Upper Primary

These notes have been written to help teachers use the Accelerated Literacy teaching strategies in Year 4. However, they could also be used with older students up to Year 9 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.

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.
Teaching Notes

Lighthouse Blues
Upper Primary
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Using this resource
Year level

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The text

‘Lighthouse Blues’ is from *Unreal* by Paul Jennings. Published 1985 by Penguin Group (Australia). Page numbers provided here refer to this edition.


Teaching DVDs

*Lighthouse Blues: Teaching Notes* are supported by a teaching DVD.

Teaching DVDs are designed to support classroom teaching by demonstrating best practice for the program. They are video clips of real teaching in real classrooms, shot so teachers can watch Accelerated Literacy teaching in practice. They provide authentic examples of the negotiation roles taken by one teacher and a class and are not all that could be said. Refer to http://www.nalp.edu.au for further information.
Lighthouse Blues
Synopsis of the story

‘Lighthouse Blues’ is a short story about a boy who conquers his fear of ghosts in order to save a lighthouse from being pulled down. The boy, Anton, develops a strong relationship with an old man (Stan, the lighthouse keeper) and out of respect for him, and because he desperately wants to be a lighthouse keeper, he finds himself acting more bravely than he ever thought he could. Love of music is a strong thread running through this story.

In common with other stories by Paul Jennings, the supernatural is combined with characters and settings students can identify with. Other similar stories are ‘A Good Tip for Ghosts’ and ‘Spooks Incorporated’. Teaching notes are available for these texts.

Themes

‘Lighthouse Blues’ is about courage and loyalty, about being resourceful, and it’s about preserving structures and customs with a history rather than indiscriminately destroying them. This is the moral of the story; the ghosts and the mysterious music are added for fun. Paul Jennings’ goal is for kids to enjoy reading his stories.

Why use this story?

As well as being an enjoyable, humorous story, ‘Lighthouse Blues’ includes examples of some very useful writing techniques that students can analyse, practise and then begin to incorporate into their own writing.

The story can be used to teach:

- why authors start stories with a dramatic or frightening event that foreshadows the complication
- how authors build mood or atmosphere
- how authors include the thoughts, feelings and reactions of characters
- how authors create and maintain suspense in their writing
- how authors blend the supernatural with ordinary settings and characters.
Structure of the text

Dramatic event: Chapter 1

‘Lighthouse Blues’ is a short narrative that starts with a mysterious and frightening event. This serves to arouse the reader’s curiosity and foreshadows the complication.

Orientation: Chapters 2–3

The author then provides the information needed for the reader to empathise with the main characters, Anton and Stan, and understand the story. It becomes clear that music is important in this story. It is also clear that something supernatural is happening on this island.

Complication: Chapters 4–6

Anton confronts his fears. This writing is full of suspense. On that same night the characters discover the real complication, which is the threat to their way of life. However, it is only with the help of the friendly ghosts that the complication can be resolved.

Resolution: Chapters 7–9

These chapters are very dramatic and describe the events leading up to the resolution. With the ghosts’ help the problem is solved, although Stan dies in the process.

Coda: Chapter 10

Order and security have been restored to the island. The lighthouse is safe and Anton is continuing the lighthouse keepers’ tradition. The author signifies the happy ending with all the ghosts now playing the song ‘Happy Days Are Here Again’.
Language features of the text

Passage one

The narrator of the story is Anton, who recounts a series of strange and terrifying events and shares his thoughts and fears with the reader.

The author builds tension and suspense by staging the action/reaction sequence in the following ways: *there was light, suddenly, now, I thought, then, I couldn’t believe, I started, I wanted, then I thought, I wasn’t going, I took a step.*

Reaction follows action. The reactions are Anton’s thoughts and physical and emotional responses. For example:

**Action:** Then the door started to open on its own. It just slowly opened.

**Thoughts/Reaction:** I couldn’t believe what I saw. I started shaking all over.

The passage finishes with Anton doing the exact opposite of what he wants to do. Contrary to the reader’s expectations, he performs a very brave act.

Passage two

This passage, at the beginning of the story, starts with an observation. As the description of the music is expanded, it becomes more mysterious. The passage is narrated by Anton and reveals his thoughts and reactions. He uses metaphors to describe what he sees. The setting, including the lighthouse, is carefully introduced.
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 ‘Lighthouse Blues’ aims to teach:

- how to read the story 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 recount of a series of frightening events that produce physical and emotional responses in the narrator.

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

Read the whole story to the class as quickly as practicable. At the start of the teaching sequence reading the story will take more of the lesson time, because high order literate orientation cannot begin until after Chapter 4.

Teaching focus

Introduce the author. Students may have studied other stories by Paul Jennings. Discuss similarities and differences with ‘Lighthouse Blues’.

The title is a pun on the music being played (the blues) and the feelings of the ghosts playing the music (sad, and protective of their island and the lighthouse).
Teaching focus

The story starts with an ordinary statement about music being played in the middle of the night. Then we learn that it is mysterious and frightening because there is no one who could be playing the instruments.

As the narrator describes the music, it seems that it has a special significance for him. It makes him feel sad without him knowing why. It seems to come from the lighthouse. He finally falls asleep while the music is still playing.

The story is set on a remote island with a lighthouse, where storms pound the cliffs. Only two people live there. Stan, the lighthouse keeper, is an older man. The narrator has recently arrived on the island and doesn’t want to seem easily spooked. He wants to make a good impression on Stan.

Inferences

The island is lonely and windy, as places with lighthouses tend to be. The narrator wants to live here because he wants to be a lighthouse keeper one day. This is important because it motivates him to act bravely to save the lighthouse.

The narrator knows something about music and songs because he can recognise the sound of different instruments, tunes and how well they are being played. This is important because the ghosts communicate with him through their choice of songs.

Teaching focus

When Anton broaches the subject of the music with Stan the next day, he learns that others have heard it too. They have been afraid and left the island. Stan never hears it. Stan seems to be challenging Anton to be brave and stay on his beloved island.

Stan describes the reactions of the last helper, who investigated the music. He became traumatised and didn’t speak for a week before he left. Anton fears that what was seen must have been terrifying.

The author often comments on the wind on the island. Again, the wind is prevailing as Stan and Anton visit the lonely graves of Stan’s father and grandfather, both lighthouse keepers before him. One played the saxophone and one the clarinet. Stan plays the violin.
Inferences

When we learn that the past two lighthouse keepers played the saxophone and clarinet, we have a reasonable idea of who the ghosts are.

