Department of **Education**

*first steps*

# Viewing Map of Development

## Addressing Current Literacy Challenges

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Thanks to Hillsmeade Primary School.

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**Revised Edition Acknowledgements**

STEPS Professional Development acknowledges:

- The writers of the  first edition: Diana Evans, Adell Griffiths, Deb Stokes, Janene Tuckey.

- Dr Michèle Anstey and Dr Geoff Bull, Anstey & Bull, Consultants in Education.

**First Edition Authors' Acknowledgements**

The *First Steps* writing team would like to thank all teachers and students involved in preparing and trialling units of work, work samples and photographs for this resource. Particular thanks to the following people:

- The First Steps team from STEPS Professional Development

- Ron Gorman, Association of Independent Schools in WA (AISWA)

- Norma Cosby, Tambellup Primary School; Shannon Sapienza and Richard Slade, Melville Senior High School; Michelle Williams, Quinns Beach Primary School; Jeff Thompson, Neerigen Brook Primary School; Christine Kennedy, Lance Holt School and Alison Le Dan, East Kenwick Primary School.

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# Overview of the First Steps Viewing Map of Development

| | Beginning Phase | Early Phase | Exploratory Phase |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Global Statement** | Students make simple interpretations from multimodal texts. They demonstrate their emerging awareness of the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems. Students use these codes and conventions to predict and construct meaning as they interact with a range of multimodal texts, e.g. illustrations, colour, facial expressions. They produce multimodal texts through making connections and creative play. | Students make meaning and respond to a small range of multimodal texts that have familiar topics and predictable text structure. They demonstrate their awareness of the organisational and structural features and the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems in a range of multimodal texts. They use some specific codes and conventions, when producing simple multimodal texts. | Students begin to integrate a variety of strategies for interpreting multimodal texts. They typically recognise and understand links between the content and purpose and form of multimodal texts. Students identify the ways in which the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems shape meaning. They use known codes and conventions when producing multimodal texts for different purposes. They identify simple symbolic representation and stereotypes. |

## Key Indicators

### Beginning Phase

**USE OF TEXTS**
- Makes use of images to 'read' simple picture books and signs.
- Makes meaning from personally significant multimodal texts, e.g. picture books, films, catalogues and television programs.
- Produces simple multimodal texts, e.g. draws, makes pictures.
- Selects simple multimodal texts primarily for enjoyment.
- Displays viewing behaviours, e.g. using icons.

**CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING**
- Expresses personal views about characters or people in different multimodal texts. e.g. I like Shrek because it is good.
- Recognises common signs and symbols used in the environment e.g. stop signs, exit signs.
- States purpose or audience for own multimodal texts, e.g. I have made this e-card for Nana.

**CONVENTIONS**
- Distinguishes written words from images.
- Shows beginning awareness of some of the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems, e.g. volume, simple facial expressions, light and dark colours.

**PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES**
- Relies on a range of familiar strategies to make meaning, e.g. connecting, predicting.
- Begins to use familiar codes and conventions of the semiotic systems to make meaning, e.g. sound effects, colour, appearance.

### Early Phase

**USE OF TEXTS**
- Makes meaning from a small range of multimodal texts by using images and print and identifying key events and supporting details.
- Produces a small range of multimodal texts to achieve a specific purpose, e.g. greeting cards, warning signs.
- Selects information in multimodal texts to achieve a simple purpose, e.g. selects clip art to make a poster, explains that this pictograph shows how students travel to school.
- Identifies some of the organisational and structural features of multimodal texts, e.g. photos, line drawings, graphs.

**CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING**
- Expresses an opinion about multimodal texts but may not always be able to justify it, e.g. I like this video game because it's cool.
- Talks about how characters, people, events and ideas are represented in multimodal texts.
- Identifies the purpose of a small range of multimodal texts e.g. email, poster, video game, factual book.
- Selects appropriate multimodal texts to suit a small range of purposes.
- Links familiar devices with their purpose, e.g. loud music to indicate fear.

**CONVENTIONS**
- Recognises the use of simple codes and conventions of the semiotic systems when making meaning from multimodal texts, e.g. visual – lighting.
- Uses simple codes and conventions of the semiotic systems when creating multimodal texts.

**PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES**
- Uses a limited range of strategies for comprehending and producing multimodal texts, e.g. inferring, comparing.
- Draws upon a small knowledge base from the semiotic systems when comprehending and producing multimodal texts, e.g. linguistic, visual.
- Decides how own multimodal text will be planned.

### Exploratory Phase

**USE OF TEXTS**
- Makes meaning from a range of multimodal texts by integrating knowledge of the semiotic systems, e.g. linguistic, audio, gestural.
- Produces a range of multimodal texts but may not fully control all elements.
- Explains how multimodal texts differ by identifying text features such as purpose, organisation and structure.
- Uses multimodal resources effectively to suit purpose.

**CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING**
- Expresses and justifies personal responses to multimodal texts.
- Recognises the different ways characters, people, events and ideas are represented.
- Identifies purpose and target audience for a range of multimodal texts, e.g. to persuade teenagers, to entertain children.
- Experiments with the use of devices, e.g. to suit the purpose of the multimodal text.

**CONVENTIONS**
- Recognises codes and conventions of the semiotic systems used to produce multimodal texts.
- Explains how multimodal texts differ by identifying text features such as purpose, organisation and structure.
- Begins to use the correct terminology of the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems.

**PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES**
- Uses an increasing range of strategies for comprehending and producing multimodal texts, e.g. determining importance, navigating, self-questioning.
- Begins to adjust viewing strategies for different texts and different purposes.
- Draws upon an increasing knowledge from the semiotic systems when comprehending and producing multimodal texts, e.g. gestural, spatial, visual.
- Plans and produces a multimodal text that is beginning to reflect the intended purpose.

## Major Teaching Emphases

### Beginning Phase

**ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE**
- Create a supportive classroom environment that provides access to a range of multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to select their own multimodal text materials according to interest or purpose.
- Foster students' enjoyment of purposeful viewing.
- Encourage students to explore new technologies when viewing.

**USE OF TEXTS**
- Expose students to a range of multimodal texts discussing purpose, e.g. advertisements are trying to persuade.
- Build awareness of simple organisational and structural features of different multimodal texts.
- Provide opportunities for students to produce a small range of multimodal texts for specific purposes, e.g. a poster to persuade.
- Provide opportunities for students to read and view a variety of multimodal texts, e.g. a web page.
- Encourage students to respond to texts, focusing on the meaning of images and print.
- Model the use of print and digital electronic resources, e.g. using a mouse and icons to access a computer game.
- Teach students simple metalanguage associated with viewing and encourage its use, e.g. point of view, layout.

**CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING**
- Provide opportunities for students to talk about multimodal texts and relate them to their own experiences.
- Draw students' attention to the way people, characters, ideas and events are represented in multimodal texts.
- Expose students to devices used in the environment, e.g. repetition of symbols.
- Discuss the audience and purpose of a range of multimodal texts.

**CONVENTIONS**
- Introduce new codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.
- Provide opportunities for students to explore the use of the five semiotic systems (linguistic, visual, audio, gestural and spatial) when consuming a range of multimodal texts.
- Develop an understanding of, and ability to use and critically reflect upon, the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.

**PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES**
- Teach students strategies for comprehending and producing multimodal texts, e.g. connecting, predicting, comparing.
- Teach students to select multimodal texts for different purposes, e.g. DVD for information, interactive book for enjoyment.
- Model how to reflect on the viewing process and encourage students to do the same.
- Model simple ways to plan and produce multimodal texts, e.g. making a sketch for a poster or an e-card.

### Early Phase

**ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE**
- Create a supportive classroom environment that provides access to a range of multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to select their own multimodal text materials according to interest or purpose.
- Foster students' enjoyment of purposeful viewing.
- Encourage students to explore new technologies when viewing.

**USE OF TEXTS**
- Continue to expose students to a variety of multimodal texts, discussing the features of each, e.g. purpose, audience and structure.
- Teach students about the purpose, organisation and structural features of a range of multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to use the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems to produce a range of multimodal texts for different purposes.
- Provide opportunities for students to read, view and respond to a variety of multimodal texts using explicit information.
- Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with viewing, e.g. lighting, gesture, gaze.

**CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING**
- Provide opportunities for students to share and justify opinions and feelings about multimodal texts.
- Draw attention to the different ways ideas, events, characters and people are represented in multimodal texts.
- Discuss the devices used in the construction of multimodal texts, e.g. the colour red is used as a warning.
- Continue to discuss the target audience and purpose of a range of multimodal texts.

**CONVENTIONS**
- Introduce, revise and extend the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.
- Teach students to use and critically analyse the codes and conventions used in a range of multimodal texts conveyed by paper, digital electronic and live technologies.
- Examine the codes and conventions of different text types used in learning areas.
- Develop students' understanding that the purpose, audience and context of a text will influence the selection and use of particular codes, conventions and semiotic systems.

**PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES**
- Continue to teach students strategies for comprehending and producing multimodal texts, e.g. navigating, self-questioning.
- Model how to reflect on the viewing process and encourage students to do the same.
- Teach students a variety of ways to plan and produce multimodal texts, e.g. use a graphic organiser to plan a news broadcast.

### Exploratory Phase

**ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE**
- Create a supportive classroom environment that provides access to a range of multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to select their own multimodal text materials according to interest or purpose.
- Foster students' enjoyment of purposeful viewing.
- Encourage students to explore new technologies when viewing.

**USE OF TEXTS**
- Continue to expose students to a range of multimodal texts and discuss the features and structure of each.
- Continue to teach students about the purpose, organisation and structure of a range of multimodal texts.
- Provide opportunities for students to produce a range of multimodal texts for authentic purposes and audiences using texts conveyed by paper, digital electronic and/or live technologies.
- Provide opportunities for students to respond to multimodal texts using both explicit and implicit information to make connections.
- Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with viewing, e.g. juxtaposition, bodily contact.

**CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING**
- Provide opportunities for students to listen to the opinions and justifications of others, realising there are different points of view and interpretations.
- Discuss how and why characters, people, events and ideas are presented in a particular way by the producers of multimodal texts.
- Teach students the use of devices to influence meaning.
- Discuss how texts are produced for different purposes and audiences.
- Provide opportunities for students to discuss how the selection and use of particular codes, conventions and semiotic systems are influenced by the purpose, audience and context of a text.

**CONVENTIONS**
- Introduce, revise and extend the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.
- Continue to develop students' understanding of how to select the appropriate codes and conventions for their intended purpose and audience.
- Encourage students to experiment with particular semiotic systems, their codes and conventions as they plan and produce multimodal texts.

**PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES**
- Continue to teach students strategies for comprehending and producing multimodal texts, e.g. inferring, summarising, synthesising.
- Model how to reflect on the viewing process and encourage students to do the same.
- Continue to teach students a variety of ways to plan and produce multimodal texts, e.g. create a storyboard for a slideshow.

first steps

| | **Consolidating Phase** | **Proficient Phase** | **Advanced Phase** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Global Statement** | Students integrate a variety of strategies for interpreting more complex multimodal texts. They recognise that all texts are constructed for particular purposes, contexts and audiences. Students understand and use the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems when producing and interpreting different multimodal texts. They understand that the interpretation of a text can differ according to the socio-cultural background and experiences of the viewers. | Students have become critical viewers of more complex texts and are aware that texts are constructed for specific purposes. They are able to identify the dominant readings of texts, but can also offer alternative interpretations, which take into account different groups and ideologies. When producing multimodal texts, students are able to craft and manipulate the codes and conventions to achieve a specific purpose. | Students evaluate a wide range of complex multimodal texts in multiple ways, recognising relationships between texts, making systematic analyses and providing evidence-based justifications for their judgements. Students identify ideologies represented in multimodal texts with critical awareness of the influences of their personal and socio-cultural understandings. They use a broad repertoire of codes and conventions to produce multimodal texts for impact. |

## Key Indicators

### Consolidating Phase

**USE OF TEXTS**
- Makes meaning from a range of multimodal texts by integrating a broader knowledge of the semiotic systems, e.g. linguistic, audio, gestural, spatial and visual.
- Produces a wide range of multimodal texts demonstrating control over most elements.
- Recognises and discusses the purpose of text features and how these frame meaning, e.g. layout favours some information implying importance.
- Selects multimodal resources appropriately to suit purpose and audience.

**CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING**
- Discusses and justifies own interpretation of multimodal texts, integrating text details with own knowledge and experiences.
- Recognises that the interpretation of a multimodal text will vary depending on the personal experiences of all viewers.
- Discusses alternatives about how characters, people, events and ideas are represented.
- Explains how the elements of a multimodal text have been deliberately selected to produce meaning for a specific purpose.
- Uses devices when attempting to influence viewers, e.g. composition, realistic style.

**CONVENTIONS**
- Uses codes and conventions of the semiotic systems when producing multimodal texts.
- Explains similarities and differences of identifying text features such as purpose, organisation, structure.
- Recognises the codes and conventions that are used to achieve specific effects.

**PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES**
- Selects and uses strategies appropriate to the demands of the multimodal text and purpose of viewing, e.g. scanning, summarising, synthesising.
- Draws upon an increasing knowledge from the semiotic systems when comprehending or producing multimodal texts.
- Plans and produces a multimodal text appropriate to the purpose and audience.
- Develops awareness of how to monitor and reflect on viewing strategies.

### Proficient Phase

**USE OF TEXTS**
- Integrates knowledge of semiotic systems to make meaning from increasingly more complex multimodal texts.
- Produces increasingly more complex multimodal texts demonstrating control over most elements.
- Controls the crafting of a large repertoire of multimodal texts.
- Critically selects from a number of multimodal resources to suit purpose and audience.

**CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING**
- Recognises how one's ideology impacts on the interpretation and production of multimodal texts.
- Makes critical choices about the way characters, people, events and ideas are represented to suit different purposes and influence audiences.
- Identifies the target audience of a multimodal text and discusses how the producer has tailored the codes and conventions to suit.
- Continues to use devices designed to enhance impact or influence viewers, e.g. advertisements contain positive images.

**CONVENTIONS**
- Selects appropriate codes and conventions of the semiotic systems when producing a multimodal text.
- Evaluates the effectiveness of the choice of the codes and conventions to achieve specific effects.
- Evaluates the effectiveness of text features in framing meaning.

**PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES**
- Reflects on and evaluates the effectiveness of strategies used when viewing.
- Continues to draw upon increasing knowledge of the semiotic systems when comprehending or producing multimodal texts.
- Selects appropriate publication formats to enhance understanding and impact.
- Monitors and adjusts viewing processes and strategies.

### Advanced Phase

**USE OF TEXTS**
- Uses interrelationships among the semiotic systems and other texts to make meaning.
- Draws on knowledge of other texts and current events to comprehend and produce complex, sophisticated multimodal texts.
- Controls the crafting of a large repertoire of multimodal texts, using a range of technologies.
- Critiques own texts by evaluating the effectiveness in achieving the purpose.

**CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING**
- Recognises how the ideology of the producer and the viewer combine to create a unique interpretation of a text.
- Recognises the impact that changing technologies have in changing multimodal texts, e.g. Internet/blogs increase the immediacy and production of multimodal texts.
- Provokes responses through the conscious representation of characters, people, events and ideas in certain ways.
- Makes critical choices about the selection of elements of a multimodal text to suit different purposes and influence audiences.
- Selects appropriate devices designed to enhance impact and discusses how they influence particular viewers.

**CONVENTIONS**
- Consciously selects codes and conventions of the semiotic systems to achieve impact.
- Continues to evaluate the choice of codes and conventions to achieve specific effects.
- Manipulates text features to achieve specific effects.

**PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES**
- Continues to reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies used when viewing.
- Consciously adds to the knowledge of the semiotic systems as required to achieve different purposes when comprehending or producing multimodal texts.
- Makes critical choices about the publishing formats of multimodal texts to create impact.
- Articulates how viewing strategies help the viewing and production of multimodal texts.

## Major Teaching Emphases

### Consolidating Phase

**ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE**
- Create a supportive classroom environment that provides access to a range of multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to select their own multimodal text materials according to interest or purpose.
- Foster students' enjoyment of purposeful viewing.
- Encourage students to explore new technologies when viewing.

**USE OF TEXTS**
- Continue to expose students to a range of multimodal texts and discuss the features and structure of each.
- Teach students to analyse how text producers manipulate text features to achieve different purposes.
- Provide opportunities for students to craft a range of multimodal texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Continue to provide opportunities for students to respond to and critically analyse multimodal texts.
- Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with viewing e.g. vectorality, modulation.

**CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING**
- Discuss how one's knowledge, experience, perspective and socio-cultural background influence the production and interpretation of multimodal texts.
- Provide opportunities for students to critically analyse and challenge the text producer's world view.
- Provide opportunities for students to explain their choices of codes, conventions and the devices used in the production of a multimodal text.

**CONVENTIONS**
- Introduce, revise and extend the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.
- Explore selection and use of particular semiotic systems, codes and conventions to convey specific information about the composition and organisation of the text.
- Explore how particular codes and conventions are used to reinforce or oppose meanings in the text.
- Explore which codes and conventions from different semiotic systems can be used to convey similar meanings.

**PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES**
- Teach students to select, evaluate and modify viewing strategies according to the purpose of the viewing.
- Continue to build knowledge in the semiotic systems.
- Encourage students to reflect on the effectiveness of the various ways they plan, produce and publish multimodal texts, e.g. using a visual diary.

### Proficient Phase

**ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE**
- Create a supportive classroom environment that provides access to a range of multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to select their own multimodal text materials according to interest or purpose.
- Foster students' enjoyment of purposeful viewing.
- Encourage students to explore new technologies when viewing.

**USE OF TEXTS**
- Continue to expose students to a range of multimodal texts and discuss the features and structure of each.
- Encourage students to manipulate some of the elements when producing a multimodal text.
- Provide opportunities for students to craft a range of multimodal texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Continue to provide opportunities to respond to and critically analyse multimodal texts of increasing complexity.
- Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with viewing e.g. saturation, kinesics.

**CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING**
- Teach students that all texts can be read on multiple levels, e.g. action films contain messages about gender and heroism.
- Teach students to question ideological values presented in a text, e.g. the 'ideal' family as middle class with two parents.
- Continue to provide opportunities for students to discuss the choices they have made when crafting texts, e.g. use of devices, representations, manipulation of elements.
- Teach students to analyse the ways in which the codes and conventions can manipulate the information provided to the viewer and influence the viewer's point of view and engagement with the text.

**CONVENTIONS**
- Introduce, revise and extend the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.
- Provide opportunities for students to investigate literal and symbolic meanings and their representation through the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems.
- Explore dominant codes or semiotic systems in a text and the reason for their dominance.

**PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES**
- Continue to teach students to select, evaluate and modify viewing strategies according to the purpose of the viewing.
- Encourage students to add to their knowledge of the semiotic systems as necessary when producing multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to be selective in their choice of planning and producing formats.

### Advanced Phase

**ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE**
- Create a supportive classroom environment that provides access to a range of multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to select their own multimodal text materials according to interest or purpose.
- Foster students' enjoyment of purposeful viewing.
- Encourage students to explore new technologies when viewing.

**USE OF TEXTS**
- Expose students to a range of complex multimodal texts and discuss the features and structure of each.
- Continue to provide opportunities for students to manipulate and craft a range of increasingly sophisticated multimodal texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Teach students to respond to and critically analyse increasingly sophisticated multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to independently use precise metalanguage associated with viewing. e.g. parallel cutting, lexical cohesion.

**CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING**
- Teach students that multimodal texts can be interpreted from dominant, alternative or resistant perspectives.
- Continue to investigate the use of literal and symbolic meanings and the deliberate design of multimodal texts to present ideology or point of view.
- Encourage students to produce multimodal texts to influence change about social issues that concern them.
- Continue to teach students to analyse the ways in which the codes and conventions can manipulate the information provided to the viewer and influence the viewer's point of view and engagement with the text.

**CONVENTIONS**
- Continue to teach and revise the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.
- Teach students to investigate texts that are unconventional in their form and their use of the semiotic systems and codes and conventions.
- Encourage students to experiment with the unconventional use of text structures, semiotic systems and codes and conventions as they plan and produce multimodal texts.

**PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES**
- Encourage students to select, evaluate and modify viewing strategies according to the purpose of the viewing.
- Encourage students to consciously add to their knowledge of the semiotic systems as necessary when producing multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to evaluate the effectiveness of their planning and producing choices.

