Early Childhood

These notes have been written to help teachers use the Accelerated Literacy teaching strategies in Year 2. However, they could also be used with older students who have difficulties with reading.

Outcomes of the teaching sequence

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

- read the passages 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.
Topsy and Turvy
Early Childhood
Using this resource
Year level

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The text

Topsy and Turvy by Justin D’Ath, illustrated by Emma Quay. Published 2001 by Puffin. Page numbers provided here refer to this edition.

The transcript

‘In the classroom’ includes sections of a transcript of a videoed lesson. These demonstrate authentic examples of the negotiation roles taken by one teacher and a class and are not all that could be said. The transcript segments are presented as dialogue in the following format:

T: Question or comment by the teacher
S: Response from the students.
We would take some blankets, a couple of
billets and some tea and sugar.

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

We would take some blankets, a rug
and some tea and sugar.
Synopsis of the story

*Topsy and Turvy* has an ‘ugly duckling’ aspect to it, as the two main characters Topsy, a baby owl, and Turvy, a baby fruit bat, find themselves in the wrong nests. Topsy finds herself unable to cope with all the things fruit bats usually do and Turvy finds himself the odd one out among the baby owls. Neither baby knows what is wrong until they are blown out of their nests one windy day.

Theme

The theme of unconditional family love is explored in this book. Although the story has elements of ‘The Ugly Duckling’ about it, in that Topsy and Turvy are both trying to cope in families where they don’t belong, there is no teasing or victimisation of the babies as there is in ‘The Ugly Duckling’. Topsy and Turvy are different, but loved and accepted all the same.

Why use this story?

Part of the charm of this story is that it is clear to readers from the first moment that Topsy is not a fruit bat and that Turvy is not a boobook owl. Both the text and illustrations make this obvious. However, the families of both babies seem to take for granted that their strange children are perfectly normal. They may have an odd appearance and some difficulties with food and sleeping habits, but basically they are fine. This blindness to what is obvious to readers makes the dialogue amusing. For example:

- *But Topsy couldn’t hang upside down for more than one minute without feeling dizzy.*

  ‘Don’t worry, Topsy,’ her parents said. ‘You’ll soon get the hang of it.’

Structure of the text

As well as being amusing and enjoyable, the story has a clear and logical sequence. Its overall structure, as well as the structure of each chapter, is predictable and easy to discuss.

Orientation and complication: Chapters 1–6

A clue to the complication in this story is provided in the chapter’s title: ‘A most unusual fruit bat’. The complication is further revealed in the first sentence of Chapter 1: *Topsy was different*. The rest of the chapter is devoted to explaining some of Topsy’s differences and how they affected her. Chapter 2 deals with Turvy...
in the same way. Chapter 3 deals with Topsy’s eating habits and Chapter 4 with Turvy’s eating habits. This strategy of dealing with the behaviour of one character then dealing with the same behaviour of the other character in the next chapter makes the text predictable and is very supportive for young readers.

The orientation to the story has to be inferred by readers as they read about each character’s differences and subsequent difficulties (eg Topsy was different. She wasn’t like all the other young fruit bats that lived in the big Moreton Bay figtree by the river). From the second sentence readers learn that Topsy is a fruit bat, that she lives in a Moreton Bay figtree and that the tree was by a river. In Chapter 2 readers find that, Next to the figtree where the fruit bats lived there was a giant rivergum. In a tree-hollow high above the ground, a young boobook owl called Turvy lived with his parents. From this information readers can visualise the setting of the story.

By the end of Chapter 6 readers know all about Topsy’s and Turvy’s problems. They know that both Topsy and Turvy have a different physical appearance from the other members of their families, that they also have different sleeping habits and that they like different food. Readers also know the setting for the story and may be able to make assumptions about where a Moreton Bay figtree by a river could be found. As well, readers will have realised from both the text and illustrations that somehow the bird and the fruit bat have ended up in the wrong nests, although the bird and fruit bat families don’t seem to notice this.

**Resolution: Chapters 7–11**

The resolution to the story is carefully staged and readers only find out how the two young creatures had been mixed up in the last chapter. First, Topsy and Turvy are blown to the ground by a willy-willy. This event results in their meeting. Next, they notice how Topsy is very like an owl in appearance and Turvy is very like a fruit bat. They still don’t realise the significance of this fact. Then they find that Topsy loves beetles although the rest of her family hates them, and that Turvy loves fruit although the rest of his family doesn’t. But they still don’t make the necessary connections. Finally, the fruit bat and owl parents find their children. They still don’t realise anything unusual, as the fruit bats greet Topsy and the owls greet Turvy. Eventually, when the parents reveal that the babies had fallen out of their nests before, when they were much smaller, Topsy and Turvy realise what had happened and readers understand how the confusion began.
Structure of Chapter 1 in detail

Chapter 1 (passage one) has a very clear structure that can be used as a model for writing. The structure of Chapter 1 is set out below.

Complication

Following the hint provided by the chapter’s title, ‘A most unusual fruit bat’, the complication consists of a statement that provides Topsy with a problematic attribute:
Topsy was different.

Orientation/Elaboration

The whole chapter elaborates on or explains what this problem means for Topsy: She wasn’t like all the other young fruit bats that lived in the big Moreton Bay figtree by the river.

Difference one

Ordinary fruit bat behaviour:
They spent all their time dangling by their feet from the branches.

Topsy’s behaviour:
But Topsy couldn’t hang upside down for more than one minute without feeling dizzy.

The reaction of Topsy’s parents (verbal):
‘Don’t worry, Topsy,’ her parents said. ‘You’ll soon get the hang of it.’

Topsy’s reaction (mental):
Topsy hoped they were right.

Ordinary fruit bat behaviour:
Fruit bats were supposed to hang upside down.

Topsy’s behaviour:
She was the only one in the whole tree who had to sit on top of her branch instead of underneath it.

