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Introduction

Here we are, teaching and learning at the beginning of a new era of educational standards: the Australian Curriculum. This new directive has ushered in a slew of educational guidelines that are somewhat familiar and yet entirely ambitious. While the Australian Curriculum standards for English address many educational basics (reading comprehension, proficiency in the conventions of English grammar, the ability to express oneself both in writing and in speech), they also seek to define what it means to be a literate, resourceful, perceptive person in the 21st century. Ultimately, they aim to equip each student with the tools needed to be that kind of person.

Introduction *(cont.)*

With this new, ambitious focus comes the need for a new type of educational material – one that challenges and interests students while meeting the multifaceted criteria of the Australian Curriculum. There are a total of 26 units in *Mastering Complex Text Using Multiple Reading Sources, Year 6*, and each one fits the bill. Here's how:

✻ **The units in this book are both familiar and innovative.**

They are familiar in that they pair reading passages with activities that test reading comprehension. They are innovative in how they accomplish this goal through the use of multiple text sources and multiple answer formats. These materials promote deeper understanding and thought processes by prompting students to analyse, synthesise, hypothesise and empathise.

✻ **The use of multiple reading sources promotes close reading.**

Close reading is the underlying goal of many educational standards worldwide. Close reading involves understanding not just the explicit content of a reading passage but also all of the nuances contained therein. A close reading of a text reveals all of the inferential and structural components of the content, while also illuminating the craft that went into the writing of it.

It is suggested that the best way to foster close reading of informational text is through text complexity. There are four factors needed to create a high level of text complexity – all four of which are achieved through this book's use of multiple reading sources:

Factor	Meaning
1. Levels of Purpose	The purpose of the text should be implicit, hidden or obscured in some way.
2. Structure	Texts of high complexity tend to have complex, implicit or unconventional structures.
3. Language Conventionality or Clarity	Texts should use domain-specific language and feature language that is figurative, ironic, ambiguous or otherwise unfamiliar.
4. Knowledge Demands	Complex texts make assumptions that readers can use life experiences, cultural awareness and content knowledge to supplement their understanding of a text.

✻ **The activities prompt students to explore the reading material from all angles.**

By completing the four different activities found in each unit, students will be able to display a broad understanding of the reading material. Each activity and question is designed to make students think about what they have read – everything from how it was written, to why it was written that way, to how its subject matter can be applied to their lives. They gain experience locating information, making inferences from it and applying knowledge in a variety of ways.

The units in this book are supplemented by a comprehensive answer key (pages 90–97) and a list of Australian Curriculum: English correlations (pages 98–99). And even more educational value can be mined from each unit's reading material with "Additional Activities" (page 89). Make copies of this page (one per student per unit) and have students follow the instructions.

How to Use This Book

This book is divided into 26 units, which do not need to be taught in any particular order. Each unit is either three or four pages in length and is composed of reading material (one or two pages) and activity pages (two or three pages):

Reading Material

The reading material for each unit consists of three, four or five text sources. Have students read all of a unit's text sources before proceeding to the activity pages. These sources complement each other, and a connective thread (or threads) runs throughout them. Sometimes these connections will be explicit, while at other times they will be hidden or obscured.

> ✳ **Another Approach** After reading the source material, ask students to name all of the ways in which the reading sources seem to be related or connected. See page 89 for more details.

Activity Pages

Each unit is supported by two or three pages of activities. These activity pages are divided into four parts:

Part 1

The "Interpreting, Analysing, Evaluating" sub-strand of the Australian Curriculum: English requires students to use comprehension strategies to draw information from more than one print and text source, demonstrating the ability to answer a question. This section directly correlates to that standard. Students will gain valuable practice in scanning multiple text sources in order to locate information.

Before beginning this section, remind students to read the directions carefully. Some of the information can be found in two or more sources, which means that students will need to fill in more than one bubble in those instances.

> ✳ **Another Approach** Have your students practise their recognition of genres and formats. For each unit, have them fill in the chart on page 89.

