 Exploring composing K-6

Through the NSW English K-10 syllabus

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Implementing new curriculum – building capacity

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Welcome

Welcome to the ‘Exploring composing K-6 through the English K-10 syllabus’ resource. This resource is designed to assist you to:

* consider the role of composing in the [English K-10 syllabus](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/)
* identify the relevant outcomes and content from the syllabus that relate to composing texts
* consider the value of the mode continuum when planning composing experiences
* develop a short sequence of learning experiences that include the use of digital and/or multimodal resources to support students to compose spoken, written or visual texts
* incorporate grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and spelling in the context of composing texts.

Overview

This resource explores the key process of composing texts in K-6 classrooms. It is organised into three main sections.

The process of composing

In this section, you will explore syllabus definitions and consider the role of the following in the context of composing: speaking and listening, writing and representing, using language to make meaning, thinking imaginatively, creatively, interpretively and critically, expressing oneself and reflecting. You will also consider the use of the mode continuum when planning for composing lessons.

Composing in the classroom

In this section of the resource, you will consider the place of vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and spelling when planning learning experiences for composing texts. You will also have the opportunity to explore examples of teaching and learning opportunities inherent in the English K-10 syllabus where students produce spoken, written or visual texts.

Professional reflection

This section provides you with a number of additional resources to reflect on your knowledge about composing texts and support your planning for teaching composing in your classroom.

Rationale

The English K-10 syllabus has identified the key processes of [responding to and composing texts](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/content-and-the-use-of-terminology/) as central to students using language purposefully and meaningfully and engaging with a wide range of texts.

Through responding to and composing texts from Kindergarten to Year 10, students learn about the power, value and art of the English language for communication, knowledge and enjoyment. By composing and responding with imagination, feeling, logic and conviction, students develop understanding of themselves and of the human experience and culture.

[English K-10 syllabus](https://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/) (2012) NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)

The process of composing

Definitions

Composing

In this syllabus, ‘composing’ is the activity that occurs when students produce written, spoken or visual texts.

Composing typically involves:

* the shaping and arrangement of textual elements to explore and express ideas, emotions and values
* the processes of imagining, organising, analysing, drafting,
* appraising, synthesising, reflecting and refining
* knowledge, understanding and use of the language forms, features and structures of texts
* awareness of audience and purpose.

[English K-10 syllabus](https://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/) (2012) NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)

Texts

Communications of meaning produced in any media that incorporates language, including sound, print, film, electronic and multimedia representations. Texts include written, spoken, non-verbal, visual or multimodal communications of meaning. They may be extended unified works, a series of related pieces or a single, simple piece of communication.

[English K-10 syllabus](https://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/) (2012) NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)

Types of text

Classifications according to the particular purposes texts are designed to achieve. These purposes influence the characteristic features the texts employ. In general, texts can be classified as belonging to one of three types: imaginative, informative or persuasive, although it is acknowledged that these distinctions are neither static nor watertight and particular texts can belong to more than one category.

[English K-10 syllabus](https://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/) (2012) NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)

Imaginative texts

Texts that represent ideas, feelings and mental images in words or visual images. An imaginative text might use metaphor to translate ideas and feelings into a form that can be communicated effectively to an audience. Imaginative texts also make new connections between established ideas or widely recognised experiences in order to create new ideas and images. Imaginative texts are characterised by originality, freshness and insight. These texts include novels, traditional tales, poetry, stories, plays, fiction for young adults and children, including picture books and multimodal texts such as film.

[English K-10 syllabus](https://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/) (2012) NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)

Informative texts

Texts whose primary purpose is to provide information through explanation, description, argument, analysis, ordering and presentation of evidence and procedures. These texts include reports, explanations and descriptions of natural phenomena, recounts of events, instructions and directions, rules and laws, news bulletins and articles, websites and text analyses. They include texts which are valued for their informative content, as a store of knowledge and for their value as part of everyday life.

[English K-10 syllabus](https://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/) (2012) NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)

Persuasive texts

Texts whose primary purpose is to put forward a point of view and persuade a reader, viewer or listener. They form a significant part of modern communication in both print and digital environments. Persuasive texts seek to convince the responder of the strength of an argument or point of view through information, judicious use of evidence, construction of argument, critical analysis and the use of rhetorical, figurative and emotive language. They include student essays, debates, arguments, discussions, polemics, advertising, propaganda, influential essays and articles. Persuasive texts may be written, spoken, visual or multimodal.

