Early Childhood

These notes have been written to help teachers use the Accelerated Literacy teaching strategies in kindergarten/preparatory year. However, they could also be used in Year 1 where students have difficulties with reading.

Outcomes of the teaching sequence

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

- read the story studied fluently and interpret the illustrations at a high level
- discuss the story: give opinions about the author’s language choices; identify the story’s structure, theme and ideology
- spell chosen words and understand related spelling strategies
- use the story as a model for writing.

Notes

- The following notes have been written for teachers who have attended professional development workshops in teaching Accelerated Literacy. The notes presume some understanding about how to teach the program.
- For a detailed explanation of how to implement the teaching sequence, please refer to the teachers’ handouts from the first professional development workshop. Additionally, you could refer to http://www.nalp.edu.au.
- It is also assumed that teachers have read the text on which these notes are based and have a detailed understanding of the text before beginning a teaching sequence.
- Teachers are responsible for ensuring the suitability of the text on which these notes are based for their particular teaching context.

The National Accelerated Literacy Program is jointly funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Education, Science and Training, and the Northern Territory Government through the Department of Employment, Education and Training, and supported by Charles Darwin University.
One day the grown-ups said we were going to "the beach." We would take some blankets, a couple of billies and some tea and sugar...
## Contents

Using this resource .................................................................................................................. 1

### Titch

Synopsis of the story .................................................................................................................. 4
Themes ...................................................................................................................................... 4
Why use this story? .................................................................................................................... 4
Structure of the text .................................................................................................................. 5
Language features of the text ................................................................................................... 5
Books with similar themes ....................................................................................................... 5

### Accelerated Literacy teaching

Teaching the sequence ............................................................................................................ 8

### In the classroom

Literate orientation ................................................................................................................... 10
Transformations ....................................................................................................................... 21
Spelling .................................................................................................................................... 27
Writing ...................................................................................................................................... 31

### Appendices

Sample weekly plan .................................................................................................................. 34

### Photocopiable master

Complete text ............................................................................................................................. 38
Using this resource
Year level

These notes have been written to help teachers use the Accelerated Literacy teaching strategies in kindergarten/preparatory year. However, they could also be used in Year 1 where students have difficulties with reading.

Outcomes of the teaching sequence

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

- read the story studied fluently and interpret the illustrations at a high level
- discuss the story: give opinions about the author’s language choices; identify the story’s structure, theme and ideology
- spell chosen words and understand related spelling strategies
- use the story as a model for writing.

Notes

- The following notes have been written for teachers who have attended professional development workshops in teaching Accelerated Literacy. The notes presume some understanding about how to teach the program.
- For a detailed explanation of how to implement the teaching sequence, please refer to the teachers’ handouts from the first professional development workshop. Additionally, you could refer to [http://www.nalp.edu.au](http://www.nalp.edu.au).
- It is also assumed that teachers have read the text on which these notes are based and have a detailed understanding of the text before beginning a teaching sequence.
- Teachers are responsible for ensuring the suitability of the text on which these notes are based for their particular teaching context.

The text

*Titch* by Pat Hutchins. Published 2002 by Red Fox. Page numbers here refer to this edition.

Go to ‘The Official Titch website’ at [http://www.titch.net](http://www.titch.net) for complimentary activities and interactive games for children, as well as teacher information.
We would take some blankets, a couple of
blankets and some tea and sugar.

One day the grown ups said we were
going on the block.

We would take some blankets, a rug
and some tea and sugar.

Titch
Synopsis of the story

Being the littlest child in the family often means getting saddled with the littlest toys. Titch must make do with a tricycle, while his older brother and sister have big, fast bikes. When they fly glorious, wind-dancing kites, he gets a dinky little pinwheel. When they handle great big tools, Titch gets to hold the nails. But when the children’s attention turns to gardening, Titch discovers that sometimes the littlest things are the best. While sister Mary has a flowerpot and brother Pete a big spade, Titch has a tiny seed that grows and grows and grows.

Themes

The key theme of *Titch* is one that many young children will find familiar. Most will have experienced the frustration of not being able to do the same things as adults or older friends or siblings.

*Titch* could also be used to demonstrate that each of us has something to contribute, no matter how small or seemingly powerless we may be. Good things often come in small packages: perhaps Titch’s seed is a metaphor for Titch himself?

Why use this story?

A simple text for early readers, *Titch* combines simple language structures with striking illustrations to tell a straightforward story.
Structure of the text

Titch’s narrative structure is straightforward: an orientation (our introduction to the three siblings) and complication (Titch’s size issue), followed by a resolution (Titch’s talent for nurturing the plant). The illustrations support and enhance this structure.

The whole text is used for the teaching sequence.

Orientation:  
Titch was little. His sister Mary was a bit bigger. And his brother Pete was a lot bigger.

Complication 1:  
Pete had a great big bike. Mary had a big bike. And Titch had a little tricycle.

Complication 2:  
Pete had a kite that flew high above the trees. Mary had a kite that flew high above the houses. And Titch had a pinwheel that he held in his hand.

Complication 3:  
Pete had a big drum. Mary had a trumpet. And Titch had a little wooden whistle.

Complication 4:  
Pete had a big saw. Mary had a big hammer. And Titch held the nails.

Resolution:  
Pete had a big spade. Mary had a fat flowerpot. But Titch had the tiny seed. And Titch’s seed grew and grew and grew.

Language features of the text

- Clear, predictable text, with repetition of sentence structure
- Simple sentence structure with the character’s name at the beginning
- The use of the simple past tense
- A relatively small range of words
- Much of the emotion is contained in the illustrations.

