Secondary

These notes have been written to help teachers use the Accelerated Literacy sequence in years 7 and 8. 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 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 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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Secondary
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Using this resource
Year level

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The text

*Feeling the Heat* by Pat Lowe was published by the Penguin Group in 2002. Page numbers herein refer to this edition.
Feeling the Heat
Feeling the Heat

Synopsis of the story

*Feeling the Heat* is about a journey of self-discovery and the need to belong. The story begins with Matthew arriving at his childhood home, a remote town in the Kimberley. He is here to rekindle his relationship with Frances. He meets Jeff on the bus, a drinker, who is grieving for the loss of his wife and children from a traumatic divorce. The two men deal with their problems very differently.

Themes

The following themes are explored in this book:

- race and culture
- belonging
- growing up
- dealing with failure.

Why use this story?

As children we dream about travelling to faraway lands and being successful. When we grow we try to make the dreams a reality: we move out of our childhood homes and begin to live adult lives. Whether we move far away or just down the road, we desperately seek to belong. Students can empathise with Matthew’s dream of returning to the country and people he loved as a child. Readers will admire his strength of character when his dreams are shattered.
Language features of the text

**General:** The author describes the setting and a sedentary activity of the character and then writes about the character’s reflections. An author writes about thoughts, not just actions, and these reflections and memories allow us to identify with the main character. We can understand his motivations.

**Specific:** The author has elaborated on events telling how, when, where and why. For example: *on a rock, of the night, on the edge of town, across his mental screen.* The effect of elaborating events like this is to make it possible for readers to follow the sequence of events and visualise settings and actions.

Pat Lowe uses metaphors to set the scene with a vivid image. The sky is a *black backdrop* and the stars are a *frozen firework display*.

The author uses personification to bring the sound of the night to life. The insects were *happy to be alive* and the *hum of a car*.

Contrast is used to emphasise the quiet reflective mood. Elsewhere *seemed like an island of madness*.

Repetition is used to emphasise the physical inaction and mental action of the character. *Matthew sat down on a rock and He sat on the rock for a long time.*

To provide a clear image for readers of Frances, snapshots from Matthew’s memories are described.
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 *Feeling the Heat* aims to teach:

- how to read the passages studied 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 passage which includes an initial description of the setting, and then uses a character’s inactivity to explore his or her reflections and memories of another person.

**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 with students the possible meaning and interpretation of 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 the general considerations in the low order literate orientation 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 low order literate orientation on *Feeling the Heat* would be to complete a serial reading of the book with an orientation to each episode before reading it. An appropriate time should be spent on this serial reading at the start or end of each lesson.

Later, a brief low order literate orientation would be used to focus the students’ thinking on the major teaching points of each day’s lesson.
Teaching focus

- *Feeling the Heat* is actually a sequel to the earlier story, *The Girl with No Name*, by the same author. In Chapter 1, therefore, the author reorients readers to the main character, Matthew, and his reason for returning to the Kimberley town he left at the end of *The Girl with No Name*. At that time, Matthew was about 12 years old. Now he is an adult. He has quit his apprenticeship, left his family and travelled north to the town and lifestyle he has dreamed about all these years.

Teaching focus

- Matthew, a young man about 19 or 20, arrives in a town in the Kimberley and immediately readers learn that he has lived here before. The sights and sounds, the heat and light cause memories to come flooding back.
- Matthew is not on a holiday, though. He has left his life in Perth for good.
- Jeff, a fellow passenger, is introduced. He has also left his old life but is desperately unhappy about it. He drinks to forget his pain.
- Matthew meets up with some old friends who talk to him about Napangarti (or Frances). This stirs up strong memories and emotions. Matthew finally admits to himself that the reason he has returned is to rekindle a relationship with Frances.
- Includes study passage one.

Teaching focus

- The next day Matthew meets up with some more people from the past and learns where Frances lives now.
- He hires a bike and rides to her house and has a conversation with her father who seems to approve of him. Frances is not home and Matthew arranges to visit her tomorrow.