Difference two

There was another thing that was different about Topsy.

Ordinary fruit bats’ wings:
All the other young fruit bats had large, umbrella-like wings,

Topsy’s wings:
but Topsy’s wings were short and fluffy. They didn’t look anything like umbrellas.
Appearance of coat:
*Her coat was different too.*

Ordinary fruit bats’ coats:
*Instead of thick, reddish-brown fur,*

Topsy’s coat:
*Topsy was covered from tail to head with soft white fuzz like spiders’ webs.*

Summary

*Everyone agreed that Topsy was the most unusual fruit bat they had ever laid eyes on.*

Language features of the text

**Passage one**

In addition to structure, some other writing techniques can be taught using this story. In passage one, these include the following.

- The use of noun groups to build vivid mental images. Noun groups provide information. They contain a *head noun* and attributes that add meaning to, or describe, the head noun. For example:
  
  - all the other young fruit **bats**
  - large umbrella-like **wings**
  - thick reddish-brown **fur**
  - soft white **fuzz** like spiders’ webs
  - the most unusual fruit **bat**

- How to compare one feature or attribute with another by using conjunctions. For example:
  
  - They spent all their time dangling by their feet from the branches. **But** Topsy couldn’t hang upside down for more than one minute without feeling dizzy.
  - All the other fruit bats had large umbrella-like wings, **but** Topsy’s wings were short and fluffy.
  
  - Instead of thick, reddish-brown fur, Topsy was covered from tail to head with soft white fuzz like spider’s webs.

- How to include mental and verbal reactions to situations so that readers can identify with characters. For example, the parents’ reaction to Topsy’s differences show readers how encouraging they are, and also demonstrates their unwitting sense of humour. It certainly shows the author’s sense of fun.
  
  - ‘Don’t worry, Topsy,’ her parents said. ‘You’ll soon get the hang of it.’
Topsy’s reaction to her parents’ encouragement shows that she doesn’t really believe them, although she hopes they are right.

*Topsy hoped they were right.*

- How to use elaboration or expansion as a writing technique. The author foreshadows the problem in the first sentence and then elaborates, or expands, on it. This technique also provides an orientation to one of the characters.

**Passage two**

This passage introduces another character using similar structural and writing techniques to those employed in passage one.

- The use of noun groups to build vivid mental images. For example:

  - *the figtree where the fruit bats lived*
  - *a tree-hollow high above the ground*
  - *a young boobook owl called Turvy*
  - *the most unusual owl*
  - *red, furry head*

- How to compare one feature or attribute with another using adverbs and conjunctions. For example:

  - *Instead of feathers, he had fur.*
  - *They looked more like giant leaves than owl’s wings.*

- How to include mental and verbal reactions to situations so that readers can identify with characters. For example, the father’s reaction to Turvy’s behaviour shows that he is concerned about Turvy’s wellbeing.

  - ‘Don’t you get dizzy?’ his father asked.
  - Turvy’s reaction to his father’s question and the description of his head shows just how different he is.
  - ‘No.’ Turvy shook his red, furry head. ‘I get dizzy when I sit up the other way!’

**Books with similar themes**

*The Twenty-Seventh Annual African Hippopotamus Race* by Morris Lurie. Edward succeeds in the race because he is different from his friends. He trains every morning while they are sleeping. In the study passage, Morris Lurie contrasts what ordinary hippos do with what Edward does. The author also uses dialogue to reveal characters’ motivations and relationships.
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](http://www.nalp.edu.au).
In the classroom
The teaching sequence on *Topsy and Turvy* aims to teach:

- how to read the study passages 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, a short passage introducing and describing a character with distinguishing attributes.

**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 – Whole book**

The first aim of a teaching sequence would be to read the whole story in stages, as quickly as practicable, with a brief low order literate orientation to each chapter. Include a discussion before and after each chapter to make sure students understand some of the possible inferences a literate reader might make.

**Teaching focus**

The book title: Topsy and Turvy are two creatures living in adjacent trees by a river. At the beginning of the story they don’t know each other, although we shall see they have much in common. They each live with loving families to which they don’t belong. The term ‘topsy-turvy’ means upside down or confused. This is true of Topsy’s and Turvy’s lives because they live with the wrong families. This story is about this situation being resolved.
The chapter title ‘A most unusual fruit bat’ introduces the concept that Justin D’Ath expands on throughout this section. Chapter 1 describes Topsy and how she differs from other fruit bats. The illustrations help to show how Topsy and her parents feel about her being different from other fruit bats. We can see the anxious and confused looks on the parent fruit bats’ faces. Although they say that she would soon get the hang of it, they don’t look very confident. Topsy looks very apprehensive when she is hanging upside down. When she is sitting on the branch looking at the bats dangling by their feet she looks a little wistful and puzzled. It is hard being so different. She can’t imagine why it is so easy for them and so hard for her. It hasn’t occurred to anyone that she might not be a fruit bat.

**Teaching focus**

The chapter title ‘A most unusual owl’ signals that Chapter 2 will mirror Chapter 1 in describing Turvy’s unusual features for an owl. Chapter 2 describes Turvy and how he differs from other boobook owls. The second chapter is similar to the first chapter in telling us how Turvy looks quite different from the rest of his family. The illustrations support the descriptions of the differences in the text and show how Turvy and his brothers and sisters are all quite interested, although puzzled, in how different his wings are.

At this point we all realise what has happened. It is easy for us to see that Topsy is really an owl and that Turvy is really a fruit bat. We know the truth straightaway, but part of the fun of the story is that the two families don’t. Each family acts as though the strange-looking creature really belongs to their family.

**Teaching focus**

Topsy’s eating preferences are the topic of Chapter 3. We know that she looks different from the rest of her family and she has different sleeping habits. In this chapter we find out that she likes different food, as well. This is indicated by its title, ‘I like grubs’. The illustrations show clearly that Mr Fruit Bat was very pleased with himself when he found a strawberry to bring home to his family. He thought that a strawberry would be a special treat.

