Accelerated Literacy Teaching Sequence notes for:

**Who Sank the Boat?**
Written and illustrated by Pamela Allen, published by Puffin Books, Victoria, 1988

**Year Level:**
This book is suitable for use with Year 1/2 students.

**Synopsis of story:**
This story is about a group of farm animals that decide to go for a row in a boat on a warm, sunny day. The cow, donkey, pig, sheep and mouse all get in one at a time, each time the boat sinking lower in the water. When the mouse finally jumps in the boat, his tiny weight is too much and the boat sinks. The question ‘Do you know who sank the boat?’ is repeated throughout the story. Although it seems more likely that it will be one of the larger animals that sinks the boat, it is only when the mouse gets in at the end that the combined weight of the animals proves to be too much.

The story is very well illustrated and clearly shows the boat getting lower and lower in the water each time an animal gets in. The awkwardness of the animals getting into the small boat and the instability of the boat is well shown with lots of water splashing and the animals’ faces displaying funny expressions.

**Why use this story?**
This story explores themes which younger students can identify with:

- Going on a fun outing
- Doing a fun activity with your friends
- Making a plan that goes wrong

The book is humorously illustrated and provides good opportunities for discussion.

This story has a distinct orientation, complication and resolution making it a good text to show the structure of a narrative.

**Important Note:**
- The following notes have been written for teachers who have attended workshops in teaching Accelerated Literacy. The notes presume some understanding about how to teach the program.
- It is also presumed that teachers have read the book and have a detailed understanding of the text before beginning a teaching sequence.
- Teachers are responsible for ensuring the suitability of this book for their particular teaching context.

**These notes were written by:** Luse Tamata

**Supportive Text and Resources**

AL Teaching Sequence Notes: The Rainbow Fish
Luse Tamata 2010
Pamella Allen has written and illustrated lots of other children’s books, many of them involving animals.

There is a website detailing how you could investigate the concepts of floating and sinking with students:
http://adventureskids.blogspot.com/2010/05/who-sank-boat.html

**Teaching Outcomes**

At the end of this teaching sequence, students will be able to:

- Read the selected passage at 90% accuracy or above,
- Demonstrate comprehension of the text
- Understand the role of the selected passage within the overall story
- Understand the language choices made by the author
- Spell selected words from the text

**Long term writing goal: Independent Writing**

To write an orientation sentence modelled on the opening sentence from *Who Sank the Boat?* More able students could attempt more than one sentence in their orientation.

**Short Term Writing Goals**

1) Correctly form letters identified within specific words
2) Correctly write selected spelling words from the text in clear handwriting
3) Contribute ideas to a class book

**Low Order Literate Orientation**

**Cover**

- Illustration – We can see the donkey and the cow sitting in the boat each holding an oar. These are not the only animals that will get into the boat. They look quite comfortable, although they are quite big, and the boat is not sinking (yet).
- In the bottom left hand corner there is a rope that is tied to the boat – this means it is still attached to the little jetty – other animals still have to climb into the boat.
- The donkey and the cow are smiling at each other – they are friends (as are the other animals)

**Inside Cover**

- Gives a brief description of what the book is about. Also details different awards that the book has won, especially because of its lovely illustrations. Highlight that we can tell a lot about what is happening because of what we see in the pictures.

**Title Pages**

- First title page shows the boat tied to the jetty.
- Publishing details, author, title
• **First Illustration** – we get an aerial view of where this story takes place. We see the animals walking along towards the jetty, past the house. We can see the boat and a little house. Maybe the boat belongs to the person who lives in the house.

• The land there looks green and hilly, maybe the animals all live there, perhaps it is a farm.

**Page 1 – 2**

• **Main points** We learn about the setting for this story and who the main characters are. We are told it is beside the sea, on Mr Peffer’s place. We learn that the cow, donkey, sheep, pig and tiny little mouse all live on Mr Peffer’s place.

• **Inferences** We assume it is a nice place to live and that the animals all live together and are friends.

