the mother bear looks concerned.)

- What is the dominant colour used in the illustration? Why? (Suggested answer: blues, purples and greys as these reflect the colours of a very dark storm cloud)

- Does this illustration show any of the eating imagery identified earlier? (Suggested answer: no).

Creating text:

Ask students to imagine that they are an illustrator who has been asked to illustrate the poem 'Thunderstorm.' Have students look closely at the examples of imagery associated with eating in the poem (they can look at the words they underlined in the first reading). Tell students that the publisher of magazine has requested that they use the eating imagery when creating the new illustration.

After allowing time for students to create their illustration, instruct students to write a paragraph explaining why they have illustrated the poem. They are to refer to the specific imagery used in the poem that inspired their illustration. Offer students the below sentence starters if needed:

- I chose to draw … because

- The line from the poem that inspired my drawing is…

- I chose this example of imagery because…

When students have written their paragraph, organize the class into groups of five. Students are to take turns showing their small group the illustration they have created and read out their paragraph to explain why they decided to illustrate the poem in that way.

Assessment for/as learning:

Students complete an exit ticket answering the following question:

- Why is imagery important for helping readers create a picture in their mind as they read a poem?

Dragan

story by EJ Delaney | illustrated by Cheryl Orsini

EN2-UARL-01 | AC9E3LE02

Learning Intention:

I am learning how different characters are made by what they say, do, and how they get along with others in a story, so I can create my own characters.

Success Criteria:

- I can identify different character types in texts generally as well as in a model text

- I can examine and analyse the key representation of two key characters in a model text

- I can use my knowledge of character types to develop my own set of characters

Essential knowledge:

For more information about characters in a text, view the School Magazine's video on Character.

The NSW Department of Education have prepared a resource relating to teaching characterisation: Reading: Stage 2 - Exploring Character

Oral language and communication

Prior to reading the story, engage the class in a discussion about characterisation. Use the following prompts:

- In a story, who are the characters? (Suggested answer: the people in the story)

- What different kinds of characters often appear in the stories that you read? (Suggested answers: Major and minor characters, the main character or protagonist, an enemy or baddie, people who help the main character- sidekick)

- Why do stories often have characters who are quite different from one another? (Suggested answer: this can create conflict, it can drive the plot line, it can help readers connect with the main character, it may encourage readers to feel an emotional response)

- Have you ever read a story where the main character was similar to yourself? Do you find those stories more interesting than others?

Understanding text:

Read the story as a class, or listen to the audio if you have a digital subscription. After reading, ask students to label each character (human) as either:

- The main character (protagonist) (Jova)

- The villain (antagonist) (Paige)

- The friend (Madison)

- Minor characters (Jova's Mum, Miss Simpson, Corey, Jemma)

Discuss the following questions as a class:

- Which character did you empathise with the most? (Jova)

- Which character did you have a negative feeling about? (Paige)

Tell the students that they are going to be investigating how the author helps readers connect with Jova as the main character as well as how they made the reader see Paige in a negative way. Explain how a Fishbone diagram works. Students will be making two fishbone diagrams, one for Jova and one for Paige. In the 'Topic' section in the middle, students are to write the name of the character. Then the five other categories of information they will gather are:

- Description (personality traits, character type)

- Actions (things the character does)

- Dialogue (examples of dialogue from the text)

- Emotion (how the reader might feel towards the character)

- Relationships (how the character is connected with other characters in the story)

Creating text:

Instruct students that they are to develop two characters – a protagonist (main character) and an antagonist (villain). These two characters are to be people that could exist in real life in the school/community/neighbourhood where students live.

Explain that students will not have to write a story, they are to prepare an outline of two opposing characters based on their characteristics, actions, dialogue and how they connect with other characters in the story.

Students may work independently or with a partner to create the two character profiles. They must first decide on the setting for their story (suggested ideas include: School, neighbourhood, local shopping centre, local library, soccer field, skate park, pony club, park, beach, river).

Students can use the scaffold below, one per character. Tell students not to write on the scaffold whether each character is a protagonist or antagonist.

Name	
Age	
Personality traits	
Interests/hobbies	
Actions	
Dialogue	
Why they are in the location when the story/conflict begins	

Assessment for/as learning:

Organise students to swap their character profiles with another student/pair of students. Ask students to read both character profiles and then finish these sentences:

1. The character _____ is the protagonist because…

2. The character _____ is the antagonist because…

3. It is important to have both a protagonist and an antagonist in a story because….