[English K-10 syllabus](https://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/) (2012) NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)

In light of the previous definitions it is obvious that composing texts is more than just the creation of written or print texts. Composing also includes speaking (spoken texts) and representing (visual texts).

A circle with the words 'make meaning through language' written in the middle. Going through the circle are 3 arrows, spread evenly, with points on either end of the arrow. On the top half of the circle is the word 'composing', surrounding by 'writing', 'speaking', and 'representing'. On the bottom half of the circle is 'responding', surrounding by 'reading', 'listening', and 'viewing'. 

Representing

The language mode that involves composing images in visual or multimodal texts. These images and their meaning are composed using codes and conventions. The term can include such activities as graphically presenting the structure of a novel, making a film, composing a web page or enacting a dramatic text.

[English K-10 syllabus](https://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/) (2012) NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)

Discuss

Reflect for a few minutes upon the graphic (below) and think about how composing may look in your classroom.

The English K-10 syllabus acknowledges that the classification of ‘text types’ is too ‘arbitrary’ and instead encourages the notion of ‘types of texts’.

Consider this multimodal text. [A recipe for making Delicious Shortbread](http://www.westernstarbutter.com.au/products-recipes/delicious-shortbread) found on the Western Star website. To strictly classify this text into a text type would be difficult. It is an example of a digital text that is visual, persuasive in nature as well as informative.

Note that the [glossary](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/glossary/#taxonomies) in the English K-10 syllabus defines ‘types of texts’ in three broad types – imaginative, informative and persuasive texts. There are many references to these three types of texts in syllabus content.

Working with the syllabus

Students today are immersed in many types of traditional and multimodal texts on a daily basis at home and at school. As English educators, it is our role to support students to not only make sense of these texts but to also think about their responses to texts as well as their compositions.

Composing texts features in the content of most outcomes in the new English K-10 syllabus.

All bolded outcomes are ‘composing represented in content’, and all outcomes followed by an asterisk (\*) are ‘represented in content to a lesser degree.

| Early Stage 1 outcomes | Stage 1 outcomes | Stage 2 outcomes | Stage 3 outcomes |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ENe-1A, ENe-2A, ENe-3A, ENe-4A, ENe-5A, ENe-6B, ENe-7B, ENe-8B, ENe-9B, ENe-10C, ENe-11D, ENe-12E\* | EN1-1A, EN1-2A, EN1-3A, EN1-4A, EN1-5B, EN1-6B, EN1-7B, EN1-8B, EN1-9B, EN1-10C, EN1-11D, EN1-12E\* | EN2-1A, EN2-2A, EN2-3A, EN2-4A, EN2-5B, EN2-6B, EN2-7B, EN2-8B, EN2-9B, EN2-10C, EN2-11D, EN2-12E\* | EN3-1A, EN3-2A, EN3-3A, EN3-4A, EN3-5B, EN3-6B, EN3-7C, EN3-8D, EN3-9E\* |

Explore

Using the table above as a guide, explore the [content of the English K-10 syllabus](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/content/) of a stage relevant to you. What references can you find to composing?

The mode continuum

The mode continuum is a great resource to keep in mind when you are planning experiences for composing texts in a unit of work. Using this tool can help to ensure that a variety of composing experiences are provided and that they range from more spoken-like and informal at the start to more written-like and formal towards the end of a learning sequence. Obviously, if the composing experiences progress from more spoken-like and informal texts towards more written-like and formal, the academic language can be built up along the way and the students will be more able to express their ideas when they compose more complex academic texts. Oracy is fundamental to responding and composing so it makes sense to consider oracy as an essential part of the teaching learning sequence.

Remember – speaking is an aspect of composing.

A circle with the words 'make meaning through language' written in the middle. Going through the circle are 3 arrows, spread evenly, with points on either end of the arrow. On the top half of the circle is the word 'composing', surrounding by 'writing', 'speaking', and 'representing'. On the bottom half of the circle is 'responding', surrounding by 'reading', 'listening', and 'viewing'. 

