

# Text features

## Stage 3

### Overview

#### Purpose

This literacy teaching strategy supports teaching and learning for Stage 3 students across all key learning areas. It targets specific literacy skills and suggests a learning sequence to build skill development.

Teachers can select individual tasks, or a sequence, and embed into their teaching and learning program according to their students' needs. While exemplar texts are provided throughout this resource, it is recommended that teachers select texts which are relevant to their students and curriculum.

#### Learning intention

Students will learn to identify features in text which impact meaning, including exclamation marks, inverted commas and quotation marks.

#### Syllabus outcome

The following teaching and learning strategy will assist in covering elements of the following outcomes:

- EN3-RECOM-01 fluently reads and comprehends texts for wide purposes, analysing text structures and language, and by monitoring comprehension

[NSW English K-10 Syllabus \(2022\)](#)

#### Success criteria

The following Year 5 NAPLAN item descriptors may guide teachers to co-construct success criteria for student learning.

- identifies the purpose of an exclamation mark in a text
- identifies the purpose of inverted commas in an information text
- identifies the purpose of quotation marks in an information text
- identifies the purpose of quotation marks on a website

# National Literacy Learning Progression guide

## Understanding Texts (UnT8-UnT10)

Key: C=comprehension P=process V=vocabulary

### UnT8

- uses knowledge of the features and conventions of the type of text to build meaning (e.g. recognises that the beginning of a persuasive text may introduce the topic and the line of argument) (C)
- uses sophisticated punctuation to support meaning (e.g. commas to separate clauses in complex sentences) (P)

### UnT9

- analyses language and visual features in texts using metalanguage (e.g. paragraph, apostrophe, camera angle) (V)

### UnT10

- integrates automatically a range of processes such as predicting, confirming predictions, monitoring, and connecting relevant elements of the text to build meaning (P)

[National Literacy Learning Progression](#)

## Evidence base

- Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (2017). [Effective reading instruction in the early years of school](#), literature review.
- Oakhill, J., Cain, K. & Elbro, C. (2015). Understanding and teaching reading comprehension: A handbook. Routledge.
- Quigley, A. (2020). Closing the reading gap. Routledge.
- Scarborough, H.S. (2001). Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory and practice. In S. Neuman & D. Dickson (Eds.), Handbook for research in early literacy (pp. 97-110). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

**Alignment to system priorities and/or needs:** [Five priorities for Literacy and Numeracy](#), [Our Plan for NSW Public Education](#), [School Excellence Policy \(nsw.gov.au\)](#).

**Alignment to School Excellence Framework:** Learning domain: Curriculum, Teaching domain: Effective classroom practice and Professional standards

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# Teaching strategies

Task	Appendices
<a href="#">Quotation marks</a>	<a href="#">Appendix 1 - 'Say What?' Adding speech bubbles and conversation</a> <a href="#">Appendix 2 – Tracking speech 'Superfudge'</a>
<a href="#">Quotation marks in informative and persuasive texts</a>	<a href="#">Appendix 3 – Hunting for quotation marks</a>
<a href="#">Inverted commas to draw reader's attention to words</a>	<a href="#">Appendix 4 - Inverted commas to draw attention to a word</a> <a href="#">Appendix 5 - Finding inverted commas in context</a>
<a href="#">Exclamation marks</a>	<a href="#">Appendix 6 - Punctuation match and sort</a>

## Background information

### Exclamation marks

A punctuation marker used at the end of a sentence to emphasise the emotion or feeling that is contained in the sentence. In some forms, such as personal letters, it may be used to strengthen the humorous element in a sentence, for example 'We found the cat asleep in the rubbish bin!' Exclamation marks are always used at the end of sentences containing a command – Go!

### Quotation marks ('...' or "...")

Punctuation markers used to indicate:

- quoted or direct speech, for example 'I am Arno's brother,' he said. A new paragraph and separate quotation marks are used for each speaker being quoted
- in formal writing, the actual words quoted from another source. For example, Shakespeare is using dramatic irony when Lady Macbeth says, 'A little water clears us of this deed'
- the titles of poems, songs, short stories or articles, for example the well-known song, 'Waltzing Matilda'
- that attention is being drawn to an unusual or particular sense or usage of a word, for example Wombats are 'sociable' creatures.