Stan plays the violin and, significantly, Anton plays the flute. If all the lighthouse keepers have played music, then perhaps Anton has a good chance of achieving his goal.

Teaching focus

There is another reference to the wind, which is very important later in the story. As the two of them return to the house, Anton learns that Stan no longer plays the violin because of arthritis. This makes Stan so sad that he no longer goes to the music room at the top of the lighthouse.

Anton doesn’t believe in ghosts, so he goes to the top of the lighthouse to investigate the music room. He goes during daytime.

The instruments in the music room – a clarinet and a saxophone – are in a neglected state and look as though they haven’t been played in years. Nevertheless, Anton gets a strange feeling in this room. He feels as if someone is watching him.

Inferences

Even though it is daytime, Anton is afraid when he visits the music room for the first time. He is alone and has not told Stan where he is going. This is a classic thriller scenario. Paul Jennings builds suspense as Anton tries to unravel the mystery. At first it seems that Anton will keep away from the strange music on Friday nights. But can he?

Anton is a very intuitive person who feels things in his bones.

Teaching focus

Anton occupies himself with all the tasks required to run a lighthouse. He doesn’t visit the music room again, nor does he talk to Stan about the music. However, the music begins to bother him. He is not scared; rather, it makes him sad and curious at the same time.

Inevitably, Anton decides to find out what is happening. He prepares as best he can, with a torch and baseball bat. He waits until Stan is asleep. As he reaches the music room, the tune ‘The Green Door’ seems to be giving him a message, as the door to the music room is green. He keeps going, then experiences something very frightening. The door opens by itself and he sees what look like instruments playing themselves or being played by something invisible. Anton is terrified. Paul Jennings describes his reactions.
Anton bravely steps towards what scares him, not away. This is what sets him apart from the other helpers, who fled when they saw this phenomenon. Anton realises that ghosts are playing the instruments. Next he has to work out why.

**Inferences**

Anton is very brave. When the other boy had seen the instruments in the air, he had left the island. But Anton doesn’t want to be chased off the island by ghosts; he is committed to being a lighthouse keeper. He likes Stan and he likes living and working on the island.

Anton is also curious. He wants to know who is playing the instruments and why. The mystery dominates his thoughts, so he goes to the music room when the music is playing. Anton recognises that the songs have significance for him.

**Teaching focus**

Anton now believes that the ghosts of Stan’s father and grandfather are playing the music. He is still curious. Why are they trying to scare strangers away? He tries to talk to the ghosts in the music room. There is no response except the feeling that cold hands are touching him. Anton finally feels afraid and runs away.

Bad news greets him when he returns to Stan. The government plans to tear down the old lighthouse and replace it with an automatic one. There will be no lighthouse keeper’s job on the island for Stan or Anton. This is devastating news for both of them. Anton thinks the ghosts might be able to help.

**Inferences**

Just when Anton has partly worked out what is happening in the music room, he has to deal with the complication: the destruction of the lighthouse. Stan gives up straightaway and already pictures himself in a home. But Anton won’t give up so easily. He already has an idea to stop the destruction, but it will involve the ghosts.

**Teaching focus**

Anton believes that the ghosts already knew of the plans for the lighthouse and were doing what they could to scare people off the island. However, playing spooky music on Friday nights will not scare away demolition workers, who could knock down the lighthouse in just one day. When he confronts the ghosts in the music room, they don’t seem to respond. Anton gets angry with them and tells them that if they don’t help, the lighthouse will be gone, Stan will be out of a job and they won’t have a home. Then Anton notices what he thinks are tears dribbling down their invisible faces.
Inferences

The ghosts can’t talk, so it’s fortunate that Anton can work out these things for himself. Anton has grown to love the island, Stan and the lighthouse keeper’s way of life. He is desperate to preserve it, and these feelings give him the courage to confront the ghosts. When the ghosts seem to ignore him, he becomes angry. He says some angry things that upset the ghosts.

Teaching focus

Anton convinces the ghosts they can help if they go outside in the daytime to scare the workers. Anton and the ghosts can communicate in two ways. First, the ghosts can play tunes, the titles of which send messages to Anton. Second, they carry their instruments, so Anton can see where they are.

Anton talks the ghosts into practising going outside. The ghosts show their reluctance, but he insists. The ghosts nearly get blown away in the wind. They manage to crawl back inside the lighthouse, but they are very angry with Anton and won’t show themselves again.

Inferences

Anton is a very strong-minded person. He is determined to do all he can to save the lighthouse. He doesn’t give up in despair as Stan does. However, he didn’t realise that the ghosts might be destroyed by the wind.

Teaching focus

When Anton finally tells Stan about the ghosts, Stan believes him but doesn’t think the ghosts will be any help if they can’t go outside. Anton begs the ghosts every day to find some way of helping, but it seems they are still angry with him and so don’t show themselves.

On the following Friday a team of men arrives to destroy the lighthouse. Stan decides to try reasoning with them. He goes down to the beach where they are camped to ask them to go away. Naturally, this fails and the men become aggressive.

Stan gives up again and asks Anton to retrieve his violin from the lighthouse so it won’t be destroyed along with the building. Anton tries once more to talk to the ghosts about helping, but gets no response. Anton realises that he and Stan are on their own.
Inferences

The situation is very desperate now. It seems that the ghosts either can’t or won’t help. The workers want to do their job, and Anton and Stan are powerless to stop them.

Teaching focus

When the bulldozer and crane start up after lunch, Stan and Anton sit in their path, hoping this will stop them. Neither of them has much confidence that this will work. The driver is big and mean and picks Stan and Anton up and tosses them out of the way, hurting Stan in the process. Others hold Anton down. The machines reach the lighthouse.

Suddenly Anton notices there is no wind, and that he can hear music. The ghosts have arrived to help. Not only do they scare the workers, but they manage to drive the crane over the cliff.

Stan jumps on the bulldozer to stop it heading for the lighthouse. He turns it towards the cliff, but fails to jump clear and plunges with it onto the rocks below. The ghosts continue to scare the workers. When they run off, terrified, Anton and the ghosts sadly look down at where Stan died. At this moment, the wind blows the ghosts off the cliff and Anton is left on his own.

Inferences

This chapter is filled with action, but ends on a very sombre note. Stan is dead and the ghosts have gone. Together they stopped the workers from knocking down the lighthouse, so they had some success, but now Anton has no one.