Topsy’s face shows us how dismayed she is when she tastes it. When she finds she hates fruit, both her parents feel upset. Her father is disappointed because he has gone to all the trouble of finding something special for her. Her mother is cross because Topsy seems ungrateful and doesn’t appreciate the strawberry. She wants Topsy to be healthy, and being healthy means eating fruit. The parents can’t imagine why Topsy wouldn’t like a strawberry.

The illustrations show Topsy looking much happier and more interested when she notices the grub in the strawberry. It turns out that she likes to eat grubs.
Teaching focus

Turvy’s food preferences are the topic of Chapter 4. Turvy doesn’t like the food that owls like. He hates his centipede. The illustration shows his disgust very clearly. He is unable to keep the wriggly insect in his mouth. Mrs Owl thinks the reason he doesn’t like his food is because he is eating it tail first. She tells him to eat his food head-first, but it makes no difference – he still hates the centipede. As he lets the centipede escape, his parents become quite frustrated with him. It seems that there is no food that he likes. Worms taste like dirt and snakes bite his tongue. Turvy is beginning to feel unhappy.

Teaching focus

Chapter 5 elaborates further on Topsy’s eating preferences. Eating a huntsman spider is something no other fruit bat would do. The illustration on page 26 shows Topsy looking slightly guilty at being caught with a spider leg sticking out of her mouth and her upside-down siblings looking disgusted, but impressed. This chapter emphasises Topsy’s predicament. She is supposed to be a fruit bat, but she can do nothing fruit bats do. In fact, fruit bat behaviour makes her feel sick. She is very miserable.

Teaching focus

Chapter 6 elaborates further on Turvy’s eating preferences. Again, the chapter emphasises Turvy’s difference from his family. When Turvy finds some berries that have blown into the tree-hollow he eats them happily. His parents, who are eating a slimy green frog, are worried and disgusted.

Teaching focus

Chapter 7 begins the story’s resolution. Readers are by now aware of the problems caused by Topsy’s and Turvy’s different appearance, and different sleeping and eating habits. This chapter relates an incident that takes place one afternoon when all the fruit bats are blown out of their nests by a willy-willy. Because Topsy can’t yet fly, she lands on the ground and then something lands on her. What is it?

Teaching focus

Chapter 8 describes how the same willy-willy blows Turvy out of his tree, where he lands right on top of something soft. What is it?
Chapter 9 describes the meeting between Topsy and Turvy, when Turvy finds that the soft thing he has landed on is actually Topsy. They introduce themselves and notice that Topsy looks a lot like an owl and Turvy looks a lot like a fruit bat. Remember, they don’t have mirrors, so neither creature knows what it looks like.

Chapter 10 describes Topsy and Turvy discovering that their respective eating habits are abnormal. Turvy enjoys some fruit they discover on the ground and Topsy enjoys the beetle that was tickling Turvy.

Chapter 11 describes how the fruit bat family and owl family finally meet. Although we have realised what has happened from the beginning of the story, it is only in this chapter that we find out how it happened. Even at this stage the two sets of parents are remarkably dense, as they don’t realise that, when the babies were blown out of their nest on a previous occasion, they were returned to the wrong nests. Fortunately, Topsy and Turvy are able to work out for themselves where they belong.

Having read the whole book, sections at a time, you may choose to read the whole book or parts of it again, particularly the sections that include the study passages. This rereading will help keep the study passages in context.

Once you have made a start on reading the book and have read at least the first four chapters, return to study passage one (Chapter 1) to start looking at the author’s language choices in more detail. Then spend some of each lesson reading the book to the students and some of the lesson working on the study passages.
High order literate orientation – Passage one

Text

Topsy was different.

She wasn’t like all the other young fruit bats that lived in the big Moreton Bay figtree by the river.

They spent all their time dangling by their feet from the branches. But Topsy couldn’t hang upside down for more than one minute without feeling dizzy.

‘Don’t worry, Topsy,’ her parents said. ‘You’ll soon get the hang of it.’

Topsy hoped they were right. Fruit bats were supposed to hang upside down.

She was the only one in the whole tree who had to sit on top of her branch instead of underneath it.

There was another thing that was different about Topsy. All the other young fruit bats had large, umbrella-like wings, but Topsy’s wings were short and fluffy. They didn’t look anything like umbrellas.

Her coat was different too. Instead of thick, reddish-brown fur, Topsy was covered from tail to head with soft white fuzz like spiders’ webs.

Everyone agreed that Topsy was the most unusual fruit bat they had ever laid eyes on.

Teaching focus

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<td><strong>Complication</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Topsy was different.</td>
<td>This complication consists of a statement that provides Topsy with a problematic attribute that will be developed in the rest of the chapter. At this point readers do not know who Topsy is – only that she is different. This statement implies that more information about this difference will follow.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Orientation/Elaboration

| **How Topsy is different** | First, we are told how Topsy is different. The information is general and provides information about:  
- who Topsy is not like  
- where she and her family live.  

By explaining what Topsy isn’t like, readers learn that Topsy is supposed to be a young fruit bat. The word *other* here tells readers that she is being introduced as a fruit bat living among fruit bats. |
| **She wasn’t like all the other young fruit bats** | 

The young fruit bats, including Topsy, lived in the big Moreton Bay figtree by the river. The author writes as though there is just one very large, significant Moreton Bay figtree by the river. It isn’t ‘a’ tree, it is the tree. Moreton Bay figtrees grow to an enormous size and, because of their fruit, are an ideal home for fruit bats. |
| **Difference 1: Behaviour** | Next, the author provides examples of the ways in which Topsy is different. The text compares two behaviours:  
- normal fruit bat behaviour  
- Topsy’s behaviour.  