Quotation marks are not used for the speech of characters in a drama script.

### Inverted commas

Inverted commas are sometimes used around the titles of publications such as books and songs. They can also be used to draw the reader's attention to a particular word or phrase.

Reference: English K-10 Syllabus © NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2012 and 2022

## Where to next?

- Text structure
- Audience and purpose
- Understanding perspective

# Overview of teaching strategies

## Purpose

These literacy teaching strategies support teaching and learning from Stage 2 to Stage 5. They are linked to NAPLAN task descriptors, syllabus outcomes and literacy and numeracy learning progressions.

These teaching strategies target specific literacy and numeracy skills and suggest a learning sequence to build skill development. Teachers can select individual tasks or a sequence to suit their students.

## Access points

The resources can be accessed from:

- NAPLAN App in Scout using the teaching strategy links from NAPLAN items
- NSW Department of Education literacy and numeracy [website](#).

## What works best

Explicit teaching practices involve teachers clearly explaining to students why they are learning something, how it connects to what they already know, what they are expected to do, how to do it and what it looks like when they have succeeded. Students are given opportunities and time to check their understanding, ask questions and receive clear, effective feedback.

This resource reflects the latest evidence base and can be used by teachers as they plan for explicit teaching.

Teachers can use classroom observations and other assessment information to make decisions about when and how they use this resource as they design teaching and learning sequences to meet the learning needs of their students.

Further support with [What works best](#) is available.

## Differentiation

When using these resources in the classroom, it is important for teachers to consider the needs of all students, including [Aboriginal](#) and EAL/D learners.

EAL/D learners will require explicit English language support and scaffolding, informed by the [EAL/D enhanced teaching and learning cycle](#) and the student's phase on the [EAL/D Learning Progression](#).

Teachers can access information about [supporting EAL/D learners](#) and [literacy and numeracy support](#) specific to EAL/D learners.

Learning adjustments enable students with disability and additional learning and support needs to access syllabus outcomes and content on the same basis as their peers. Teachers can use a [range of adjustments](#) to ensure a personalised approach to student learning.

[Assessing and identifying high potential and gifted learners](#) will help teachers decide which students may benefit from extension and additional challenge. [Effective strategies and contributors to achievement](#) for high potential and gifted learners helps teachers to identify and target areas for growth and improvement. A [differentiation adjustment tool](#) can be found on the High potential and gifted education website.

## Using tasks across learning areas

This resource may be used across learning areas where it supports teaching and learning aligned with syllabus outcomes.

Literacy and numeracy are embedded throughout all syllabus documents as general capabilities. As the English and mathematics learning areas have a particular role in developing literacy and numeracy, NSW English and Mathematics syllabus outcomes aligned to literacy and numeracy skills have been identified.

## Text selection

Example texts are used throughout this resource. Teachers can adjust activities to use texts which are linked to their unit of learning.

Further support with text selection can be found within the [National Literacy Learning Progression](#) Text Complexity appendix. Needs to be updated to V3 TCA

The [NESA website](#) has additional information on text requirements within the NSW English syllabus.

# Teaching strategies

## Quotation marks

1. Discuss the role of quotation marks as indicators of direct or quoted speech. Model how to use quotation marks by transcribing a conversation between two students. Using a think-aloud strategy will help students understand where the marks sit in a sentence, why they are used and why we take a new line for each new speaker to track conversation.
2. Say what? Students add dialogue to word bubbles using [Appendix 1 - 'Say What?' Adding speech bubbles and conversation](#). Students then transfer these thought bubbles into a conversation, replicating the modelled process and using speech marks to indicate who is speaking and taking a new line for each new speaker.
3. Students use [Appendix 2 – Tracking speech 'Superfudge'](#) to highlight in different colours when a new speaker comes into the conversation, tracking the flow of communication. Half of the class receives Part A of Appendix 2 which shows a text that does not take a new line for each new speaker. The second half of the class will receive Part B of Appendix 2 which has correctly taken a new line for each new speaker. Note: Give students who need support Part B.
4. Students partner so that both Part A and B can be reviewed. Pairs share and discuss the difference in their texts and which was easier to follow.