Books with similar themes

This is the first in a series of books written about Titch. Once study of this text has begun, teachers could read other Titch books to provide further insights into Titch’s character.
Accelerated Literacy teaching
Teaching the sequence

The National Accelerated Literacy Program consists of a cycle of interrelated activities based on a sequence beginning with literate orientation and focused on one selected text. The text may vary from a short, illustrated story written for early childhood students to several carefully selected passages from a longer book intended for older students.

Teachers spend, on average, an hour and a half a day teaching Accelerated Literacy. The total number of weeks spent on a text across a sequence of consecutive lessons will vary according to the age of the students and the complexity of the text.

Low and high order literate orientation are carried out before reading. The other strategies use the students’ fluent reading of and common knowledge about a text as teaching resources for extending their literacy competence.

Further information on the teaching sequence can be found at http://www.nalp.edu.au.
In the classroom

We would take some blankets, a couple of
balls, and some tea and sugar.
The teaching sequence on *Titch* aims to teach:

- how to read the book at 90 per cent accuracy or above
- how to discuss the story, including the meaning and inferences contained in the author’s language choices
- how to spell fluently and write clearly the words taught as part of the teaching sequence
- how to write, with appropriate teacher support, class books based on a character who feels left out until he or she demonstrates their talent and wins the admiration of others.

**Literate orientation**

Literate orientation is a pre-reading strategy that prepares students to read the study text fluently, accurately and independently. The teacher models a literate orientation to the text and discusses why the author made certain language choices. Literate orientation consists of two components: low order literate orientation and high order literate orientation. Both are equally important.

In low order literate orientation the teacher starts the process of ‘pointing the students’ brains’ at the text by modelling a literate interpretation of the text, including its illustrations when necessary.

In high order literate orientation the teacher shifts the students’ focus from general considerations to a close examination of the author’s wording in the text. The teacher systematically models how to attend closely to the language features of the text and how they construct meaning.

**Low order literate orientation**

**Teaching focus**

- Introduce the author and provide a brief overview of the story.
- Help students to understand the general theme of the story.
- Look closely at the pictures and track how they provide clues to the story and tell us about the characters’ emotions.

**What you could say**

We are going to read a story that was written by a woman named Pat Hutchins. Pat writes stories for younger children that are easy to read and follow. This story is called *Titch* and in this lesson we’ll find out all about Titch by looking at the pictures and reading the words on each page.
First of all, we will look at the pictures. Sometimes you can find out more from the pictures in a book than you do from the words. Now, on the cover we can see the name of the main character, Titch, and a picture of him. He is holding a small pinwheel, and is standing next to a small tricycle and large plant. He looks quite happy, but we will find out that he is actually a little bit sad because, being so small, he feels left out of all the things that his brother and sister can do.

When we turn to the half-title page, we can see something at the bottom of the page. Can you see the three pairs of shoes at the bottom here? I think they look like slippers or shoes you might wear indoors. Can you see that each pair is a different size and these ones in the middle look a bit more like the ones girls might wear? Maybe the shoes belong to the characters in this book.

On the title page we get another clue about the sizes of the people in this book. Can you see the different sized clothes on the line? I think the illustrator is trying to give us some clues about the people in this book and how big or small they are. I think these small ones might belong to Titch, because the word ‘titch’ can mean something small.

The orientation

Teaching focus

- From the outset, low order discussion about this book should focus on the illustrations and what they add to the text. What do the expressions and gestures of the characters reveal about them?
- Draw attention to how the placement of Titch on the page helps convey his small size.

What you could say

If we open to the first page of the story, we can see Titch. He looks little, doesn’t he? Look at all the white space around him, and at how the jumper he is wearing is much too big for him. If we look closely at his face we see he looks about four or five years old, so he is probably about the same size as you. If we look closely at his face we see he doesn’t look very happy, does he? He is not smiling.

The complication

Teaching focus

- Introduce the other main characters, Mary and Pete. Mary is a bit taller than Titch and Pete is a bit taller than both of them.
What you could say

On these pages we meet Titch’s brother and sister, Pete and Mary. We can see from the picture that they are quite a bit bigger than Titch, can’t we? See their eyes looking down at Titch? Titch is looking up at Mary, and he still doesn’t look very happy. He must be thinking that it is not much fun being the littlest all the time.

Teaching focus

- The complication emerges as we start to be informed about the kinds of things the children like to do.
- Mary and Pete have bigger bikes than Titch, and can ride them easily up the hill. Titch, however, has a tiny tricycle, and simply can’t keep up.
- We begin to appreciate that being the smallest child has its disadvantages.

What you could say

Now we can see that Pete and Mary are out riding their bikes. Maybe they are having a race because they look like they are pedalling really fast.

Pete has a great big bike. I bet he can ride really fast on that bike. Mary has a fairly big bike. It’s not as big as Pete’s, but it is just the right size for Mary. They both look like they’re having a good time riding them, don’t they? But where is Titch? He isn’t anywhere on this page. Maybe if we turn the page we will find Titch.

Teaching focus

- In comparison with the other children’s bikes, Titch’s tricycle is tiny.
- Titch cannot keep up with the other children on his tricycle.
- The expression on Titch’s face and his gesture show that he would like to be part of the fun but is too little to keep up.

What you could say

We can see Pete and Mary riding up to the top of the hill. Poor Titch is down at the bottom and it looks like his tricycle is too small to make it up. He looks upset, as though he is reaching out to Mary and Pete and saying, ‘Wait for me’.

Teaching focus

- Pete and Mary have great kites, and look very happy flying them.
- Titch is not present in the illustration nor mentioned in the text, which implies that he is being left out again.
The discussion here should point out that there might be a pattern developing in the text. Here, the author tells us about Pete and Mary’s great toys. In the following pages, will it turn out that Titch’s toys aren’t so great?