# A Metalanguage and Development Sequence for the Codes and Conventions of the Semiotic Systems

Anstey & Bull, 2011

| | Introduce at the Beginning Phase | Introduce at the Early Phase | Introduce at the Exploratory Phase | Introduce at the Consolidating Phase | Introduce at the Proficient Phase | Introduce at the Advanced Phase |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Revise and extend previous phase ↺* | *Revise and extend previous phase ↺* | *Revise and extend previous phase ↺* | *Revise and extend previous phase ↺* | *Revise and extend previous phase ↺* |
| **Visual Semiotic System** | **Colour** Colour, Colour wheel, Placement, Go together (harmonious), Clash (discordant), Light (tone), Dark (tone), Pure, Mixed, Warm, Cool, Happy, Sad, See through, Solid | **Colour** ↺ | **Colour** Harmonious, Discordant, Tone, Mood, Emotion, Transparent, Opaque | **Colour** Intensity, Dilutes, Strengthen | **Colour** Saturation | **Colour** ↺ |
| | **Texture** Touch/feel | **Texture** ↺ | **Texture** Texture | **Texture** ↺ | **Texture** Tactile memory | **Texture** ↺ |
| | **Line** Line, Thick, Thin, Heavy, Light, Straight, Curved, Jagged, Real, Imaginary | **Line** Diagonal, Horizontal, Vertical | **Line** Right angle | **Line** Quality, Vector, Vectorality | **Line** Implied, Actual | **Line** ↺ |
| | **Shape** Shape | **Shape** ↺ | **Shape** Visual outline | **Shape** ↺ | **Shape** ↺ | **Shape** ↺ |
| | **Point of View** Bird's-eye, Worm's-eye, Eye level | **Point of View** Top down, Bottom up, Eye level | **Point of View** ↺ | **Point of View** ↺ | **Point of View** Point of view, Positioning the viewer, Angle of view | **Point of View** ↺ |
| | **Framing** Close-up shot, Medium shot, Long shot | **Framing** ↺ | **Framing** ↺ | **Framing** ↺ | **Framing** Framing, Context, Characterisation, Cropping | **Framing** ↺ |
| | **Lighting** Lighting, Bright, Dull | **Lighting** ↺ | **Lighting** Degree, Soft, Harsh | **Lighting** Direction of lighting, Top, Bottom, Side, Front, Back, Spotlight | **Lighting** ↺ | **Lighting** ↺ |
| | | **Editing** Editing, Sequence, Speed, Real speed, Sped up, Slow motion | **Editing** ↺ | **Editing** ↺ | **Editing** Transitions, Fading, Dissolving, No transition | **Editing** Parallel cutting, Split screen, Inserts, Pacing (fast or slow) |
| | | | **Juxtaposition** Juxtaposition | **Juxtaposition** | **Juxtaposition** ↺ | **Juxtaposition** ↺ |
| | | | **Focus** Focus, Soft, Hard | **Focus** ↺ | **Focus** ↺ | **Focus** ↺ |
| **Audio Semiotic System** | **Volume and Audibility** Loudness, Softness, Sound effect, Voice, High (pitch), Low (pitch) | **Volume and Audibility** Pitch, Expression (modulation) | **Volume and Audibility** ↺ | **Volume and Audibility** Modulation, Projection, Articulation, Timbre, Intonation and Stress | **Volume and Audibility** ↺ | **Volume and Audibility** ↺ |
| | **Pace** Fast, Slow | **Pace** ↺ | **Pace** Pace, Pause, Silence | **Pace** Phrasing | **Pace** ↺ | **Pace** ↺ |
| **Spatial Semiotic System** | | **Position** Position, Placement, Layout, Foreground, Background, Importance | **Position** Left/right (old new) | **Position** Top/bottom, Centre/margin | **Position** ↺ | **Position** Salience |
| | | **Distance** Distance, Space, Close, Distant | **Distance** ↺ | **Distance** Obtuse angles, Acute angles, Frontal angles | **Distance** ↺ | **Distance** ↺ |
| | **Framing** Frames, Bringing together, Separating | **Framing** Framing, Directing attention, Real (frames), Imaginary (frames) | **Framing** ↺ | **Framing** Implied (frame) | **Framing** ↺ | **Framing** ↺ |

| | Introduce at the Beginning Phase | Introduce at the Early Phase | Introduce at the Exploratory Phase | Introduce at the Consolidating Phase | Introduce at the Proficient Phase | Introduce at the Advanced Phase |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Revise and extend previous phase ↻* | *Revise and extend previous phase ↻* | *Revise and extend previous phase ↻* | *Revise and extend previous phase ↻* | *Revise and extend previous phase ↻* |
| **Gestural Semiotic System** | **Appearance**<br>Clothes, Costume, Hairstyle, Jewellery, Make-up | **Appearance**<br>Appearance, Props | **Appearance**<br>↻ | **Appearance**<br>↻ | **Appearance**<br>↻ | **Appearance**<br>↻ |
| | **Head Movement**<br>Nodding, Shaking | **Head Movement** | **Head Movement**<br>Angle, Tilt | **Head Movement**<br>↻ | **Head Movement**<br>↻ | **Head Movement**<br>↻ |
| | **Facial Expression**<br>Mouth, Eyes, Eyebrow position, Smile, Frown, Squint | **Facial Expression**<br>Facial expression, Grimace | **Facial Expression**<br>Nostrils flared | **Facial Expression**<br>↻ | **Facial Expression**<br>↻ | **Facial Expression**<br>↻ |
| | **Kinesics**<br>Body movement, Head, Arms, Legs, Hands, Feet | **Kinesics**<br>↻ | **Kinesics**<br>↻ | **Kinesics**<br>↻ | **Kinesics**<br>Kinesics | **Kinesics**<br>↻ |
| | **Posture**<br>Standing, Sitting, Lying, Slumped, Tall, Short | **Posture**<br>Posture, Rigid, Upright, Leaning, Slight, Heavy, Height, Weight, Build | **Posture**<br>↻ | **Posture**<br>↻ | **Posture**<br>↻ | **Posture**<br>↻ |
| | | **Proximity**<br>Distance, Space | **Proximity**<br>↻ | **Proximity**<br>Proximity, Personal space | **Proximity**<br>↻ | **Proximity**<br>↻ |
| | | **Body Position**<br>Body position, Face to face, Away, To the side | **Body Position**<br>Angle | **Body Position**<br>↻ | **Body Position**<br>↻ | **Body Position**<br>↻ |
| | | | **Body Contact**<br>Body Contact, Touch | **Body Contact**<br>↻ | **Body Contact**<br>↻ | **Body Contact**<br>↻ |
| | **Gaze and Eye Movement**<br>Look, Length of look | **Gaze and Eye Movement**<br>↻ | **Gaze and Eye Movement**<br>↻ | **Gaze and Eye Movement**<br>Gaze, Eye movement, Focused, Unfocused, Scanning, Directed, Gaze, Angle, Eye level, Top down, Bottom up, Offer, Demand | **Gaze and Eye Movement**<br>↻ | **Gaze and Eye Movement**<br>↻ |
| **Linguistic Semiotic System** | **Parts of Speech**<br>Word, Noun, Pronoun, Verb | **Parts of Speech**<br>Adjective, Adverb, Concrete, proper and abstract nouns, Articles, Tense | **Parts of Speech**<br>Preposition, Voice | **Parts of Speech**<br>Modality | **Parts of Speech**<br>↻ | **Parts of Speech**<br>Nominalisation |
| | **Punctuation**<br>Capital letters, Full stops, Question marks, Exclamation marks, Statements, Questions, Commands | **Punctuation**<br>Contractions, Apostrophes, Commas | **Punctuation**<br>Quotation marks, Dialogue, Titles, Reported speech | **Punctuation**<br>Apostrophes (to denote possession) Colons, Semicolons, Hyphens | **Punctuation**<br>↻ | **Punctuation**<br>Dashes, Brackets, Ellipses, Slashes |
| | **Phrases, Clauses and Sentences**<br>Sentence, Simple sentence | **Phrases, Clauses and Sentences**<br>Compound sentence, Clause Subject, Predicate | **Phrases, Clauses and Sentences**<br>Noun group, Word group, Phrases, Adverbial and prepositional phrases, Direct and indirect speech, Interjections | **Phrases, Clauses and Sentences**<br>Noun and adjective groups Main and subordinate clause Conjunctions | **Phrases, Clauses and Sentences**<br>Embedded clauses | **Phrases, Clauses and Sentences**<br>↻ |
| | **Cohesive Devices**<br>Written text, Spoken language, Repetition, Contrast | **Cohesive Devices**<br>Word associations, Synonyms, Antonyms, Paragraphs | **Cohesive Devices**<br>Pronoun reference, Text connectives, Overviews, Initial paragraph, Concluding paragraph, Topic sentences, | **Cohesive Devices**<br>Substantiation (of claims) | **Cohesive Devices**<br>Site index, Site map | **Cohesive Devices**<br>Lexical cohesion, Ellipses |

# CHAPTER 1
# About Viewing

## Introduction

### New Times, New Literacies: A New Focus on Viewing

In response to the rapidly changing world of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, the literate and communicative practices students are experiencing have undergone significant change (Anstey, 2002; Unsworth, 2001). Students are exposed to increasing volumes of information, through different social and technological means as well as through continually evolving modalities of communication. It is essential that students are able to interpret and use this information, as well as become critical and competent consumers of it. Consequently, what has traditionally counted as literacy must be re-examined in light of current social, technological, economic and global changes (see Figure 1.1).

*In the 21st century, the definition of literacy has expanded to refer to a flexible, sustainable command of a set of capabilities in the use and production of traditional texts and new communications technologies, using spoken language, print and multimedia.*

*p. 6 Australian Curriculum: English, 2010.*

| Global | Economic |
|---|---|
| • Globalisation of economies, cultures and work places<br>• Global borders being significantly reduced | • Knowledge-based economies<br>• Multiple occupations throughout life<br>• Changing demands on literacy skills and behaviours |
| **Social** | **Technological** |
| • Changing social structures in a shrinking world<br>• Increasing social and cultural diversity<br>• Increased marketing of ideas and products through multi-media<br>• Increased technology-mediated social interactions, e.g. *synchronous and asynchronous communication, memos, web logs, video blogs, virtual reality personas, instant and SMS messaging* | • New information and communication technologies<br>• Literacy no longer print-based<br>• Media influences reaching home, leisure sites and work places<br>• Proliferation of mobile technologies<br>• Increased access to www and increased Internet connection speeds<br>• Increased use of semiotic systems other than the linguistic semiotic system. |

**Figure 1.1 Factors impacting on literacy change adapted from *Literate Futures: Reading* Anstey, M. (2002: 1–11)**

To be considered literate today means to be competent in a range of different literacies; one set of literacy skills is no longer enough. This requires that students become multiliterate and that schools teach multiliteracies (Unsworth 2001). Teachers of multiliteracies need to have a solid understanding of different text forms and recognise all forms of representation in their classroom instruction. Printbound literacies and text forms can no longer be privileged to the exclusion of others. This does not mean that printed texts are no longer important, rather that their status is '… being transformed in relation to new technologies, new cultures, and new forms of life — new times' (Durrant & Green, 1998).

Students need to be given the opportunity to not only engage with different multimodal text forms but to also understand how they are produced and what kinds of meanings are conveyed through the representations.

The term multimodal refers to five semiotic systems (linguistic, visual, gestural, spatial and audio), that work together to create meaning (see Figure 1.2). The hybrid combinations of these modes form multimodal texts (Kress & van Leeuwen 1996).

| Semiotic System | Definition and Examples of Codes |
| --- | --- |
| Linguistic | Oral and written language (use of vocabulary and grammar). e.g. phrase, clause, noun, verb, adjective |
| Visual | Still and moving images. e.g. colour, vectors, viewpoint |
| Audio | Music, sound effects and silence. e.g. volume, pitch, rhythm |
| Gestural | Facial expression and body language. e.g. movement, speed, stillness, body position, smile, eye contact |
| Spatial | Position, layout and organisation of objects in space (physical, screen, or paper page) e.g. proximity, direction, foreground, background |

**Figure 1.2 Defining the five Semiotic Systems, adapted from Bull and Anstey, (2010: 2)** *Evolving Pedagogies*

Multimodal texts are used as an integral part of today's society; many of these texts are a combination of print, image and graphics with sophisticated layout designs, e.g. web pages, interactive CDs (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006).

The inclusion and extent of images that appear in multimodal texts are increasing, and our society, in general, is moving from a print-based to a multimodal society. If students are to successfully navigate this changing literacy landscape, teachers need to be explicitly teaching multimodal literacy knowledge and understandings that students will require (see Figure 1.3). Therefore, viewing must form a critical component of the literacy teaching in today's classroom.

