Lower Primary

These short-version notes have been written to help teachers use the Accelerated Literacy teaching strategies in Year 4. However, they could also be used up to Year 7 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 with a high level of inferential comprehension
- discuss the story: give opinions about the author’s language choices; identify the story’s structure, theme and ideology
- spell fluently and in clear handwriting write the words taught as part of the teaching sequence
- write, independently or jointly, a fable using the moral from the text.

Notes

- The following notes have been written for teachers who have attended professional development workshops in teaching Accelerated Literacy and who are now experienced in using the Accelerated Literacy teaching sequence.
- 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 Frogs at the Rainbow’s End

Lower Primary
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Using this resource
Year level

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The text

The Frogs at the Rainbow’s End
Synopsis of the story

‘The Frogs at the Rainbow’s End’ is one of 20 fables in this book. Like all fables, it is a short narrative illustrating a moral and satirising human behaviour. The characters are greedy frogs who behave in very foolish and reckless ways.

As expected, they come to a bad end. A moral, or coda, appears at the end of the narrative summarising the theme of the story, which is also characteristic of fables.

Themes

Themes in ‘The Frogs at the Rainbow’s End’ include:

- the importance of verifying facts before rushing into something
- greed can blind people to reality
- the highest hopes can lead to the greatest disappointments.

Structure of the text

In this fable Arnold Lobel has used an unusual structure to tell the tale of three silly, greedy frogs and their ultimate demise. There are four events, building anticipation and suspense, and a finale. The story is told by a narrator and expanded by the use of dialogue. This technique allows readers to draw their own conclusions about the characters, rather than relying on the narrative voice.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Structure</strong></th>
<th><strong>Text</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Initiating event</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction of first frog</td>
<td>A Frog</td>
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<tr>
<td>What he was doing and the setting</td>
<td>was swimming in a pond</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reference to time</td>
<td>after a rainstorm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>He saw a brilliant rainbow stretching across the sky.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction</td>
<td>“I have heard,” said the Frog, “there is a cave filled with gold at the place where the rainbow ends. I will find that cave and be the richest frog in the world!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sequent event (following as a consequence of a previous event)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action; journey begins</td>
<td>The Frog swam to the edge of the pond as fast as he could go.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction of second frog</td>
<td>There he met another Frog.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue to advance the story</td>
<td>“Where are you rushing to?” asked the second Frog. “I am rushing to the place where the rainbow ends,” said the first Frog. “There is a rumour,” said the second Frog, “that there is a cave filled with gold and diamonds at that place.” “Then come with me,” said the first Frog. “We will be the two richest frogs in the world!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sequent event</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting shifts; journey continues</td>
<td>The two Frogs jumped out of the pond and ran through the meadow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction of third frog</td>
<td>There they met another Frog.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### The Frogs at the Rainbow’s End

*Dialogue to advance the story*

“What is the hurry?” asked the third Frog.
“We are running to the place where the rainbow ends,” said the two Frogs.
“I have been told,” said the third Frog, “there is a cave filled with gold and diamonds and pearls at that place.”
“Then come with us,” said the two Frogs. “We will be the three richest frogs in the world!”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sequent event (following as a consequence of a previous event)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Journey continues</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Journey ends</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What the frogs saw; a new setting</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What the frogs did</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finale (following as a consequence of a previous event)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction of snake</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How the snake felt</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What the snake did</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Moral: The highest hopes can lead to the greatest disappointments.**
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
In the classroom

The teaching sequence on ‘The Frogs at the Rainbow’s End’ 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, another fable using the moral from this text.

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

Show the students the picture on page 15 and explain that this story is a fable. If they are familiar with the ‘The Bad Kangaroo’ or ‘The Hen and the Apple Tree’, compare the two tales.

‘The Frogs at the Rainbow’s End’ is a fable about three very silly frogs who set out to find riches at the end of a rainbow, but end up with their hopes dashed. As with the other fables in the book, the characters are animals that wear clothes and speak and behave as though they are people.

