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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 23 units in *Mastering Complex Text Using Multiple Reading Sources*, 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.

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 87–94) and a full list of Australian Curriculum: English correlations (pages 95–96). And even more educational value can be mined from each unit's reading material with "Additional Activities" (page 86). 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 23 units, which do not need to be taught in any particular order. Each unit 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 or four 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 86 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 Australian Curriculum asks students to draw on information from multiple print sources and show the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently. 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 86.

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 86 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 86 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:

Analyze	Synthesize	Hypothesize	Empathize
<ul style="list-style-type: none">* authorial choices* intent of characters/historical figures* overall meanings* quotations in context* statistical data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* make predictions about future events* explore alternatives to previous choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* 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.

Creating a Stir

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

Source 1

Figurative language describes something by comparing it with something else.

- * **simile** (a comparison using *like* or *as*) – The car was as slow as a snail.
- * **onomatopoeia** (the use of a word to imitate a sound) – The truck's loud boom woke him from his slumber.
- * **idiom** (a common phrase whose total meaning is different from the meaning of the individual words) – The president created a stir when he signed the controversial bill.

(Note: The antonym of *figurative* is *literal*.)

Source 2

Vote **YES** on Free, Clean Power!

For too long, we have relied on fossil fuels like oil to light and heat our homes. These fuels pollute our air, land and water; and what's more, they won't be around forever. Once they're gone, they're not coming back.

This is why wind energy is so important. Wind energy is clean. That means that it doesn't produce pollution. No chemicals are required to tap into this power. Our environment will stay protected.

Look around you. Wind is everywhere. It's free, and it can never be used up! We can harness this natural power and use it forever. Using the power of wind will ensure that we don't have to buy oil and other fossil fuels from other countries. This will give us financial freedom by keeping our money in our country.

By voting **YES** on September 2, you can make a dream of clean energy come true. Beautiful wind farms will be built immediately. The whispering whir of the windmills will soon signal a new era of energy efficiency. Opponents of this law will say that these wind farms will cost too much to build, but that cost will be more than paid for within a few short years.

Can you feel the winds of change stirring? The time is now to begin looking to a new future with cleaner, more renewable energy. The time is now to vote **YES**.

Source 3

Vote **NO** on these noisy nuisances!

Rumble! Scrape! Clang! Don't let anyone fool you: windmills cause pollution... noise pollution! When the large, mechanical parts in windmills are turning and stirring the air, there can be no peace and quiet. It's like living inside a washing machine. The noises are loud and disturbing, and they are nearly constant. You can't escape them. Is that what you want in your ears and in your home 24/7?

Wind energy is not some magical solution that will solve all of our energy problems. Sure, wind is free, but building wind farms is the furthest thing from free. It will cost millions of our hard-earned tax dollars. Also, the wind doesn't always blow. It's inconsistent. We need energy that is reliable and always available at the flick of a switch. If we become dependent on the weather for our energy, we will lose some of the freedom we have worked so hard for.

Our opponents want you to think that wind farms only help the environment. Ask the birds if that's true! Windmills' sharp blades are dangerous to the local wildlife. Windmills also require a lot of open space. Should we cut down trees to make room for them? Many animals make their homes in those trees.

Lastly, wind farms are unattractive. They do not blend in with the natural landscape of our town. They will stick out like a sore thumb.

Vote **NO** this September 2!

Falling Off and Growing In *(cont.)*

Name: _____

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

11. In the space below, draw a sketch of the picture that Mr. Oakley shows his class in Source 2. Use the clues given to make the sketch as accurate as possible. Label each object in the picture.



12. About how old is the narrator of Source 3? Use specific clues given in Sources 3 and 4 to make an informed guess. Then explain your reasoning below.

13. Give two other terms for “baby teeth”, and explain how you know these terms. (**Hint:** One is mentioned directly in the sources, and the other can be inferred from the information given.)

The Dynamic Trio

Read each source below and on page 9. Then complete the activities on pages 10–11.

Source 1



- (as **adjective**) energetic, forceful
Dana's dynamic personality made her one of the leaders of our group.
- (as **noun**) the way that two or more people behave with each other
Having fun and making jokes was a big part of our group's dynamic.

Source 2

Silver Screen Cinema

"Where movies come to life!"

Theatre 1 • The Dynamic Trio

Three unlikely partners – a 4-year-old and two rival superheroes – join forces to battle bad guys.

Running Time: 102 minutes

Showtimes for Saturday, 28 March: 10:30 12:25 2:20 4:15 6:10 8:05

Theatre 2 • The Tails of Two Kitties

Two mischievous kittens vie for the attention of a famous French actress.

Running Time: 99 minutes

Showtimes for Saturday, 28 March: 10:20 12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:20

Theatre 3 • Old Hat

An aging wizard must change his ways in order to match wits with a new enemy.

Running Time: 123 minutes

Showtimes for Saturday, 28 March: 11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

Theatre 4 • Space Neighbors II

A new crew of aliens explores Earth in this long-awaited follow-up to *Space Neighbors*.

Running Time: 96 minutes

Showtimes for Saturday, 28 March: 2:20 4:05 5:50 7:35 9:20 11:00

Theatre 5 • The History of Sound

Five talented musicians form a band and learn to work together to succeed.

Running Time: 202 minutes

Showtimes for Saturday, 28 March: 10:40 2:35 6:30 10:15

Theatre 6 • Only Game in Town

A mysterious inventor designs a new board game that makes the world a better place.

Running Time: 114 minutes

Showtimes for Saturday, 28 March: 12:25 2:45 5:05 7:25 9:45

Theatre 7 • The Best-Kept Secret

A shocking discovery has scientists racing against the clock to solve an ancient riddle.

Running Time: 130 minutes

Showtimes for Saturday, 28 March: 12:10 2:40 5:10 7:40 10:10