What you could say

Here we find out about another thing that the kids like to do together. Look, can you see that Pete has a kite? It’s flying high above the trees. Those trees are really tall, so Pete’s kite is very high up in the sky. Now look at Mary’s kite. Mary’s kite isn’t flying as high as Pete’s, but it’s still flying very high.

Mary and Pete both have big smiles on their faces, showing us how happy they are. They must be having a really good time. But I wonder where Titch is. Maybe we will have to turn the page to find out.

Teaching focus

- The pattern does continue: Titch’s toy is inadequate compared with Pete and Mary’s kites.
- Again, Titch seems unhappy.

What you could say

Here is Titch. He is holding a pinwheel. A pinwheel is a small, handheld toy that spins around in the wind: it doesn’t fly high in the sky. Titch doesn’t look as happy as Mary and Pete, does he? Again, I think Titch might be sad because he is feeling left out.

Teaching focus

- The pattern continues. Pete and Mary have adult-sized musical instruments.

What you could say

Now Mary and Pete have found big musical instruments to play with. Pete has a big drum. I bet he is making a lot of noise with that drum. He is holding his drum sticks high so that he can hit the drum hard and make a very big banging sound. Mary has a trumpet. I bet she is making a lot of noise because she has taken a very deep breath. Look at her cheeks. They are full of air.

Pete and Mary seem to have instruments that match their size, don’t they? But we can’t see Titch. I wonder what Titch has this time?
Teaching focus

- The pattern continues. Titch has a little wooden whistle that doesn’t make much noise.

What you could say

Here is Titch. He has a musical instrument too: a little wooden whistle. I bet it doesn’t make as much noise as the big drum and the trumpet. It looks like Titch is blowing really hard into his whistle to make a noise. But look at Pete and Mary. They are making a lot of noise as well. I bet that they can’t even hear Titch’s whistle.

Teaching focus

- The older children have adult-sized tools.
- Continue to discuss the structure of the story, and encourage the children to predict what Titch’s toy/tool will be, as well as his reaction.

What you could say

On these pages, it looks as if Pete and Mary want to make something with timber. We can see that Pete is cutting a piece of timber with his big saw. Mary is bringing the big hammer. She must want to hammer two pieces of timber together. They both look like they are having a good time and enjoying what they are doing with their big tools.

But we can’t see Titch yet. I wonder what he has this time.

Teaching focus

- The pattern continues. Titch is holding some nails.
- He looks dissatisfied.

What you could say

Here is Titch on the next page. He is holding the nails that Mary will need to join the pieces of timber together. See how Pete and Mary are looking happy? They must be very proud of themselves because they can use grown-up tools. Titch does not look very happy. Pete and Mary must think that Titch will hurt himself because he is too little to use the hammer, so he just helps by holding the nails.
Teaching focus

• The older children both use adult-sized gardening implements.
• This episode begins the climax and resolution to the story. Pete and Mary are once again engaged in ‘adult-like’ behaviour using ‘grown-up’ tools, and Titch is nowhere to be seen. Students should be encouraged to anticipate how the story might change.

What you could say

So far the bigger children have been riding bikes, flying kites, playing music and working with tools. It looks like they are trying something else now. I think they might be getting ready to grow something. Can you see on these pages that Pete has a big spade? He is using the spade to dig up the dirt. Over on the next page we can see Mary with her fat flowerpot. See how she needs two hands to carry it? It must be very fat. I bet that Pete is going to use his big spade to fill the fat flowerpot up with dirt.

Once again, Titch is not involved. I wonder what Titch will bring to the task. I wonder what is missing if the children want to grow something.

Teaching focus

• The pattern changes. In his tiny hand Titch holds the key to growing something, only the older children don’t recognise it yet.

What you could say

Now on these next pages we can see that Pete and Mary are filling the fat flowerpot. They look very pleased with themselves. We can also see Titch on the other page. Let’s look closely at his hand. Can you see? He has a tiny seed. And Titch is not looking so sad. He is thinking, and is looking a little bit excited.

Resolution

Teaching focus

• Pete and Mary look amazed at the rapid growth of Titch’s plant.
• Discussion should focus on how Titch’s very small contribution was the key to seeing the plant grow. For the first time in all the children’s activities, Titch feels satisfied that his contribution is important.
What you could say

On this first page here we can see that Titch’s seed has started to grow. We can see it here in the fat flowerpot. It has three new leaves on it. Titch is looking very happy. He must be feeling very pleased with himself because his seed has grown. Pete and Mary are looking very surprised. Maybe they thought that the seed would not grow, or maybe they thought that Titch was too little to help grow anything.

Over on this next page, we can see that Titch’s seed has grown some more. It is starting to look like a plant now. Titch is standing there, proudly looking up at the plant. Without the seed they would have been looking at a pot full of dirt! Pete and Mary look very shocked. They can not believe that Titch’s tiny seed has grown so big. The plant is almost as tall as Pete.

Teaching focus

- Titch is proud of his achievement.
- The other children are amazed at what Titch has contributed.

What you could say

Now on the last page we can see that the plant has grown very tall and it has a lot of leaves on it. And here is Titch standing up really tall and looking very pleased with himself. He must be very proud of the plant. And Pete and Mary both look very surprised, their mouths are wide open and their arms are up in the air. They can not believe that Titch has grown this huge plant from his tiny seed.

Perhaps now Pete and Mary will let Titch do some of the grown-up things they do because he grew such a wonderful plant.