Explain that the story starts with one frog swimming in a pond after a rainstorm. Because it has just been raining, there is a brilliantly coloured rainbow in the sky. Rainbows are very beautiful, but it isn’t the lovely colours that the frog is interested in. Instead, the frog remembers that he has heard that at the end of a rainbow is a cave filled with gold.
What you could say

Some legends say that there is gold at the end of a rainbow, but people don’t believe this is true. This silly frog doesn’t know that, and so he sets off to find the end of the rainbow and the cave full of gold. He wants to become the richest frog in the world.

He swims to the edge of his pond and meets another frog, who wants to know where he is going. This frog has heard a rumour that there is a cave filled with gold and diamonds at the end of a rainbow, so they both set out together.

On their way they meet another frog who wants to come with them because he has been told about a cave filled with gold, diamonds and pearls at the end of a rainbow. They are all very keen to become the richest frogs in the world.

When they finally reach the cave at the end of the rainbow, they find no gold, diamonds or pearls. Instead they find a hungry snake who eats them in one quick gulp.

The illustration shows the frogs leaping into the cave full of excitement and hope. They don’t look inside first to check whether it is safe. They believe everything they have heard and jump straight in. They are very greedy. They don’t have much time to think about how disappointed they are before the snake eats them!

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.
### Initiation event

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structural Organisation of text</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Why language choices are made in this text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The author starts by introducing the first character (A Frog), what he was doing (was swimming) and his setting (in a pond). The only reference to time is when he was swimming (after a rainstorm). All these events are ordinary frog activities. It is when an extraordinary (brilliant) rainbow appears that the frog starts to act like a human. The frog’s speech makes it clear to readers that he has not thought to question something he has heard.</td>
<td>A Frog was swimming in a pond after a rainstorm. He saw a brilliant rainbow stretching across the sky.</td>
<td>Following the rainstorm, the frog saw a brilliant rainbow stretching across the sky. Just any old rainbow may not have attracted the frog’s attention but a brilliant one certainly did. It must have been splendid, bright and vivid.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"I have heard," said the Frog, “there is a cave filled with gold at the place where the rainbow ends. I will find that cave and be the richest frog in the world!"

The frog reacted to seeing the rainbow in speech. There was no one there to hear the frog’s reaction so we can assume he was thinking aloud. The frog set the scene for the rest of the story by repeating what he had heard about a cave filled with gold at the place where the rainbow ends.

**Note:** Finding gold at the end of the rainbow is a myth often repeated when people see a rainbow in the sky so the idea may already be familiar to children. However, since rainbows are formed by rays of sunlight being broken into the colours of the spectrum by refraction through drops of rain, the position of the end of the rainbow is always far away from the person viewing it. It is really impossible to find the end of a rainbow.

This, then, must have been a quite silly frog to set out to find a cave at the end of the rainbow. He was also a greedy frog with impossible goals.
Sequent event

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The first frog set out for the edge of the pond quickly (as fast as he could go). The author wants readers to know that the frog was very eager to find the gold. Readers might wonder why a frog wanted gold or how a frog would get the gold out of the cave. In fables the animals act like people. They might have some characteristics of animals but they really behave like people. This frog, like many people, is very keen to get rich without much effort.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The second frog too, had heard about riches being in a cave at the end of the rainbow. (There is a rumour that there is a cave filled with gold and diamonds at that place.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sequent event

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“There is a rumour,” said the second Frog, “that there is a cave filled with gold and diamonds at that place.”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With the addition of diamonds to the gold, the first frog thought perhaps that there were plenty of riches for both of them so he invited the second frog to go with him. (Then come with me. We will be the two richest frogs in the world.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sequent event

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The first frog showed that he was not entirely greedy. He was willing to share the riches. Especially if there were gold and diamonds.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Then come with me,&quot; said the first Frog. “We will be the two richest frogs in the world!”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sequent event