The first difference between Topsy and other young fruit bats is the way they roost. Fruit bats (when they are not flying) dangle by their feet from the branches of trees. The word *dangling* is used to mean swinging loosely. Had the word ‘hanging’ been used, it would have suggested being suspended and would have lost its relaxed connotation. |
| **They spent all their time dangling by their feet from the branches.** | The word *But* confirms that Topsy is different. She couldn’t hang upside down for more than one minute without feeling dizzy. If she tried, she ended up feeling dizzy. Topsy can’t do what fruit bats do naturally. |
| **Difference 1: Reactions** | Two reactions are provided:  
- her parents’ reaction (verbal)  
- Topsy’s reaction (mental).  

These reactions allow readers to understand the type of characters the fruit bats and Topsy are. Topsy’s parents are supportive of her. They are confident that she will be able to roost as normal fruit bats do. This reaction serves to construct the fruit bat parents as kind. They are good parents. They don’t ridicule Topsy or make her feel inadequate. |
| **But Topsy couldn’t hang upside down for more than one minute without feeling dizzy.** |  

"Don’t worry, Topsy," her parents said. "You’ll soon get the hang of it." |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Topsy hoped they were right.</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Topsy’s reaction shows that she does feel anxious, and that’s she not quite convinced by their words. She <em>hoped they were right.</em></td>
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| **Ordinary fruit bat behaviour**  
Fruit bats were supposed to hang upside down. |
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<tr>
<td>The words <em>were supposed to</em> are important in this sentence. They assert that it is a normal fruit bat characteristic to hang upside down.</td>
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| **Topsy’s behaviour**  
She was the only one in the whole tree who had to sit on top of her branch instead of underneath it. |
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<tr>
<td>The next sentence makes it clear that Topsy is the only one who can’t hang upside down.</td>
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</table>

| **Difference 2: Appearance**  
There was another thing that was different about Topsy.  
**Wings**  
All the other young fruit bats had large, umbrella-like wings, but Topsy’s wings were short and fluffy.  
**Fur**  
Her coat was different too. |
|---|
| Another difference between Topsy and her family is foreshadowed. This example describes the appearance of:  
- ordinary fruit bats’ wings  
- Topsy’s wings.  
By describing all the other young fruit bats first, the writer emphasises the difference between them and Topsy. The word *other* assumes Topsy to be a fruit bat. Fruit bats have *large, umbrella-like wings*. However, Topsy does not have these wings.  
The next words, *but Topsy’s wings*, make this point clear, as the author describes her wings as being *short and fluffy*.  
The author emphasises that *they didn’t look anything like umbrellas*. It is clear that Topsy is not a fruit bat.  
The next difference is also presented as a contrast. The appearance of Topsy’s coat is compared with that of an ordinary fruit bat.  
*Instead of thick, reddish-brown fur, Topsy was covered from tail to head with soft white fuzz like spiders’ webs.*  
*Instead of thick, reddish-brown fur describes the fur a fruit bat would have, but Topsy doesn’t have it. She has soft white fuzz, which is not a critical description, merely an observation.* |
Everyone agreed that Topsy was the most unusual fruit bat they had ever laid eyes on.

The chapter is summarised by restating that Topsy is an unusual fruit bat. The whole chapter has been devoted to providing examples of how she differs from her fruit bat family.

This sentence begins with Everyone agreed so that it is clear that there can be no argument about the statement that follows. The group being identified as everyone and they are the fruit bats in the tree. The amusing point to make at this stage is that it did not occur to any of these fruit bats that Topsy could be another type of animal. Because she lives with fruit bats, she is presumed to be a fruit bat and is accepted as such.

Complete the teaching sequence, transformations, spelling and writing on passage one before beginning work on passage two.

High order literate orientation – Passage two

Text

Next to the figtree where the fruit bats lived there was a giant rivergum.

In a tree-hollow high above the ground, a young boobook owl called Turvy lived with his parents.

Turvy was different from other young owls.

Instead of feathers, he had fur.

And his wings were large and floppy.

They looked more like giant leaves than owl's wings.

But the strangest thing about Turvy was the way he liked to sleep.

He didn't snuggle down in the bottom of the tree-hollow with his parents.

He stood on his head against the wall!

‘Don’t you get dizzy?’ his father asked.

‘No.’ Turvy shook his red, furry head. ‘I get dizzy when I sit up the other way!’

Everyone agreed that Turvy was the most unusual owl they had ever laid eyes on.
## Teaching focus