Read the story aloud

Following the low order literate orientation, read the story to the class. Show the students where you are reading with a pointer or marking strip of some kind so they know you are attending to the words. Read the story expressively and if the students want to read with you allow them to do so, but do not slow down and wait for them. Avoid the reading becoming a chant by consistently modelling fluent, expressive reading.
High order literate orientation

Teaching focus

Early in the teaching sequence, the teacher does not ask students to underline every word of the text. The teacher chooses the key words of the text to establish understanding about characters and their actions. Initially, the students read these key words and the teacher reads the others. Other words could be underlined in subsequent lessons or dealt with in the transformations. Teachers using the Accelerated Literacy approach need to make decisions about the focus of each lesson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure of text and wording</th>
<th>Why language choices were made</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Orientation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Titch was little.</em></td>
<td>The author introduces us to the main character in this first sentence and tells us about his size. Titch’s littleness is reinforced by the layout of the illustration. He is deliberately placed at the bottom of the page so that the white space contrasts with his small size. The past-tense verb <em>was</em> tells us that, while Titch may be big right now, he was <em>little</em> at the time that the story takes place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>His sister Mary was a bit bigger.</em></td>
<td><em>His</em> is a reference to the main character, Titch, while <em>sister</em> tells us that it was a female sibling. We learn that <em>Mary</em> is the name of Titch’s sister and, by using the word <em>was</em> (rather than <em>is</em>), the author is continuing to talk in the past tense. The final three words (a <em>bit bigger</em>) combine to give the idea that Mary was larger than Titch but not too much larger. The illustration confirms this. Note that the children’s feelings are not explained in the words of the text. Instead, they must be inferred from the illustrations: Titch always looks a little unhappy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>And his brother Pete was a lot bigger.</em></td>
<td><em>And</em> tells us that the information contained in this sentence will follow on from what we’ve already been told. <em>His</em> again refers to Titch, while <em>brother</em> tells us that Pete is the male sibling and <em>was</em> reminds us that this story happened in the past. The three words <em>a lot bigger</em> tell us that Pete is larger in size than both Mary and Titch.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Complication**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Pete had a great big bike.</em></td>
<td>This sentence begins a sequence of events or revelations about the children, their possessions and their actions. The text and illustrations follow a repeated pattern of comparison between Pete and Mary on the one hand and Titch on the other. The book is organized so that the page must be turned to reveal this comparison in each episode. Pete, the character’s name, at the beginning of the sentence tells us that we are going to find out something important about him. Then comes <em>had</em> (past tense), a (one) and a <em>great big bike</em> (very large bicycle).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Mary had a big bike.</em></td>
<td>By putting the character’s name at the beginning of the sentence, the author lets us know that we are going to find out something important about her. The words <em>a big bike</em> set up the initial comparison between Mary’s and Pete’s bikes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>And Titch had a little tricycle.</em></td>
<td><em>And</em> ties the information to come in this sentence with the information that we have recently been given. Tricycles are for children who are too small to be able to balance on two wheels. They are much smaller than bicycles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Pete had a kite that flew high above the trees.</em></td>
<td>A pattern is beginning to emerge. In each episode, Pete is named first (and has the biggest or best things), then we are told about Mary, and finally we are told about Titch. A <em>kite</em> is a fun flying toy that uses wind power to move. In order to gain a sense of how high high above the trees is, the reader needs to observe that the trees are the tallest things in the illustration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Mary had a kite that flew high above the houses.</em></td>
<td>Once again, we need to look at the illustration to appreciate that, while the houses are tall, they are not quite as tall as the trees. Thus Mary’s kite flies high but not quite as high as Pete’s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And Titch had a pinwheel that he held in his hand.</td>
<td>A pinwheel is a handheld toy that spins as it is blown by the wind. In comparison with the kites, it is small and fairly basic. The words <em>that he held in his hand</em> describes where the pinwheel is located. As a location, it seems much less thrilling than <em>high above the trees/houses</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pete had a big drum.</td>
<td>Once again, an episode opens with Pete, who again seems to have a big and impressive toy. A drum is a loud-sounding instrument that requires skill to play well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary had a trumpet.</td>
<td>The pattern of comparison continues. The size of Mary’s instrument is not contained in the words, so we need to look at the illustration to appreciate that it’s smaller and probably not quite as loud as Pete’s drum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And Titch had a little wooden whistle.</td>
<td>The pattern concludes. Titch has the smallest, quietest instrument. Note the use of alliteration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pete had a big saw.</td>
<td>The illustrations show that now the children are turning their hands to a woodworking project. In accordance with the pattern, Pete approaches the task with the biggest, most ‘adult’ tool. Saws are sharp, and a little too dangerous for small children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary had a big hammer.</td>
<td>Similarly, Mary has a <em>big hammer</em>. This tool is also adult-sized and could be dangerous in the hands of small children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And Titch held the nails.</td>
<td><em>Nails</em> are small items that are less dangerous to children. Nails can’t be manipulated like the tools of the other children, which makes Titch a passive participant in this task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pete had a big spade.</td>
<td>For this episode, Pete is manipulating an adult-sized spade, used for digging earth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary had a fat flowerpot.</td>
<td>Whilst the flowerpot cannot be manipulated, it is still quite big – probably too big for Titch to handle. Note the use of alliteration again.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resolution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>But Titch had the tiny seed.</th>
<th>This time, the sentence begins with the conjunction but instead of and. This heralds a change in the story. Even though the seed is tiny, could Titch’s contribution this time be a bit more important?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>And Titch’s seed grew</td>
<td>The potential of the seed is realized in its growth. At this point it is essential to ‘read’ the pictures as well as the text to comprehend the change in the children’s attitudes and thus arrive at the resolution. <em>Titch’s</em>: note the apostrophe. This seed belongs to Titch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and grew and grew.</td>
<td>The repeated and grew emphasizes the success of Titch’s contribution and the amazement of the other children.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What you could say

Teaching letter/sound recognition can begin during high order literate orientation. In the examples of ‘what you could say’ for this text, the letters *t, m* and *p* have been suggested. Other letters should be taught as well. Refer to the Spelling section in these notes.