Teaching focus

This chapter acts as a coda. The union refuses to allow its workers back on the island. The lighthouse is safe, and so Anton has attained his ambition of becoming a lighthouse keeper. Stan is buried next to his father and grandfather on the island. Although Anton loves the island and his job, he misses Stan and feels lonely at times. After a year, Anton hears music again. When he investigates, he is delighted to see that a violin has joined the other two instruments. As they play ‘Happy Days Are Here Again’, Anton feels a great deal of joy.

Inferences

Even people who want to live an isolated life, like that of a lighthouse keeper, get lonely at times. It is comforting for Anton when the ghosts (including his good friend Stan) begin to play music again. They play a song that tells him they are happy to be back and this makes him feel happy, too.
Read the story aloud

Having read the whole story, sections at a time, you may choose to read the whole story 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 passages

Once you have made a start on reading the book and have read at least the first four chapters, you can begin to study passage one more closely.

Low order literate orientation – Passage one

This passage (pages 107–108) marks the culmination of the curiosity and fascination Anton has about the strange music, and his fears about what scared off the other lighthouse helpers. The music always seems to have a special message for him. Although it doesn’t scare him anymore, it still upsets him, and he can never sleep on Friday nights when it plays. After four months Anton decides to investigate. Once he sets foot in the lighthouse and recognises the first tune, ‘Stay Away From Me Baby’, he becomes frightened. As he approaches and the tune changes to ‘The Green Door’, Anton realises that whatever is in the music room is aware of him. Anton’s fear increases up to when he steps into the room and breaks the spell. The reason he is able to act so bravely is his determination to be a lighthouse keeper. He doesn’t want to be scared off like the others.

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

Low order literate orientation – Passage two

This passage (page 97) comes at the very beginning of ‘Lighthouse Blues’. It sets the scene and introduces the main character and also builds a mood of suspense and foreshadows the complication. At first, someone playing music in the middle of the night may not seem to be much of a complication. However, this music is being played when no one is there to play it. The narrator, Anton, is scared. Starting a story with a mysterious event and introducing a scared main character are good techniques to capture readers’ interest.

This passage also foreshadows the importance of music in this story. All the main characters, including the ghosts, are good musicians. Music is used by the ghosts to communicate and it strengthens the relationships among all the characters.

The weather is introduced as a major motif of the story in this passage. The wind has a crucial significance and is present most of the time. The importance of the lighthouse is also established in this passage.
### High order literate orientation – Passage one

#### Teaching focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure of text and wording</th>
<th>Why language choices were made</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What Anton could see and hear</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>There was light coming under the music room door.</em></td>
<td>Anton was in total darkness when he climbed the stairs. Now, seeing light coming from under the music room door confirms his fears. There is something there, and it isn't human, because only Stan and Anton are on the island.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The music was very loud.</em></td>
<td>He is getting closer to whatever it is because the music is now louder. Previously, the music had <em>floated</em> and <em>echoed</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>It was definitely coming from the music room.</em></td>
<td>Now that he is close enough, Anton knows that the music is indeed coming from the music room. Remember, he is right outside the door, so he can tell the direction the noise is coming from.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The tune and what it means</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Suddenly the tune changed. Now they were playing ‘The Green Door’.</em></td>
<td>The names of the tunes have been significant and this continues to be the case.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I thought of some of the words. They were: ‘What’s behind the green door?’ The door of the music room was green,</em></td>
<td>Just as in the song, Anton really wants to know what is behind the green door, and somehow whoever is playing the music knows this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>and I wanted to know what was behind it.</em></td>
<td>Anton is curious, afraid and determined all at the same time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anton’s feelings</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>But I was too scared to go in.</em></td>
<td>Anton describes his fear of entering the room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whatever was in there knew where I was.</td>
<td>He hasn’t managed to sneak up on the musicians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What happened next</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Then the door started to open on its own.</td>
<td>While Anton is unable to muster the courage to open the door, it opens by itself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It just slowly opened.</td>
<td>The author repeats the fact that the door opened by itself to add emphasis to the strangeness of it. It opens slowly and so there is more suspense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anton’s reaction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I couldn’t believe what I saw.</td>
<td>The author delays telling us what Anton sees by describing his reactions. When we say we can’t believe what we see, we mean we can’t think of a logical explanation for what we see. We think our eyes are deceiving us, or that something is a trick.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I started shaking all over. The hair on the back of my neck stood up.</td>
<td>But Anton realises that what he is seeing is really happening and so experiences dramatic physical reactions because now he is very, very frightened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wanted to turn around and run, but I couldn’t. My legs wouldn’t do what I wanted them to.</td>
<td>To want to run away is a typical reaction to fear and not being able to do so is also typical.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Anton saw in the room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The clarinet was playing itself. And the saxophone was doing the same thing. They were both floating in mid-air.</td>
<td>We finally know what Anton has seen. First Anton thinks that the instruments are playing themselves as they float in the air, but this is impossible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone or something was playing them, but they were invisible.</td>
<td>Then Anton realises that that they are being played by invisible entities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
More reactions from Anton

| I was really scared. My knees were knocking together. | Anton is even more scared now and cannot control his legs at all; they are shaking too much, a typical reaction to fear. |
| I decided to get out of there. | He decides to escape. |
| Then I thought about the other two boys who had left the island. | He dissuades himself by thinking about the other boys who were scared off. Once they had left they were not able to return and be lighthouse keepers. |
| I wasn’t going to be scared off like them – no fear! No ghosts were going to chase me away. | Anton really wants to be a lighthouse keeper and this desire proves stronger than his fear of the unknown. Thinking about this makes him change his mind about running away. |

What Anton did

| I took a step forward into the room. | He had been ready to flee, but now he steps into the room. It’s only a small move, but it shows great courage and determination. |

What happened next/end of suspense

| As soon as I entered the room the music stopped. | Once Anton has done something brave, what he was facing becomes less scary, in his mind as well as in fact. Nothing terrible happens to Anton when he enters the room. |
| The clarinet and the saxophone floated through the air and landed on the table. Everything was quiet. I went over to the table and picked up the clarinet. | The music stops and the instruments floated through the air and landed on the table. It’s as though Anton has broken a spell with his courage. The reader feels relief, as well as admiration for Anton. |
What you could say

Introduction to the passage

We’re going to look at this part of the story very carefully to see how Paul Jennings builds up suspense in his writing. Until the very end of this passage the character, Anton, only actually does one thing. He only takes one step into the room – it’s not until the end of the passage that Anton goes over to the table and picks up the clarinet. Just taking one step doesn’t sound very exciting - but it is what is going on around him and what goes on in his head that is scary.