Teaching focus

- Matthew needs work and arranges to meet a prospective employer with station-hand work.
- They drive back to the station but, as Wainwright has arrogantly expected Matthew to start work without discussion, Matthew decides to go back to town. Wainwright refuses to drive him so Matthew drives Wainwright’s car back to town (without permission), offering Horace a lift.
- Wainwright reports it to the police but it seems everyone knows what sort of a character he is so Matthew is not charged.
Teaching focus

- Nervously, Matthew visits Frances again. But again he is disappointed, as she is not home.
- Matthew begins to doubt his decision to leave Perth and return to the Kimberley. He reminisces about his first meeting with Frances. She had taught him so much about the bush: *Through Frances, his view of the country had changed for good*. He loves her.
- That afternoon, Matthew comes across Frances. She is being abused by a man, and Matthew, perhaps foolishly, intervenes.
- But Frances doesn’t want to know him. Matthew is thrown into a state of confusion but finally decides to visit her grandmother for support.
- Frances turns up and finally they talk. But Frances is moody and often shuts him out.

Teaching focus

- Matthew is shocked and angry to discover that Frances is pregnant.
- For the first time Matthew feels empathy for Jeff and seeks him out at the hotel.
- They drink until closing time and then buy more beer to take with them. Jeff discloses more about his failed relationship and his regrets.
- Jeff continues drinking on the jetty.
- In spite of Matthew’s warnings about crocodiles, Jeff foolishly jumps into the water. Inevitably, Jeff is taken by a crocodile.
- Police, ambulance and SES search but can’t find Jeff. They give up for the night.

Teaching focus

- Matthew is traumatised by what has happened to Jeff and seeks comfort at Frances’s house.
- Next day, Ajax, Alfie, Frances and Matthew join the search for Jeff.
- They find evidence which suggests that poor Jeff was indeed attacked and eaten by a big crocodile.
- The SES brings his body in. Later, Matthew formally identifies the body at the morgue and gives a statement to the police.

Teaching focus

- Mathew rings his parents and is upset by his father’s reaction to Jeff’s death. He seems to blame Matthew.
- Matthew checks out of the backpackers where he has been staying and moves into Frances’s house.
- Here he is interviewed by an aggressive detective about his involvement with Jeff’s accident. He manages to speak clearly and calmly.
Teaching focus

- Although Matthew is living in the same house as Frances, he feels they are not becoming any closer. She is busy with her training and other activities. When they talk, she is aloof.
- Matthew commences an uneasy period as he waits for the inquest. He feels guilt, regret and detachment.
- As Matthew’s money diminishes, he realises he must look for work.
- One day they all go hunting and Matthew’s spirits lift. They kill a goanna and a bush turkey. The hunt, butchering and cooking the meat bring back happy memories for Matthew.

Teaching focus

- Jack Wainwright offers Matthew a job again and Matthew accepts. This time he knows how to deal with the farmer.
- Matthew reluctantly leaves Frances and Ajax and settles in on Wainwright’s property. He will be working with Horace.

Teaching focus

- Horace and Matthew cook for the musterers and Matthew is surprised to find Roy, the father of Frances’s baby, among them. Roy is friendly and jokes about their previous encounter, but Matthew is uncomfortable.
- Matthew enjoys a gallop back to the homestead. The rest of the week is spent checking bores and fences. Matthew learns a bit more about Wainwright and Horace.
- On the weekend, when Matthew returns to Frances’s home, Roy is there. After a discussion, it seems Matthew has been accepted as Frances’s husband, although he must satisfy Roy’s pride in some way at a later date. Frances now sleeps with Matthew on his swag on the verandah, and Matthew feels fiercely protective.

Teaching focus

- Frances is more attentive towards Matthew, which gives him joy, but when he presses her to speak about her feelings she won’t.
- Matthew is worried about his decision to take on Frances and her baby and discusses it with Horace.
- Later, Matthew receives the letter he has been waiting for, setting the date for the inquest. He is very anxious but everyone assures him that, if he tells the truth about Jeff’s death, he will be fine.
- While shopping for clothes, Matthew has a discussion with two nuns about the impact of the missionaries.
- The inquest is gruelling for Matthew but the verdict comes in that Jeff’s death was by misadventure. Matthew’s efforts to save Jeff were commended.
- Matthew meets Jeff’s father and they talk about Jeff.
- The baby will be due soon.
Teaching focus

- Matthew continues working on the farm and enjoys his early morning rides. He muses on his future with Frances. They are happy enough together but Matthew wants more from Frances than she can give.
- Roy is still around and even humbugs some money from Matthew. Whether Matthew likes it or not, he and Roy have a relationship, which he will have to deal with.
- Matthew worries he won’t be in town for the birth.
- One day, while checking fences, Horace and Matthew come across a mare having difficulty giving birth. With their support, the foal is born and the mare will be OK. Is it an omen?