Explore

[Download the Mode continuum diagram](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/d08b58dc-e271-4435-b7e0-21798d5a629b/1/Comp_continuum_mindmap.doc) and consider what you already know about the Mode continuum. With the words Mode continuum in the centre of the page, write what you already know around it.

The mode continuum diagram a two-way arrow. On one end of the arrow is 'most spoken-like', and on the opposite end is 'most written-like'.

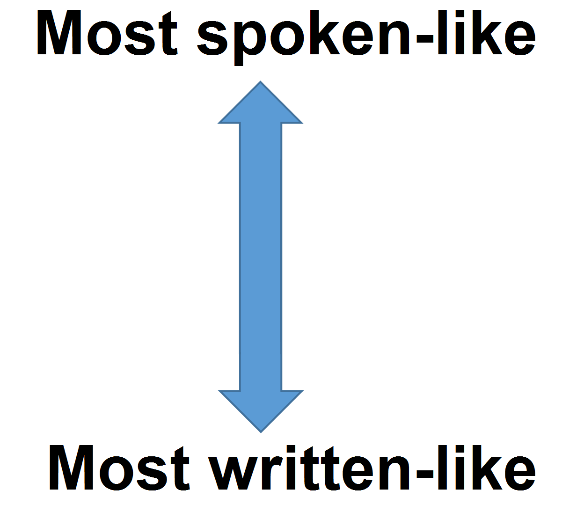
Discuss

In this example, all the activities that have been plotted on the mode continuum are spoken texts; they do however involve the use of a more formal language as they move along the continuum towards the most written-like texts.

The left side of the continuum is 'most spoken-like', and the right side is 'most written-like'. From left to write are some phrases written above the arrow. They are 'Informal face-to-face chat', 'Small group problem-solving tasks', 'Reporting back on a task', 'newstime', 'spoken information reports', and 'reading aloud'. Underneath the arrow, from left to right, is 'Language accompanying action', 'class discussions', 'show and tell', and then a large gap where 'language as reflection' is written all the way at the end-right side of the arrow, underneath 'most written-like'.
Underneath the diagram is 'The mode continuum (reflecting the use of spoken language). Pauline Jones (Ed) (1996) Talking to Learn, PETA, Sydney'.

Online activity

With the mode continuum in mind, [complete the online activity](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/6419002d-6351-4584-96ea-9e4b48fa624e/1/15379.zip/seq15379.htm) by sorting each responding and composing activity from ‘most spoken-like’ to ‘most written-like’.



If you are experiencing difficulty in downloading the above activity, you can [view a summary](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/6419002d-6351-4584-96ea-9e4b48fa624e/1/15379.zip/seq15379_text.htm).

Discuss/reflect

Now revisit your mind map and reflect. Using a new colour pen, make some more notes about the mode continuum and consider how it could be used as a planning tool when planning experiences for composing texts.

Composing in the classroom

When planning a teaching and learning sequence for composing texts you must also consider what role vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and spelling will play in the composing experience. It is difficult to understand how composing could occur without attention being given to these aspects of English language learning and meaning making.

Teaching vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and spelling in context is most important. These aspects become significant in varying degrees throughout the composing process or teaching and learning sequence as experiences move along the mode continuum.

While grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and spelling are clearly evident in syllabus content, it is worth noting that there is a great deal of other syllabus content that relates to composing. Clearly teaching the basic skills of grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and spelling will not be enough for teachers to ensure their students become skilled and confident composers of texts.

In order to compose a text there needs to be a purpose and an audience. The purpose and audience largely determine the characteristics of a text that needs to be composed.

The intent of the English K-10 syllabus is to have students compose texts as a response to something they have experienced through reading, viewing or listening. Therefore when composing a text students may also be responding to a text. For example, a visual text might provide a stimulus

for students’ writing, or studying another composer’s text might help students to use language appropriately in their texts. Texts that engage our students are the texts that we should use. They can be written, spoken, multimodal and in print or digital/online forms. Clearly, composing and responding are rarely taught in isolation.

Telling stories

A two-way arrow pointing from a corner in the bottom-left, to a corner in the top-right. The bottom-left corner has the words 'most spoken-like' written near it, the top-right has 'most written-like' written near it. Spaced evenly from the bottom-left to the top-right are words written alongside the arrow. It starts at 'Exploring a spoken text (song) of Waltzing Matilda', written near 'most spoken-like', and is followed by 'talking about a print text of Waltzing Matilda', 'vocabulary building activities', 'Composing a word bank or diagram and a descriptive paragraph about a swagman', 'composing a podcast of the descriptive paragraph', 'adapting a poem into a narrative', and finishing 'composing the story within the story', near 'most written-like'.