When Anton takes his single step it is one step towards the danger, not away from it. When he takes that step, he overcomes his fear. He doesn’t give into it and run. He gets the courage to go forward because of his enormous desire to be a lighthouse keeper.

In the part of the story we are going to work on, we will look at the way that Paul Jennings writes about Anton’s experience. He describes things so that we can almost share Anton’s fear and that way we understand his courage in stepping into the room.

Note: A notional transcript of the whole high order literate orientation for passage one appears in the Appendices.

Complete the teaching sequence, high order literate orientation, transformations, spelling and writing on passage one before beginning work on passage two.
High order literate orientation – Passage two

Teaching focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure of text and wording</th>
<th>Why language choices were made</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statement about mysterious event</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Someone was playing music in the middle of the night.</em></td>
<td>The narrator doesn’t know who is playing the music, so he just calls them <em>someone</em>. At this stage we don’t know if it is recorded music or musicians playing, just that it can be heard <em>in the middle of the night</em>. That usually means after most people are asleep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expansions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>It sounded like a saxophone, or maybe a clarinet.</em></td>
<td>Next, we find out a little more about the music. The narrator thinks <em>it</em> (the music) <em>sounded like a saxophone</em>. He then thinks that it is <em>maybe a clarinet</em>. Sometimes it’s hard to pick the sound of similar instruments. Saxophones and clarinets are both reed instruments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I could only hear it when the wind dropped.</em></td>
<td>We now find out more about the circumstances surrounding the music. This is the first of many times the wind is referred to in this story. It would be quite eerie to be listening to a howling wind and then, when it dropped, to hear some mysterious music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statement</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>But there was no mistake about it.</em></td>
<td><em>But</em> tells us that even though we may think that Anton has made a mistake because he could only hear it sometimes, he was not mistaken. Anton doesn’t repeat the statement <em>Someone was playing music</em>, he just makes it clear that he was not imagining it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reactions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I shivered even though I was snug in bed.</em></td>
<td>Shivering is a common reaction to fear as well as to cold. It’s an involuntary reaction. As he is <em>snug in bed</em>, Anton is implying that he is shivering because he is afraid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I wasn’t cold.</em></td>
<td>He makes it explicit that he is not cold in order to add emphasis to his last sentence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I was scared.  
Anton tells readers how he feels: The music has made him scared.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stan and I were the only people on the island,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anton gives readers some information so they can appreciate the mystery. There are only two people on the island. Could Stan be playing the music? |
| and he was in bed in the next room. |
Anton tells us where the other person, Stan, is. |
| I could hear him snoring. |
Anton confirms that Stan couldn’t be playing an instrument because he is sleeping. He knows that because Anton can hear him snoring. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question about mysterious event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>So who was playing the music?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anton is left with this question: So who is playing the music? He has worked out that no person could be playing the music. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting the scene</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The author, through Anton, tells us a little more about the island – the weather conditions and what else Anton can see and hear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was cold outside</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It’s cold outside, but if Anton is snug in bed, then he’d normally feel cosy and safe, had he not felt so scared. |
| and a storm was brewing up. |
We have another reference to stormy, windy weather. This sort of weather can be unsettling. To say a storm is brewing up means that a storm is coming. |
| I could hear the sea pounding against the cliffs. |
Anton has told us about hearing the wind and the music, and now he listens to the sea. When the sea pounds against cliffs it can make a loud, booming, frightening sound. We infer than Anton must be close to the cliffs. |
### Reactions

| I got out of bed and looked out of the window. | Anton responds to all he can hear. He gets out of his cosy bed and goes over to the window to look out, even though he is scared. |

### What he could see

| All I could see were the black clouds racing across the moon. | He can’t see much at all, only the black clouds. Because of the wind, they are moving quickly across the moon. Anton says the clouds are *racing across the moon*. This is a metaphor. Clouds don’t race and they were obscuring the moon, not racing across it. This description creates a lovely image for the reader. |
| and the light from the lighthouse stabbing into the night. | The only other thing Anton can see is the light from the lighthouse. This is the first time the lighthouse is mentioned. Now we can understand why the narrator and Stan are on this desolate island. We infer that they must be looking after the lighthouse. Again, the author uses a metaphor to build an image for the reader. *The light is stabbing into the night*. We have an image of a dagger or knife made of light piercing the black night. |

### Explanation

| The music seemed to be coming from the lighthouse. | Sound travels better through glass than through walls; as Anton is standing near the window, he can hear the music more clearly. He would also have a better idea of the direction from which it is coming. He is not sure it is *coming from the lighthouse*, but it *seemed to be*. |
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

Transformations – One

This passage is the part of the story where Paul Jennings builds suspense by delaying Anton’s discovery of who or what is in the room playing the mysterious music. This engages readers’ attention and keeps them wondering.

Readers gradually find out what Anton sees, hears, thinks and feels as he stands outside the green door. As more and more supernatural events occur, culminating in the door opening on its own, the reader is assured that Anton is going to see something that scares him.

Text (page 107)

There was light coming under the music room door. The music was very loud. It was definitely coming from the music room. Suddenly the tune changed. Now they were playing ‘The Green Door’. I thought of some of the words. They were: ‘What’s behind the green door?’ The door of the music room was green; I wanted to know what was behind it. But I was too scared to go in. Whatever was in there knew where I was. Then the door started to open on its own. It just slowly opened.
Teaching focus

**What Anton sees and hears**

If it is dark, authors have to provide a light source to enable their characters to see. The author has already told us that it is dark inside the lighthouse and that Anton has to use a torch to see to climb the stairs. He now focuses the reader’s attention on another light source, which confirms that there is definitely something in the music room. Anton was almost certain that the music was coming from the room, and the light confirms this.

The author writes about this light as if it is moving towards Anton. There had been no light in the stairwell, but now there is light *coming* from this room.

The door was closed the first time Anton went to investigate the music room and it is closed tonight. When the rest of the lighthouse is dark, this sliver of light is very mysterious. There can only be a supernatural explanation for it and it is connected to the music.

Authors often describe how their characters’ senses are affected. Paul Jennings has described what Anton sees and now he describes what he hears.

Previously the author has described the music as being in the distance. Then, it had floated down from above Anton when he entered the lighthouse. Now it sounds very loud, so the reader knows that Anton is quite close to its source.

The reader has already inferred that the music is coming from the music room, and now the author explicitly states that this is so.