Teaching focus

- When the message arrives at the farm that Frances has gone into labour, Wainwright drives Matthew into town.
- Matthew is confused because Frances doesn’t seem to want him at the birth. The next morning Roy arrives first and, as he is the father, is allowed in the room with Frances and her new baby girl.
- Matthew visits and claims he is the husband, but feels out of place.

Teaching focus

- Matthew, realising the changes wrought by the birth of the baby, decides to pack up and leave Ajax’s house. He understands now that Roy will always be around and always be the baby’s father.
- First Matthew hitchhikes to Goanna Gorge and finds the rock paintings he had looked for as a child. There is a track and a Perspex screen to protect them. For him, this symbolises an ending. Like Jeff, his dreams have been destroyed.
- But Matthew wants a future. He just can’t picture it right now. He gets another lift back to Wainwright’s farm. The work, his early morning rides — it will be a satisfying life until he works out what to do next. And he will belong here.

Read the story aloud

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.
Refine the focus to the study passage

Once you have started reading the book and have read at least to the end of Chapter 1, return to the beginning of study passage one to start looking at the author’s language choices in closer detail. You can then spend part of each lesson reading the book to students, and another part working on the study passage.

Low order literate orientation – Passage one

Teaching focus

This passage comes at the end of chapter one of the book. It is part of the orientation to the story. *Feeling the Heat* is actually a sequel to the earlier story, *The Girl with No Name*, by the same author. In Chapter 1, therefore, the author reorients readers to the main character, Matthew, and his reason for returning to the Kimberley town he left at the end of *The Girl with No Name*. When he left with his family Matthew was about 12 years old. Now Matthew is an adult.

Matthew arrives in town on a bus, buys a drink, walks to the local backpackers’ accommodation, books in, has a sleep, then goes to the pub for a meal. He also strikes up a conversation with a person who had been on the bus with him. Those are the actual events around which the chapter is structured. As these fairly mundane events take place, the author uses Matthew’s reflections to create images of his previous life in the town. Through Matthew’s eyes the author describes changes in the town, a conversation with an old acquaintance and finally the reflections contained in the study passage. These reflections focus on Matthew’s memories of Frances.

The important point to make in low order book orientation is that the author has to let readers know what has happened to bring the character into the setting of a Kimberley town looking for a job and a person he once knew. The reasons for Matthew to travel back to the town have to seem powerful enough to have caused him to leave his family in Perth and travel for two days in an uncomfortable bus.

**Complete the teaching sequence, high order literate orientation, transformations, spelling and writing for passage one before beginning work on other study passages.**
Suggestions for other study passages

A study of the three passages below could be used to show students how authors can reveal elements of a character’s personality, positive or negative, in a variety of ways.

Low order literate orientation – Passage two
Text (page 37)
Teaching focus
A character’s physical attributes are described in such a way that much can be inferred about his personality.

Low order literate orientation – Passage three
Text (page 45)
Teaching focus
A negative description of Wainwright’s parlour that gives readers a sense of his unpleasant personality.

Low order literate orientation – Passage four
Text (page 48)
Teaching focus
A more positive description of a place. The occupant of this space, although he or she hasn’t been introduced into the story yet, is likely to be a much more likeable character.

High order literate orientation – Passage one
Teaching focus
(You would not address these in one lesson. You would decide what was suitable for the focus of your lesson.)