Text resources for the following teaching sequence

‘Waltzing Matilda’ by Banjo Patterson is an engaging text that could be used with Stage 2 to provide opportunities for composing texts. Waltzing Matilda is an excellent example of cleverly constructed poetry that has stood the test of time. It also tells the narrative of an interesting character from a different time in Australian history. Students may be familiar with the melodic tune and the chorus of the song, but let’s delve deeper and create some opportunities to compose some texts in response to this legendary text.

What follows is a short sample of a teaching and learning sequence, with possible outcomes and content, that could be used when composing texts in response to Waltzing Matilda. The resources needed for this series of teaching ideas are tabled below.

[The countdown kids, Waltzing Matilda.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B81afxJcwFw&list=UU0lL9kFJNJHWAFhBKNRXuBA&index=1&feature=plcp)

Other versions available:

* [Slim Dusty](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwvazMc5EfE)
* [John Williamson](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHUcRTvdcbM)
* [Andre Rieu](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXasKlTsjf8)

[Waltzing Matilda lyrics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waltzing_Matilda#Typical_lyrics)

Waltzing Matilda book cover by Paterson and Blackwood.

Paterson, B & Blackwood, F (2006) Waltzing Matilda, Scholastic, Australia.

This particular version includes a John Williamson CD with an instrumental and sing-along version.. It also has another story happening in the background of the visual text, a story within a story.

Waltzing Matilda cover by Paterson and Digby.

Paterson, A.B. & Digby, D (1970) Waltzing Matilda, Angus & Robertson, Australia.

Explore

Explore each of the following teaching ideas.

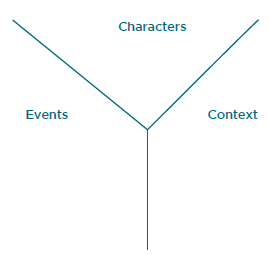
Exploring a spoken text of Waltzing Matilda

Field building – a familiar song

* [EN2-2A](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/content/887/) plans, composes and reviews a range of texts that are more demanding in terms of topic, audience and language
  + plan and organise ideas using headings, graphic organisers, questions and mind maps
* [EN2-6B](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/content/880/) identifies the effect of purpose and audience on spoken texts, distinguishes between different forms of English and identifies organisational patterns and features
  + listen to and contribute to conversations and discussions to share information and ideas and negotiate in collaborative situations (ACELY1676)

As a class listen to [Countdown kids version of Waltzing Matilda](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B81afxJcwFw&feature=player_detailpage).

Students follow the lyrics and sing along wherever possible. Allocate a focus aspect of the text such as characters, events and context to each pair and listen to the lyrics again. Students think independently about their focus aspect and then pair up to share and make notes that they will present to or discuss with the class. As a class, using a Y chart with the headings ‘characters’, ‘events’ and ‘context’, record students’ initial responses to the text.



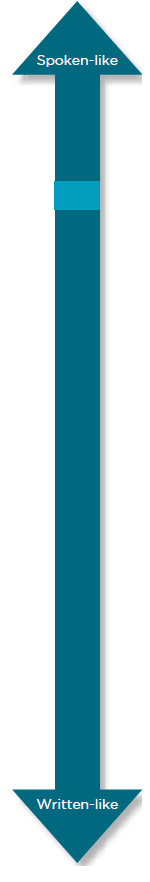


Talking about a print text of Waltzing Matilda

* [EN2-1A](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/content/881/) communicates in a range of informal and formal contexts by adopting a range of roles in group, classroom, school and community contexts
  + interact effectively in groups or pairs, adopting a range of roles
* [EN2-2A](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/content/887/) plans, composes and reviews a range of texts that are more demanding in terms of topic, audience and language
  + discuss aspects of planning prior to writing, for example knowledge of topic, specific vocabulary and language features
* [EN2-7B](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/content/884/) identifies and uses language forms and features in their own writing appropriate to a range of purposes, audiences and contexts
  + identify and analyse the purpose and audience of imaginative and informative texts

In small groups, using the print text version only, compose some questions about the text then share questions with another group and discuss each other’s questions and answers. As a class, discuss the difficulties of using the print text version, such as difficult vocabulary, lack of field knowledge and lack of visual support.