## Quotation marks in informative and persuasive texts

1. Students use a text linked to a current unit of learning to highlight examples of quotation marks. Discuss when they are used to quote people, often experts or researchers in the field, a prominent person or an important person within the context.
2. Students use [Appendix 3 – Hunting for quotation marks](#) to record quotation marks found in texts and respond to key questions: what is the quote, who was quoted and why was this quote selected or used?

## Inverted commas to draw reader's attention to words

### Emphasising words

1. Review ways to draw a reader's attention to a word (bold, italics, underline, capital letters – refer to [Stage 2 Text Features](#)). Explain that the author may also draw a reader's attention to a word or phrase by using inverted commas, for example: "This process is called 'photosynthesis'."
2. Show the following sentence: "The robot can 'smell' the fire and will alert the fire brigade." Discuss: why is the word 'smell' in inverted commas? What does this tell the reader? Jointly construct additional examples.
3. Students work in pairs to discuss examples of using inverted commas in a range of contexts (refer to [Appendix 4 - Inverted commas to draw attention to a word](#)).
4. Discuss how ' ' are used often used to indicate the title of a book for example: Angus could not put down the book 'The Lonely Giant'.

## In context

5. Students use Appendix 5 to find examples of inverted commas in context with the text 'Fingerprints' ([Appendix 5 - Finding inverted commas in context](#)). Students engage in a [Think-Pair-Share](#): with a partner to determine the purpose of inverted commas. Discuss examples with the class and correct common misconceptions.

## Exclamation marks

1. Punctuation memory: Students use [Appendix 6 - Punctuation match and sort](#) and play memory with a range of questions and punctuation marks – students need to choose the one that is best suited.  
**Differentiation:** Students who need an additional challenge use all three columns in Appendix 6 (sentence, author intent and punctuation mark).
2. Review the exclamation mark as a punctuation tool to emphasise the emotion or feeling that is contained in the sentence. Students offer examples of using an exclamation mark and teacher transcribes on the board. Discuss what effect a different punctuation mark, such as a full stop or a question mark, would have on the meaning of the sentence.
3. Students hunt through a range of texts linked to current unit of learning to find examples of the exclamation marks. Students analyse what effect this mark has on the reader within the text and why an author would use this mark in a range of contexts. Students present their findings to the class and justify their conclusions.

## Punctuation hunt

1. Reads aloud the first paragraph from [Appendix 7 – Punctuation hunt](#) (which is missing key punctuation):

Most people know of the importance and the fragility of the frozen environments at the north and south poles What is less well known is the significance of the vast glacial region in the world's most mountainous place the Hindu Kush-Himalayan HKH region of central Asia This region is called the Third Pole because it contains one-third of the world's glaciers the largest volume of ice outside the Arctic and Antarctic

2. Teacher asks students to give feedback about what they heard. Were you able to understand what was read? What challenges did you face? Why do you think it was difficult to comprehend meaning?
3. Display text so students can see what is missing. Explain to students that we are going to hunt for places to add some punctuation so that we can maintain the meaning.
4. Teacher uses a think aloud to explain what clues to look for to place punctuation such as:
  - Capital letters
  - Possession
  - Brackets to shorten the name of something
  - Inverted commas if it is a specific name



Most people know of the importance and the fragility of the frozen environments at the north and south poles. What is less well known is the significance of the vast glacial region in the world's most mountainous place, the Hindu Kush-Himalayan (HKH) region of central Asia. This region is called the 'Third Pole' because it contains one-third of the world's glaciers - the largest volume of ice outside the Arctic and Antarctic.