Matthew has been deeply affected by his conversation in the pub and has sought out this private place in order to sort out his thoughts.
The passage below consists of Matthew’s reflections on his memories of the Frances he knew when he was a boy. He had been good friends with her when his father was a prison officer in the Kimberley town and he was a schoolboy. He had not wanted to leave the town but had to go with his parents. Now he has grown up and returned to the town specifically to meet her again. Matthew found it was not as easy as he had hoped to find Frances. Finally, in a hotel bar, he met some people who remembered him and his friendship with Frances. One of the men, Alfie, told Matthew that Frances still lived in the town and that she was not married. The meeting with Alfie brought back many memories of his previous time in the town. When Matthew left the bar, he walked a little way out of town and sat on a rock to think about Frances and memories of her came flooding back.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure and wording of text</th>
<th>Why language choices were made</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statement about setting</strong></td>
<td>The author describes the sky as if it is part of a theatre or a stadium. The stars are a stunning display. These images are very vivid. Away from artificial light, the stars are very bright. The use of the word <em>frozen</em> gives the impression of stillness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The sky was a black backdrop to the frozen firework display of stars.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What Matthew did</strong></td>
<td>Sitting on a rock gives time and space for reflection. After noting the splendour of the sky, Matthew now becomes aware of all the sounds in the night, both natural and man-made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Matthew sat down on a rock and listened to the sounds of the night.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sounds and sights of the setting</strong></td>
<td>The author describes what Matthew hears. First, Matthew focuses on the natural, comforting, peaceful sounds. Then Matthew shifts focus and hears human sounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Insects chirred, happy to be alive.</em> Far off, if he switched his attention, he could hear sounds of human activity: a shout of distant laughter, a starting engine, the hum of a car.*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Matthew’s reflections**

The rowdy brightness of the pub now seemed like an island of madness back there on the edge of town. His meeting with Alfie had stirred up so many memories. He had almost forgotten what Frances looked like.

Matthew is in a reflective mood, overcome by memories, and so the human sounds and sights seem to him like *madness*.

Matthew has found a quiet place away from the pub to reflect on his childhood memories and the relationship with Frances that is about to be renewed. Despite the quiet, Matthew’s memories are *stirred up*, suggesting that his thoughts are an unordered, unsequenced mix of memories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>His memories (snapshots)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. but now her thin, leggy form danced across his mental screen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. He remembered her sparkle, her swift grace that seemed enhanced by the faded hand-me-down dresses she always wore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sitting on a school bench, 4. walking down the street 5. or digging a goanna out of its burrow, 6. she had never seemed conscious of her appearance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We learn what Matthew recalls about Frances using the metaphor of his mind as a screen, going back in time, step by step, projecting her image upon it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotional outcome</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Matthew had been fascinated by her.</em> She had become the most important person in his life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Matthew had been fascinated by Frances – how she looked, her lack of self-consciousness and all the things she could do. This had influenced Matthew’s life dramatically and had driven him to leave his parents in Perth, come back to the town of his childhood, and find the most important person in his life.

<table>
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<th>What Matthew did</th>
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</thead>
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<td><em>He sat on the rock for a long time, staring into the night.</em></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Readers must infer what other images and memories are flooding Matthew’s mind as he continues to sit quietly.
**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.

**Text (page 27-28)**

*The sky was a black backdrop to the frozen firework display of stars. Matthew sat down on a rock and listened to the sounds of the night. Insects chirred, happy to be alive.Far off, if he switched his attention, he could hear sounds of human activity: a shout of distant laughter, a starting engine, the hum of a car. The rowdy brightness of the pub now seemed like an island of madness back there on the edge of town.*

*His meeting with Alfie had stirred up so many memories. He had almost forgotten what Frances looked like, but now her thin, leggy form danced across his mental screen. He remembered her sparkle, her swift grace that seemed enhanced by the faded, hand-me-down dresses she always wore. Sitting on the school bench, walking down the street or digging a goanna out of its burrow, she had never seemed conscious of her appearance.*

*Matthew had been fascinated by her. She had become the most important person in his life.*

*He sat on the rock for a long time, staring into the night*

**Goals of the transformations**

**Comprehension**

Transformations on this text will help the students to understand how the author builds an image of the setting and Matthew’s state of mind. The author also uses reflections and memories to introduce another character.

**Word recognition leading to spelling**

Students’ word recognition can be developed through cloze type activities and games, using words taken from the transformations board.
Writing

Particular literate features, such as the structure of the text studied, use of metaphor and personification, can be studied in detail to assist students with their own writing.