<div style="border:1px solid black">

### Required Understandings about Visual Texts to Be Multiliterate in the twenty-first Century

- All texts are consciously constructed and have particular social, cultural, political and economic purposes.
- Texts come in a variety of representational forms, incorporating a range of grammars and semiotic (meaning) systems.
- The viewer may need to draw on several grammars and semiotic systems in order to process some texts.
- Changes in society and technology will continue to challenge and change texts and their representational forms.
- There may be more than one way of reading or viewing a text depending on the range of contextual (social, cultural, economic or political) and other factors.
- There is a need to consider the possible meaning of a text, how it is constructing the person themselves and the world around them in a particular way, and why this construction is being made.

</div>

**Figure 1.3 from Anstey, M. (2002: 89–90) 'More than Cracking the Code: Postmodern Picturebooks and New Literacies' in *Crossing the Boundaries* Bull, G. and Anstey, M., editors.**

# Defining Viewing

Viewing is more than just seeing. It is the construction of meaning from images; the interpretation of a range of multimodal text forms; the critical analysis and reflection on these interpretations in the light of the context in which the texts have been created and read. This definition, however, does not completely reflect the complex nature of the viewing process and the importance of the acquisition of multimodal literacy competence.

Like reading, viewing is a complex process that is dependent on a range of factors. When viewing or reading images 'we are engaging in both an active and creative process … when reading the visual, we draw on our general and specific knowledge, our tastes and habits and our personal contexts to make what we see, and to make sense of it' (Schirato & Webb, 2004).

Effective viewing will vary from context to context according to what the viewer wants and needs to achieve and the type of multimodal texts being used.

In the *First Steps* resource, as in the other strands of reading, writing, and speaking and listening, viewing has been broken down into smaller categories that are referred to throughout the resource as Aspects. Figure 1.4 summarises how these Aspects combine to capture the nature of viewing and provide teachers with a framework to audit the way they teach viewing.

| Aspect | As students view, they... |
|---|---|
| *Use of Texts:* what students do with texts to interpret meaning | – Make meaning from a wide range of visual texts including everyday, mass media and literary texts |
| *Contextual Understanding:*<br>– How the context affects the choice of image and the mode, medium and format used<br>– How the context affects the interpretation of text | – recognise the way a range of cultural and situational contexts contribute to the creation of visual texts<br>– recognise a variety of viewing contexts |
| *Conventions:* understanding structures and features of texts | – understand the ways different conventions create meaning in still and moving images |
| *Processes and Strategies:* the processes and strategies students use as they make meaning | – plan, select, use and reflect on the processes and strategies needed to interpret visual texts |

**Figure 1.4 Viewing Aspect table**

## *Understanding the Importance of Viewing*

Increasingly, images are becoming an integral part of communication in classroom instruction; they are now widely used in textbooks, media presentations and digital electronic technologies. To develop the level of visual literacy required for both everyday and academic competence, students need to be explicitly taught how to deconstruct, read, interpret and critically analyse the multimodal texts they encounter. Whether the students are viewing an artwork, a photograph, a sign, an illustration, a video or any other type of text that contains images, they need to be able to make sense of it, critically consider it, respond to it and use it.

The purpose of the *First Steps* Viewing resource is to provide teachers with teaching and learning experiences that are suitable for the different phases of students' development. This resource will assist teachers to:

• monitor and assess students' progress in viewing
• identify what students need to know, do and understand
• select the appropriate teaching and learning experiences that will support students to become accomplished viewers.

---

**Students who are visually literate:**

*Have a working knowledge of visuals produced or displayed through a variety of media*
– Understand basic elements of visual design, technique and media.
– Are aware of emotional, psychological, physiological and cognitive influences in perceptions of visuals.
– Comprehend representational, explanatory, abstract and symbolic images.

*Apply knowledge of visuals in electronic media*
– Are informed viewers, critics and consumers of visual information.
– Are knowledgeable designers, composers, and producers of visual information.
– Are effective visual communicators.
– Are expressive, innovative visual thinkers and successful problem-solvers.

---

**Figure 1.5 (from '*Literacy in the Digital Age*', NCREL 2003)**

## *Understanding the Viewing Process*

*First Steps* uses an aspect framework, and draws on the three-dimensional, meta-functional organisation of Halliday (1978); as well as the works of the academic writers Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), Green (2002), Callow (2006), and Bull and Anstey (2010) as a basis to illustrate the complex process of viewing.

This section will briefly outline what these Aspects are and how they relate to each other. The *Viewing Resource Book* provides a more detailed explanation of these Aspects while the *Map of Development* demonstrates how this model can be translated into classroom practice by providing developmentally appropriate teaching and learning experiences.

This resource looks at viewing as an interactive process between the meaning that is being made at both the contextual and textual levels and takes into account:
• the context of the viewing event
• the range of visual text forms
• the knowledge of codes and conventions of the semiotic systems
• the use of viewing strategies and processes.
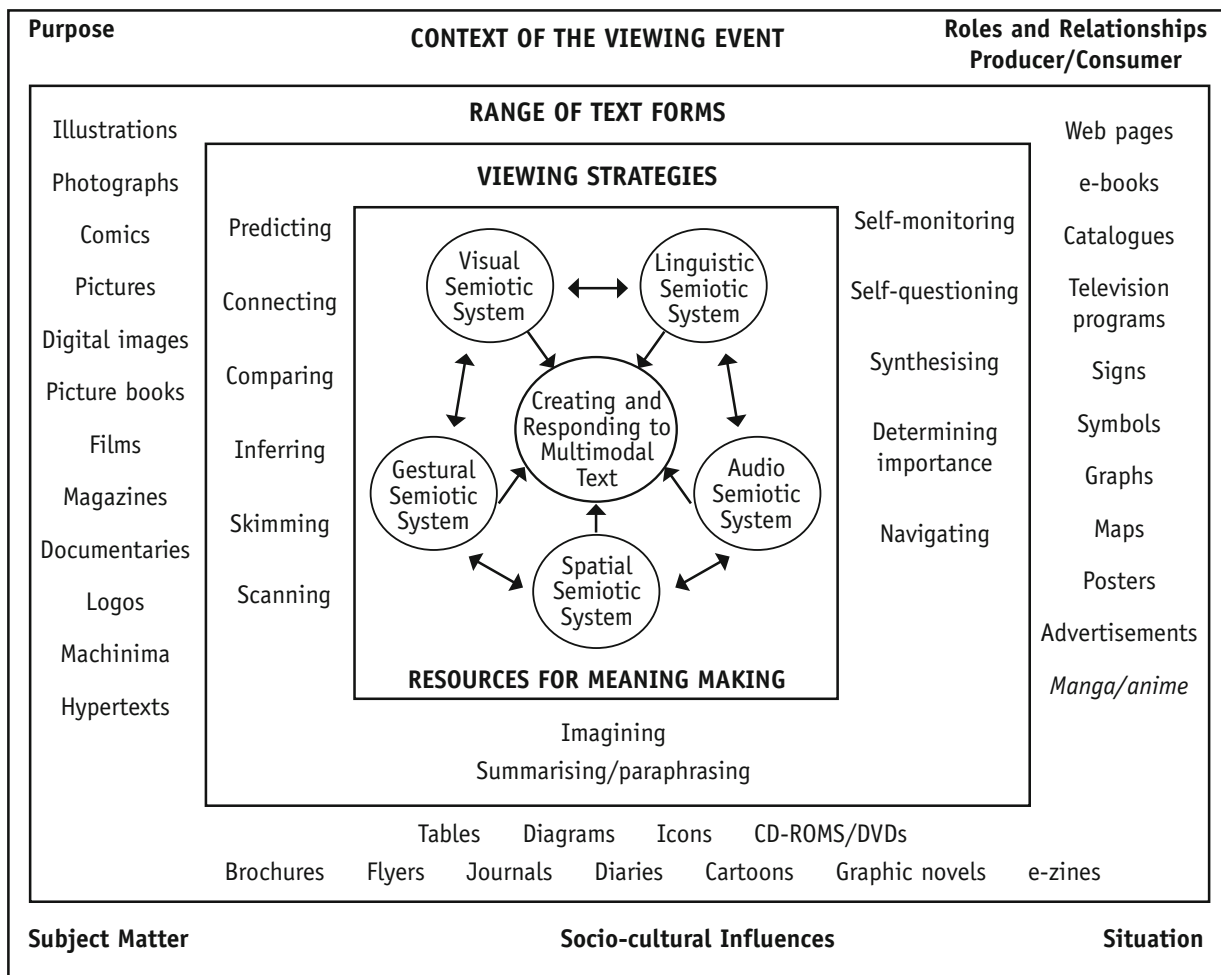
See Figure 1.6, Understanding the Viewing Process



**Figure 1.6 Understanding the Viewing Process**

## *The Context of Viewing*

Context refers to the immediate situational, cultural and social aspects of an environment. Meaning is derived from the situational and socio-cultural contexts in which a text is produced and read or viewed, as well as from the actual structural elements of the text itself.

> *All visual texts are influenced by the cultures, values, ideologies and world views in which they are created and consumed.*
>
> J. Callow, 1999

Producers and consumers of multimodal texts within these contexts each contribute to the meaning of the text through their personal experiences. Producers of visual texts will be affected by a range of influences, while the viewers of the same text will be subject to a whole range of other factors. Meaning is constructed on both sides. Ultimately, meaning is co-constructed; it is a 'coming together' of the ideas and influences of the producer of the text with the influences and knowledge of the viewer. This may result in quite different responses to texts.

It is important that teachers provide students with opportunities to develop an understanding of how context affects the meaning of any text. Figure 1.7, adapted from the work of John Callow, provides a framework to assist students to effectively explore how visual images are constructed and how they function within a particular context. Context can be considered at two levels: a broad socio-cultural context and a more specific situational context.

| | |
|---|---|
| **What's happening? (Field)**<br>*Includes the actions, setting and participants of a text* | **Interpreting the text**<br>• Possible meaning of text: literal and figurative<br>• What action is occurring? What can be seen?<br>• What concepts or ideas are being shown?<br>• Drawing on prior knowledge |
| **How is the relationship developed between the viewer, the image and the image-maker? (Tenor)**<br>*The interpersonal relationships developed between the viewer, the image and the image-maker* | **Analysing the text**<br>• How have the images been constructed and presented to position the viewer, e.g. *angles, framing, colour, demands and offer*?<br>• How do the images reflect the values, beliefs, views and culture of both the viewer and the illustrator? |
| **How is the image composed? (Mode)**<br>*The textual form and construction of both written and visual texts* | **Decoding the text**<br>• Identifying parts of an image, e.g. *layout — top/bottom; right/left*.<br>• What conventions are used, e.g. *colour, line, shape, symbols, icons*?<br>• Follow appropriate reading path |

**Figure 1.7 (Adapted from *Image Matters: Visual Texts in the Classroom* (ed.) Callow, 1999)**

## Situational Context

The situational context is the immediate environment in which a text is constructed or viewed. The situational context consists of three components: field, tenor and mode. These components constitute what is known as the register of a text.

### Field (The Subject Matter)

The field or subject matter refers to the content of the multimodal text. The field of knowledge relates to 'how the world works — the natural world, the technological world, the social world and the world of imagination' (Derewianka, 1996). Students' field of knowledge will determine the extent to which they connect with and integrate new knowledge from a text with existing understandings. This will affect the way they understand and make use of the multimodal texts with which they are engaging.

Students' comprehension of the multimodal text will also be affected by their understanding of the concepts being developed in the text, the relationship between ideas, and the specialised terminology associated with the subject matter.