5. Double [Think-Pair-Share](#): Teacher informs class that they will be the editors of a text that has no punctuation and that their job is to correct it. In pairs students complete the punctuation hunt (refer to [Appendix 7 – Punctuation hunt](#) or any other text linked to current unit of learning). In quads, students compare and contrast their findings, discussing the similarities and differences between their punctuation choices.
6. This strategy can be replicated with any text linked to current unit of learning. It is best to focus on removing one or two focus punctuation marks after explicit instruction of their use.
7. Students could then create their own text, remove key punctuation and peers complete the punctuation hunt.

# Appendix 1

## Say what? Adding speech bubbles and dialogue

- Create speech bubbles to show what these people might be saying
- Develop a conversation between the people in the image using quotation marks



Photo by Dakota Corbin on [Unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)

## Appendix 2

### Tracking speech 'Superfudge' Part A

'Superfudge' by Judy Blume (1990/2004) The Berkley Publishing Group

One afternoon when I came home from school, Tootsie wasn't in her crib. I figured Mom was feeding her, so I went to her bedroom to say hello. Mom was lying on her bed with her hands over her eyes. "Hi," I said. "Where's Tootsie?"

"In her crib, asleep," Mom muttered. "No, she's not." "Of course she is. I just put her down a few minutes ago." "I looked in her crib and I'm telling you, she's not there." Mom took her hands away from her face. "What are you saying, Peter?" "Mom, Tootsie's not in her crib. That's all I'm saying." Mom jumped up. "Then where is she?" We both ran down the hall and into the area where we used to eat. Mom looked into her crib but Tootsie wasn't there. "Oh no!" Mom cried. "She's been kidnapped." "Who'd want her?" As soon as I said it, I was sorry. "Call the police, Peter..." Mom said. "No, wait,

Create a conversation:

call Dad first...no, call the police...dial 911..." "Wait a minute Mom," I said. "Where's Fudge?" "Fudge? In his room, I guess. He was listening to tapes when I put Tootsie down for a nap." She looked thoughtful for a minute. "You don't think..." We raced down to Fudge's room. He was sitting on the floor playing with his Matchbox cars and listening to "Puff the Magic Dragon." "Where's Tootsie?" Mom said. "Tootsie?" Fudge asked, sounding a lot like me when I'm trying to get out of answering a question. "Yes, Tootsie!" Mom said, louder. "She's hiding," Fudge said. "What are you talking about?" "We're playing a game," Fudge told her. "Who's playing a game?" Mom asked. "Us", Fudge said. "Me and Tootsie." "Tootsie can't play. She's too young for games." "I help her," Fudge said. "I help her hide.

Too easy? Try adding speech marks and colour-coding characters in this version:

One afternoon when I came home from school, Tootsie wasn't in her crib. I figured Mom was feeding her, so I went to her bedroom to say hello. Mom was lying on her bed with her hands over her eyes. Hi, I said. Where's Tootsie?

In her crib, asleep, Mom muttered. No, she's not. Of course, she is. I just put her down a few minutes ago. I looked in her crib and I'm telling you, she's not there. Mom took her hands away from her face. What are you saying, Peter? Mom, Tootsie's not in her crib. That's all I'm saying. Mom jumped up. Then, where is she? We both ran down the hall and into the area where we used to eat. Mom looked into her crib but Tootsie wasn't there. Oh no! Mom cried. She's been kidnapped. Who'd want her? As soon as I said it, I was sorry. Call the police, Peter... Mom said. No, wait, call Dad first...no, call the police...dial 911... Wait a minute Mom, I said. Where's Fudge? Fudge? In his room, I guess. He was listening to tapes when I put Tootsie down for a nap. She looked thoughtful for a minute. You don't think... We raced down to Fudge's room. He was sitting on the floor playing with his Matchbox cars and listening to Puff the Magic Dragon. Where's Tootsie? Mom said. Tootsie? Fudge asked, sounding a lot like me when I'm trying to get out of answering a question. Yes, Tootsie! Mom said, louder. She's hiding, Fudge said. What are you talking about? We're playing a game, Fudge told her. Who's playing a game? Mom asked. Us, Fudge said. Me and Tootsie. Tootsie can't play. She's too young for games. I help her, Fudge said. I help her hide.