As this story is written in the first person, the author is showing us that Anton is now completely sure that the music is coming from behind this door.

The author uses the word *suddenly* to signal a quick, unexpected change or development in the narrative.

Anton believes the tunes he hears are meant for him. Will this tune be significant?

We are about to find out what was being played.

Authors use many techniques to create suspense. Delaying revelations about the cause of strange happenings is one of them. The author still hasn’t revealed who or what is playing the music, but the reader finds out that they are playing another tune that is appropriate for Anton.

**What Anton thinks and feels**

Anton is a musician, so he recognises many songs and knows their words.

Again, the words of the song have a special significance for Anton and what he is facing.
The author confirms what we had already suspected – that the music room door is green.

The author tells us what Anton thinks and wants. He has wanted this ever since he first heard the music.

Authors share characters’ feelings so readers can relate to them. Because Paul Jennings is using Anton as the narrator, he can tell us directly how he feels. He is too scared to actually open the door and go in. In this case, describing Anton’s thoughts is also a delaying tactic that heightens the suspense.

Anton doesn’t know what is behind the green door, so he thinks of it as ‘whatever’ rather than ‘whoever’. He is convinced it is not human because he and Stan are the only people on the island.

Whatever is in the room knows exactly where Anton is standing because the tune changes when he reaches the door. This awareness is very scary.

**What happened next**

A door slowly opening, seemingly by itself, is another technique used to create suspense, and introduces another supernatural element. The slow action not only provokes tension, but allows the author to describe Anton’s reactions in detail.

Authors often repeat what is happening to emphasise an element in the story. The emphasis here is on the slowness of the movement and the fact that no one was opening the door; it was doing it by itself.

**Transformations – Two**

In this part of the passage the author delays telling us what Anton saw by describing his physical reactions first and then what he thought. This creates a delicious feeling of suspense for readers. The author wrote like this so readers can empathise with Anton’s fear and then appreciate the courage it took to go into the room.
Text (pages 107–108)

I couldn't believe what I saw. I started shaking all over. The hair on the back of my neck stood up. I wanted to turn around and run, but I couldn't. My legs wouldn't do what I wanted them to. The clarinet was playing itself. And the saxophone was doing the same thing. They were both floating in mid-air. Someone or something was playing them, but they were invisible.

I was really scared. My knees were knocking together. I decided to get out of there. Then I thought about the other two boys who had left the island. I wasn't going to be scared off like them – no fear! No ghosts were going to chase me away. I took a step forward into the room.

As soon as I entered the room the music stopped. The clarinet and the saxophone floated through the air and landed on the table. Everything was quiet. I went over to the table and picked up the clarinet.

Teaching focus

Anton’s thoughts and reactions
We know what is in the room is something that can’t be explained logically; that’s what the expression couldn’t believe what I saw means. We know it is scary because the author describes the physical reactions of someone who is afraid. He describes what he wanted to do and why he couldn’t do it.

What Anton saw
Finally, Paul Jennings reveals what it is that frightens Anton. He sees the clarinet and the saxophone playing in mid-air.

What Anton thought
Authors can build strong empathy for their characters by sharing their thoughts and feelings. The author describes the progression of Anton’s thoughts. Someone or something must be playing the instruments but they were invisible and, of course, this is not possible. Anton is really scared.

Reminder of physical reactions
So that we continue to empathise with Anton, the author describes another physical reaction to fear. He describes how Anton’s legs feel.
What Anton decides
Again, authors can share a sequence of thoughts with us. We read how Anton copes with being so afraid. At first he decides to run (flight), but then he remembers the other boys who had not been brave and had forfeited their careers as lighthouse keepers. Because Anton so desperately wants to be a lighthouse keeper, he finds the courage to face the ghosts (fight).

What Anton did
The author tells the reader what Anton does next. There is no description of his feelings: readers have to work them out for themselves. Anton takes a brave action and faces his fears. He does the opposite to what he wants and the opposite to what the reader expects.

What happened next/end of suspense
The suspense can’t be sustained for too long or the reader will tire. Paul Jennings alleviates Anton’s fear. After that one brave action everything changes. Maybe the ghosts don’t know what to do now. We are not told because we only have Anton’s point of view. Anton is now looking at an ordinary scene. The tension has been broken.

Transformations – Passage two
Text (page 97)

Someone was playing music in the middle of the night. It sounded like a saxophone, or maybe a clarinet. I could only hear it when the wind dropped. But there was no mistake about it.

I shivered even though I was snug in bed. I wasn’t cold. I was scared. Stan and I were the only people on the island, and he was in bed in the next room. I could hear him snoring. So who was playing the music?

It was cold outside and a storm was brewing up. I could hear the sea pounding against the cliffs. I got out of bed and looked out of the window. All I could see were the black clouds racing across the moon, and the light from the lighthouse stabbing into the night. The music seemed to be coming from the lighthouse.
Teaching focus

**Statement about mysterious event**
Authors choose different ways to start stories. Paul Jennings starts this story with a statement about a sound, which at first seems quite banal. We don’t know who is playing the music, we don’t know what sort of music and we don’t know where it is happening. Even so, it is not particularly mysterious. This passage foreshadows the complication.

**Expansion**
Gradually the author provides more details, through the narrator, about the music. He tells us that it is an instrument (he is not sure exactly which one). This reveals that the narrator, Anton, knows something about music. He can distinguish between a saxophone and clarinet.

This shows that there were two sounds – the wind and the music. The narrator can only hear the music when the wind stops blowing loudly.

**Statement**
Authors build empathy by sharing the narrator’s thought processes. Later we find out that Anton is a musician and so he is probably not mistaken about what he hears.

**Reactions**
Now it is time to write about Anton’s reactions again so that the reader is kept active. Anton’s reaction to the music tells us that there is something scary about it. Anton shivers, and we are told that this is not because he is cold. In fact, he is warm in bed. He shivers in spite of being warm and cozy.

Authors often repeat statements in order to emphasise a point. Anton repeats that he is not shivering because of the cold.

Anton tells the reader explicitly how he feels.

**Background information**
Authors need to provide background details so readers will understand what is happening. Up until now, readers did not know what was so scary about hearing music being played in the middle of the night. Now readers know why this is scary.

**Question about mysterious event**
This is the question that both Anton and the reader want answered.
Setting the scene
The author now begins to provide details about the setting to create an atmosphere for the story. We don’t know what season it is, but we do know the weather is cold.