### Tenor (The Roles and Relationships)

The tenor relates to the interpersonal elements of the context — the roles and relationships between the producers and consumers of the text that give meaning to the communication. Gender, race and class for instance, all contribute to how meaning is construed from a multimodal text, e.g. parents may take a different view of an advertisement for sport's shoes compared with that of their children.

### Mode

Mode refers to how the message is communicated and how it holds together or is structured and delivered. This may vary from mainly spoken, to a combination of spoken, written and images, to mainly images.

The message may be delivered by paper, digital electronic or live technologies, e.g. film, diagram, photograph, stage production, television show or website.

To understand the effect that situational context has on the meaning of a text, students need to know that the situational context of a text refers to:

- the function or purpose of the text, e.g. to persuade, to inform, to entertain
- the intended audience and the producer's intent
- the physical setting of the text
- the chosen delivery technology
- the viewing purpose of the audience.

## Socio-cultural Context

The socio-cultural context is one in which a person makes meaning of texts from their knowledge of the values, beliefs, experience and behaviours of a particular cultural group. Over time, cultural groups develop certain accepted ways and predictable structures for using language for particular purposes. Within a cultural group these ways of using language are easily recognised by all members. However, it must be realised that they are not static or singular in nature and will rarely occur in isolation.

Students will be required to respond to and use a range of multimodal texts across all learning areas. As they progress through school, the variety and complexity of these texts will increase. Students need to learn how to interpret or 'read' the multimodal texts they are likely to encounter.

Teachers need to provide students with opportunities to examine and reflect on how the socio-cultural context influences both the construction and interpretation of any multimodal text. To understand the effect that the socio-cultural context has on the meaning of the text, students need to know that a viewer's interpretation of a visual text will be influenced by their:

- identity and sense of self
- beliefs, attitudes and value systems
- alliances to social groups and cultures.

## *The Range of Visual Texts*

Students enter school with experiences of a wide variety of different types of multimodal texts — texts which draw not only on traditional print-based resources but those which combine images, words and sounds on screen and paper. Many of the texts that students use in school can no longer be read and interpreted by attention to print alone. The ability to read both print and image is vital to the academic success of students, as well as contributing to their ability to operate successfully in the wider community.

The majority of the multimodal texts students will be using in school, home and community contexts combine print, images and sound. The images and sounds used in the production of these texts can be photographic, illustrated or digitally constructed. The multimodal texts may be categorised according to the delivery technologies.

- Paper-based: e.g. picture books, magazines, information books, print advertising, catalogues and brochures, newspapers, posters, etc.
- Digital, electronic: e.g. film, television, video, DVD, web pages, e-books, e-zines.
- Live: e.g. stage productions, street performances, sporting events.

Multimodal texts consist of more than one semiotic system (meaning system) to convey their meaning. These semiotic systems are:

- visual, e.g. colour, texture, line, lighting
- gestural, e.g. proximity, appearance, facial expression
- audio, e.g. volume, audibility, pace
- spatial, e.g. position, distance, framing
- linguistic, e.g. parts of speech, punctuation, cohesive devices.

Effective teachers of viewing ensure their students gain experience with many different kinds of multimodal texts including literary, informational and everyday texts. They will support their students to develop the knowledge and understandings necessary to produce and interpret a range of multimodal texts delivered by paper-based, digital electronic and live technologies. Some multimodal texts such as those delivered by digital electronic technologies found on websites or computer software programs will often be interactive. The viewer is not only required to read the text but is also offered

the opportunity to transform and re-create the text as well as produce new or re-mixed versions of the texts. The advent of digital electronic technologies has significantly changed the way in which print-based texts are constructed. Images, illustrations and graphics are now much more common in textbooks. Many of these textbooks use print, image, layout and typography to convey meaning in sophisticated ways.

## *The Role of the Semiotic Systems in Viewing*

When engaging in viewing a multimodal text, the viewer draws upon the specific resources provided by any of the five semiotic systems from which the text has been constructed. The five semiotic systems (linguistic, visual, audio, gestural and spatial) have previously been introduced in Figure 1.2 on page 2. Previously literacy teaching, particularly the teaching of reading, writing, listening and speaking, has foregrounded the linguistic semiotic system, because texts were mainly comprised of oral or written language. However, because texts are increasingly multimodal, individuals must have mastery of all five semiotic systems and understand how they work together in a text to convey meaning. Therefore viewing, as a way of understanding the full meaning conveyed by a multimodal text, has become integral to all aspects of literacy teaching as any or all of the semiotic systems may have to be viewed and understood in reading, writing, listening or speaking. The concept of viewing as an integral part of literacy is presented in Figure 1.8 on page 10.

A semiotic system is a system of signs and symbols that have agreed upon meaning within a particular group. The signs or symbols are called *codes* and they are employed according to agreed *conventions*, or accepted ways of doing things. Therefore the codes and conventions of a semiotic system serve the function of a grammar (Cope and Kalantzis 2000, Anstey and Bull 2006, Bull and Anstey 2010). In the visual semiotic system of still and moving images codes such as line, shape, colour, camera angles and pacing, can be combined to perform the same functions as verbs, adjectives and nouns when they are combined into clauses, sentences and paragraphs in the linguistic semiotic system.

It is important to acknowledge that, because the codes and conventions have a shared meaning within a particular group, they are culturally determined. Therefore not every individual will interpret these codes and conventions in the same way (e.g. different colours have particular associations within particular cultural groups).

### *Linguistic Semiotic System*

The linguistic semiotic system is most familiar and consists of the orthographic (print/spelling), semantic (meaning) and syntactic (grammar) cues of language. Its codes include vocabulary items such as nouns, verbs, adjectives and pronouns and compositional items such as punctuation, phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, generic structure and chapters. The compositional items provide the conventions of the linguistic semiotic system. All of these items form a grammar of the linguistic semiotic system with which we can design linguistic text that best achieves writing purposes. Similarly these items provide information for the reader that facilitates meaning making and the achievement of the reader's purpose.
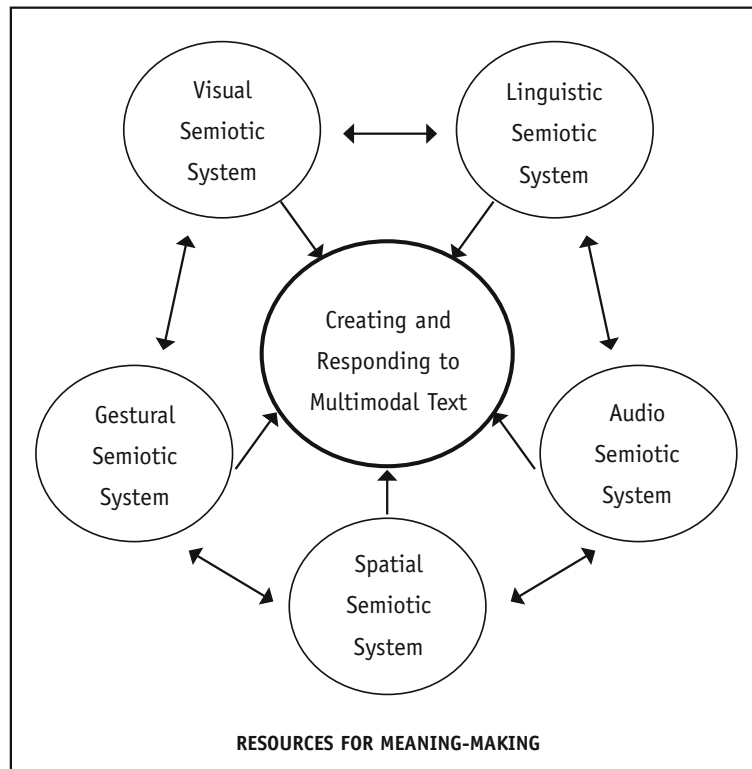
## Visual Semiotic System

The visual semiotic system is drawn from the work of semioticians such as Kress (2003) Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) and Trifonas (1998) and the literature of art, design, film and photography. When viewing a multimodal text that includes both words and pictures the linguistic semiotic system is used to understand how words, clauses and punctuation combine to make meaning. The visual semiotic system will enable the viewer to understand the way elements depicted in the images (people, objects, places) make meaning. Just as phrases, words and punctuation construct meaning in the linguistic part of the multimodal text, the way in which codes and conventions such as colour, line, texture and framing are combined assist meaning making of the pictures. The visual semiotic system does not have universal meaning but is socially and culturally specific and some codes such as colour and position will have different meanings in different cultures.

The visual semiotic system is used in both still and moving images and there are some codes and conventions that are unique to each and some that are common to both.

## Audio Semiotic System

The audio semiotic system encompasses every aspect of sound, its production, how it is heard and interpreted. It can include sound effects, music, everyday sounds or silence. It may also include voice where speech is modified by codes such as pace, pitch and volume. The audio semiotic system is not about auditory perception or auditory discrimination skills that are associated with phonics or phonological awareness.

The audio semiotic system can create subtle meanings by either literally interpreting, augmenting or disagreeing with meanings presented by other semiotic systems in a

multimodal text. The codes and conventions of the audio semiotic system can create distance, affinity, inclusion, exclusion or empathy.

## *The Spatial Semiotic System*

The spatial semiotic system includes both the two-dimensional space of page and screen (as in organisation and layout) and three-dimensional space (as in architecture, real places and how they might be depicted on page or screen). Codes and conditions of space can include position, placement and how objects or people move from one position to another and the direction of the movement (Jewitt & Kress, 2008).

As with other semiotic systems meanings conveyed through the use of space are socially and culturally influenced. In western cultures meaning is based around top, bottom, left and right, while in Asian cultures meaning is based around centre and margins (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

Relationships between people and objects in a text can be indicated by the way in which space is organised and used around and between them. For example, in live, digital electronic and paper texts, when participants are placed close together it can suggest a more intimate relationship.

## *The Gestural Semiotic System*

The gestural semiotic system refers to actions or movements of the body that are observable and intended (Kendon, 2004). Their codes include facial expression, posture, gaze and eye movement. The viewer of the gesture has to determine whether the gesture is deliberate, conscious and voluntary and is therefore intended to convey meaning. Therefore purpose and context are crucial in the interpretation of gesture. The meaning of gestures is determined by cultural and social conventions. Gesture can be found in texts that are delivered through live, digital electronic and paper technologies and its meaning can be modified by the size, reach and direction of the gesture and the body parts involved in making the gesture.

It is important to remember that there is no hierarchy or level of importance among the semiotic systems. In any multimodal text one or more of the semiotic systems may be dominant. As Figure 1.8 suggests viewers of multimodal texts need to determine which semiotic systems are present, the meanings they convey individually and together. This requires an understanding of the relationship between them, for example, do they complement, augment or contradict one another? The following questions adapted from Anstey and Bull (2006: 27) will assist in achieving this:

• What technology is used (paper, digital electronic or live)?
• What is the purpose of the text and context in which it is being used?
• What semiotic systems are employed?
• What information is conveyed by each semiotic system?
• What is the relationship between the semiotic systems used: (complementing, augmenting or contradicting)?
• How were the semiotic systems used and combined to achieve the purpose of the text and how effective was this?