Page 1

*Titch was little*

**Preformulation**

On the first page, we meet the main character in the story, and we find out his name.

**Question:** Who can remember the name of the little fellow in this story?

**Reconceptualisation**

Yes, the name of the main character is Titch. Look, his name starts with a capital *T*. *T* makes the ‘teh’ sound. Titch is the little boy standing here on this first page. Remember that he is about your size, maybe about 5 or 6 years old. Who would like to underline the word that tells us his name?

**Preformulation**

We also find out some more information about Titch. We find out about his size.

**Question:** Who can show me the word that tells us about Titch’s size?

**Reconceptualisation**

Well done. *Titch was little*. The word *little* is telling us about the size and the age of Titch. Who would like to underline that word? The word *was* is telling us that this story happened in the past and maybe Titch is all grown up now.
Preformulation
His sister Mary was a bit bigger. And his brother Pete was a lot bigger. We can see on this page that there are two more characters. First we meet Titch’s sister. We can see her standing here next to Titch.

Question: So what is the name of Titch’s sister?

Reconceptualisation
That’s right. His sister is called Mary. And her name starts with a capital M. Would someone like to underline Titch’s sister’s name? She is older than Titch and if we look at the picture here, we can see that Mary is a bit bigger than Titch too. She is a different size than Titch.

Question: Who can tell me the words that tell me about Mary’s size?

Reconceptualisation
That’s right, Mary was a bit bigger than her brother Titch. But there is another character who was a lot bigger than both of them.

Question: Who can remember the name of this character?

Reconceptualisation
That’s right. Pete is the name of Titch and Mary’s bigger brother. His name starts with a capital P. Would someone like to underline Titch’s older brother’s name?

Preformulation
And Pete wasn’t just a bit bigger than Titch was he?

Question: Who can show me the words that tell us about Pete’s size?

Reconceptualisation
That’s right, Pete was the biggest child in this family so he was a lot bigger and older than Titch.

Transformations

Transformations is an activity designed to change students’ orientation to the text under consideration from that of a reader looking for meaning to that of a writer learning how the author used various literary techniques to achieve a particular effect or purpose.

In addition, transformations provides a key opportunity for ‘handover’ of understanding about the language choices in the text. The questioning techniques in this part of the teaching sequence reflect the growing common knowledge shared between class members, and between class members and the teacher. A successful handover might mean, for example, that there is less need for preformulation.
Transformations can be used by teachers of beginning readers to teach letter and word recognition skills and one-to-one correspondence. In these instances, the text would be cut into single words. In addition, transformations has an important role in preparing these students for spelling activities.

Introduction

Teaching focus

- Explain the activity.
- Identify the part of the text to be studied.

What you could say

**Explain the activity**
The next thing we are going to do is look at this first page again on some strips of cardboard. Okay, this bit says, *Titch was little*, and the next bit tells us about Titch’s sister, Mary and his brother, Pete. Pat Hutchins is introducing us to the characters in her story. She does this by comparing the sizes of the children, telling us first that Titch was little and second that his brother and sister are bigger than him. The words don’t tell us how Titch feels about being little, but we can see in the illustration that he’s not happy about it.

**Transformations – One**

**Text (page 1)**

*Titch was little*

Example of text segmentation

Initially, the sentence could be segmented in the following way. Other segmentations may also be used.

*Titch / was / little / . /

Teaching focus

- Identify the name of the character: *Titch*. This tells us who the story is about. Capital letters are used for names.
- Identify characteristics of the main character: *little*. This tells us about his size.
- Identify the time: *was*. This places the story in the past.
- Letter or word recognition.
What you could say

Now is there anyone here who can remember how Pat Hutchins starts this story? Who does it tell us about first? That’s right, it tells us about the main character or person in this story.

Who is this sentence about? That’s right: Titch. Could someone cut off his name here? ‘Titch’ is also a word that we sometimes use to mean something very small. Who can tell me what letter it starts with? Good. Remember that people’s names always start with a capital letter.

Can anyone here tell us when this story is set? Look at the word in the middle here: was. This means that the story happened some time ago. Titch might be a lot bigger today, but we know that in the past he was little.

And what does the author tell us about his size? That’s right: He was little. Can someone cut off the word that tells us that Titch was little?

Would you like to cut the full-stop off as well? Because that full-stop tells us that it is the end of the bit of information about Titch. That’s it.

Transformations – Two

Text (page 2)

*His sister Mary was a bit bigger. And his brother Pete was a lot bigger.*

Example of text segmentation

Initially, the sentences could be segmented in the following way. Other segmentations may also be used.

*His / sister / Mary / was / a / bit / bigger / . / And / his / brother / Pete / was / a / lot / bigger / . / *

Teaching focus

- Identify the words that introduce the characters and their place in the family – *sister, brother*.
- Identify the words that deal with their size.
- Discuss the author’s use of *And*.
- Letter or word recognition.
- Discuss the author’s use of full stops and capital letters.
What you could say

**Punctuation: Function of full stops and capital letters**
The next two sentences in the story introduce two more characters. We know that they are two sentences because they are separated by a full stop, which comes at the end of each sentence. Can someone come and cut the full stops from the ends of the sentences for me? [Separate the sentences on the board.]