Authors often use weather to build atmosphere. Earlier we were told about the wind. Now we find that the wind is an indicator of stormy weather approaching. Storms are unsettling. It is the perfect atmosphere to develop something mysterious in a story. The sea is acting violently, adding to the atmosphere.

Reactions
Now it’s time to write about Anton’s reactions again so that the reader is kept involved.

It’s natural for Anton to get up and look out the window. It also allows the author to describe the setting from Anton’s point of view. Not only does looking out the window provide a visual image but it also clarifies what Anton can hear.

What he could see
Paul Jennings has chosen to give Anton quite a poetic turn of phrase. He uses personification to describe what he sees.

Personification allow authors to share vivid images with their readers.

Explanation
This is a statement about the complication of the story. More details are revealed as the story progresses. By this stage the reader is involved in the story and what might happen.

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

Keep the following points in mind when choosing words to work on in spelling:

- Are there any words that have patterns (or letters) that students have worked on before?
- Are there any new patterns that occur more than once or are commonly occurring?
- Are there any words that have interesting origins or roots that will help students develop an understanding of English?
- Which words will help students with joint reconstructed writing?
- Which words that students have already been taught need revision?
- Consider students’ age and stage of spelling development.

This text has been benchmarked at a Year 4 level, so it would be reasonable to assume that most students studying this text would be negotiating the transitional stage of spelling. They need to be taught to pay attention to the spelling patterns in words and the way words are put together.

Suggestions for spelling

Following are some suggestions for spelling from ‘Lighthouse Blues’. Teachers will make other choices based on their students’ needs, spelling goals and writing goals and the spelling patterns previously learnt. Some words appear on more than one list.

Examples from passage one

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>–ght–</th>
<th>–ing–</th>
<th>–gh–</th>
<th>–ould– and contractions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>l/ght</td>
<td>kn/ock/ing</td>
<td>gh/ost/s</td>
<td>c/ould/n’t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>th/ought</td>
<td>fl/oat/ing</td>
<td>w/ould/n’t</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sh/ak/ing</td>
<td>was/n’t</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples from passage two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>–ight</th>
<th>–ing</th>
<th>–ou</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n/ight</td>
<td>pl/ay/ing</td>
<td>s/ou/nd/ed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l/ght/h/ouse</td>
<td>p/ound/ing</td>
<td>c/ou/l’d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ou/t/s/ide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>p/ou/nd/ing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>l/ght/h/ou/se</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ou/t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>cl/ou/d/s</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 and http://www.thefreedictionary.com.

Examples

- light: from Old English, leht
- thought: from Old English, gepoht
- ghost/s: from Old English, gast; or German, gheest or geist
- knocking: from Old English, cnocian
- floating: from Old English, flotian
- shaking: from Old English, sceacan

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

- Reconstruct the part of the story where Anton approaches the door and hears the music, and then the door opens by itself.
- Reconstruct the part of the story where the author describes the physical reactions to fear.

Joint reconstructed writing on these sections will assist with the discussions about the writing.
What you could say

Today we are going to try to think and write like Paul Jennings. We are going to rewrite the passage in which Paul Jennings created so much suspense. I wonder who can remember what Paul Jennings told us Anton became aware of, apart from the scary music, as he climbed up the lighthouse staircase? Up and up, and around and around he went, and then he saw something.

The light, that’s right. Paul Jennings wrote *There was light*. How do we write this like Paul Jennings? We start with a capital T. To write *Th*/ere we need a *Th* and then the pattern *ere*. *There*. Paul Jennings tells us what there was … *There was light*. So let’s write *w/as* and then *l/ight*. Remember the –*ight* pattern. There had to be some light coming from somewhere so Anton could see the scary things. Where was the light coming from?

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 ‘Lighthouse Blues’ would include:

- overall goals, such as constructing a suspenseful recount, either individually or as a group
- short-term goals, such as workshop activities that build towards a full suspenseful recount, including writing about a character experiencing something scary, describing an impossible event, relating a character’s reactions to it, and describing how the character decides to do something brave – resulting in a build-up of fear that is suddenly broken by an observation.
Workshops

The following workshop activities could be done as joint class constructions, and then students who are able could go on to do their own independent writing. The writing workshops can be taught discretely or with a view to combining ideas into an extended recount.

Passage one could be used for writing workshop activities in which:

- students could think of scenarios in which they wish to build up suspense for the reader by delaying the character discovering something frightening; to do this students describe what the character sees, hears, thinks and feels about scary sounds or sights in order to build suspense and engage the readers’ attention
- students relate something really scary that happens and repeat it to emphasise just how strange and scary it is.

By using these strategies the students build up writing skills that are used time and time again by good authors.

Example of a possible scenario for a suspenseful recount: A character really wants to get up early to go camping with the family, but hears scary noises outside the window (like fingernails scraping on the glass) and so is too afraid to get up and go outside. When the character decides that going camping is too important to miss, she or he faces the fear and finds out that it’s only a branch scraping against the window because of the wind.

Workshop one

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible writing plan</th>
<th>Example of joint writing with class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What character sees or hears</td>
<td>Something had woken me up. Beads of sweat dribbled down my forehead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character’s thoughts and reactions</td>
<td>I remembered that we were going camping early, but I didn’t think it was excitement that had woken me from a sound sleep. My heart started to pound loudly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What happened next</td>
<td>I looked at the window. It was getting light outside. I could see what looked like long, bony fingers. I could hear tapping on the glass, and it was getting louder. Tapping and scraping.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Workshop two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible writing plan</th>
<th>Example of joint writing with class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Character’s thoughts</td>
<td>Something was outside my bedroom window trying to get in. Something neither human nor animal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character’s physical reactions</td>
<td>The blood was pounding in my head now, and I could scarcely breathe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What character thinks and then decides</td>
<td>I wanted to race out the door and jump in the jeep and drive off. But then I would miss out on the trip of a lifetime.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character’s brave action</td>
<td>I slid out of bed and crept over to the window and flung it open.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Workshop three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible writing plan</th>
<th>Example of joint writing with class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What happened next</td>
<td>I looked out the window.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of suspense</td>
<td>It was just a branch of the gum tree we had planted next to my window. The branch was being blown around by the wind and was scraping the glass. I leaned out the window and snapped off the dry twigs at the end of the branch. The noise stopped. The twigs really had looked like fingers. I heard the others calling me to get up.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notional transcript – Passage one (High order literate orientation)

Note: The following example is the complete notional transcript for the high order literate orientation on passage one. It is meant as a guide for planning, not a script.