<table>
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<th>Structure of text and wording</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Orientation</strong></td>
<td>Chapter 2 of this story follows the same structure as Chapter 1. We learn that a rivergum stands next to the big Moreton Bay figtree, the home of the fruit bats. The author tells us it is a <em>giant</em> rivergum, so we can imagine it to be about the same size as the big Moreton Bay figtree with lots of places where birds and animals can live. It is also important that we know the trees are next to each other, as this foreshadows the story’s resolution.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction of character</strong></td>
<td>The author introduces us to Turvy, who lives in this tree. He calls him a <em>young boobook owl</em>, but we already suspect that he isn’t. He lives with his parents in a <em>tree-hollow high above the ground</em>. A giant tree would be old, and it would have places where branches may have broken off over time or the trunk may have been damaged in some way. Such spots provide tree-hollows as safe habitats for birds and animals.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Complication</strong></td>
<td>Again, the complication is that Turvy is different, in this case <em>from other young owls</em>. This time readers anticipate that Turvy’s differences will be described.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Difference 1: Appearance – Fur</strong></td>
<td>The author first explains that Turvy doesn’t have the feathers of a boobook owl; he has fur.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Next we learn about the appearance of his wings. We learn about their size (<em>large</em>) and how they look (<em>floppy</em>). By using the word <em>floppy</em>, the author creates an image of the wings hanging loosely. The implication is that these wings are wrong for an owl.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The author expands on the description of the wings, and explicitly tells the reader that these wings are not normal for an owl. Using a simile makes the writing more interesting by providing the reader with a mental image.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Difference 2:</strong> Behaviour</td>
<td>The use of <em>But</em> signals that something unexpected is about to be revealed. As well as Turvy’s wings being nothing like those of an owl, the author describes the way he sleeps as being <em>the strangest thing about Turvy</em>.</td>
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<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinary owl behaviour</td>
<td>Before expanding on this statement, the author tells us what an owl would be expected to do, by telling us that Turvy doesn’t do it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turvy’s behaviour</td>
<td>Now the author tells us how Turvy likes to sleep. Standing on his head against the wall is funny because it is not what a baby owl would normally do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal reactions</td>
<td>If we think like an owl we can empathise with the father owl’s reaction. He believes that Turvy must get dizzy because he would get dizzy if he stood on his head.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘No.’</td>
<td>Turvy’s verbal reaction is a very definite <em>No</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turvy shook his red, furry head.</td>
<td>The author then provides more detail about Turvy’s appearance, confirming that he is definitely not an owl. Boobook owls do not have red, furry heads. From study passage one we know that it is fruit bats that have thick, reddish-brown fur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘I get dizzy when I sit up the other way!’</td>
<td>The author then allows the reader to empathise with Turvy as he explains to his ‘father’ that he gets dizzy sitting up the other way. We understand that he is a fruit bat.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Summary</strong></th>
<th>As in the first chapter, the end of this one sums up the family’s attitude to Turvy. They accept him, but they all agree he is the most unusual owl they have ever seen. <em>Everyone</em> means the owl family and perhaps other owls living in the giant rivergum.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
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 – Passage one

Text

_Topsy was different._

_She wasn’t like all the other young fruit bats that lived in the big Moreton Bay figtree by the river._

Example of text segmentation

Initially, the sentences could be segmented in the following way.

Other segmentations could also be used.

_Topsy / was / different / . /_

_She / wasn’t / like / all the other young fruit bats / that / lived / in the big Moreton Bay figtree / by the river / . /_

Teaching focus

When authors start writing a narrative, they have to decide how and when to introduce the complication. In this case, the complication is stated at the outset of the story: Topsy’s problematic attribute; that is, she is different. In fact, the first signal is provided in the chapter title.

Readers anticipate that, if they read on, the problem will be explained. This is a choice the author makes when deciding how to capture readers’ interest.

In this activity discuss:

- varying the orientation, complication and resolution structure of a narrative (text level)
- using expansion as writing technique (sentence level)
- descriptions that utilise groups of words around a noun (within sentence level).
The whole chapter elaborates on, or explains, what this difference means for Topsy. This elaboration serves as an orientation to one of the characters and the situation in which she finds herself.

**Complication**

At this point of the story readers do not know who or what Topsy is. The author withholds this information so that readers will want to read on to find out.

Narratives typically relate something that has already taken place. The verb in this sentence is *was*.

The attribute that makes Topsy interesting is that she is different. Knowing that someone or something is different can be interesting enough to entice readers to continue reading. Our curiosity is aroused.

**Elaboration (Orientation)**

*She* refers to Topsy, who is the topic of this sentence. We expect to find out how she was different.

The contraction of ‘was not’, *wasn’t*, does the same job as *was* in the first sentence. It tells readers something about Topsy. In the first sentence we found out what Topsy was and in this sentence we find out what she was not.

The word *like* used after *wasn’t* tells readers that the writer is about to compare Topsy with something she is not like.

Topsy is not like *all the other young fruit bats* … This sentence also provides the setting.

**Transformations – Two**

**Text**

They spent all their time dangling by their feet from the branches. But Topsy couldn’t hang upside down for more than one minute without feeling dizzy.

‘Don’t worry, Topsy,’ her parents said. ‘You’ll soon get the hang of it.’

*Topsy hoped they were right.*

**Example of text segmentation**

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

*They / spent / all their time / dangling / by their feet / from the branches / . / But / Topsy / couldn’t / hang upside down / for more than one minute / without / feeling dizzy / . /‘ / Don’t worry / , / Topsy / , / ’ / her parents said / . / ‘ / You’ll soon get the hang of it / . / ‘ /

*Topsy / hoped / they were right / . /*
Teaching focus

The author describes all the differences between Topsy and the other fruit bats. Readers need to know this information so they can understand Topsy’s situation, empathise with her and also remember these attributes as they become important later when Turvy is being described.

In this activity discuss:

- the comparison between normal fruit bat behaviour and Topsy’s behaviour; this comparison serves to expand on the first statement about Topsy being different (text level)
- the role of participants’ reactions in a text and how speech can be used in reactions (sentence level)
- the use of the conjunction but to signal a contrast (within sentence level).

**Difference 1: Behaviour – normal fruit bat**

In order to build images for their readers, authors often provide comparisons. Here the author describes normal fruit bat behaviour before describing Topsy’s behaviour. The contrast is funny and allows readers to empathise with Topsy. First we are given a clear picture of what they (all the other young fruit bats) do. This is normal, expected fruit bat behaviour.

*Topsy’s behaviour*

The author then introduces and contrasts Topsy’s behaviour with normal fruit bat behaviour. Placing *but* at the start of this sentence signals that Topsy’s behaviour will be something quite different from normal fruit bat behaviour. Again, the author tells us what she can’t do. She doesn’t dangle all the time, but can only manage to hang upside down for about one minute. This information allows readers to feel sympathy for Topsy. To be a fruit bat but not to be able to behave like one would be puzzling and sad.