• **Illustrations** The animals are all walking on their hind legs so we can relate to them as if they were people. The sheep has brought her knitting along and the pig has brought an umbrella - is it going to rain, or is it very sunny to keep the sun off?

**Page 3 – 4**

• **Main points** We find out the animals are good friends. They didn’t have a reason to go for a row on the bay but because they are friends they must just like spending time together. It is nice weather so it would be fun to go out onto the water. We are asked if we know who sank the boat?

• **Inferences** We understand that the boat is going to sink, can we figure out which animal is going to sink it? We don’t know if they are ‘allowed’ to go in the boat - Mr Peffer is not about so we don’t know if they have ‘permission’.

• **Illustrations** We can see the water looks lovely and clear – a nice day to be on the water. We can also see how small the boat looks compared to all the animals – it’s not likely that they will fit easily.

**Page 5 – 6**

• **Main points** The cow gets in, but it is not easy. She tilts the boat and makes a lot of noise (‘din’) as she gets in. We also see a big splash and the uncertainty on her face as the boat tilts under her weight.

• **Inferences** The boat is not really big enough for the animals, and it is very awkward for the animals to try and get into it.

• **Illustrations** The cow is seen looking uncertain and a bit unsteady. She is steadying herself on the jetty – it is not easy for her to keep her balance.

**Page 7-8**

• **Main points** We discover it was not the cow who sank the boat although she came close to falling in.

• **Inferences** The cow is heavy and the boat is not balanced in the water.

• **Illustrations** The boat is moving a lot and splashing a lot of water about. The cow’s face shows that she is struggling to keep the boat steady.

**Page 9-10**

• **Main points** Next is the donkey who gets in the other end to balance the weight of the cow. The donkey gets in quickly so that the overbalanced boat doesn’t sink or turn over.

• **Inferences** The animals are quite brave and quick to help each other out, showing that they are good friends.

• **Illustrations** The donkey looks quite funny getting into the water, back end first. The other animals are waiting quite patiently and happily. They don’t look worried about getting into the boat. The pig is still shading itself from the sun with its umbrella and the sheep is still knitting.

**Page 11-12**

• **Main points** We discover it was not the donkey that sank the boat.

• **Inferences** The donkey has balanced the weight of the cow and now the boat seems quite stable.

• **Illustrations** We can see that cow and donkey are much bigger than the boat – they both entirely fill the sections of the boat they are sitting in.
Main Points Next the pig, who is ‘as fat as butter’ steps in the side of the boat. This tilts the boat again, and the pig loses its umbrella as well causing more splashing.

Inferences The pig is not discouraged from getting into the boat, it is quite happy to climb in. They all must have really wanted to go out in the boat.

Illustrations The sheep and mouse are still quite happily waiting and chatting on the jetty. The pig’s climbing into the boat unsettles the boat so much that both the cow and donkey stand up again, trying to keep their balance. The pig must cling to the jetty to stop itself falling in. Again, the animals expressions show their instability and anxiety in the boat.

Main Points We learn it is not the pig that sank the boat.

Inferences It must be getting a bit squashed on the boat now.

Illustrations The rim of the boat is now very close to the water. The boat is tilted in favour of the side the pig is sitting on. The cow and the donkey seem to be leaning away from the pig in order to balance the boat.

Main Points Next it is the sheep. She already knows where she must sit in order for the boat to be balanced – the opposite side to the pig. She wants to take her knitting along with her.

Inferences The animals are pretty clever to know where they need to sit in order to keep the boat balanced.

Illustrations The sheep seems to have a good method of getting into the boat and she is smaller so maybe it is easier for her to get in.

Main Points We are told it was not the sheep that sank the boat.

Inferences If it was not the sheep that only leaves the mouse – it must be the mouse that sinks the boat! The big animals wait for the smallest animal, the mouse, to get into the boat. Maybe the animals really thought they were going to all fit into the boat and be able to go for a row in the boat. They probably thought they were safe now!

Illustrations The top of the boat is nearly level with the sea. The animals all look very happy – they only need to get one more animal, a small mouse, into the boat.