Preformulation
T: Now we’re going to see if we can find out how Paul Jennings chose his words to get the effect he does. First of all, he starts by telling us where Anton was standing but he does it by telling us about the colour of the music room door.
Question: Can anyone find where it tells us what the colour of the music room door was?
S: Green.

Reconceptualisation
T: That’s right. We know Anton was outside looking at the closed green door of the music room. There would be a lot of thoughts whizzing around in his head as he stood there.

Preformulation
T: The next thing Paul Jennings tells us is what Anton is thinking as he stood outside the green door.
Question: Can anyone see what Anton wanted to know?
S: He wanted to know what was behind it.

Reconceptualisation
T: Yes, so if he finds out what was behind the door he will find out where the music was coming from and his question will be answered. But what if there is something terrible behind the door? He wanted to know but he was also afraid to know in case he couldn’t cope with what he saw. It would be very hard to make a decision, wouldn’t it?

Preformulation
T: We know we might feel scared in the same situation and Paul Jennings tells us how Anton feels.
Question: Can anyone find where he tells us how Anton felt?
S: Too scared to go in.

Reconceptualisation
T: That’s right. Poor Anton was still standing outside the music room door too scared to go in. He hasn’t moved.

Preformulation
T: Now Paul Jennings explains exactly why Anton was so scared. He was thinking that maybe whatever was in the music room knew he was there. If he had been creeping up on whatever was in the room, he might have been able to take it by surprise. But if whatever was in there knows about Anton, it will be ready for him.
**Question:** Can you see what Anton was thinking now?

S: Whatever was in there knew where I was.

**Reconceptualisation**

T: Right, so now we know what Anton was thinking and feeling. We can sympathise with him. We might feel the same in the same situation.

**Preformulation**

T: Now Paul Jennings has let us know how afraid Anton was, he tells us something supernatural about the door. Something doors don’t usually do on their own. Remember, Anton was outside still. He couldn’t actually see what was inside.

**Question:** Can anyone find how Paul Jennings tells us what the door started to do?

S: Then the door started to open on its own.

**Reconceptualisation**

T: Yes. It didn’t just fly open with a bang. It started to open. That means it was opening slowly, a bit at a time. Anton wouldn’t be able to see what was in the room immediately. He had to wait.

**Preformulation**

T: So Paul Jennings tells us again how the door opened.

**Question:** Can anyone read about how the door opened?

S: It just slowly opened.

**Reconceptualisation**

T: Good, so eventually Anton was able to see into the room. But Paul Jennings still doesn’t tell us what Anton saw.

**Preformulation**

T: He builds up suspense again by telling us what Anton was thinking and feeling. First of all Anton saw something so amazing he couldn’t believe he was seeing it.

**Question:** Can you see what Anton was thinking?

S: I couldn’t believe what I saw.

**Reconceptualisation**

T: That’s right. This complete disbelief set up reactions in his body.

**Question:** Can you see how his body reacted first?

S: I started shaking all over.

**Reconceptualisation**

T: Right, that would feel bad for a start. But Paul Jennings doesn’t tell us just one reaction.

**Question:** How did his hair react?

S: The hair on the back of my neck stood up.
Reconceptualisation
T: Well done. Having the hair on your neck stand up would feel very creepy. He would certainly want to get out of there.

Preformulation
T: But there are more reactions.
Question: What next? What did he want to do?
S: I wanted to turn around and run but I couldn’t.
T: That’s right.
Question: So why didn’t he turn around and run?
S: My legs wouldn’t do what I wanted them to.

Reconceptualisation
T: Good. If he was shaking so much it would be difficult to move. So now Paul Jennings has told us a whole series of reactions. (He did this in ‘A Good Tip for Ghosts’.)

Preformulation
T: But we still don’t know what he saw that was so frightening so at last we are going to find out.
Question: Can you find what it was Anton saw?
S: The clarinet was playing itself.

Reconceptualisation
T: Well done. That is how it appeared anyway.
Question: And can you see what the other instrument was and what it was doing?
S: The saxophone was doing the same thing.

Reconceptualisation
T: Right, we know both those things are impossible.

Preformulation
T: And there was one other impossible thing they were doing.
Question: Can anyone see what it was?
S: They were both floating in mid-air.

Reconceptualisation
T: Well done. So now we all know what was in the room. Anyone would react the way Anton did, I’m sure. It was unbelievable that two instruments were playing themselves.

Preformulation
T: So Anton tried to explain what he could see. If music was coming from the instruments there must be a reason. Instruments don’t play themselves. Someone or even something has to play them but no one can see the players.
Question: Can you find the part of the story that tells us how Anton explains what is playing the musical instruments?
S: Someone or something was playing them, but they were invisible.
Reconceptualisation
T: Good. So Anton has decided that invisible beings are playing the music. We know now exactly what Anton could see and what he thinks was causing what he could see.

Preformulation
T: Next Paul Jennings tells us about how Anton was feeling and reacting again. Question: Can anyone read how he was feeling? S: I was really scared.

Reconceptualisation
T: Yes. Not just a little bit scared but really scared. We couldn’t blame him. Question: And what part of his body was reacting this time? S: My knees were knocking together.

Reconceptualisation
T: Great. He had just about had enough of this shaking and knee knocking. Question: So what did he decide to do? S: I decided to get out of there.

Reconceptualisation
T: Terrific. So now we can imagine Anton, absolutely scared stiff. He’s shaking, his hair was standing on end, his legs wouldn’t move except for his knees knocking and so he’s decided, very sensibly, to get out of there.

Preformulation
T: But wait a minute. Anton thought again. Even through his terror, he had another thought. He thought about the other boys who’d been afraid and left the island. If he ran away and left he would never get to be a lighthouse keeper. Even as he stood there, paralysed with fear, he decided he wasn’t going to be like the other boys. This is a big change in the way he felt. First he decided to get out of there, but he changed his mind. Let’s see how Paul Jennings writes that. The word that he uses to signal that there is a change is ‘then’.
Question: Can anyone read the part that tells us what Anton thought? S: Then I thought about the other two boys who had left the island.

Reconceptualisation
T: Right. He doesn’t want to be scared away like them, does he? Question: How does Paul Jennings tell us that? S: I wasn’t going to be scared off like them – no fear!

Reconceptualisation
T: Well done. Remembering them gave Anton the strength to resist running away. Question: So can you see what Anton didn’t want to have happen to him? S: No ghosts were going to chase me away.