Part 2

In this section, students are asked to provide the best answer(s) to multiple-choice questions. What sets these apart from the usual multiple-choice questions is their emphasis on higher-order thinking skills. Very few questions ask for simple recall of information. Instead, these questions are designed to provide practice and strengthen knowledge in a variety of areas, including the following:

✳ inference	✳ word etymology	✳ compare and contrast
✳ deduction	✳ parts of speech	✳ cause and effect
✳ grammar and usage	✳ literary devices	✳ analogies
✳ vocabulary in context	✳ authorial intent	✳ computation

> ✳ **Another Approach** Ask each student to write an original multiple-choice question based on the reading sources. Use the best or most interesting questions to create a student-generated quiz. See page 89 for more details.

How to Use This Book *(cont.)*

Activity Pages *(cont.)*

Part 3

This two-question section takes the skills addressed in Part 1 and approaches them from another angle. Part 3 is in the form of a scavenger hunt that asks students to search the sources in order to locate a word or phrase that fits the criteria described. Students are also asked to name the source in which they found the word or phrase.

> ❋ **Another Approach** Assign students to small groups, and have each group collaboratively come up with two suitable scavenger hunts from the reading material. These student-created scavenger hunts can then be completed and discussed by the entire class. See page 89 for more details.

Part 4

This section is composed of three questions that ask students to integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write knowledgeably about a subject. The vast majority of these questions are open-ended, while the rest involve using a new format (e.g. chart, diagram, graph) to organise and/or interpret data and information.

The questions in this section challenge students to blend close-reading concepts with flexible-thinking skills. Students are asked to do the following:

Analyse	Synthesise	Hypothesise	Empathise
❋ authorial choices ❋ intent of characters/ historical figures ❋ overall meanings ❋ quotations in context ❋ statistical data	❋ combine different takes on the same subject ❋ use information from different genres and formats (nonfiction, fiction, graphs, etc.) to draw conclusions ❋ compare and contrast characters, ideas and concepts ❋ draw conclusions from information and/or numerical data	❋ make predictions about future events ❋ explore alternatives to previous choices	❋ connect to one's own life ❋ put oneself in a character's/ historical figure's place

> ❋ **Another Approach** The Australian Curriculum places a strong emphasis on teaching and applying speaking and listening skills. Many of the questions in Part 4 lend themselves well to meeting standards from this strand. Have individual students present oral reports on specific Part 4 questions. Or, form groups of students and ask them to engage in collaborative discussion before presenting their findings.

Aaron's Errands

Read each source below. Then complete the activities on pages 3—4.

Source 1

Dear Aaron,

Good morning! When I left for work, you were sleeping like a log. Now that you're awake, I need help! It's already the 9th of June. Your sister's birthday party is tomorrow! Dad is picking up the cake on his way home from work, and I'll put together all the party favours for Ariel's little friends when I get home. I'm worried there's too much to do and too little time to do it in. Can you please run a few errands for me?

I need you to drive to Foodland to pick up some groceries. The list is in the usual place on the fridge. But before you do that, I need you to go to the party shop that's right next door to Foodland. I'll try to be really specific, but you may need to look around to see what they have. Remember, the party will have an "Under the Sea" theme.

Please get 2 packages each of plates, cups and bowls. If they have mermaid ones, get those. If not, blue would be fine. Also, get some blue and green balloons and streamers. Anything I'm forgetting?

Thanks so much, Aaron. You're a big help! Your sis will appreciate you!

Love, Mum

Oh, two more things!
1. Take a $100 note from the "secret" jar. That should be enough for everything.
2. Please save the receipts from both shops.

Source 2

Stuff to buy at Foodland
(for Ariel's b-day party!)

ice (2 bags)	juice boxes	water (lots!)
lollies	chips/pretzels	ice-cream
fruit/melon	soft drink (3 bottles)	

Source 3

PARTY WORLD
9/6/17   2.00 pm

2 pkg cups – blue	$6.00
2 pkg plates – mermaid	$8.00
2 pkg bowls – mermaid	$7.50
2 pkg napkins – blue	$4.00
bday candles – blue	$2.00
"Under the Sea" balloons	$5.39
streamers – green	$2.50
streamers – blue	$2.50
Total	**$37.89**

Source 4

Foodland
Friday, 9 June 2017   1.13 pm

watermelon whole	$4.99
red grapes 1 kg	$5.64
pineapple whole	$3.99
ice-cream	$4.00
potato chips	$1.99
colour lollies	$2.50
juice bxs (case)	$5.99
soft drink	$1.33
soft drink	$1.33
soft drink	$1.33
goldfish crackers	$2.00
pretz twists	$1.50
ice (2 bags)	$5.00
btl water (2 cases)	$12.00
Total	**$53.59**

Name: _____

Part 1: Read each idea. Which source gives you this information? Fill in the correct bubble for each source. (Note: More than one bubble may be filled in for each idea.)