## *Use of Viewing Strategies*

An important element in supporting the development of students' viewing is the explicit teaching of strategies related to understanding visual texts. Strategies are most effective if they are introduced through the Gradual Release of Responsibility model. Teachers use the teaching practices of modelling, sharing and guiding, and provide opportunities for students to use viewing strategies in meaningful contexts across the curriculum. By explicitly teaching a range of viewing strategies teachers ensure that students will be able to select and apply a wide range of strategies when comprehending any visual text. (Refer to Chapter 4 in the *Viewing Resource Book* for detailed information about viewing processes and strategies.)

| **Viewing strategies include:** |
| --- |
| Predicting    Connecting    Comparing    Inferring |
| Imagining    Self-questioning    Synthesising    Self-monitoring |
| Determining importance    Summarising/Paraphrasing |
| Navigating    Skimming    Scanning |

**Figure 1.9 Viewing strategies**

## *The Importance of Metalanguage*

*The primary purpose of the metalanguage should be to identify and explain differences between texts, and relate these to the contexts of culture and situation in which they seem to work.*

New London Group, 2000

In order to discuss, produce and interpret multimodal texts, teachers and students need to have a shared understanding of the metalanguage involved. Metalanguage or the language used to talk about language is now widely acknowledged as important.

The *Viewing Map of Development* has the appropriate metalanguage to be introduced at each phase, which students need to learn to be able to discuss multimodal texts and the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems.

In *Viewing Map of Development*, each phase chapter contains specific examples demonstrating how the appropriate metalanguage can be used in the classroom.



**Figure 1.10 Teachers can share visual texts with students using interactive whiteboards**

# CHAPTER 2
# Understanding the *Viewing Map of Development*

The *First Steps Viewing Map of Development* contains behaviours, suggested teaching emphases and a range of teaching and learning experiences for each phase of development. It validates what teachers know about their students. The organisation of the map assists teachers to link teaching and learning with assessment.

Although in practice, literacy integrates the four strands of Viewing (Writing, Reading, Speaking and Listening) individual maps are necessary to represent the complexity of each strand. Breaking each strand into aspects provides further opportunity for more specialised analysis.

The organisation of the *Viewing Map of Development* into the four aspects of Use of Texts, Contextual Understanding, Conventions, and Processes and Strategies provides a practical framework for looking at assessment, teaching and learning, and reflects current beliefs about how Viewing is defined. The features of the map help teachers to make informed, strategic decisions about how to support students' literacy development.

## How the Map Is Organised

There are six phases in the *Viewing Map of Development*. The same organisational framework is used for each phase:
- Beginning
- Early
- Exploratory
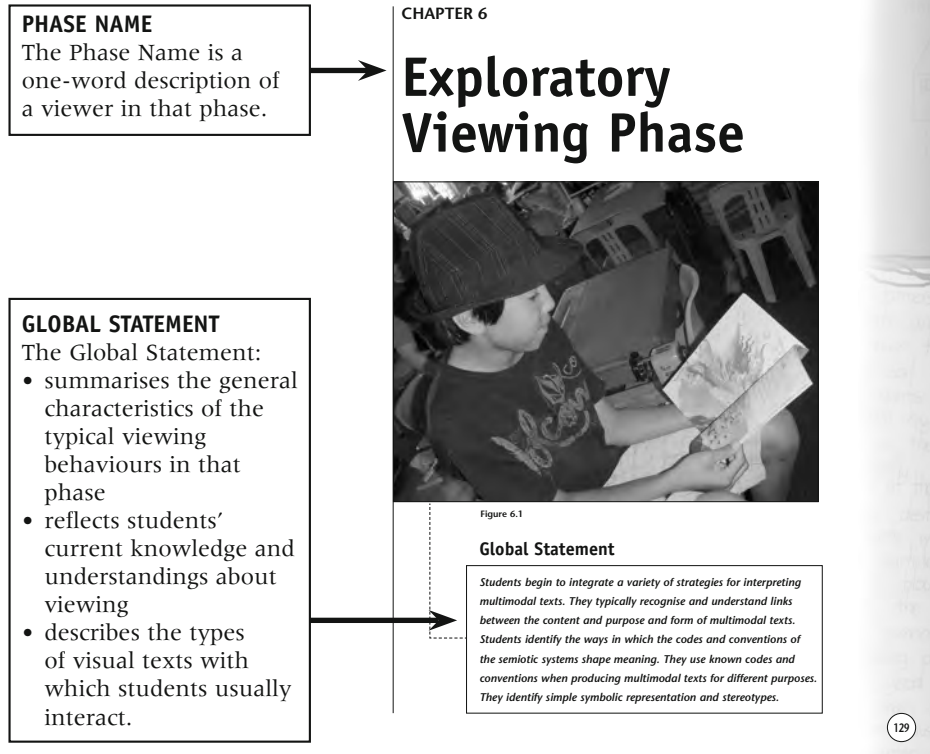- Consolidating
- Proficient
- Advanced.

Figure 2.1

**PHASE NAME**
The Phase Name is a one-word description of a viewer in that phase.

**GLOBAL STATEMENT**
The Global Statement:
• summarises the general characteristics of the typical viewing behaviours in that phase
• reflects students' current knowledge and understandings about viewing
• describes the types of visual texts with which students usually interact.

---

**CHAPTER 6**

# Exploratory Viewing Phase

**Figure 6.1**

**Global Statement**

*Students begin to integrate a variety of strategies for interpreting multimodal texts. They typically recognise and understand links between the content and purpose and form of multimodal texts. Students identify the ways in which the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems shape meaning. They use known codes and conventions when producing multimodal texts for different purposes. They identify simple symbolic representation and stereotypes.*

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**Figure 2.2 The Exploratory Phase Name and Global Statement**

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**INDICATORS**
Indicators:
• are organised under the aspect headings:
  – Use of Texts
  – Contextual Understanding
  – Conventions
  – Processes and Strategies
• describe viewing behaviours.
Key Indicators:
• signify a conceptual leap in critical understandings
• describe behaviours that are typical of a phase.
Other Indicators:
• describe behaviours that provide further details of the phase.

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Exploratory Viewing Phase

## Exploratory Viewing Indicators

**Use of Texts**
◆ **Makes meaning from a range of multimodal texts by integrating knowledge of the semiotic systems,** e.g. linguistic, audio, gestural.
◆ **Produces a range of multimodal texts but may not fully control all elements.**
◆ **Explains how multimodal texts differ by identifying text features such as purpose, organisation and structure.**
◆ **Uses multimodal resources effectively to suit purpose.**
• Discusses multimodal texts with attention to main ideas and supporting detail, e.g. in information texts — key information, in literary texts — main character and setting.
• Identifies and discusses links between print information and images.
• Uses multimodal resources to locate information, e.g. menu bars, simple navigational tools, scroll bars.
• Uses appropriate metalanguage when discussing a multimodal text, e.g. sound effects, body language.

**Contextual Understanding**
◆ **Expresses and justifies personal responses to multimodal texts.**
◆ **Recognises the different ways characters, people, events and ideas are represented.**
◆ **Identifies purpose and target audience for a range of multimodal texts,** e.g. to persuade teenagers, to entertain children.
◆ **Experiments with the use of devices,** e.g. to suit the purpose of the multimodal text.
• Discusses possible reasons for choices of images in different texts, e.g. advertisements, DVD cover.
• Identifies how a person or event is represented in a particular way, e.g. the scientist wears glasses and has a white lab coat.
• Identifies the ways in which stereotypes are constructed within a multimodal text.
• Attempts to use familiar devices when producing multimodal texts.

**Conventions**
◆ **Recognises codes and conventions of the semiotic systems used to produce multimodal texts.**
◆ **Explains how multimodal texts differ by identifying text features such as purpose, organisation and structure.**
◆ **Begins to use the correct terminology of the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems.**
• Identifies predictable organisational patterns in a range of familiar multimodal texts, e.g. television news formats.
• Identifies the use of dominant images and simple font to attract the eye.
• Identifies visual and audio elements that contribute to the representations of people, e.g. costume, make-up, accent.
• Uses knowledge of structure and organisation to construct meaning, e.g. layout.

**Processes and Strategies**
◆ **Uses an increasing range of strategies for comprehending and producing multimodal texts,** e.g. determining importance, navigating, self-questioning.
◆ **Begins to adjust viewing strategies for different texts and different purposes.**
◆ **Draws upon an increasing knowledge from the semiotic systems when comprehending and producing multimodal texts,** e.g. gestural, spatial, visual.
◆ **Plans and produces a multimodal text that is beginning to reflect the intended purpose.**
• Uses skimming to identify different text forms.
• Uses scanning to locate specific information.
• Is able to summarise events or actions from a multimodal text.
• Makes some comparisons between information from different multimodal formats and sources.

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**Figure 2.3 The Exploratory Viewing Indicators**

**MAJOR TEACHING EMPHASES (MTEs)**

Major Teaching Emphases:

- are organised under the aspect headings:
  - Environment and Attitude
  - Use of Texts
  - Contextual Understanding
  - Conventions
  - Processes and Strategies
- are suggestions of appropriate priorities for teaching of each phase
- are designed to help teachers support and challenge students' current understandings.



**Figure 2.4 The Exploratory Viewing Major Teaching Emphases**

**TEACHING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

- Teaching and Learning Experiences are organised under the following aspect headings:
  - Environment and Attitude
  - Use of Texts
  - Contextual Understanding
  - Conventions
  - Processes and Strategies.
- Each aspect is divided into two sections: Teaching Notes and Involving Students.
  - Teaching Notes unpack the Major Teaching Emphases.
  - Involving Students contains a selection of developmentally appropriate activities that support the Major Teaching Emphases.
- The ⊙ icon indicates formats available on the *First Steps* Viewing CD.



**Figure 2.5 Exploratory Viewing Teaching and Learning Experiences**



**Figure 2.6 Exploratory Viewing — Involving Students**

**SUPPORTING PARENTS PAGES**

Supporting Parents pages:
- provide support for teachers in helping parents or care-givers assist their child's viewing development at home
- contain:
  – a general description of viewers in the phase
  – a Parent Brochure that outlines how to support viewers at home.

Brochures are available on the *Viewing CD*, and may be copied for distribution to parents.

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**Supporting Parents of Exploratory Viewers**

**Supporting Parents of Exploratory Viewers**

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF EXPLORATORY VIEWERS**

Students at the Exploratory phase are able to use a variety of strategies to understand visual texts. They are able to identify the content and purpose of texts. Students at this phase understand how codes and conventions are used not only in the construction of visual texts but also as a way to understand the meaning of the texts. Exploratory viewers are also able to identify and interpret simple symbolic representation and stereotypes in a range of different visual texts.

**Supporting Exploratory Viewers in the Home**

A parent brochure providing tips on supporting young viewers in the home is located on the *Viewing CD*. The brochure contains information about the kinds of viewing activities students will be engaged in at school and why the teaching of viewing is an important part of the school curriculum. It also gives information about age-appropriate viewing practices and ways that parents can help students develop their critical viewing habits.

**Parent Information (see Parent Brochure 2)**
1 Why Teach Viewing?
2 The Development of Viewing
3 Supporting Your Child
4 Resources
5 Things to Do When Viewing with Your Child
6 Viewing at School.