Now, if you are very clever, you will have noticed that at the beginning of every sentence there is a capital letter. Let’s see if we can just point to the capital letters that begin these two sentences. The first one is the *H* in *His* and the next one is the *A* in *And*. There is also a *his* in this second sentence, but it begins with a small *h* because it appears halfway through the sentence, rather than at the beginning.

Now these two sentences tell us about two new people. Can anyone tell us who they are? That’s right: *Mary* and *Pete*. Can someone cut out *Mary* and *Pete* for me? Notice how these words have a capital *M* and capital *P*, even though they are not at the beginning of their sentences. That is because when we write someone’s name we *always* use a capital letter, no matter where it comes in the order of the words.

**Comparison of size**
Now Pat Hutchins is also telling us about the size of these two characters compared with Titch. Who can remember what size Mary was? That’s right, she was a *bit bigger* than Titch. That means she is only slightly bigger. Can someone come and cut out these words? We can see in the picture that Pete is the biggest in the family. He is a lot bigger than Titch, isn’t he? Can someone see the words that tell us that Pete was *a lot bigger*?

**The use of ‘And’**
I also want to show you this word that joins these two sentences together. These two sentences are both talking about the children’s sizes, so it makes good sense to join them with the word *And*. Can someone cut out the word *And* for me?

**Activities around the transformations**

**Word recognition and function of ‘His sister’**

**T:** Now let me see if I can trick you. If you shut your eyes, I’m going to turn some words over. [Turn over *His sister.*] Now I want you to have a go at reading it without those words.

**S:** Mary was a bit bigger.
T: Now this sentence makes perfect sense like this because it still tells us the name of the girl and what size she was. But it leaves out some important information about how Mary is related to Titch. What does it leave out?
S: That Mary is Titch’s sister.
T: Well done! Would you like to come out and turn it over and see if you are correct.

Word recognition and function of ‘Mary’

T: Now, shut your eyes. (Turn over Mary.) Open them! What have I turned over this time? It just says His sister was a bit bigger now, doesn’t it? What doesn’t it tell us?
S: That his sister’s name is Mary.
T: Very good! And if it was Mary, what would it start with? That’s right, a capital M. Come and turn it over for us.

Word recognition and function of ‘a bit’

T: Okay, shut your eyes again. I’m going to turn over another part of the sentence. (Turn over a bit.) Open your eyes and read it now.
S: His sister Mary was bigger.
T: Well, this tells us that she was indeed bigger in size than Titch but it doesn’t tell us how much bigger, does it? What words are missing that tell us how much bigger Mary is?
S: A bit.
T: Could someone turn the words around that tell us how much bigger Mary is?

Further transformations

Suggestion one

Text (pages 8–11)

Pete had a kite that flew high above the trees. Mary had a kite that flew high above the houses. And Titch had a little pinwheel that he held in his hand.

Example of text segmentation

Initially, the sentence could be segmented in the following way. Other segmentations may also be used.

Pete / had / a kite / that flew / high above the trees / . / Mary / had / a kite / that flew / high above the houses / . / And / Titch / had / a little pinwheel / that he / held in his hand. /
Goals of the transformations

**Comprehension**
The pattern of the text changes here to include a dependent clause that elaborates on the children’s toys. The prepositional phrases that end each sentence are worth examining closely with young children who are still developing concepts about space and direction. On the surface, Pete’s and Mary’s kites seem to be flying at a similar height, but the implication of one kite flying above trees and the other above houses is that Pete is once again ahead of Mary.

The author uses a dynamic verb group to compare Pete’s and Mary’s kites with Titch’s pinwheel. While the motion of the kites is described, the action of Titch’s pinwheel is not.

It is Titch’s action of ‘holding’ the pinwheel in his hand that provides the contrast.

**Word recognition leading to spelling**
Revise words such as and, his, Mary, Pete, Titch, had and a. Focus on the word hand as it relates to and, which has previously been seen. You could also focus on the word that.

**Writing**
Extend students’ oral and written language by encouraging them to add to a description of an object by adding expansions beginning with the word ‘that’.

**Suggestion two**

Text (pages 20–23)

*Pete had a big spade. Mary had a fat flowerpot. But Titch had the tiny seed.*

Example of text segmentation

Initially, the sentence could be segmented in the following way. Other segmentations may also be used.

*Pete/ had / a / big / spade / . / Mary / had / a / fat / flowerpot / . / But / Titch / had / the / tiny / seed / . / . /*
Purpose

Comprehension
This part of the text begins the resolution, in which Titch finally has something that causes his siblings to take notice of him. This change is signalled in the word but, whereas previously and was used to join clauses. The change is also reflected in the children’s expressions, in this set of contrasts the author expands her repertoire of ‘size-related’ words to include fat and tiny.

Word recognition leading to spelling
The children’s names and some of the common grammatical items are repeated here and are worth further revision. Revise initial consonant sounds such as s, as in seed and spade or f, as in flowerpot and fat. Examination of the word fat could be related back to the word that encountered previously, leading to further discussion about the –at pattern.

Writing
Writers foreshadow change through their language choices. The word but here heralds a definite change from the previous text pattern and suggests that this contrast will provide some satisfaction for Titch. Students could be encouraged to link contrasting ideas with the conjunction but in order to show that something different is going to happen.

Spelling
The spelling segment of the Accelerated Literacy teaching sequence follows transformations once the teacher is reasonably sure that students are able to recognise many of the words from the text out of context. Teachers are then able to use the students’ ability to hold a stable image of a word in their memory to show how that word can be broken into letter pattern chunks. Spelling activities include joint reconstructed writing.