*Topsy’s parents’ reaction (verbal)*

Authors use characters’ reactions to provide details of their personalities and to allow readers to empathise with them. This author provides Topsy’s parents’ reaction by using speech. They try to reassure her, and clearly don’t know that she is not a fruit bat. The author introduces humour in the phrase *get the hang of it*. This is a colloquial phrase. Topsy’s parents believe that she will soon be able to dangle from her feet like all the other fruit bats.
Topsy’s reaction (mental)
The author provides Topsy’s mental reaction to the situation and to her parents’ comments. He tells the reader what she thinks. She tries to be optimistic, because she wants to be a normal fruit bat. It is only the illustrations accompanying the text that reveal that her hopes won’t ever eventuate because we can see that she is not a fruit bat.

Transformations – Three

Text

Fruit bats were supposed to hang upside down. She was the only one in the whole tree who had to sit on top of her branch instead of underneath it.

There was another thing that was different about Topsy. All the other young fruit bats had large, umbrella-like wings, but Topsy’s wings were short and fluffy. They didn’t look anything like umbrellas.

Her coat was different too. Instead of thick, reddish-brown fur, Topsy was covered from tail to head with soft white fuzz like spiders’ webs.

Everyone agreed that Topsy was the most unusual fruit bat they had ever laid eyes on.

Example of text segmentation

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

Fruit bats were supposed to hang upside down / . / She was the only one in the whole tree who had to sit on top of her branch instead of underneath it / . /

There was another thing that was different about Topsy / . / All the other young fruit bats had large / , / umbrella-like wings / , / but Topsy’s wings were short and fluffy / . / They didn’t look anything like umbrellas / . /

Her coat was different too / . / Instead of thick / , / reddish-brown fur / , / Topsy was covered from tail to head with soft white fuzz like spiders’ webs / . /

Everyone agreed that Topsy was the most unusual fruit bat they had ever laid eyes on / . /
Teaching focus

This part of the orientation develops the concept of the differences that exist between Topsy and all the other fruit bats. Differences in behaviour are elaborated on and differences in appearance are introduced. These differences are really quite significant, and the humour lies in the fact that the other fruit bats conclude that Topsy is just an unusual fruit bat.

**Language choice**

**Fruit bats were supposed to hang upside down.** In this part of the story, readers find out more about fruit bat behaviour. This sentence confirms that fruit bats’ ability to hang upside down is normal.

Readers already know that if Topsy hangs for more than a minute she gets dizzy, so it is no surprise that she is the only one to sit on top of her branch. She is the odd one out. The author has revisited this difference so readers will empathise with Topsy. The illustration also supports this; she looks left out and upset.

**Comparison of behaviour**

Authors tend to expand on statements. The author has already described a difference in behaviour, and now he signals that there is at least one other thing that is different about Topsy.

**Comparison of appearance**

However, after signalling another difference, the author describes the appearance of all the other young fruit bats. He could have said, ‘Their wings were like umbrellas’ Instead, he chose to coin the word ‘umbrella-like’ so readers can visualise their wings.

The use of the conjunction but here tells us to expect a contrast. Topsy’s wings were not like those of the other fruit bats. The author describes them and then, for emphasis, reiterates that they were nothing like fruit bats’ wings.

The author adds another difference in appearance. First he makes a direct statement, which he then expands upon.

Using a comparison, the author tells us what Topsy doesn’t have. She doesn’t have thick reddish-brown fur.

Then he tells us what she does have. Justin D’Ath’s description of Topsy is not critical, but it is apparent that she is not a fruit bat.
Summary
The other fruit bats (everyone) agree that Topsy is a fruit bat, although the most unusual one they have ever seen. This summary is a little like the punch line of a joke. It is gently ironic.

Transformations – Passage two

Text
Next to the figtree where the fruit bats lived there was a giant rivergum.

In a tree-hollow high above the ground, a young boobook owl called Turvy lived with his parents.

Turvy was different from other young owls. Instead of feathers, he had fur. And his wings were large and floppy. They looked more like giant leaves than owl’s wings.

But the strangest thing about Turvy was the way he liked to sleep. He didn’t snuggle down in the bottom of the tree-hollow with his parents. He stood on his head against the wall!

‘Don’t you get dizzy?’ his father asked.

‘No.’ Turvy shook his red, furry head. ‘I get dizzy when I sit up the other way!’

Everyone agreed that Turvy was the most unusual owl they had ever laid eyes on.

Example of text segmentation
Initially, the sentence could be segmented in the following way. Other segmentations could also be used.

Next to / the figtree / where the fruit bats lived / there was / a giant rivergum / . /

In a tree-hollow / high above the ground / , / a / young / boobook / owl / called / Turvy / lived / with his parents / . /

Turvy / was / different / from / other / young / owls / . / Instead / of feathers / , / he / had / fur / . / And / his / wings / were / large / and / floppy / . / They / looked / more / like / giant leaves / than / owl’s wings / . /

But / the strangest thing / about / Turvy / was / the way / he liked / to sleep / . / He / didn’t / snuggle down / in the bottom / of the tree-hollow / with / his parents / . / He / stood / on his head / against / the wall / ! / !

‘ / Don’t you get dizzy / ? / ’ / his / father / asked / . /
'No / . /' / Turvy shook / his red / , / furry / head / . / ' / I get dizzy when I sit up the other way / ! / '! /'

Everyone / agreed / that / Turvy / was / the most unusual owl / they had ever laid eyes on / . /

Teaching focus

Orientation
When authors write narratives, they decide when and how to introduce the setting and the characters. At this point, we already know a little about the setting and about one important character, and now we are told a little more. The author introduces a giant rivergum that stands next to the big Moreton Bay figtree by the river. We are gradually building an image of the setting. The title of the chapter signals the introduction of a new character. Readers anticipate that they will be introduced to Turvy and, from the chapter’s title, assume that he will be different too.