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strangely enough, this second frog proves himself to be just as ignorant and greedy as the first. So with the two thinking the same about rainbows, they have become even more excited about being the richest frogs in the world.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“There are you rushing to?” asked the second Frog. “I am rushing to the place where the rainbow ends,” said the first Frog.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
And the third frog is equally gullible and greedy. When this pattern is repeated three times for the reader it becomes even funnier. If only one deluded frog had sought the gold at the end of the rainbow the story would not have had any elements of comic suspense.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sequent event</th>
<th>The two Frogs jumped out of the pond and ran through the meadow.</th>
<th>The setting shifted from the pond as the journey to the cave progressed. (The two frogs jumped out of the pond and ran through the meadow.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There they met another Frog.</td>
<td>&quot;What is the hurry?&quot; asked the third Frog.</td>
<td>The next event occurred when they met another frog. (There they met another frog.) This frog too, had noticed the way the frogs were hurrying. (What is the hurry?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;We are running to the place where the rainbow ends,&quot; said the two Frogs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>The first and second frog’s reacted to the meeting through their speech as before. (We are running to the place where the rainbow ends.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I have been told,&quot; said the third Frog, &quot;there is a cave filled with gold and diamonds and pearls at that place.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td>The third frog had been told about the riches at the end of the rainbow as well. (I have been told there is a cave filled with gold and diamonds and pearls at that place.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Then come with us,&quot; said the two Frogs. &quot;We will be the three richest frogs in the world!&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td>The first two frogs must have thought there would be plenty of riches for all of them, considering now there would be pearls as well, because they invited the third frog to join them. (Then come with us. We will be the three richest frogs in the world.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The author has made these frogs quite generous and willing to share with each other although he has also made them seem quite greedy and thoughtless as they rushed to the cave.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Sequent event**

The journey progresses for an unknown time but we do know the frogs ran for miles. This is an expression that still sounds better than *ran for kilometres!* Arnold Lobel wrote these fables in the 1970s in the US where they still measure distance in miles. In any case, these stories have an old-fashioned flavour to them, (many characters wear old fashioned clothes) so the use of this expression is appropriate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The three Frogs ran for miles.</th>
<th>Now the three frogs ran to the cave together. (<em>The three frogs ran for miles.</em>) The author doesn’t tell us how long it took them. We can infer that to run for miles for frogs would be hard work and they kept going because they shared excitement and determination to find these riches.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finally they came to the rainbow’s end.</td>
<td>Eventually though, they did reach the end of the rainbow (<em>Finally they came to the rainbow’s end.</em>), or at least they reached a cave that they believed was the one at the rainbow’s end.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There they saw a dark cave in the side of the hill. “Gold! Diamonds! Pearls!” cried the Frogs, as they leaped into the cave.</td>
<td>The author describes the cave as a dark cave in the side of the hill. If it was a dark cave the frogs could not see into it. And often in stories if something is dark it implies something ominous; it can be a foreboding of danger. Of course these frogs were too silly to take notice of this. They must have been very excited by now because they really believed that they had found the cave containing the treasure (<em>Gold! Diamonds! Pearls!</em>) They leapt in before even looking inside. The saying ‘Look before you leap’ would have been apt here. From the behaviour and speech of the frogs we can tell that they acted without thinking very carefully. They believed rumours or what they had heard about what was at the end of a rainbow. They didn’t question these, but rushed off to find the treasure. When they finally reached the cave, they firmly believed that it would contain gold, diamonds and pearls. So they just leaped into the cave believing that they would soon be the richest frogs in the world. They were full of very high hopes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Finale**

This is quite an unexpected ending because the snake has not been introduced earlier. The author introduces him right at the end of the story. His dark cave is introduced first and that is a hint that something other than treasure might be inside but now we find out that a snake lives inside. We then find out how he was feeling (*He was hungry*) and thinking (*and had been thinking about his supper.*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Snake lived inside. He was hungry and had been thinking about his supper. He swallowed the three Frogs in one quick gulp.</th>
<th>Unfortunately for the frogs they did not become the richest frogs in the world, they became a snake’s supper. All their high hopes led to the greatest disappointment as the moral of the story says. Instead of gold, diamonds and pearls inside the cave there was a hungry snake. Finally the author tells readers what happened to the frogs who had leaped into the cave so happily (<em>He swallowed the three Frogs in one quick gulp.</em>)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moral: The highest hopes may lead to the greatest disappointments.</td>
<td>In a way, the author has made it seem that it was a justified end for the thoughtless frogs, their unrealistically high hopes were bound to be disappointed, and a happy ending for the snake, who had not had any high hopes to begin with</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</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 – One