How to choose spelling words
Keep the following points in mind when choosing words to work on in spelling:
- Are there any words that have patterns (or letters) that students have worked on before?
- Are there any new patterns that occur more than once or are commonly occurring?
- Are there any words that have interesting origins or roots that will help students develop an understanding of English?
- Which words will help students with joint reconstructed writing?
- Which words that students have already been taught need revision?
- Consider students’ age and stage of spelling development.
Suggestions for spelling

This text has been benchmarked at the transition/pre-primary level, so it could be assumed that most students studying it would be negotiating the early or phonetic stage of spelling. Consequently, teachers should work on words that help students use visual strategies to notice larger chunks of letters that go together to make common orthographic patterns.

Begin with the children’s names – Mary, Pete and Titch – and the initial consonant sounds, M, P and T. As other words that begin with the same sounds are discovered, they can be added to word lists.

There are a small number of words that offer an opportunity to look at visual and phonemic letter patterns (eg and/hand, that/fat). Similarly, in building word families, one might begin with the word big and follow by pointing out its comparative, bigger, which is also contained in the text. This could lead to a discussion of comparatives and superlatives, although early readers should not be expected to learn how to spell the words that are not contained in the text.

Children who are moving into the transitional stage might benefit from some discussion around compound words such as flowerpot and pinwheel.

The following table provides further suggestions for spelling focuses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>k</th>
<th>f/fl</th>
<th>m</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>k/ite</td>
<td>f/at</td>
<td>M/ary</td>
<td>T/itch</td>
<td>P/ete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fl/ower/pot</td>
<td>fl/ew</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>s/sp</td>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b/it</td>
<td>s/eed</td>
<td>house/s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b/ig</td>
<td>s/aw</td>
<td>igh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b/igg/er</td>
<td>sp/ade</td>
<td>amm/er</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b/ike</td>
<td>h/eld</td>
<td>h/and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h/and</td>
<td>Words related to size</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l/itt/le</td>
<td>f/at</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b/it</td>
<td>gr/eat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l/ot</td>
<td>h/igh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b/ig</td>
<td>t/iny</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b/igg/er</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h/ise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h/ise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Etymology

Etymological information on selected words is always interesting for students. Many websites, as well as dictionaries and other books, provide etymological information. Two informative websites are [http://www.etymonline.com](http://www.etymonline.com) and [http://www.thefreedictionary.com](http://www.thefreedictionary.com).
Joint reconstructed writing

Joint reconstructed writing provides a transition from spelling activities to writing activities and works best when taken from transformations. Joint reconstructed writing involves the teacher and students working together to reconstruct the text using the same words as the author. It successfully reduces the stress associated with working out what to write about, what to write and how to write it. Stress associated with spelling is greatly reduced, giving students the mental space to think about subject matter and language choices.

The teacher ‘thinks aloud’ to reconstruct a passage with the students, using the writer’s language choices. This is a culmination of all the shared knowledge built up so far about language choices used in the construction and positioning of particular phrases and includes the dimensions of letter formation, the role of initial consonants and blends, and visual patterns.

Students in the phonetic stage of spelling

Students in their first year of school, in the phonetic stage of spelling development, will still be learning to recognise words and write letters. The physical demands of forming letters are quite high for many of these students, especially combined with the cognitive demands of remembering the names of letters and sounds, so they will need support with word recognition, handwriting and spelling.

Joint reconstructed writing is undertaken using either a blackboard or whiteboard, or a sheet of butcher’s paper that everyone can see. The students write some letters of each word and the teacher writes the rest. Students could also write letters on small whiteboards or blackboards before they contribute to the joint writing.

Steps in joint reconstructed writing

The book should be readily available for easy reference. The teacher explains to the students that together they are going to try to write the story the way Pat Hutchins did, and that they will start by telling readers who the main character is.

The teacher asks the students if they can remember how the story starts. When someone has answered with ‘Titch’, the teacher shows the class where to start writing and explains that it is necessary to start the sentence with a capital T. The teacher can write the T or ask a student to come and write it on the board or paper. The teacher reminds the class how to write a capital T as it is being written.

The teacher goes on to ask the students to help write Titch. If the students can write the word, the teacher asks them to help write the parts they know. The teacher talks about the word in chunks – T/itch – and asks someone to write T and someone else to write itch. The teacher reminds the class that Pat Hutchins tells reader how Titch is feeling through the pictures rather than the words.
Then ask students what word the author used to give us the idea that this story happened some time ago. Go through the same process with the word *was*, focusing on the sound of the initial consonant followed by the visual pattern of the rhyme.

Continue like this until the passage has been reconstructed. The discussion includes what words come next, what letter or letters the word starts with, what letters come next, how to write them as well as why the author used those particular words or that particular word.

**Students in the transitional stage of spelling**

These students, who are usually in Year 1 (age 6), may be able to write many letters independently. They may also know some of the letters that go together to form English letter patterns, such as T/itch and l/itt/le.

These students can work with the teacher on jointly reconstructing parts of the text, with the teacher working on the blackboard, whiteboard or butcher’s paper while they write in individual writing books.

**Steps in joint reconstructed writing**

The discussion about the author’s word choices continues as described above, along with discussion about spelling patterns and letter formation. These students, however, write in their books, while the teacher writes on the board or butcher’s paper. Teachers may allow time for students who already know how to write a word to do so before writing it themselves. In this way students can choose to write what they know or wait for the teacher. The teacher should be careful that students copying a word do so by writing it in its chunks, rather than letter by letter.

Joint reconstructed writing provides a transition from spelling activities to writing activities.