Reconceptualisation
T: Right. So Anton has made a big decision here. This is an important point in the story.
Preformulation
T: He is going to face whatever is in the room and so now we come to his first actual movement. This is where he takes a step.

Question: How does Paul Jennings tell us that?
S: I took a step forward into the room.

Reconceptualisation
T: Great. It was a very important step and it took a long time to tell us about.

Preformulation
T: Now we will find out what happened to Anton. We’ll find out if anything terrible happened.

Question: Can anyone read what happened as soon as he entered the room?
S: As soon as I entered the room the music stopped.

Reconceptualisation
T: Good. The step into the room had an effect on the music.

Preformulation
T: Now I wonder what happened to the instruments. Let’s see what happened to them.

Question: Can anyone read what the clarinet and saxophone did?
S: The clarinet and the saxophone floated through the air and landed on the table.

Reconceptualisation
T: Well done. Nothing awful happened to Anton. The risk he took entering the room was worth taking.

Preformulation
T: Now that the clarinet and saxophone are on the table they won’t be playing any more.

Question: Can you read what it was like in the room without the ghostly music?
S: Everything was quiet.

Reconceptualisation
T: Yes. There is no sound at all. Anton has faced up to the ghosts and he is free of his fear.

Preformulation
T: Nothing awful has happened and he is free to move however he wants to.

Question: Can anyone see what he did?
S: I went over to the table and picked up the clarinet.

Reconceptualisation
T: Right. He knows he can do what he likes now. He did what no other visitor had done on the island before. He has faced up to the ghosts. His desire to be a lighthouse keeper was stronger than any fear of ghosts he felt.
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 4  
**Week:** 1  
**Term:** 1  
**Text:** ‘Lighthouse Blues’ in *Unreal* by Paul Jennings  
**Teaching focus:** How an author builds suspense and creates empathy for characters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
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| Low order literate orientation | Introduce the story.  
Overview, theme. Read first four chapters. | Discuss what we know about Anton. Read Chapters 6-7. | Recap events in story. Why do Anton and Stan want to fight? Read Chapters 8-10. | Recap and discuss events in the story. Pick a focus for discussion. | Encourage students to discuss story. Pick a focus or point of view. |
| High order literate orientation | Page 107: Focus on the light and what it means.  
Focus on the music and significance of the different tunes. | Focus on Anton’s feelings, which change over time. | Focus on slow building of suspense. The recount of what happens is delayed by description of Anton’s reactions. | Focus on physical reactions to fear: flight or fight. How we can empathise with Anton. | Focus on how Anton bravely takes one step. How his desire to be a lighthouse keeper overrides fear. |
| Transformations | Transformations one. Focus on why author talks about light and music. | Focus on what Anton is thinking and feeling. Why did author include this? | Focus on writing plan.  
Characters’ reactions. |
| Spelling | light  
thought  
gh/lost/s | Jointly reconstruct the first four sentences. | kn/ock/ing  
s/float/ing  
sh/shaking | c/ouldn’t  
w/oud/n’t  
was/wasn’t | Jointly reconstruct the last four sentences of transformations one. |
| Writing | Jointly write text following plan. | Jointly write text following plan. (1) | | | Jointly write text, following on from character’s reactions.  
Some students may be able to independently write another passage. |
### Sample lesson plan

**Class:** Year 4  
**Week:** 1  
**Term:** 1

#### Purpose of lesson
- Literate orientation on ‘Lighthouse Blues’ by Paul Jennings
- Use transformations to focus on character’s thoughts and reactions.

#### Lesson 2 – Teaching sequence

**Low order literate orientation**
Encourage students to discuss story so far. Give an overview for the chapter/s to be read this lesson. Focus on one/some of the following points:
- The importance of music in this story
- How Paul Jennings gradually builds suspense in the story
- The significance of the weather, eg the wind
- The developing relationship between Stan and Anton
- The tradition of the lighthouse keepers
- Anton’s ambition to be a lighthouse keeper
- Why Paul Jennings often includes supernatural elements in his stories
- How the most unlikely characters can act courageously and these are often heroes in stories.

**High order literate orientation**
Continue from previous lesson. Focus on:
- Anton’s conflicting feelings
- Anton’s thoughts
- The frightening action of the door opening by itself.

#### Transformations
Discuss why authors include characters’ thoughts and feelings. Point out that this:
- allows reader to empathise with characters
- delays revealing scary things to build suspense and tension
- allows the author to enhance descriptions of scary things through the intensity of characters’ reactions.

#### Spelling
Revise spelling patterns from last lesson.

#### Writing
Together, write the first four sentences which refer to the sound of the music.
Lighthouse Blues – Study passage one (257 words)

There was light
coming under the music room door.

The music was very loud.

It was definitely coming from the music room.

Suddenly the tune changed.

Now they were playing ‘The Green Door’.

I thought of some of the words.

They were ‘What’s behind the green door?’

The door of the music room was green,

and I wanted to know what was behind it.

But I was too scared to go in.

Whatever was in there

knew where I was.

Then the door started to open on its own.

It just slowly opened.
I couldn’t believe what I saw.

I started shaking all over.

The hair on the back of my neck stood up.

I wanted to turn around and run,

but I couldn’t.

My legs wouldn’t do what I wanted them to.

The clarinet was playing itself.

And the saxophone was doing the same thing.

They were both floating in mid-air.

Someone or something was playing them,

but they were invisible.

I was really scared.

My knees were knocking together.

I decided to get out of there.

Then I thought about the other two boys
who had left the island.

I wasn’t going to be scared off like them – no fear!

No ghosts were going to chase me away.

I took a step forward into the room.

As soon as I entered the room the music stopped.

The clarinet and the saxophone floated through the air and landed on the table.

Everything was quiet.

I went over to the table and picked up the clarinet.
Someone was playing music in the middle of the night.

It sounded like a saxophone, or maybe a clarinet.

I could only hear it when the wind dropped.

But there was no mistake about it.

I shivered

even though I was snug in bed.

I wasn’t cold.

I was scared.

Stan and I were the only people on the island,

and he was in bed in the next room.

I could hear him snoring.

So who was playing the music?
It was cold outside

and a storm was brewing up.

I could hear the sea pounding against the cliffs.

I got out of bed

and looked out of the window.

All I could see were the black clouds racing across the moon,

and the light from the lighthouse stabbing into the night.

The music seemed to be coming from the lighthouse.
These notes have been written to help teachers use the Accelerated Literacy teaching strategies in Year 4. However, they could also be used with older students up to Year 9 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.

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