Identify and list aspects that are appealing about a visual text such as image, colour, fonts, layout, character’s facial expression, body language, light and shadow, camera angle, symbols, comic elements. Discuss the role of sound and spoken text in a multimodal text and how it can add further meaning to the text. Identify the purpose and audience of the text.



Waltzing Matilda

| Our questions | Notes | Their questions | Notes |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |

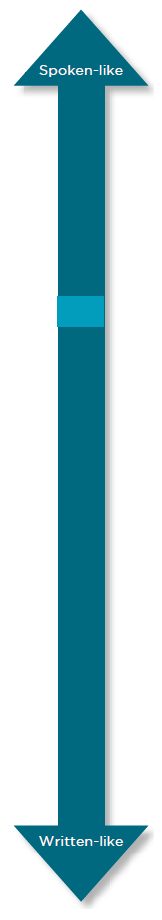
Vocabulary building activities

* [EN2-9B](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/content/885/) uses effective and accurate sentence structure, grammatical features, punctuation conventions and vocabulary relevant to the type of text when responding to and composing texts.
  + understand that choice of vocabulary impacts on the effectiveness of texts
  + incorporate new vocabulary from a range of sources into students’ own texts including vocabulary encountered in research (ACELA1498)

Individually students could do some vocabulary building to become more familiar with the text.

| Word | I’ve seen it before | I’ve never seen it before | What I think it means | What it really means |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Waltzing |  |  |  |  |
| Matilda |  |  |  |  |
| Billabong |  |  |  |  |
| Jumbuck |  |  |  |  |

Other vocabulary building activities that can be incorporated include doing an image search on the computer to create a visual representation of new vocabulary or word and definition matching.



Designing learning book cover

For more vocabulary development ideas see Dufficy, P (2005) Designing learning for diverse classrooms, e:lit - Primary English Teaching Association, Australia. (Chapters 5, 6, 7)

Students may arrive at the following meanings in context.

* Swagman – a man who travels around the countryside with his swag, and who survives by doing odd jobs for farmers, or by begging
* Billabong – a lake or waterhole cut off from a bend in the river that only fills up during the rainy season
* Waltzing – travelling with all one’s belongings wrapped in a blanket and hung around ones back or carrying away a stolen item (a sheep in this case) derived from the German term auf der Walz which means to travel while working as a craftsman and learn new techniques from other masters before returning home
* Jumbuck – another word for sheep
* Squatter – in the past, those who settled on land without permission were called squatters; they usually chose the best land available and became very wealthy
* Billy – a tin container with a wire handle for boiling water and making tea, usually over a camp fire
* Coolabah tree – a type of eucalypt that grows near billabongs or in places that are regularly flooded
* Matilda – a swag, or a bedroll, that is carried like a backpack. Matilda is also a slang word for something that has been stolen.
* Troopers – policemen
* Tucker-bag – the bag where food was kept, an old hessian sack or similar

Create a grammatically organised word bank of the vocabulary for students to use as a reference during composing experiences. Consider choosing words from this table for spelling lists and activities. This could also be an ongoing activity where interesting or new language is added as a text is shared. [Singe-page version of this table](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/3941bfb0-36f6-4222-b05a-0870a387119d/1/Comp_Waltzing_Matilda_wordbank.doc).

| Adverbs  Adverbial phrases | Nouns  Noun groups | Verbs  Verb groups | Pronouns | Conjunctions |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| once  by a billabong  under the shade of a coolabah tree  till his billy boiled  with me  at the billabong  with glee  on his thoroughbred  into  never | a jolly swagman  Matilda  darling  a jumbuck  the swaggie  tuckerbag  the squatter  the troops  one  two  three  the jolly jumbuck  ghost | camped  sang  as he watched  waited  come  a-Waltzing  came  to drink  down came  up got  grabbed  stowed  mounted  up came  up got  jumped  catch me alive  said  nay be heard  pass | he  you (as in you’ll and you’ve)  my  his  whose  your  me  him | and |