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## Tracking speech 'Superfudge' Part B

### 'Superfudge' by Judy Blume (1990)

One afternoon when I came home from school, Tootsie wasn't in her crib. I figured Mom was feeding her, so I went to her bedroom to say hello. Mom was lying on her bed with her hands over her eyes. "Hi," I said. "Where's Tootsie?"

"In her crib, asleep," Mom muttered.

"No, she's not."

"Of course she is. I just put her down a few minutes ago."

"I looked in her crib and I'm telling you, she's not there."

Mom took her hands away from her face. "What are you saying, Peter?"

"Mom, Tootsie's not in her crib. That's all I'm saying."

Mom jumped up. "Then where is she?"

We both ran down the hall and into the area where we used to eat. Mom looked into her crib but Tootsie wasn't there.

"Oh no!" Mom cried. "She's been kidnapped."

"Who'd want her?" As soon as I said it, I was sorry.

"Call the police, Peter..." Mom said. "No, wait, call Dad first...no, call the police...dial 911..."

"Wait a minute Mom," I said. "Where's Fudge?"

"Fudge? In his room, I guess. He was listening to tapes when I put Tootsie down for a nap." She looked thoughtful for a minute. "You don't think..."

We raced down to Fudge's room. He was sitting on the floor playing with his Matchbox cars and listening to "Puff the Magic Dragon."

"Where's Tootsie?" Mom said.

"Tootsie?" Fudge asked, sounding a lot like me when I'm trying to get out of answering a question.

"Yes, Tootsie!" Mom said, louder.

"She's hiding," Fudge said.

“What are you talking about?”

“We’re playing a game,” Fudge told her.

“Who’s playing a game?” Mom asked.

“Us”, Fudge said. “Me and Tootsie.”

“Tootsie can’t play. She’s too young for games.”

“I help her, “Fudge said. “I help her hide.”

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# Appendix 3

## Hunting for quotation marks

Quote	Who was quoted?	Why was this quote selected?

# Appendix 4

## Inverted commas to draw attention to a word

Example	Why have inverted commas been used?	Your own example
The plane can 'see' the landing strip when it lands.		
The painting used a range of techniques including 'underpainting' and 'blocking in'.		
The walls 'stood' after the builder had supported them with scaffolding.		
Plant cells are 'eukaryotic' which means they have a true nucleus.		
Many of these 'hackers' think they are able to outsmart technology.		
Do you ever eat an ice-cream on a hot day and get a headache from the cold? Some people call this a 'brain freeze'.		
Forests have been annihilated all due to 'progress'.		
Organising another 'visit' was out of the questions. We were here, the file had to be retried, and it was our task to do so.		
Illy's song 'Then What' was released in 2019.		
The 'leader' of the group had a lot of things to learn.		



# Appendix 5

## Inverted commas in context

Curious Kids: How did I get my own unique set of fingerprints? By Sarah Leupen, University of Maryland. Full text with images on [The Conversation](#) website.

Fingerprints are those little ridges on the tips of your fingers. They're essentially folds of the outer layer of skin, the epidermis. The "prints" themselves are the patterns of skin oils or dirt these ridges leave behind on a surface you've touched



*A careful closeup look will show you your fingerprint's ridges and valleys. Photo by: George Prentzas on [Unsplash.com](#)*

Your fingerprints began to form before you were born. When a foetus starts to grow, the outside layer of its skin is smooth. But after about 10 weeks, a deeper layer of skin, called the basal layer, starts growing faster than the layers above it, which makes it "buckle" and fold. The expanding lower layer ends up scrunched and bunched beneath the outside layer.

These folds eventually cause the surface layers of the skin to fold too, and by the time a foetus is 17 weeks old – about halfway through a pregnancy – its fingerprints are set.

Although this folding process might sound random, the overall size and shape of fingerprints are influenced by the genes you get from your parents. So you probably share some fingerprint patterns with your family members.

But the details of your fingerprints are influenced by many other factors besides genes. For example, the shape and size of the blood vessels in your skin, how fast the different layers of skin are growing, and the chemical environment inside the womb all play a part. No two people end up with exactly the same fingerprints, even identical twins.

