











#### Topic: Explore characters in stories

#### Writing about experiences

##### Lesson concepts

-  Text organisation — Concepts about print: books
-  Spelling — Letters of the alphabet represent sounds in spoken words
-  Spelling — High-frequency sight words, known words
-  Sounds of language — Syllables, phonemes
-  Features of literary texts — Characters, events
-  Creating literary texts — Retelling familiar literary texts: performance, use of illustrations, images
-  Text processing strategies — Understanding phrasing and fluency
-  Text processing strategies — Print knowledge, contextual knowledge, semantic knowledge, grammatical knowledge, phonic knowledge
-  Comprehension strategies — Understanding and discussing texts
-  Text structures and language features that create texts — Short texts: familiar words and phrases, beginning writing knowledge

Today students will:

- ▶ understand how to read and comprehend a predictable text from a familiar context with phrasing and fluency, using concepts about print and emerging contextual, semantic, grammatical and phonic knowledge
- ▶ understand how to create short texts using writing knowledge.

## Resources

### Texts

Gleeson, L and Blackwood, F 2006, *Amy and Louis*, Scholastic, Lindfield, NSW.

Shanahan, L and Guthridge, B 2003, *My mum Tarzan*, Hodder Headline, Sydney.

Morgan, S, Kwaymullina, E and Ottley, M 2003, *Me and my dad*, Little Hare, Prahan, Victoria.

(Or use an internet search engine to find read-aloud versions of these stories online.)

### Digital

Book — *Beth and the three-toed sloth*

Book — *First day at school ... a Rosie and Wallace story*

### Find and prepare

Sheet — Where's Whitney?

Sheet — Where's Theodore?

Sheet — Words 13 (cut out) (save for future lessons)

Digital camera or phone camera

Scrapbook

Cotton wool, glue, cardboard

## Lesson

### Share a story

- Find the book or an online reading of the book *Amy and Louis* by Libby Gleeson.
- Before reading/viewing, ask questions about the front cover and the inside pictures which allow students to make predictions about the story.

#### Focus questions

- Q: *What does the picture on the cover tell us about the characters, events and settings?*
- Q: *What do you think this story might be about?*
- Q: *What problems might these characters have in the story?*
- Q: *Who is the author and who is the illustrator? Where do their names appear?*

- During reading, demonstrate the rules of reading in the right direction.

### Comprehend story through literal and inferential questions

- After reading the story, ask questions to help students think about the story parts.

#### Focus questions

- Q: *Who were the characters?*
- Q: *What was the setting of the story?*
- Q: *What were the main problems encountered by Amy or Louis?*
- Q: *Were there any repeating patterns?*
- A: For example: 'Coo-ee'.

- Use questions to help students talk about:
  - what parts of the story they enjoyed or did not enjoy
  - what parts of the story they found interesting or puzzling
  - personal stories about moving place or school or changes in friendships.

### Focus questions

Q: *What did you like about this book?*

Q: *Was there anything that you disliked?*

Q: *What surprised you about Amy's dream?*

Q: *What connects us to others when we are apart?*

Q: *What experiences have you had that are similar to the children or the setting of this story?*

### Perform and innovate on story elements

- Explain to students that they will act out some parts of the story as you re-read it to them.
- Ask students to perform the actions in the story as the book's beginning is re-read.  
Ask students to:
  - practise the 'Coo-ee, Luo-ee' and 'Coo-ee, Am-ee' refrains
  - practise saying, 'Coo-ee, Luo-ee' and 'Coo-ee, Am-ee' with you
  - on your signal, ask students (in role as Amy or Louis) to give a 'Coo-ee' to another person.
- Ask students to talk about some of the games that Amy and Louis played when they were together, for example: building towers, digging holes, staring at clouds, playing dress-ups, making cubbies.
  - Talk about whether students have ever played similar games.
  - Ask students to perform the action in the story as you read the beginning parts of the text.
  - Ask students questions while they enact the text.

### Focus questions

Q: *Where and why are you digging?*

Q: *What creatures can you see in the clouds?*

Q: *What are you dressing up as?*

- Ask students to choose a pretend game like the one that Amy and Louis played together.
  - Ask another person (another adult or child) to join students' games for at least a few minutes.
  - Encourage students to keep playing and interacting with other people.
  - Encourage students to use their imagination to think of new ideas to keep their game going and to put their ideas into words.
- Use a digital camera or phone camera to take photographs of students' play.
- View the photos and ask students to tell you what was happening in the pictures.

### Focus questions

Q: *Who's this?*

Q: *What's happening here?*

Q: *What were they saying, doing or feeling here?*

### Write a sentence using elements from a story and performance

- Discuss the games that the children played together in the story *Amy and Louis*.
- Demonstrate writing a sentence that tells about the game students played when they were Amy and Louis.
  - Use the 'think aloud' strategy when writing and be clear about the use of full stops, capital letters and descriptive words.
  - Demonstrate the use of different strategies where possible to spell simple words, for example: listening to the most obvious sounds, using knowledge of letter endings.
- Ask students to draw a picture in their scrapbook about their pretend game.
  - Encourage students to add detail to their drawing to show what they used, who else played the game, what they did and how they felt.