Main Points Pamela Allen asks us, almost as if it’s not possible, whether it could be the mouse that sinks the boat.

Inferences The boat could not take any more weight at all, not even a tiny little mouse. The mouse is only small and had to take a big jump in order to make it into the boat.

Illustrations The animals are all watching as the mouse makes his big jump into the boat. The pig and the sheep almost look a little anxious about it.

Main Points Pamela Allen confirms that yes, it is the mouse who ends up sinking the boat.

Inferences We have guessed correctly that only the mouse was left and it must have been him that sank the boat, although he was the lightest. In some ways, it was all the animals together who sank the boat.

Illustrations The animals all falling in at the same time causes a very big splash. The mouse manages to hang onto the end of an oar. The sheep loses her knitting and the ball of wool is up in the air.
Illustrations: The cow, donkey and pig all look tired and wet as they traipse back up the path. The sheep, somehow still holding her knitting, is looking back at the mouse who is running to catch up, with a bit of a grin on his face. The donkey still has hold of one of the oars.

Study Passage

Passage 1

Beside the sea, on Mr Peffer’s place, there lived a cow, a donkey, a sheep, a pig, and a tiny little mouse. They were good friends, and one warm sunny morning, for no particular reason, they decided to go for a row in the bay. (45 words)

High Order Literate Orientation

Purpose:
These two sentences set the scene for the story Who Sank the Boat? They introduce us to the setting, to the main characters and to the activity they will be attempting – going out for a row in the bay. We learn that the story takes place in a little bay, beside the sea, on a warm sunny morning. We learn that the animals are good friends and have decided to go for a row together in the bay. There is no particular purpose for them going out in the boat, other than it is a nice day and being friends they probably like to do fun things together.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Grammar &amp; word choice</th>
<th>Impact (What is the writer trying to achieve?)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>Beside the sea, on Mr Peffer’s place, there lived a cow, a donkey, a sheep, a pig, and a tiny little mouse.</td>
<td>proposition ‘beside’ tells us it is very close to the sea Mr Peffer owns this land, he is possibly a farmer a list which clearly lets us know who all the characters in the story are.</td>
<td>Placing the story next to the sea implies the animals want to have a fun time – we associate the seaside/beach with fun and outings lets us know the animals probably belong on a farm, they aren’t ‘wild’ animals In roughly this order, the author will have the animals getting into the boat. The story focuses on what happens to each individual so they are listed individually to begin with.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AL Teaching Sequence Notes: The Rainbow Fish
Luse Tamata 2010
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of characters</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They were good friends,</td>
<td>and one warm sunny morning,</td>
<td>for no particular reason,</td>
<td>they decided to go for a row in the bay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>describes them as a group, all five are friends together ‘good’ implies closeness, helpfulness and equality between them</td>
<td>‘one’ – non specific, just a day nice weather, ‘morning’ lets us imagine they looked forward to a nice long morning on the water they aren’t going for anything specific e.g. going fishing</td>
<td>‘they decided’ – a group decision, there is no obvious leader in the group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implies characteristics that make a good friend: kind, helpful, friendly</td>
<td>‘morning’ lets us imagine they looked forward to a nice long morning on the water, maybe before lunchtime</td>
<td>lets us know that it is a relaxed outing, just for fun – when it goes wrong, it’s not a big problem re-emphasises that despite their sizes, all animals in the group are equal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Orientation**

**Setting**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>where</th>
<th>where + expansion</th>
<th>who + expansion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beside the sea, on Mr Peffer’s place, lived a cow, a donkey, a sheep, a pig, and a tiny little mouse.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Next to the sea, maybe on a farm, live five different animals.
   ‘Beside’ close to the sea.
   Mr Peffer – maybe a farmer?
   ‘a’ – tells us how many of each animal – only one
   ‘tiny little’ – tells us how small the mouse is – contrasts with the other animals who are all quite big

**Character information**

**event setting**

2. They were good friends, and one warm, sunny morning, for no particular reason, they decided to go for a row in the bay.