Example of text segmentation

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

*The sky* / was a black backdrop / to the frozen firework display / of stars. / *Matthew* / sat down / on a rock / and / listened / to the sounds / of the night / . / *Insects chirred*, / *happy to be alive*. / *Far off*, / *if he switched his attention*, / *he could hear sounds of human activity*: / *a shout of distant laughter*, / *a starting engine*, / *the hum of a car*. / *The rowdy brightness of the pub* / now seemed / like an island / of madness / back there / on the edge of town / . /

*His meeting with Alfie* / had stirred up / so many memories / . / *He had almost forgotten what Frances looked like*, / *but now her thin*, / *leggy form danced across his mental screen*. / *He remembered her sparkle*, / *her swift grace that seemed enhanced by the faded*, / *hand-me-down dresses she always wore*. / *Sitting on the school bench*, / *walking down the street*, / *or digging a goanna out of its burrow*, / *she had never seemed conscious of her appearance*. / *Matthew had been fascinated by her*. / *She had become the most important person in his life*. / . /

*He sat on the rock for a long time*, / *staring into the night sky*. / . /
## Teaching focus

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<tr>
<td><em>The sky was a black backdrop to the frozen firework display of stars.</em></td>
<td>The author has used metaphor to describe the setting dramatically. This setting is vast and perfectly still and part of the natural world. Later, this will be a contrast to the rather tawdry world of the pub.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Matthew sat down on a rock and listened to the sounds of the night.</em></td>
<td>If the author has the character sitting and doing nothing, he is then free to concentrate on his senses and his thoughts. In this case, he uses his sense of hearing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sounds and sights of the setting</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Insects chirred, happy to be alive. Far off, if he switched his attention, he could hear sounds of human activity: a shout of distant laughter, a starting engine, the hum of a car.</em></td>
<td>First there is the pleasant natural sound of insects, personified to convey their harmony with the environment. Then the author describes what Matthew hears when he focuses on the human activity. These are abrupt, less pleasant sounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflections</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The rowdy brightness of the pub now seemed like an island of madness back there on the edge of town. His meeting with Alfie had stirred up so many memories. He had almost forgotten what Frances looked like,</em></td>
<td>Now the author portrays Matthew’s awareness of the pub, which, in contrast to the cloudless starry night, seems mad. Next, the author explains why Matthew’s memories have been aroused. In contrast with his quiet surroundings, his memories have been stirred up and are in turmoil. Before his meeting with Alfie, he had almost forgotten how Frances looked,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transformations

Memories (snapshots)

1. but now her thin, leggy form danced across his mental screen.
2. He remembered her sparkle, her swift grace that seemed enhanced by the faded hand-me-down dresses she always wore.
3. Sitting on a school bench,
4. walking down the street
5. or digging a goanna out of its burrow,
6. she had never seemed conscious of her appearance.

Here the author uses Matthew’s mental screen to describe Frances for the reader. Her appearance, some distinctive activities and her lack of self consciousness are listed for the reader. We form an impression of a graceful, competent and natural girl. Readers can empathise with Matthew’s strong feelings towards her. That these images of Frances are somewhat idealised will be revealed as the story progresses.

Emotional outcome

Matthew had been fascinated by her.
She had become the most important person in his life.

The author describes the outcome for Matthew of having Frances as a friend. The fact that she had become the most important person in his life explains his motivation for leaving his family and travelling back to this town.

What Matthew did

He sat on the rock for a long time, staring into the night.

In order to show how deeply affected Matthew is by these powerful memories, the author has him sit and stare for even longer. After many years, he has come back to see Frances. We don’t know what he is thinking or feeling now but we can guess it is about her and the past.
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 early secondary level, so it would be reasonable to assume that many students studying this text would be negotiating the transitional stage of spelling, while others will have developed beyond this to be quite capable independent spellers. Work on words that help students use visual strategies to notice larger chunks of letters that go together to make orthographic patterns and explore words with interesting origins.
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

hand-me-down: When a person gives an item of some value that they have used to someone else, typically an acquaintance or family member, it is sometimes referred to as a ‘hand-me-down’.

Origins - Vendors would typically keep their new, more expensive clothing at street level, while keeping their older, used clothing on racks that were elevated out of reach. To purchase the latter, buyers would have to ask the stall owner to ‘hand me down’ a particular piece of clothing.