Introduction of character
The author introduces Turvy, the second main character, after describing the setting. We expect, and the illustration underlines our expectations, that, although Turvy is supposed to be an owl, he is a fruit bat. This mirrors Topsy’s situation. We also learn that, like Topsy, Turvy lives with his parents.

Complication
Authors often make a statement about characters and then expand from that. This is the technique Justin D’Ath is using. He tells us that Turvy is different. This seems like a second complication, but there is only one complication: Topsy and Turvy have somehow got mixed up and are living with the wrong families.

Difference 1: Appearance
The author begins the expansion on the problem. First he describes Turvy’s appearance and then his behaviour, both of which are problems within the owl family. The simile tells readers that Turvy looks quite different from the other young owls.
**Difference 2: Behaviour**
The author continues to expand on the theme that Turvy is different. He describes his strange behaviour. His behaviour is more problematic than his appearance for the owls. It makes them concerned for his wellbeing.

**Ordinary owl behaviour**
Before the author describes the strangest thing about Turvy, he tells us what owls normally do. This leads to a humorous contrast. We imagine a pleasant scene in which fluffy baby owls are nurtured by their parents in the tree-hollow.

**Turvy’s behaviour**
Turvy’s sleeping behaviour provides a humorous contrast to the preceding sentence. Turvy’s situation mirrors Topsy’s as they each struggle with their natures while trying to adapt to their families.

**Verbal reactions**
Following the structure of Chapter 1, Justin D’Ath describes the parents’ reactions to these differences. This technique creates empathy for the characters and provides insight into their personalities. Turvy’s father shows concern by questioning him about how he feels.

Turvy’s response reveals that he needs to be upside down and the description confirms that he looks like a fruit bat.

**Summary**
As in Chapter 1, a summary tells readers what everyone agrees. Both chapters follow this structure so that young readers know what to expect, and can understand the story and enjoy the humour. The last sentence uses irony as its humorous device.

**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 Year 2, so it is reasonable to assume that students studying it would be negotiating the phonetic stage of spelling. Consequently, work on initial consonants and blends, as well as the other patterns suggested below, will be essential for developing students’ decoding skills in reading.

Older students may be at the transitional stage of spelling, so working on words that help students use visual strategies to notice larger chunks of letters that go together to make orthographic patterns will be essential for them.

Examples from passage one

Some words appear on more than one list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>t/ai</td>
<td>l/aid</td>
<td>in/st/ead</td>
<td>d/iff/er</td>
<td>y/young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l/aid</td>
<td>s/aid</td>
<td>h/ead</td>
<td>r/er</td>
<td>w/ith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>–own</td>
<td>–ee–</td>
<td>Compound</td>
<td>–own</td>
<td>–own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d/own</td>
<td>f/eeet</td>
<td>words</td>
<td>d/own</td>
<td>d/own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>br/own</td>
<td>tr/ee</td>
<td>fig/tree</td>
<td>br/own</td>
<td>br/own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f/ig/tr/ee</td>
<td>a/gr/eed</td>
<td>every/one</td>
<td>f/ig/tr/ee</td>
<td>f/ig/tr/ee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f/eel/ing</td>
<td></td>
<td>with/out</td>
<td>f/eel/ing</td>
<td>f/eel/ing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Choose some high-frequency words from the first four sentences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>was</th>
<th>one</th>
<th>from</th>
<th>but</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>she</td>
<td>the</td>
<td>down</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>like</td>
<td>big</td>
<td>for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all</td>
<td>their</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples from passage two

-ee-  
s/eep  
tr/ee-h/oll/ow  
a/gr/eed  

-ee(h)oll/ow

–ou–  
gr/ound  
y/oung  

–ow  
owl  
d/own  
tr/ee-h/oll/ow

–ea(d)–  
I n/st/ead  
h/ead  
f/eath/er/s  
l/eave/s  

–ea(d)–  

–oo–  
b/oo/b/ook  
l/ook/ed  
st/ood  
sh/ook

–ing  
thy/ing  
w/ing/s

Choose some high-frequency words from the first four sentences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>there</th>
<th>had</th>
<th>more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>where</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with</td>
<td>were</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from</td>
<td>they</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).

Examples

brown: O.E. *brun* meaning ‘dark’, only developing a definite colour sense from the 13th century.
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.

Examples

Jointly reconstruct the sentences in which the author describes Topsy’s different behaviour.

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 Topsy and Turvy would include:

- overall goals, such as writing an introduction to a story in which a character is distinguished by a particular attribute
- short-term goals, such as the use of noun groups to create vivid mental images; comparing one feature or attribute with another using conjunctions; including mental and verbal reactions to situations so that readers can identify with characters; and creating words to describe things, as Justin D’Ath did when he wrote umbrella-like.
Workshops

Workshop one
Discuss and record examples of noun groups to build a vivid image for a reader. Discuss places, appearances or characters. For example:

- a noisy flock of parrots perched high in a callistomen tree
- bright red and blue feathers
- well-hidden nests
- green-coloured younger birds
- bright and intelligent eyes.

Workshop two
Discuss and record examples of comparisons of two attributes or features using conjunctions and similes. For example:

- The rosellas tended to their babies’ every need, but the mynah birds left their young to survive on their own.
- The adult rosellas had ruby-red breasts while the young ones were speckled with green.
- The rosellas roosted in the trees like large red flowers.

Workshop three
Discuss and record how to include mental and verbal reactions to certain situations that would allow readers to identify or empathise with characters. For example:

- The baby rosellas felt impatient to try out their wings and fly.
- The rosetta mother said, ‘Not yet. Keep flapping your wings to make them strong.’
- The babies hoped this would work so they could leave the cramped nest one day soon.