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**Figure 2.7 Providing parent support — Supporting Parents page**

# How to Use the *Viewing Map of Development*

The purpose in using the *Viewing Map of Development* is to link students' phase of development with appropriate teaching, learning and assessment. The process used to achieve this may vary from teacher to teacher, depending on a teacher's familiarity with *First Steps*, the data already collected about students' viewing development, the time of the school year, or the school's implementation plan. Some teachers may begin by using the map to profile individual students while others may focus on the selection of Major Teaching Emphases (MTEs) and Teaching and Learning Experiences for individual, small-group and whole-class teaching. This section outlines a possible process (see Figure 2.8).



**PREDICTING**
- Read Global Statements

**ASSESSING**
- Collect data
- Profiling students on the Map of Development
- Monitor student progress

LINK

**TEACHING/LEARNING**
- Select Major Teaching Emphases
- Select Teaching and Learning Experiences
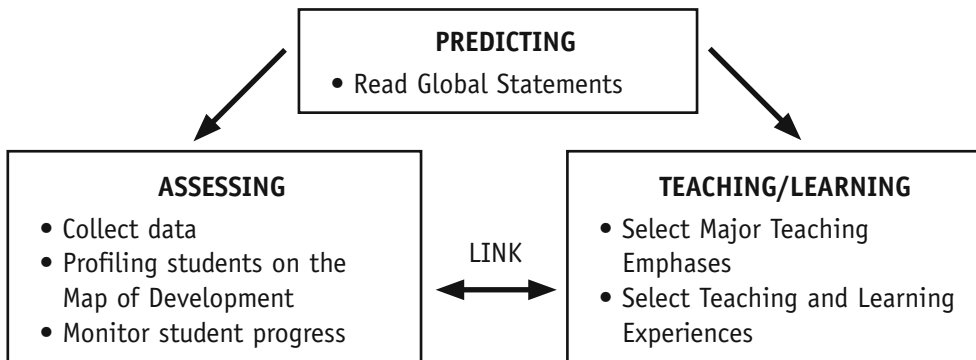
**Figure 2.8 A possible process for using the *Viewing Map of Development***

# *Suggested Process for Using the* Viewing Map of Development

## *Predict*

Many teachers begin to use the *Viewing Map of Development* by making predictions about each student's phase of development. Predictions are made by reading through the global statements. Teachers are then able to use this information to determine which statement best describes a student or group of students' current viewing behaviours. These initial predictions, recorded on a class profile sheet, allow teachers to immediately begin linking assessment, teaching and learning.

These predictions can be used to begin selecting Major Teaching Emphases from appropriate phases for whole-class, small-group or individual teaching. The MTEs will then guide the selection of teaching and learning experiences to support students' development.

It is critical that teachers begin to collect data to confirm or amend their initial predictions as part of the teaching and learning cycle.

## *Collect Data*

The Indicators on the *Viewing Map of Development* provide a focus for data collection, which can be carried out on an ongoing basis using a range of tools in a variety of contexts. A balance of conversation, observation and analysis of products will ensure that information is gathered across all four aspects. Encouraging the involvement of students and parents or care-givers in the data collection will provide further information about students' viewing development and interests (see Chapter 3).

### *First Steps* Viewing Map of Development: Class Profile Sheet

Year Level: _____     Teacher: _____

|    | Beginning | Early | Exploratory | Consolidating | Proficient | Advanced |
|----|-----------|-------|-------------|---------------|------------|----------|
| 1  |           | Donna | Irene       | Wesley        |            |          |
| 2  |           | Graham| Heath       | Donovan       |            |          |
| 3  |           | Tyler | Monica      | Kaylee        |            |          |
| 4  |           | Jack  | Joel        | Sarah         |            |          |
| 5  |           | Simon | Tammy       | Leigh         |            |          |
| 6  |           | Anna  | Marcus      | Jason         |            |          |
| 7  |           | San-Lee | Narelle   |               |            |          |
| 8  |           | Sean  | Tye         | Max           |            |          |
| 9  |           |       | Jay         |               |            |          |
| 10 |           |       | Brandon     |               |            |          |
| 11 |           |       |             |               |            |          |
| 12 |           |       |             |               |            |          |
| 13 |           |       |             |               |            |          |
| 14 |           |       |             |               |            |          |
| 15 |           |       |             |               |            |          |
| 16 |           |       |             |               |            |          |
| 17 |           |       |             |               |            |          |
| 18 |           |       |             |               |            |          |
| 19 |           |       |             |               |            |          |
| 20 |           |       |             |               |            |          |
| 21 |           |       |             |               |            |          |
| 22 |           |       |             |               |            |          |
| 23 |           |       |             |               |            |          |
| 24 |           |       |             |               |            |          |
| 25 |           |       |             |               |            |          |
| 26 |           |       |             |               |            |          |

Major Teaching Emphases can be selected from a range of phases.
• Whole-class focus, e.g. Exploratory phase
• Small-group focus, e.g. Early or Consolidating phase
• Individual student focus.

**Figure 2.9 Sample of a class profile sheet**

## *Profiling Students on the* Viewing Map of Development

The *Viewing Map of Development* can be used as a framework for recording a wide range of information gathered about students' viewing behaviours. A number of recording formats have been designed, and successfully used by teachers. Samples of these are provided on the *Viewing CD*.

Information about the behaviours displayed by students can be recorded in a range of ways. The development of a system, such as highlighting or dating, is an individual or school preference. Marking the selected recording sheets in some way is referred to as 'profiling students on the Map of Development'. There are a number of points that should be considered when profiling students on the map of development.

- Indicators for each phase should be interpreted in conjunction with the global statement of the phase and with the indicators from the surrounding phases.
- With the exception of Beginning viewers, students are considered to be in the phase where they exhibit all Key Indicators.
- When students display any of the indicators of the Beginning Viewing phase, they are considered to be in that phase.
- For most students in the class, it will only be necessary to record information about the Key Indicators.
- It is important that any student behaviours (indicators) recorded have been displayed more than once, and in a variety of contexts.



**Figure 2.10 Sample of a student profile sheet**

## *Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning*

Profiling students on the *Viewing Map of Development* is just the beginning of the assessment, teaching and learning cycle. It is crucial that teachers continue to monitor and record their students' progress to ensure that the teaching and learning program is addressing their needs.

Once a student's phase of development has been determined, the Major Teaching Emphases provide the first step in linking assessment, teaching and learning. These are provided at each phase of development, and suggest appropriate priorities for students 'in that phase'.

Once Major Teaching Emphases have been selected for an individual, a small–group or a whole-class focus, appropriate Teaching and Learning Experiences can be chosen from the corresponding phase in the Viewing Map. The *Viewing Resource Book* and other teacher resource material can provide further support for the chosen MTEs.
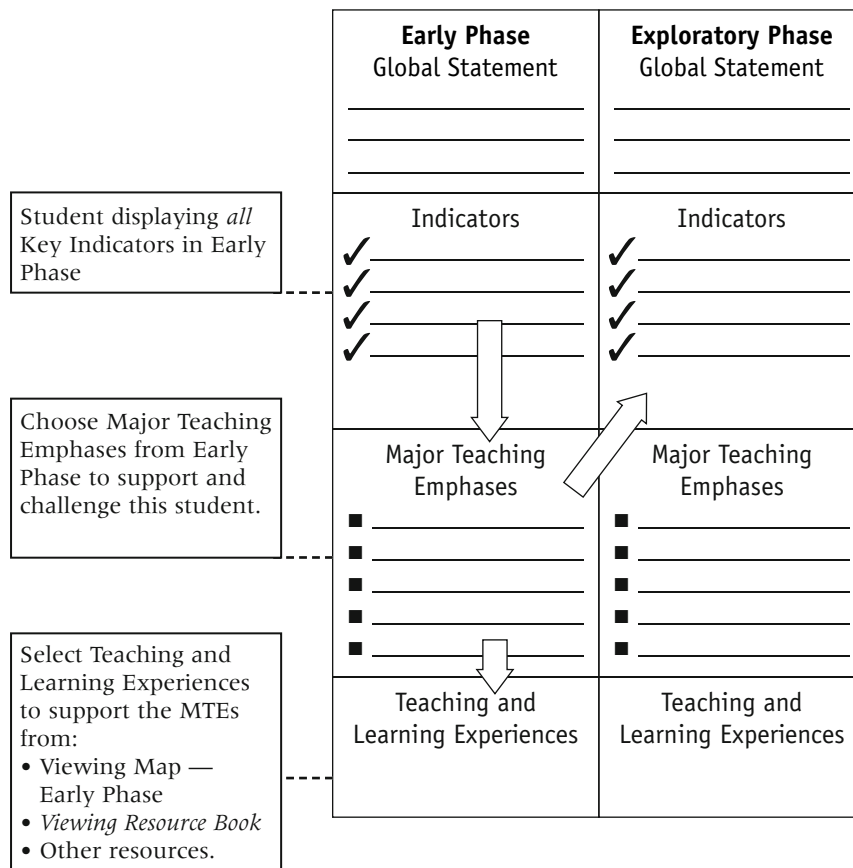
**Figure 2.11 Choosing appropriate Major Teaching Emphases and teaching and learning experiences**

## *Monitoring Student Progress*

The *Viewing Map of Development* can be used to monitor students' progress over time. It is important that teachers update the profiles of each student often enough to ensure that their students' needs are constantly being met. Decisions about the monitoring

and updating process are a personal choice. Some teachers choose to focus on four or five students at a time, while others choose to focus on the indicators from a particular aspect, or on students from a particular phase. These options help to make the monitoring and updating process manageable.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Can I start using the Major Teaching Emphases and the Teaching and Learning Experiences before I have profiled students on the *Viewing Map of Development?*

Yes. The best way to start is to use the global statement to predict the phase of development of each student. Once this has been completed, you are able to select the Major Teaching Emphases from the predicted phase. You can then select appropriate Teaching and Learning Experiences and use these as a springboard for collecting data in an ongoing manner.

## Does a student have to display all Key Indicators of a phase to be 'in that phase'?

Yes. The phase in which the student is displaying all the Key Indicators is considered to be the student's phase of development. There is, however, an exception to this when looking at students in the Beginning Viewing phase. When students display any of the indicators in the Beginning phase, they are considered to be in that phase.

## Do I need to profile all students on the Map of Development?

It is important to be clear about your purpose for profiling students on the Map of Development, and this will guide your decision about which students to choose. You may decide that for some students it is sufficient to predict using the global statement, and then use this information to select MTEs and Teaching and Learning Experiences. For others in the class, you may gather information only about Key Indicators to create individual profiles. For a selected few, you may gather information about both Key Indicators and other indicators to create more detailed records of development.

## How much evidence do I need to collect before an indicator can be marked or highlighted?

It is important to have sufficient evidence to determine whether a student consistently displays a particular behaviour. The most effective way to do this is to see the behaviour displayed several times in a range of contexts. Your professional judgement will help you decide whether the evidence you have is strong enough to mark the indicator. When in doubt, leave it out and wait until you have confirmation that an indicator is being displayed.

## When would I use other indicators?

The other indicators list additional behaviours you may notice some students displaying. You may choose to use them when you are looking for more detailed information about a student to help determine a learning focus.

### How long should a student be in a phase?

There is no definitive time span. Some students may progress quickly through a phase, while others remain in the same one for a length of time. Each student is unique, and no two developmental pathways will be the same. Providing developmentally appropriate teaching and learning experiences will assist students to progress along the *Viewing Map of Development*.