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.

Reconstruct sentences, paragraphs and sections of text as appropriate. For example, reconstruct the part of the story where the author describes a setting and a character’s reflections which, while introducing a new character, convey strong emotion. Include how the sky was described *(The sky was a black backdrop to the frozen firework display of stars)* and what the character was doing *(Matthew sat down on a rock and listened to the sounds of the night)*.
Writing activities should not be based only on patterning, but also 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 *Feeling the Heat* would include:

- overall goals such as writing a passage which includes an initial description of the setting, and then uses a character’s inactivity to explore his or her reflections and memories of another person
- short-term goals such as exploring the use of metaphor and personification, the effectiveness of contrast between the natural and human environment, and the use of reflections to describe characters.

**Workshop one**

Exploring the use of metaphor and personification to describe a setting and non-human participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Metaphor</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>How personified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A sunrise</td>
<td>The eastern sky was a chiffon curtain, pale blue and pink</td>
<td>Cicadas</td>
<td>The cicadas welcomed the sun with their own special song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calm lake</td>
<td>The lake was a piece of glass reflecting the bright blue sky</td>
<td>Fish</td>
<td>Lazy fish sunbaked near the surface of the water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example:

*It was sunrise and the eastern sky was a chiffon curtain, all pale blues and pinks. The noisy cicadas started up, almost deafening, as they welcomed the sun again with their own special song.*
Workshop two

Explore the effectiveness of contrast between the natural and human environments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natural</th>
<th>Human</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The cicadas welcomed the sun with their own special song</td>
<td>People slept through this sunrise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lazy fish sunbaked near the surface of the water</td>
<td>People who have to drive to the supermarket to get their fish for dinner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example:

*Behind closed windows and curtains, people slept through this beautiful noisy sunrise. They must be crazy.*

Workshop three

Explore the use of reflections to introduce and describe characters. These can take the form of memory ‘snapshots’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for reflections.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A phone call from out of the blue.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of ‘snapshots’ of memories of this character.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. long strong fingers playing guitar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. hearty laugh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. white teeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. comforting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example:

*That phone call had really stirred up memories. Carrie watched the sunrise but she was thinking of the past. She could see Tim’s long strong fingers playing his guitar. She could hear his hearty laugh and see his flashing white teeth. Most of all she remembered his comforting arm around her when she couldn’t help crying as she said goodbye. She watched the sky and remembered.*
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.
Class: Year 7  

**Text:** *Feeling the Heat* by Pat Lowe

**Teaching focus:** Matthew’s character and motivations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson focus</strong></td>
<td>Introduce the story and the main characters.</td>
<td>Focus on the setting for this book.</td>
<td>Emotional state of characters. How do they deal with difficult situations?</td>
<td>Impact of environment on events.</td>
<td>How Matthew deals with the ordeal of Jeff’s death.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low order literate orientation</strong></td>
<td>Summarise Matthew’s life up to the point where the story starts. Provide background information and read Chapter 1.</td>
<td>Revise low order from previous lesson. Discuss Jeff’s state of mind and how he deals with failure. Read Chapters 2 and 3.</td>
<td>Monitor students’ comprehension of text to date. Discuss the first meeting with Frances. Not what Matthew expected or hoped for. Read Chapter 4.</td>
<td>Revise events from previous chapters. Jeff appears again. Discuss contrast between Jeff and Matthew. This chapter includes a very dramatic event. Read Chapter 5.</td>
<td>Discuss the aftermath of the death. Read Chapters 6 and 7.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

**High order literate orientation**

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Briefly introduce study passage. Explore meaning of the statement about the setting.</td>
<td>Focus on what Matthew did. Discuss his emotional state.</td>
<td>Focus on the contrast of sounds. Explore personification.</td>
<td>Focus on the contrast between the natural and human world.</td>
<td>Start discussions about the memories of Frances. (continue into next lesson.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| The sky was a black backdrop to the frozen firework display of stars. | Matthew sat down on a rock and listened to the sounds of the night. | Insects chirred, happy to be alive. Far off, if he switched his attention, he could hear sounds of human activity: a shout of distant laughter, a starting engine, the hum of a car. | The rowdy brightness of the pub now seemed like an island of madness back there on the edge of town. His meeting with Alfie had stirred up so many memories. He had almost forgotten what Frances looked like, but now her thin, leggy form danced across his mental screen. | 1. but now her thin, leggy form danced across his mental screen.  
2. He remembered her sparkle, her swift grace that seemed enhanced by the faded hand-me-down dresses she always wore.  
3. Sitting on a school bench, walking down the street, or digging a goanna out of its burrow,  
4. she had never seemed conscious of her appearance. |
### Class: Year 7