Workshop four
Discuss parts of birds or animals that remind us of everyday objects and then coin or make up words to describe them so that readers have a clear image. For example:

- A bird’s eyes could be jewel-like.
- An elephant’s legs could be tree-like.
- A horse’s nose could be velvet-like.
- A squirrel glider’s wings could be cape-like.
- A snake’s tail could be whip-like.
Workshop five

Discuss a scenario such as the one below based on passage two. The plovers’ nest includes something unusual: a green tree snake egg. This egg looks different from the other two and, when all three eggs hatch, the differences between their previous occupants are very obvious. As in *Topsy and Turvy*, however, the plovers are willing to accept the strange baby as their own.

**Orientation**
Over by the big grey boulder, on the shady side, was a dip in the ground.

**Introduction of character**
Almost hidden by grass and twigs, the plovers’ nest held three eggs that were just about to hatch.

**Complication**
One of the eggs was different to the rest.

**Difference 1. Appearance**
Instead of green and grey speckles, this egg was pale green and rather long. The shell appeared leather-like. When the long, pale green egg hatched, the baby looked more like a piece of string than a fluffy little dot.

**Ordinary behaviour**
The strangest thing about this chick was that he didn’t chirp and nod his head, waiting for his parents to feed him.

**Character’s behaviour**
He slid around the nest, hissing.

**Verbal reactions**
‘Don’t you want to eat some crickets we found?’ asked the mother plover.

‘No!’ hissed the baby as he slid away, looking for a tree to climb. ‘I can look after myself now.’

**Summary**
The plovers agreed that this was the strangest baby they had ever had.

**Joint construction**

The clear structure of passages one and two could be a useful resource for writing. An attribute is explained or elaborated on through examples. In the students’ writing, the examples could be comparisons, as in *Topsy and Turvy*, or they could be the consequences of each attribute. Students could write either jointly or independently, depending on their confidence, skills and experience.
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.
### Sample weekly plan

**Class:** Year 2  
**Text:** *Topsy and Turvy* by Justin D’Ath

**Week:** 1  
**Term:** 2  
**Teaching focus:** Introducing characters and settings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Low order literate        | The fruit bat family.  
Introduce author, and ‘The  
Ugly Duckling’ theme.  
Discuss the setting. Read  
Chapters 1–4  
Show pictures of fruit bats  
and Moreton Bay figtrees. | Comparison between Topsy  
and other fruit bats.  
Revisit discussion from last  
lesson. Read Chapters 5–6.  
Show pictures of boobook  
owls and gum trees. | Focus on Topsy’s  
differences.  
Discuss the story so far.  
Complete reading. | Discuss how readers may  
know something characters  
in story don’t.  
Discuss the story, humour,  
how the families were  
supportive but silly. | Focus on how authors build  
noun groups.  
Brief recap, then focus on  
writing goal/s. |

**High order literate**  
**orientation**

**Transformations**

**Spelling**

**Writing**

---

**Read story with the class. Students join in when they can.**

**High order literate orientation**

First four sentences.  
Focus on Topsy’s problem  
and where story is set.  
Discuss the first difference,  
behaviour.

Revisit last lesson if  
necessary. Next three  
sentences: parents’ and  
Topsy’s reactions.

Next two sentences: focus  
on repetition of what fruit  
bats do compared with  
Topsy’s behaviour.

Next three sentences: another  
major difference,  
appearance.

Next difference in  
appearance is Topsy’s coat.  
What animal (or bird) does  
this describe?

Unpack meaning from  
first two sentences. Who  
Topsy wasn’t like. Discuss  
why author described the  
problem, then the setting.

Next two sentences. What  
fruit bats do compared with  
what Topsy can do.

Focus on verbal and mental  
reactions.

Why does the author repeat  
information about fruit bats  
hanging upside down?

y/oung  
fig/tree  
High-frequency words as  
needed.

Revision  
w/ih/out  
High-frequency words;  
prepare for joint  
reconstructed writing.

Revision of high-frequency  
words.  
d/ifferent  
r/iver

Joint reconstructed writing  
of first sentence. Write  
a second sentence if  
appropriate.

Begin discussions for first  
workshop activity. Record  
results.
One day the grown ups said we were going on a trip.

We would take some blankets, a couple of bottles and some tea and sugar.

We would have a car and a bike to ride.
Topsy was different.

She wasn't like all the other young fruit bats that lived in the big Moreton Bay figtree by the river.

They spent all their time dangling by their feet from the branches.

But Topsy couldn’t hang upside down for more than one minute without feeling dizzy.

‘Don’t worry, Topsy,’ her parents said. ‘You’ll soon get the hang of it.’

Topsy hoped they were right.

Fruit bats were supposed to hang upside down.

She was the only one in the whole tree who had to sit on top of her branch instead of underneath it.
There was another thing that was different about Topsy.

All the other young fruit bats had large, umbrella-like wings, but Topsy’s wings were short and fluffy. They didn’t look anything like umbrellas.

Her coat was different too. Instead of thick, reddish-brown fur, Topsy was covered from tail to head with soft white fuzz like spiders’ webs.

Everyone agreed that Topsy was the most unusual fruit bat they had ever laid eyes on.
Next to the figtree where the fruit bats lived there was a giant rivergum.

In a tree-hollow high above the ground, a young boobook owl called Turvy lived with his parents.

Turvy was different from other young owls.

Instead of feathers, he had fur.

And his wings were large and floppy.

They looked more like giant leaves than owl’s wings.

But the strangest thing about Turvy was the way he liked to sleep.

He didn’t snuggle down in the bottom of the tree-hollow with his parents.

He stood on his head against the wall!

‘Don’t you get dizzy?’ his father asked.
‘No.’ Turvy shook his red, furry head. ‘I get dizzy when I sit up the other way!’

Everyone agreed

that Turvy was the most unusual owl they had ever laid eyes on.
Early Childhood

These notes have been written to help teachers use the Accelerated Literacy teaching strategies in Year 2. However, they could also be used with older students who have difficulties with reading.

Outcomes of the teaching sequence

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

- read the passages 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.

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