Information Sources ➡	1	2	3
1. The BOM is based in Australia.	○	○	○
2. Storms can cause over $1 billion in damages.	○	○	○
3. Large storms are given people's names.	○	○	○
4. A storm name can be retired.	○	○	○

Part 2: Fill in the bubble next to the best answer to each question.

5. What is the name of the narrator in Source 1?

 Ⓐ Ingrid   Ⓑ Marcia   Ⓒ Debbie   Ⓓ Tara

6. What happens when a storm name is retired?

 Ⓐ It is erased from the history books.

 Ⓑ It is never used again.

 Ⓒ It is only given to another big storm.

 Ⓓ That letter is no longer used for storm names.

7. When the narrator in Source 1 says the threat of a storm seems to "rear its ugly head" every year, which literary device is she using?

 Ⓐ simile   Ⓒ onomatopoeia

 Ⓑ alliteration   Ⓓ personification

8. If a storm with winds over 61 km/h hits in the year 2030, which of these could be its name?

 Ⓐ Cyclone Xavier   Ⓒ Cyclone George

 Ⓑ Cyclone Ingrid   Ⓓ Cyclone Tracy

Part 3: Search "The Naming of the Storm" to find one example of each of the following. Then write the number of the source in which you located this information.

9. a word with five syllables _____ Source #: _____

10. a word meaning "to leave a place of danger" _____ Source #: _____

Name: _____

Part 4: Refer back to the sources, and use complete sentences to answer these questions.

11. Using the information you have read, what time of year seems to be the worst time for cyclones? Shade in the box of the time period below, and then cite examples from your sources to back up your claim.

Spring – Early Summer	Summer – Early Autumn	Autumn – Early Winter	Late Winter – Spring

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. Imagine that you are like the narrator from Source 1, and a storm with your name is predicted to be a powerful cyclone. How would you feel? Would you be excited or worried? Would you wish that the storm had a different name? Explain your feelings.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

13. Imagine the Beureau of Meteorology needs to add some new names its list of cyclone names for the coming year, and they have put you in charge. Be creative as you create a list of names below. (Note: You must use the rules set forth in Source 3.)

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

Written Without Ease

Read each source below. Then complete the activities on pages 9–11.

Source 1

The novel *Gadsby* was written by Ernest Vincent Wright and published in 1939. It tells the story of its title character, an ambitious man named John Gadsby. He lives in a fictional town called Branton Hills. This town is in decline, and the novel's protagonist decides to do something about it. *Gadsby* becomes mayor, and the town thrives.

That is the plot of *Gadsby*, but it is not what makes this novel really unique and ambitious. What makes *Gadsby* special is that it is written without the help of one very important thing: the letter *e*. There are over 50 000 words in *Gadsby*, and not one contains the letter *e*. This must have been difficult considering the letter *e* appears in about 12.5% of the words in the English language. It was so difficult in fact that as he typed the final manuscript, Wright tied down the letter *e* on his typewriter so that "none of that vowel might slip in, accidentally".

So what drove this author to attempt such a feat? In the introduction to *Gadsby*, Wright said he was tired of hearing people say, "It can't be done".

Source 2

Roots

(from the Greek language)

homo- means "same"

lipo- means "missing"

-gram means "something written"

-phone means "sound"

Source 3

The following chart shows the frequency with which each letter appears in words in the English language. Each percentage has been rounded to the nearest 0.5% (except for letters appearing in fewer than 0.5% of words).

Most Common Letters in English	
A	8%
B	1.5%
C	3%
D	4.5%
E	12.5%
F	2%
G	2%
H	6%
I	7%
J	0.15%
K	1%
L	4%
M	2.5%
N	6.5%
O	7.5%
P	2%
Q	0.09%
R	6%
S	6.5%
T	9%
U	3%
V	1%
W	2.5%
X	0.15%
Y	2%
Z	0.07%