Composing a word bank or diagram and a descriptive paragraph about a swagman

* [EN2-2A](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/content/887/) plans, composes and reviews a range of texts that are more demanding in terms of topic, audience and language
  + reread and edit texts for meaning, appropriate structure, grammatical choices and punctuation (ACELY1683)
* [EN2-7B](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/content/884/) identifies and uses language forms and features in their own writing appropriate to a range of purposes, audiences and contexts
  + compare and review written and visual texts for different purposes and audiences
* [EN2-9B](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/content/885/) uses effective and accurate sentence structure, grammatical features, punctuation conventions and vocabulary relevant to the type of text when responding to and composing texts.
  + understand that a clause is a unit of grammar usually containing a subject and a verb and that these need to be in agreement (ACELA1481)
  + understand that the meaning of sentences can be enriched through the use of noun groups/ phrases and verb groups/phrases and prepositional phrases (ACELA1493)
  + use grammatical features to create complex sentences when composing texts
* [EN2-10C](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/content/889/) thinks imaginatively, creatively and interpretively about information, ideas and texts when responding to and composing texts
  + justify interpretations of a text, including responses to characters, information and ideas, for example ‘The main character is selfish because …’
* [EN2-12E](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/content/891/) recognises and uses an increasing range of strategies to reflect on their own and others’ learning
  + discuss the roles and responsibilities when working as a member of a group and understand the benefits of working collaboratively with peers to achieve a goal



Share the two picture book versions of the text.

Discuss how the swagman is represented in a picture from each text. What ideas about the swagman does each picture give us? Can you explain why each picture gives us different ideas about the swagman?

Paterson and Blackwood book cover

Paterson, B & Blackwood, F (2006) Waltzing Matilda, Scholastic, Australia.

Paterson and Digby book cover

Paterson, A.B. & Digby, D (1970) Waltzing Matilda, Angus & Robertson, Australia

Share an image of the swagman from each text and have the students in small groups choose their preferred image. Students then label a copy of the picture to create a diagram or create a word bank using noun groups, adjectival phrases, adjectival clauses, verbs, verb groups and adverbial phrases.

Revise noun groups, adjectival phrases, adjectival clauses, verbs (doing, thinking, saying, and relating) and verb groups and adverbial phrases. Create some examples and discuss how their function in a sentence is to enrich the meaning of the sentence.

Noun groups

A group of words representing who or what is involved in the action or condition of the verb.

* Slim, tired looking man
* Thin, jolly looking fellow

Adjectival phrases

A group of words (usually beginning with a preposition) that give more information about the noun.

* With dirty old clothes
* With a swag on his back

Adjectival clauses

Provide information which defines the qualities or characteristics of the person or thing named.

* Who wandered
* Who was looking for work

Verb groups

A group of words built up around a verb. They may include auxiliary verbs or two or more verbs even adverbs or prepositions.

* Carried
* Wandered
* Strolled
* Was looking

Adverbial phrases

A group of words that provide information about, where, when, how, with what, how far, how long, with whom, about what, as what … something happens.

* Under a shady tree
* By a billabong

In small groups of 3 or so, students use the diagram or word bank to write a descriptive paragraph of the swagman and the setting incorporating a variety of sentences. Each group edits their paragraph for grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors and students record the edited paragraph in their own books.

Conversations about text book cover

For more ideas see Rossbridge, J & Rushton, K (2010) ‘Conversations about text 1 teaching grammar using literary texts’, PETAA, Australia. (Chapter 4).

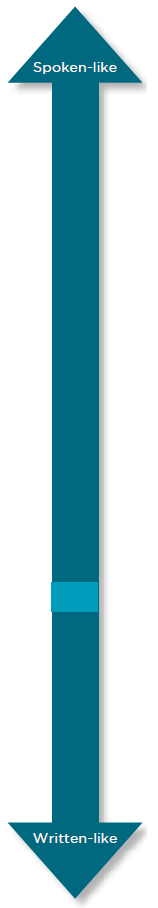
Composing a podcast of the descriptive paragraph

Each member of the group then makes a recording of themselves reading the group’s descriptive paragraph as a podcast or in ‘Photo Booth’. The group then listens to/views each recording and nominates the member of the group, who they felt read, the text the best, to share the recording with the class.