The beginning of the fable introduces the first frog, the setting and the initiating event, which sets off a series of events leading to the three frogs’ eventual demise. The first frog’s incorrect thinking is illustrated by his speech.

First, the frog wrongly believes a variation of the Irish legend about there being a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow. Arnold Lobel says that the gold is in a cave so that when the frogs finally reach the end of the rainbow, readers will be surprised to find that the cave actually contains a hungry snake.

Second, the frog allows his greed to influence his actions. Through his speech he reveals himself to be both gullible and greedy. The author makes no judgements during the narrative; this is left to the reader.

Text

A Frog was swimming in a pond after a rainstorm. He saw a brilliant rainbow stretching across the sky.

“I have heard,” said the Frog, “there is a cave filled with gold at the place where the rainbow ends. I will find that cave and be the richest frog in the world!”
Example of text segmentation

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

**A Frog** was swimming in a pond after a rainstorm.

He saw a brilliant rainbow stretching across the sky.

"I have heard," said the Frog.

"There is a cave filled with gold at the place where the rainbow ends.

"I will find that cave and be the richest frog in the world!"

Teaching focus

Following is a plan for discussing the transformations to lead into a writing activity:

- Introduction of character, behaviour and setting
- The character sees something that reminds him of something he has heard
- This sets him thinking (out loud) about a myth or legend in which he believes, and what he will do about it.

**Introduction of character, behaviour and setting**

The author starts the story with a frog doing what frogs do: they swim in a pond. The author tells us that the frog was swimming after a rainstorm so the rainbow can be introduced.

**The character sees something out of the ordinary**

This is no ordinary rainbow. Some rainbows are quite faint, but this one is described as brilliant, which prompts the frog to notice it and speak about it.

**This sets him thinking (out loud) about a myth or legend in which he believes and**

At this point the frog begins to act like a human being. Through speech, the author alerts us not only to what the frog is thinking but also to his motivations and intentions.

**what he will do about it**

A more sensible frog would have mused about the cave with the gold, and then gone about his business. This frog, however, decides to act on what he has heard. The author portrays the frog as being greedy, so the reader anticipates the frog’s downfall.
Other points for discussion

Arnold Lobel is writing within the conventions of a fable. Fables are short tales that were originally passed on by word of mouth to teach listeners a lesson. They are populated by animal characters with human qualities. Fables gently make a point about human behaviour without becoming lectures. Lobel’s stories are fresh and humorous. In this one the frogs may swim in ponds, but they behave like three very stupid, greedy people. The moral at the end of the story is also a characteristic of a fable: it sums up the story’s lesson.

Transformations – Two

This passage is the first of the sequent events. It sets up the pattern for the frogs to meet each other, share their mistaken beliefs and then proceed on their journey. The frogs’ thinking is again revealed through speech.

Just as the rainbow has to be brilliant for the first frog to notice it, so the first frog has to be rushing for the second frog to query his behaviour.

On hearing where the first frog is going, the second frog remembers a rumour he heard. As the contents of the mythical cave are exaggerated, we realise that each frog we meet is sillier than the last.

Text

*The Frog swam to the edge of the pond as fast as he could go. There he met another Frog.*

“Where are you rushing to?” asked the second Frog.

“I am rushing to the place where the rainbow ends,” said the first Frog.

“There is a rumour,” said the second Frog, “that there is a cave filled with gold and diamonds at that place.”

“Then come with me,” said the first Frog. “We will be the two richest frogs in the world!”