It was only in 2015 that a big long-term study showed that fingerprints are stable over a person's lifetime. The ridges of a fingerprint are visible on the skin's surface layer, but the pattern is actually "encoded" below that. Even if you have a major skin injury, your prints will come back when the outer layer heals – though you might have a scar, too.

So your fingerprints are totally unique to you and have been since before you were born. No matter how much you change as you grow up, you'll always have the set you have now, no matter how long you live.

## What's a fingerprint's point?

Surprisingly, nobody really knows what fingerprints are for.

People have long thought that fingerprints provide the friction that helps our hands grip objects. This makes sense because the other animals besides human beings that have fingerprints – including many other primates like apes and monkeys, and koalas – are all tree climbers.

But sometimes what makes sense isn't true, and a recent study found that fingerprints don't really help people hold onto things – at least, not things with smooth surfaces.

Other possibilities are that fingerprints improve your sense of touch or help protect your fingers from injury. But scientists don't know for sure yet.

## Making use of your prints

Police have been using fingerprints and their unique loop, whorl and arch shapes to help catch criminals for more than 2,000 years, starting in ancient China.

Fingerprints are now used for many other things as well, all based on the fact that each person's fingerprints are different. You can use that unique code to unlock your phone or enter a restricted area, for example. In Malawi, fingerprints have been used to identify farmers who have taken out loans. They can even be taken from babies and used throughout the person's life to access their immunisation records.

Police forces are still finding new uses for fingerprints, too. As fingerprint detection and study methods have improved, detectives can even use them to see who threw a particular stone. Those little ridges can hide tiny amounts of substances too – which means they could be used to detect the use of illegal drugs like cocaine and heroin. And now forensic scientists can detect decades-old fingerprints, too – maybe allowing detectives to solve really old crimes – with a new technique that uses a colour-changing chemical to map the sweat glands within your fingerprints.

Copied under the statutory licence in s 113P of the Copyright Act. Sarah Leupen '[Curious Kids: How did I get my own unique set of fingerprints?](#)' February 14, 2020. [The Conversation](#). Section 113P [Warning Notice](#).

# Appendix 6

## Punctuation match and sort

Sentence	Author's intent	Punctuation
He couldn't believe it – not again	The character was exasperated that it was happening again.	! Exclamation mark
The building was designed in 1934	A statement of fact about a building.	. Full stop
The children looked at each other and slowly closed their eyes	Something more is about to come	... Ellipsis
There is a job available for three people in the company	Statement of fact that there are jobs available.	. Full stop
Do you think I could be the winner this year	The character is hopeful and asking if this year they could win.	? Question mark
Honestly, how could the mashed potato get on that wall	The character was exasperated and could not understand how the mashed potato ended up on the wall.	?! Exclamation and question mark
I haven't sent my information through but will do it ASAP	There is a sense of urgency to send information.	! Exclamation mark
I will be out of action until this wretched ankle heals	There is frustration that the ankle is hurt and the character can't do anything.	! Exclamation mark

# Appendix 7

## Punctuation hunt

### Original

#### Making Flat glass

Flat glass is used in windows because it is strong, clear and weatherproof. In the past, making flat glass was time-consuming and costly, but now it can be made cheaply and easily using the float glass method. This multi-phase method was discovered in 1959 by a British company called Pilkington.

In the first phase, glass ingredients are put into a melting furnace. This produces molten glass.

Next, the molten glass is gently poured into a tank of molten tin. This tank is called a float bath because a layer of molten glass floats on the surface of the molten tin. Molten tin is used in the float bath because it has a smooth, mirror-like surface. The molten glass can be made thicker or thinner by controlling how fast it flows through the float bath.

### Punctuation removed

#### Making Flat glass

Flat glass is used in windows because it is strong clear and weatherproof In the past making flat glass was time consuming and costly but now it can be made cheaply and easily using the float glass method This multi phase method was discovered in 1959 by a British company called Pilkington

In the first phase glass ingredients are put into a melting furnace This produces molten glass

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Year 5 NAPLAN Reading Magazine, 2010 ACARA