2. The animals all get along well and on a nice morning, just for fun, they decide to go for a trip in a boat.
   “good friends” – not only close, but also good friends to each other – kind, helpful etc.
   “one” - not specific
   “warm, sunny morning” - lets us know the sun is out, it is nice weather, early in the day
   “no particular reason” - e.g. fishing would be a particular reason, but the animals have no reason – implies they are doing it for fun
   “they decided” – make the choice as a group, they are good friends
   “bay” usually nice, calm water in a bay
Transformations

Orientation
Setting
This section of the text focuses on the setting of the story and the introduction of the main characters.

/Beside the sea/, /on Mr Peffer’s place/, /there lived/, /a cow/, /a donkey/, /a sheep/, /a pig/, /and a tiny little mouse/. /They were good friends/, /and one warm sunny morning/, /for no particular reason/, /they decided/to go for a row/in the bay/.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure and wording of text</th>
<th>Features to discuss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>Where</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beside the sea,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expansion 1</td>
<td>Expansion 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on Mr Peffer’s place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>characters introduced</td>
<td>Characters being introduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there lived a cow, a donkey,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a sheep, a pig</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>character + detail</td>
<td>More detail about mouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and a tiny, little mouse.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>description</td>
<td>description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They were good friends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>setting</td>
<td>setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and one warm sunny morning,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reason</td>
<td>reason (there is no reason -&gt; implies it was for fun)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for no particular reason</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who decides</td>
<td>who decides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they decided</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>action</td>
<td>action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to go for a row</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>where</td>
<td>where</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the bay.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Spelling

Points to consider:

- Are there any words that have patterns (or letters) that you have worked on before?
- Are there any new patterns that occur more than once and are commonly occurring?
- Are there any words that have interesting origins or roots that will help the students develop an understanding of English?
- Which words will help the teacher and students with Joint Reconstructed Writing?
- Which words already taught in previous lessons, need revision?
The class teacher’s knowledge of students’ progress and skills will inform how many spelling words or sounds are introduced and at what pace.

**Suggestions for spelling:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>c/ow</th>
<th>th/e</th>
<th>p/ig</th>
<th>s/ea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sh/ee/p</td>
<td>ti/ny</td>
<td>m/ou/se</td>
<td>sun/ny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g/oo/d</td>
<td>th/ere</td>
<td>w/ar/m</td>
<td>n/o</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Writing**

**Short Term writing goals**

1) Correctly form letters identified within specific words
2) Correctly write selected spelling words from the text in clear handwriting
3) Contribute ideas to a class book

Students may practice writing selected spelling words in shorter sentences on their whiteboards before joint-reconstructed writing. The sentences should contain a high number of focus words.

*For example:* The sea is warm. There is a pig. The cow is big. It is sunny.

**Joint Reconstructed Writing**

Jointly reconstruct the parts of the text you have used for Transformations, discussing the writing techniques that apply to each sentence as you do so. Discuss and highlight correct spelling with students as you jointly reconstruct the text. Very young non-reading students should focus on the initial, middle and end sounds in words. The teacher can write other parts of the words on the whiteboard/ butcher's paper, with students assisting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where</th>
<th>Beside the sea,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where expansion</td>
<td>on Mr Puffer's place,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who</td>
<td>there lived a cow, a donkey, a sheep, a pig, and a tiny little mouse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of characters</td>
<td>They were good friends,</td>
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<td>Setting</td>
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<td>Reason</td>
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Joint Constructed Writing

Jointly construct a text based on the passage studied and the model used in transformations and in Joint Reconstructed writing.

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<tr>
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<td>who</td>
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Independent Writing

Students independently construct their own sentence based on the model used in Transformations. The teacher's knowledge of students will inform to what extent students write initial/middle/end sounds versus whole words.

Other Passages to study

Was it the cow who almost fell in, when she tilted the boat and made such a din? No it wasn't the cow who almost fell in. Do you know who sank the boat? 34 words