Example of text segmentation

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

*The Frog / swam / to the edge / of the pond / as fast as he could go / . / There / he met / another Frog / . / “ / Where are you rushing to / ? / ” / asked / the second Frog / . /
“/ I am rushing to the place where the rainbow ends / , / ” / said / the first Frog / . / 
“/ There is a rumour / , / ” / said / the second Frog / , / 
“/ that there is a cave filled with gold and diamonds at that place / . / ” / 
“/ Then come with me / , / ” / said / the first Frog / . / 
“/ We will be the two richest frogs in the world / ! / ” /

Teaching focus

Following is a plan for discussing the transformations to lead into a writing activity:

- The character acts on the decision he has made.
- A second character is introduced.
- Dialogue establishes the curiosity of the second character, allowing information to be shared, and the behaviour to continue.

Beginning of journey

As a result of his foolishness and greed, as shown in the initiating event, the first frog embarks on a journey. Because he is going as fast as he could go, he will probably attract the attention of another frog.

Second character introduced

We are not told whether the two frogs already know each other, but possibly because they are both frogs they act in a friendly and familiar manner towards each other.

Dialogue which establishes – Attention of second character

Dialogue can be used for a number of purposes. In this story the author uses dialogue to develop the characters and to advance the plot. The second frog’s question tells us that he is curious about why the first frog is in such a rush. Perhaps frogs don’t ordinarily rush.

Sharing of information

Dialogue is used to show the first frog’s readiness to share information.

Dialogue is also used to show that this frog has also heard and believed the rumour about the cave at the end of a rainbow. This time the author cleverly inserts diamonds into the rumour, proving the second frog to be even more gullible than the first.
Continuation of journey (quest)

Finally, dialogue is used to show that the two frogs agree to travel together and become rich. The dialogue shows that neither of the frogs has questioned the rumours, or whether it is possible to find where a rainbow ends. The twist in the story, which comes later, is built on the premise that they actually can find the place where the rainbow ends.

“/ Then come with me /, /” / said / the first Frog / . / “/ We will be the two richest frogs in the world / ! /” /

Other points for discussion

Again Arnold Lobel is using dialogue to achieve two effects. First, the dialogue advances the plot of the story. The dialogue between the frogs tells the reader what is happening in the story. Second, the dialogue leaves readers in no doubt about the thinking and motivation of the frogs. It develops the characters.

Because dialogue rather than narration is used, the reader must infer this understanding.

Further transformations

Following these examples, teachers can begin to work through the text in subsequent transformations.

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

- Look at words that end with –ing (eg. swim/ing, run/ing, rush/ing, think/ing). Discuss why it is easier to spell these words in chunks. Look at the way in swim and run the final consonant is doubled before adding –ing. This is to show that the vowel sound is short. The remaining words already have a double consonant.
- Look at the compound words such as rain/bow and rain/storm.
- Look at words that end with –d or –ed (eg. live/d, fill/ed, leap/ed, jump/ed, swallow/ed). Note the way –d is added to live but –ed is added to the other words.
- Look at words containing the –ea– pattern (eg. heard, meadow, pearl/s, leap/ed).
- Look at words containing the –old pattern (eg. gold and told).
- Look at words with interesting origins such as sky, brilliant and rich.

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 and http://www.thefreedictionary.com.

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.

Discuss the fact that Arnold Lobel uses the conventions of fable writing. The animal characters behave like people and the story contains a moral or lesson. Here the moral is, ‘The highest hopes may lead to the greatest disappointments’.

Activities

Writing workshop one

Initiating event

Students will need to understand that the author has written an initiating event to convey the information readers require to appreciate what comes next. Lobel introduces the first character and the setting, then uses dialogue to relate what the frog is thinking and what sort of character he is.
Discuss some situations that could serve as the initiating event of a fable. For example:

- An animal character finds a four-leaf clover. (Good luck)
- An animal character decides to rely on a rabbit’s foot. (Good luck)
- An animal character breaks a mirror. (Bad luck)
- A black cat walks in front of an animal character. (Bad luck)

Explain the writing activity to the students. List their suggestions, then choose one to write about jointly.