Adapting a poem into a narrative

Students could choose a stanza or two from the poetic text or the whole poem and adapt it into a narrative form using a variety of descriptive sentences, simple, compound and complex sentences.

| Example | Sentence type | Grammar identified |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Once a jolly swagman camped by a billabong,  Under the shade of a coolabah tree; | Simple – single independent clause | Once upon a time there was a jolly swagman.  He camped under the shade of a coolabah tree. |
| And he sang as he watched and waited till his billy boiled - | Compound – two or more independent clauses | He sang and he waited for his billy to boil. |
| Down came the jumbuck to drink at the billabong; | Complex – a combination of independent and dependent clauses | While he was waiting, a shy looking jumbuck came down the bank and drank water at the billabong. |



Single independent clause

Once upon a time (adverbial phrase) there was (verb group) a jolly swagman (noun group)

He sang (single independent clause) and (conjunction) he waited for his billy to boil (single independent clause with embedded clause)

While he was waiting, (dependent clause)  
a shy looking jumbuck came down the bank (independent clause)  
and (conjunction)  
drank water at the billabong (dependent clause)

A new grammar companion cover

For more ideas see Derewianka, B (2011) A new grammar companion for teachers, PETAA, Australia. (Chapter 3) Connecting ideas.

For further exploration of building sentences you could choose to follow the link below. Teachers TV: Primary English – [more ideas for extending Writing](http://www.tes.co.uk/teaching-resource/Teachers-TV-Primary-English-Writing-Activities-6044182/).

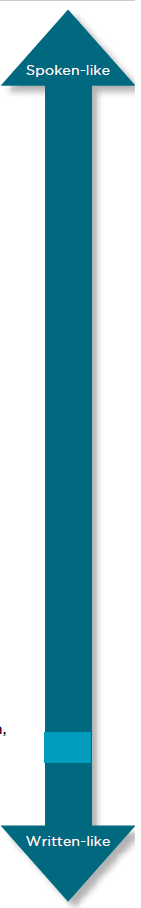
Composing a story within the story

* [EN2-9B](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/content/885/) uses effective and accurate sentence structure, grammatical features, punctuation conventions and vocabulary relevant to the type of text when responding to and composing texts
  + understand that effective organisation of ideas in imaginative, informative and persuasive texts enhances meaning
  + understand that paragraphs are a key organisational feature of written texts (ACELA1479)
  + compose a range of effective imaginative, informative and persuasive texts using language appropriate to purpose and audience
  + incorporate new vocabulary from a range of sources into students’ own texts including vocabulary encountered in research (ACELA1498)
* [EN2-12E](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/content/891/) recognises and uses an increasing range of strategies to reflect on their own and others’ learning
  + discuss the roles and responsibilities when working as a member of a group and understand the benefits of working collaboratively with peers to achieve a goal

Share the Freya Blackwood version of Waltzing Matilda and draw the students’ attention to the illustrations. While the poem is being shared in the close up shots, there is a story within a story occurring in the background. Using the illustrations as a source of information the students make some notes predicting the events occurring in the background.

In pairs, students can then investigate the historical background to the song Waltzing Matilda by looking into the story about the Dagworth station in Northern Queensland being burnt down by the shearers in protest during the shearer’s strike in 1894.

In pairs, students research and make notes about the shearer’s strike and then independently write a short informative text about the event. Some revision or explicit teaching of text structure and how to organise ideas into cohesive paragraphs would support students when composing this text. The work done previously on grammar, in particular using a variety of descriptive sentences, punctuation, vocabulary and spelling can now be applied to this task.



Resources for this lesson

Radio National’s Background Briefing has developed The Matilda Myth: An audio documentary about the shearer’s strikes in Queensland 1894, Banjo Paterson and his song Waltzing Matilda. This spoken text does, however, contain some swearing and explicit detail about violent behaviour. It should be used by the teacher initially as background information and then the teacher can share relevant excerpts of the spoken text with the students. Students should only have access to this spoken text under the guidance of the teacher.