### Focus questions

Q: *What is happening in your drawing?*

Q: *Is that what happened in your game?*

Q: *Who else played the game?*

Q: *What materials did you use in your game?*

Q: *What do you think you would like to write to describe your game?*

- Explain to students:
  - that they will also write a sentence that tells about their picture and the game they played earlier
  - how the rules of reading relate to the rules of writing.

## Say to students

Before we read, we think about what the story will be about. Before we write, we think about what we want to say.

We read and we write from left to right and top to bottom.

When we read, we say one word for each word on the page. When we write, we write one word for each word we say.

When we read, punctuation tells us how to use our voice. When we write, we use punctuation to tell the reader how to use their voice.

When we read, we listen to what we say and fix mistakes if it doesn't make sense or sound right. When we write, we read back our writing to make sure it makes sense and sounds right.

- Support students as they write their sentence. Remind them about full stops and capital letters.
- Prompt students to use describing words to make their writing more interesting, for example: What word/s can you use to describe the cubby house you made?
  - Remind students to use word walls and what they know about letters and sounds to complete their writing. For example: Students might write, 'I mad a cubee and pretd it was a cassl and I was the brav prns'; you could write the correct spelling above their writing: 'I made a cubby and pretended it was a castle and I was the brave prince.'
- When students are finished, ask them to explain what is happening in their drawing.

## Discuss special ways of communicating

- Discuss how language is used differently depending on the relationships between people.

## Say to students

You may have noticed that there are different ways that people talk to each other depending on how well they know the other person or the situation they are in.

For example, you might greet a friend 'Hi, Jack!', but you would say 'Good morning, Mrs Brown' to your teacher.

Let's think about the different ways the characters in the books we've been reading speak to each other.

- Find the books or an online reading of the books *My mum Tarzan* and *Me and my dad*.

## Focus questions

Q: *How did the characters in these books speak or communicate with each other?*

A: The mum used play language to communicate with her daughter. The dad and the boy communicated through shared activities and body language.

Q: *How do you speak to your friends?*

Q: *How do you speak to your teachers?*

## Review letters and sounds

### Note

This series of lessons provides opportunities for students to review three- and four-letter words in context that have 'th', 'wh', 'sk' and 'sw' and the letter endings 'ag', 'eg', 'ig', 'ug', 'et' and 'ed'. Introduce the letter endings 'en' and 'un' and the blends 'cl', 'bl' and 'gl'.

Draw students' attention to these letter patterns in words as you write and read texts, for example: stories, factual texts and everyday or environmental print.

When two letters are together and they make one sound in a word such as 'ch', 'sh', 'th' or 'wh', they are called digraphs. It is not necessary for students to know or use this term.



- View and join in reading the **Book** — [Beth and the three-toed sloth](#).
- Ask students to identify words with the /th/ and /wh/ sound as they view and listen to the story.
  - Remind students that the letters 't' and 'h' make the one sound /th/ and the letters 'w' and 'h' make the one sound /wh/.
- Assist students to identify the words 'Beth', 'three', 'sloth', 'broth' and 'cloth' that have the /th/ sound and 'whippet', 'whispers', 'whisks', 'whiff' and 'whistles' that have the /wh/ sound.



- Review the **Sheet** — [Where's Theodore?](#) and ask students to find words whose names have the /th/ sound in them.



- Have students find words whose names have the /wh/ sound in them. Use the **Sheet** — [Where's Whitney?](#)

- Talk about the words and the sound the letters make in each word.
  - Use this table to prompt student answers.

th	wh
three	where
there	when
that	what
they	wheel
then	why

### Develop a bank of high-frequency words



- Show students the word 'before' cut from the **Sheet** — [Words 13](#).
- Read the word and explain to students that they will listen and look for this word in the **Book** — [First day at school ... a Rosie and Wallace story](#).
  - Read along with the words of the story and stop on the pages that have the word 'before'.
  - Place all the new words from the sheet on a word wall.
- Encourage students to use the word cards when they need to use these words in their writing.

### Develop, progress and consolidate English through the contexts for learning

#### Prepare for play

- Explain to students that they will make cloud pictures using cotton wool, glue and cardboard.

#### Make a cloud picture

- Take students outside to look at clouds or look at pictures of clouds in books or online.
- Ask students to make cloud pictures using cotton wool, glue and cardboard.
- Engage students in conversations about what shapes or creatures they are seeing in the clouds and creating in their pictures.
- Ask students to write sentences to describe the content of the picture.

#### Build responsibility in students

- Have students pack away any materials they used in this session.