**Text:** feeling the Heat by Pat Lowe

**Teaching focus:** Matthew’s character and motivations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transformations</td>
<td>Explore the power of metaphors in this statement. The sky was a black backdrop to the frozen firework display of stars.</td>
<td>Explore the technique of putting character in a position to freely reflect. Introduce senses. Matthew sat down on a rock and listened to the sounds of the night.</td>
<td>Discuss techniques: personification, use of senses to describe environment, contrast between sounds and the implications. Insects chirred, happy to be alive. Far off, if he switched his attention, he could hear sounds of human activity: a shout of distant laughter, a starting engine, the hum of a car.</td>
<td>Revise techniques discussed so far. Physical inactivity of character metaphor, personification, contrast, use of senses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Revise, then sound/s febze/n joint reconstructed writing first 2 sentences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Begin discussing scenarios for joint writing workshops.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The sky was a black backdrop to the frozen firework display of stars.

Matthew sat down on a rock and listened to the sounds of the night.

Insects chirred, happy to be alive.

Far off, if he switched his attention, he could hear sounds of human activity:

- a shout of distant laughter,
- a starting engine,
- the hum of a car.
The rowdy brightness of the pub now seemed like an island of madness back there on the edge of town.

His meeting with Alfie had stirred up so many memories.

He had almost forgotten what Frances looked like, but now her thin, leggy form danced across his mental screen.

He remembered her sparkle, her swift grace that seemed enhanced by the faded hand-me-down dresses she always wore.

Sitting on a school bench, walking down the street or digging a goanna out of its burrow,
she had never seemed conscious of her appearance.

Matthew had been fascinated by her.

She had become the most important person in his life.

He sat on the rock for a long time, staring into the night.
Instead of answering, Ajax opened the flyscreen door and stepped out onto the verandah, letting the door slam shut behind him. His left leg trailed slightly. Matthew had to step back to make room for him.

The two stood looking at one another without speaking. Ajax was slightly shorter than Matthew, a lean figure with an angular, even gaunt face. Deep lines shaped his thin cheeks and mouth. His skin was very dark, and his longish curly hair was turning grey. Matthew tried to read his expression. Ajax’s eyes were penetrating and hard, but there was a slight curve that might have been amusement at the corners of his mouth. He was not carrying crutches or a walking-stick, and there was no sign of the wheelchair Matthew had imagined.
“Come into me parlour,” said Wainwright, leading the way, carrying an esky in front of him. Matthew looked around the vast interior. In a corner at one end was a sink and cooker flanked by open shelves piled with dishes, pots, pannikins, cutlery, medicine bottles and shaving gear. At the opposite end of the shed a king-sized swag lay unrolled on the concrete floor, surrounded by clothes, boots, books and papers. A green mosquito net was suspended on a long cord from a roof-beam above the swag. Several canvas chairs stood about the room, draped with more clothes. Hanging from nails in one wall were items of harness, and in the middle of the room a western-style saddle straddled a wooden trestle. Despite the disorder, the shed appeared almost empty because of its size.
From the quarters Matthew walked over to a shed, a smaller version of the homestead, which turned out to be a workshop. Everything was laid out in an orderly fashion, the floor swept, tools hanging in rows along the wall above a workbench, lengths of timber stacked according to size on bricks on the ground, bits and pieces of mechanical equipment arranged neatly on shelves. The contrast between this shed and the disorderly homestead was so striking that Matthew knew that someone other than Wainwright must be responsible for looking after it. After his brief experience with the owner, he felt quite friendly towards this absent stranger.
These notes have been written to help teachers use the Accelerated Literacy sequence in years 7 and 8. 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 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 chosen words and understand related spelling strategies
- use the story as a model for writing.

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.