* Audio ‘[Silencing the swagman](http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/rn/podcast/2010/02/bbg_20100214.mp3)’
* [Other resources for further information](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dagworth_Station)

Composing a multimodal text in response to Waltzing Matilda – (Representations)

* [EN2-10C](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/content/889/) thinks imaginatively, creatively and interpretively about information, ideas and texts when responding to and composing texts
  + use visual representations, including those digitally produced, to represent ideas, experience and information for different purposes and audiences
* [EN2-11D](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10/content/890/) responds to and composes a range of texts that express viewpoints of the world similar to and different from their own
  + recognise the ways that stories depict Australians who are significant at a local and community level
  + experiment with visual, multimodal and digital technologies to represent aspects of experience and relationships

As a class, revisit the list of aspects that are appealing about a visual text, compiled earlier. Discuss the role of sound and spoken text in a multimodal text. Students can then use the knowledge that they have gained from the previous experiences to compose a multimodal text that expresses the ideas that they have been thinking about or have become interested in, related to Waltzing Matilda. An exhibition event could be organised so students can share their multimodal texts.

Students can choose one of the following experiences or negotiate another with their teacher. Obviously the level of engagement here will depend on the students’ previous experiences in composing multimodal texts and the expertise of the teacher to support their choice.

Use your favourite version of the song (traditional, contemporary or classical) as inspiration and find/create images that express and represent ideas about the text. Create a multimodal text with these images and the print text.

Record a spoken text over visuals to tell the story adaptation of ‘Waltzing Matilda’ using PowerPoint or another digital presentation program.

Find images to match your short informative text written about the shearer’s strike. Create a multimodal text representing the story behind ‘Waltzing Matilda’.

Find images, music and/or text to match your swagman description to create a multimodal text on the swagman character in ‘Waltzing Matilda’.

Internet links

Talk to the students about responsible use of online materials and copyright. Suggest sources of music and images.

* [Copyright guidelines for schools](http://www.smartcopying.edu.au/scw/go).
* [Digital storytelling ideas and inspiration](http://lrrpublic.cli.det.nsw.edu.au/lrrSecure/Sites/LRRView/14117/)
* A sample storyboard template

Multimodal literacy book cover

Walsh, M. (2011) Multimodal literacy, e:lit - Primary English Teaching Association, Australia.

Additional text

A Waltz for Matilda book cover

Another opportunity to explore Waltzing Matilda

French, J (2010) A Waltz for Matilda, Angus & Robertson, Australia

At this point, if the students have become interested in and inspired by ‘Waltzing Matilda’, you could also share the novel, ‘A Waltz for Matilda’. Jackie French has taken the historical events surrounding Waltzing Matilda and used them as inspiration to write this imaginative story.

Professional reflection

Your context

Throughout this resource, you have looked at:

* the role of composing in the English K-10 syllabus
* how to identify the relevant outcomes and content from the syllabus that relate to composing texts
* the value of the mode continuum when planning composing experiences
* how to develop a short sequence of learning experiences that include the use of digital and/or multimodal resources to support students to compose spoken, written or visual texts
* how to incorporate grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and spelling in the context of composing texts

Explore

Using the [English K-10 syllabus](http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/english/english-k10) and the knowledge you have gained from this resource, plan a short teaching and learning sequence for composing texts that incorporates composing spoken, written, visual and/or multimodal texts. Identify the outcomes and content that will be relevant to the composing experiences. Download the [planning template](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/dc38b805-8b4d-4d82-a572-1f96a26a53f5/1/Comp_texts_template.docx) to give you some starting points.

Additional resources

Further reading – composing

* Hertzberg, M (2012) Teaching English language learners in mainstream classes, PETAA, Australia.
* Rossbridge, J & Rushton, K (2011) Conversations with text 2 Teaching grammar using factual texts, PETAA, Australia.
* Derewianka, B (1998) A grammar companion for primary teachers, Primary English Teaching Association, Australia.
* Cox, R (2011) ‘Talk for learning: developing and expanding oral language in the classroom’, e:lit, e:update 018, e:lit - Primary English Teaching Association, Australia.
* Rushton, K (2010) ‘Teaching grammar in the context of narrative’, e:lit, e:update 010, e:lit - Primary English Teaching Association, Australia.

Additional resources/links

* [Six ways to make your sentence super](http://www.tes.co.uk/teaching-resource/Teachers-TV-Primary-English-Writing-Activities-6044182/)

Copyright resource links

* [Visual literacy and using lighting in images](https://www.scootle.edu.au/ec/resolve/view/L2846)
* [Digital Citizenship website](http://www.digitalcitizenship.nsw.edu.au/)