**Example**

Reconstruct sentences, paragraphs and sections of text as appropriate. For example, the orientation to *Titch*:

*Titch was little.*

*His sister Mary was a bit bigger.*

*And his brother Pete was a lot bigger.*
Writing

Writing activities should not be based only on patterning, but on a principled understanding of why writers use specific techniques. For example, it is not much use substituting words to write a ‘new’ sentence or paragraph if students do not know what the skill they are learning is about or when to use it.

Writing goals consist of goals for the whole teaching sequence (overall goals), as well as goals for individual lessons (short-term goals).

Goals for *Titch* would include:

- overall goals such as jointly constructing a class book based on a character who feels left out until he or she demonstrates their talent and wins the admiration of others
- short-term goals such as how to write a simple sentence that reveals something about a character’s physical features or attributes and writing additional sentences about another characters with similar attributes using comparisons.

Activities

Workshop

Examples of adding to an initial simple sentence:

**Example 1**

*John was fit.*

*His brother Stephen was very fit.*

*And their cousin Penny was the fittest of them all.*

**Example 2**

*Jan was a little bit brave.*

*Her friend Yuko was very brave.*

*And Caborano was as brave as a lion.*

Joint construction of a class book

Joint construction allows the teacher to assist students by ‘thinking aloud’ about the way an author plans and writes short narratives. Joint construction of class books is a particularly appropriate writing activity for Kindergarten and Year 1 students, for whom the physical and cognitive demands of writing are great.
Students of this age not only have to think about what to write, they also have to remember how to form letters and spell words correctly. For students in the early/phonetic stage of spelling, negotiating the possible spelling of words takes second place to actually making ‘readable’ marks on the page. For students in the transitional stage of spelling, negotiating the possible spellings of words takes confidence and a range of spelling resources.

Possible steps in jointly constructing a class book

- Read other stories that deal with family relationships to the class. Discuss the orientation, complication and resolution structure of these stories as you read them.
- Discuss how each author must have planned her or his story.
- Explain that the class is going to write a story, planning it in the way all authors do before writing.
- Discuss a character who lives in a family where no-one appreciates her or his talents.
- Discuss some possible talents that the character might have. There would also have to be a situation when these talents might become important.
- Discuss the event sequence.
- Have students work in groups to illustrate the sequence (undertake illustration tasks in art lessons). Sequence the illustrations and discuss the sequence.
- Discuss possible text for each illustration, but don’t start to write yet. Here the class should reach agreement on the story sequence.
- When everyone understands the story sequence and how it will work, start to write.
- Carry out the writing jointly and remind students about the strategies that can be used. (eg using expansion when talking about an object or using ‘but’ to herald the change in the story.)

Jointly constructing a story could take up one or more sessions of Accelerated Literacy. For a joint construction of this nature the teacher needs to prepare some examples ahead of the lesson to help get the activity started.

More than one joint construction can be attempted before students are asked to write independently. In fact, it would be not be necessary for students in Year 1 or younger to write a story independently.
Appendices
Sample weekly plan

The following weekly plan is included as a *guide only* to the way teachers could move through the teaching sequence over a period of time. The plan’s content has been condensed. In reality, working through this text will take some weeks, and the following one-week plan could actually take two or even three weeks to complete. Parts of a session that are not finished in one lesson can be picked up in the next. Teachers will need to introduce the subsequent lesson/s carefully so students know what to expect, what the purpose of the lesson is, and where they are in the teaching sequence.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transformations</td>
<td>Titch/was/little/. / Discuss author telling readers about Titch. Punctuation.</td>
<td>Revise last transformation. Play word recognition games.</td>
<td>Play word recognition games. Focus on Mary. His/sister/ Mary/. /</td>
<td>Revise: joint reconstructed writing: Titch was little, or, if appropriate, teach b b/ke.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>Initial letters T, W and L. Tr/itch w/as (high frequency word) l/itt/le (high frequency word)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Initial letters: T, M, P, T/tritch M/ary P/ete</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Begin discussions and jointly construct texts: ... was ...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One day the grown ups said we were going on the blctc.

We would take some blankets, a couple of

biscuits and some tea and sugar.

We would have a car and some wine and sugar.
Titch (121 words)

Titch was little.

His sister Mary was a bit bigger.

And his brother Pete was a lot bigger.

Pete had a great big bike.

Mary had a big bike.

And Titch had a little tricycle.

Pete had a kite

that flew high above the trees.

Mary had a kite

that flew high above the houses.

And Titch had a pinwheel

that he held in his hand.

Pete had a big drum.

Mary had a trumpet.

And Titch had a little wooden whistle.

Pete had a big saw.
Mary had a big hammer.

And Titch held the nails.

Pete had a big spade.

Mary had a fat flowerpot.

But Titch had the tiny seed.

And Titch’s seed grew

and grew

and grew.
These notes have been written to help teachers use the Accelerated Literacy teaching strategies in kindergarten/preparatory year. However, they could also be used in Year 1 where students have difficulties with reading.

Outcomes of the teaching sequence

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

- read the story studied fluently and interpret the illustrations at a high level
- discuss the story: give opinions about the author's language choices; identify the story's structure, theme and ideology
- spell chosen words and understand related spelling strategies
- use the story as a model for writing.

Notes

- The following notes have been written for teachers who have attended professional development workshops in teaching Accelerated Literacy. The notes presume some understanding about how to teach the program.
- For a detailed explanation of how to implement the teaching sequence, please refer to the teachers' handouts from the first professional development workshop. Additionally, you could refer to http://www.nalp.edu.au.
- It is also assumed that teachers have read the text on which these notes are based and have a detailed understanding of the text before beginning a teaching sequence.
- Teachers are responsible for ensuring the suitability of the text on which these notes are based for their particular teaching context.