A writing activity could follow this plan:

- Introduction of the character, his or her behaviour and the setting.
- The character sees something out of the ordinary.
- This sets the character thinking (out loud) about a myth or legend to do with good or bad luck in which he or she believes, and what he or she will do about it.

Example

If the students were going to write about a character finding a four-leaf clover, they would start by writing about the initiating event, including the character and setting:

One day while a magpie was looking for grubs in the ground she found a four-leaf clover.

Then write about the magpie’s reaction in speech:

‘This will bring me good luck,’ she said. ‘I won’t have to look for my food any more.’

Writing workshop two

First sequent event

The students will need to understand the purpose of the first sequent event. The first sequent event sets up the pattern for the rest of the story. Remind students that dialogue can develop the story and the characters’ motivations.

If a second character is to be introduced, the first character’s behaviour must somehow attract his or her attention, and so on. It can be very humorous if each new character is more foolish than the last.
To continue with the four-leaf clover story, the writing activity could follow this plan:

- The character acts on the decision he or she has made.
- A second character is introduced.
- Dialogue is used to arouse the curiosity of the second character, share information and continue the behaviour.

Example

If students are about to write a sequent event, they might have the character acting on her decision:

She tucked the clover leaf under her wing and sat and rested in a tree.

Introduce a second character, using dialogue to show how this even sillier character copies the magpie:

Another magpie was busy digging under the tree. 'Why are you just sitting there?' he asked.

'I have a four-leaf clover, so I don’t need to look for food,’ she said. 'Food will just appear in front of me from now on.’

'If you share your luck with me I can sit and rest on that tree too,’ said the second magpie.

Further writing activities

A number of sequent events could be written. Other magpies could join in, for example. Perhaps the finale could involve a fox eating the magpies who, now weak from not eating, cannot escape.

Following the joint writing, encourage the students who are confident about the process to write an independent variation. Allow those who would prefer to use part of the joint writing in conjunction with their own writing to do so. Invite any students who do not feel confident about writing independently to join you in another joint writing activity.
The Frogs at the Rainbow’s End (283 words)

A Frog was swimming in a pond after a rainstorm. He saw a brilliant rainbow stretching across the sky.

“I have heard,” said the Frog, “there is a cave filled with gold at the place where the rainbow ends. I will find that cave and be the richest frog in the world!”

The Frog swam to the edge of the pond as fast as he could go. There he met another Frog.

“Where are you rushing to?” asked the second Frog.

“I am rushing to the place where the rainbow ends,” said the first Frog.

“There is a rumour,” said the second Frog, “that there is a cave filled with gold and diamonds at that place.”

“Then come with me,” said the first Frog. “We will be the two richest frogs in the world!”
The two frogs jumped out of the pond and ran through the meadow. There they met another Frog.

“What is the hurry?” asked the third Frog.

“We are running to the place where the rainbow ends,” said the two Frogs.

“I have been told,” said the third Frog, “there is a cave filled with gold and diamonds and pearls at that place.”

“Then come with us,” said the two Frogs. “We will be the three richest frogs in the world!”

The three Frogs ran for miles. Finally they came to the rainbow’s end. There they saw a dark cave in the side of the hill.

“Gold! Diamonds! Pearls!” cried the Frogs, as they leaped into the cave.
A Snake lived inside. He was hungry and had been thinking about his supper. He swallowed the three Frogs in one quick gulp.

*The highest hopes can lead to the greatest disappointments.*
Lower Primary

These short-version notes have been written to help teachers use the Accelerated Literacy teaching strategies in Year 4. However, they could also be used up to Year 7 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 with a high level of inferential comprehension
- discuss the story: give opinions about the author’s language choices; identify the story’s structure, theme and ideology
- spell fluently and in clear handwriting write the words taught as part of the teaching sequence
- write, independently or jointly, a fable using the moral from the text.

Notes

The following notes have been written for teachers who have attended professional development workshops in teaching Accelerated Literacy and who are now experienced in using the Accelerated Literacy teaching sequence.

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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