### How often do I need to update each student's progress on the Map of Development?

Data collection and analysis is an ongoing process, and the frequency of the collation of this information onto the map is your decision. However, it is crucial that you consider updating the profiles often enough to drive teaching and learning in the classroom so that the students' learning needs are being addressed.

### From which phase do I choose the Major Teaching Emphases?

Major Teaching Emphases are chosen from the phase where a student is displaying all Key Indicators; for example, if a student displays all of the key indicators in the Exploratory Phase, the Major Teaching Emphases will come from the Exploratory Phase. Major Teaching Emphases are designed to further develop students' current understandings and support them to begin displaying behaviours from the next phase.

### Within a phase, which Major Teaching Emphases do I choose?

Any of the MTEs in the phase where students display all the Key Indicators will be appropriate. To select the most appropriate, you may take into consideration:
- the students' strengths and learning needs
- any 'gaps' in previous teaching
- the grouping arrangements
- links to other literacy strands and what is being taught in other learning areas.

The Major Teaching Emphases are designed to be revisited many times in different contexts, using different texts. This selection and revisiting process continues until students consistently display all key indicators in the next phase.

### How do I use the Student Self-Assessment pages?

The Student Self-Assessment pages are designed to be completed by the students. These pages can be completed over time either independently or with teacher support. This could happen during student conferences, reflection sessions or as part of an interview. These pages provide a springboard for individual goal setting. They can be found on the *Viewing CD* in Chapter 3 — Collecting Data to Assess Viewing Development.

### Why are there no activities for students in the Processes and Strategies aspect in the Map of Development?

The activities for the Processes and Strategies aspect are described in the *Viewing Resource Book*. The rationale for this is that all students engaging in viewing make use of a range of processes and strategies that are not hierarchical, and are therefore not

phase-specific. The activities in the *Viewing Resource Book* can be applied across a range of phases.

## Can I use the Map of Development with students who have English as a Second Language (ESL) or Students who have English as a Second Dialect (ESD)?

Viewing is an important element in the process of developing the language competency of ESL/ESD students. It is well recognised that when first learning another language, ESL/ESD students will rely more heavily on the visual information accompanying written and verbal (oral or spoken) texts than on the words themselves.

There are different considerations for ESL/ESD students when using the *Viewing Map of Development*. Initially, it would be worthwhile to use an ESL/ESD Progress Map until ESL students are demonstrating a satisfactory competence in English.

The *First Steps Viewing Map of Development* may be used as an additional resource to assist in the identification of students' language strengths and needs, and to inform the planning of appropriate teaching and learning programs. The behaviours exhibited could be across a number of phases; therefore, it may not be appropriate to identify an ESL/ESD student as being in only one particular phase. In order to tailor instruction appropriately, you may need to select Major Teaching Emphases from more than one phase of the map (see Chapter 4 of the *Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning* book for further information about *First Steps* and Diversity).

Students who speak, read and write languages other than English may already be aware that each language is different. Some of these understandings can be transferred from one language to another; others cannot. This means that such students may have a well-developed understanding of language as a system, but not in those aspects of language that are peculiar to English. Many ESL/ESD students may be able to make sophisticated meaning from visual texts but may require teacher support to show these levels of understanding. Teachers need to consider the appropriate instruction so these students can engage and respond to visual texts in a supportive group environment.



**Figure 2.12 Older students enjoy reading a graphic novel**

# CHAPTER 3
# Collecting Data to Assess Viewing Development

Chapter 6 of the *Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning* book provides detailed information about principles of assessment and evaluation that underpin the *First Steps* resource. The data-collection tools listed in that chapter are generic, and can be applied to all areas of literacy.

The focus of this chapter is on how data-collection tools can be used specifically to make judgements about students' viewing development; the ideas and suggestions provide support for teachers when placing students on the *First Steps Viewing Map of Development*.

Planning for success in viewing requires teachers to find out what individual students currently know and can do, and identify what they need to learn next. It is useful to ask the following questions:
- What do I want to assess?
- What information is needed at an Aspect level?
- What types of learning experiences will provide this information?
- What are the most efficient and valid ways to collect the information, and who should collect it?
- How can the information be collected and recorded?
- What can be done with the information?
- How can the information be shared with others?

To obtain a comprehensive picture of what students' can do, teachers need to recognise and understand the different viewing demands that will be placed on students as they engage with multimodal texts across different learning areas. Teachers need to teach students to effectively use and interpret multimodal texts within particular learning areas, e.g. how to read graphical data and diagrams in a science text. Teachers need to take into account the purpose for viewing and the metalinguistic and metacognitive demands of particular tasks. For example, a student viewing a paper-based text such as a book, newspaper or brochure to locate specific information for a science research topic would need to use a different set of skills from those that would be used when accessing and locating information from a digital electronic text such as a film or television documentary, a website or an interactive DVD. In order to provide the teaching, learning and assessment that are appropriate to the needs of their students, teachers need to be able to effectively review the viewing opportunities that are provided by their existing classroom programs.

The recording format on page 24 (see Figure 3.1) provides a reflective framework that may be used by teachers to plan for their viewing program. It focuses the teacher's

attention on what students can currently do and what students need to be able to do next in order to make progress. Figure 3.2 is a set of reflective questions that teachers may use to review their teaching and learning program.

## Viewing Context

| 1 What students can currently do | 2 What students need to be able to do | 3 What students need to be taught to do |
|---|---|---|
| This comes from the data — teacher observations, self- and peer-assessment. | This is a combination of outcomes from curriculum documents and observations. | The gap between what they can do and what they need to be able to — the understandings, skills and attitudes. |

Figure 3.1 Format for recording what students can currently do

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**1** *Are your viewing lessons:*
– functional and goal orientated?
– reflective of authentic viewing in real contexts?

**2** *Do your viewing lessons:*
– develop and enhance the concept of viewing, not just focus on the acquisition of skills?
– contain explanations and explicit modelling, which provide students with thorough knowledge about visual literacy?
– incorporate guided and independent practice of viewing strategies or skills?
– encourage self-reflection and self-monitoring?
– acknowledge the student's social context outside the classroom in the selection of content and visual literacy materials?
– use materials which resemble a variety of real-life situations and contexts in which the knowledge skills and strategies might be used?

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Figure 3.2 Teacher-reflection Questions (from *The Literacy Landscape* by Bull, G. & Anstey, M., 2005)

Because of the changing nature of multimodal text that are used in both school and everyday life, it is necessary that teachers not only recognise but also are able to plan and assess those skills necessary for students to be effective users and producers of these types of texts. The following table (see Figure 3.3, adapted from the work of the New London Group) outlines a set of teaching components, identified as being essential in establishing teaching and learning programs. This table may also provide teachers with a reflective tool when planning for teaching, learning and assessment. It should be noted that the components are not hierarchical and may occur simultaneously while, at different times, one or the other may predominate.

| **Situated Practice** | **Reflections** |
|---|---|
| Locate your teaching, planning and assessment within your students' abilities, textual practices, texts and life worlds.<br><br>Immersion in meaningful practice.<br><br>*What do they know?*<br><br>*What can they do?*<br><br>*What do they have the potential to do?* | • What do my students read and view?<br><br>• How do they think?<br><br>• What are their interests?<br><br>• What are the cultural backgrounds of my students?<br><br>• What do they do outside of school?<br><br>• What kinds of texts are they using?<br><br>• How do they read these texts?<br><br>• What technologies are they familiar with?<br><br>• What technologies do they use outside of school? |
| **Overt Instruction** | |
| Teach *to* your students' skills. Match your instruction to their abilities.<br><br>*Choosing appropriate assessment, teaching learning experiences that are located within students' capabilities — challenging but achievable.*<br><br>*Scaffolding learning through explicit teaching and guided practice.*<br><br>*Teaching and using the metalanguage to describe the learning process and the learning is a key feature.* | • What are my students currently able to do?<br><br>• How can I build on this knowledge?<br><br>• Is there variety in the kinds of texts I am using with my students?<br><br>• Have I included a balance of print, electronic and digital texts in my teaching and learning program?<br><br>• Have I considered different interests — gender, cultural, social? |
| **Critical Framing** | |
| Teaching students to understand and think about different values and ideologies present in texts. How the format and layout of a text reflects the underlying meaning.<br><br>*Peeling back the layers in texts and analysing them in terms of modality, form, language or discourse, function and social and cultural contexts.*<br><br>*Allowing students to stand back from what they have learned and view it critically in relation to its context.* | • Have I provided my students with a wide range of texts to analyse?<br><br>• Have I provided opportunities for discussions and substantive conversations? |
| **Transformed Practice** | |
| *Transfer of skills and strategies that the students learned in the classroom to real-life contexts. Can students use these skills independently in a range of contexts?* | • Are the skills and strategies that I teach in line with students' worlds outside of the classroom?<br><br>• What are my program goals and do they correspond with what my students need to know and enjoy doing? |

**Figure 3.3 Four components of a balanced teaching and learning program (based on the New London Group (2000), 'A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing Social Futures' by Cope, B. & Kalantzis, M. (eds) from *Multiliteracies: Literacy Learning and the Design of Social Futures*)**

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The judgements that teachers make about students' learning should be based on a balanced range of assessment. These assessments should provide accurate and consistent information that may be used to inform teaching and learning practices. The following list (adapted from the Western Australian Curriculum Frameworks *Five Key Principles of Assessment* 1998) provides some fundamental points to consider when planning for assessment, teaching or learning.

- Assessment tasks or means of the assessment should be *fair* to all students and should not discriminate on the grounds of social, cultural, linguistic or physical differences.
- Assessment needs to be conducted *over a period of time*; decisions about a student's knowledge or their teaching and learning program should never be decided on the strength of isolated 'one-off' assessments. Rather, it should be a result of conversations, samples, and observations carried out over a period of time in a *range of different contexts*.
- Assessment needs to be *comprehensive*; it must be carried out across a range of learning areas. To make any judgement about a student's knowledge and skills, teachers need to know if students can transfer them to other contexts.
- Assessment must be *educative*; the task and the means of assessment must be of educational benefit to the student.
- Assessment must be *explicit* and understood by all those involved in the process. Students should always be aware of how, when and why an assessment is being made.
- Assessment tasks and methods should be *discussed and planned* in consultation with other teachers in the school, year level, or faculty, to ensure a balance and consistency across and between year levels.

## Data Collection

The judgements that teachers make about students' learning need to be based on a range of assessment tools. These assessments should provide accurate and consistent information that should be used to inform teaching and learning practices.

Different data-collection tools will provide different perspectives on viewing. The type of data-collection tool selected will depend upon the Aspect for which information is to be collected — Use of Texts, Contextual Understanding, Conventions, or Processes and Strategies. The decisions teachers make about which assessment tools to use, and how and when to use them have an impact on the quality of the evidence gathered. These decisions can also have an impact on the messages given to students about 'what counts' and what is valued in viewing. It is important to develop efficient and valid ways of assessing viewing, and to involve students, parents or care-givers, and other teachers in the process of collecting and recording data.

# What Are the Most Efficient and Valid Ways to Collect Viewing Information?

Data can be collected in several ways and can be grouped under the following broad headings:

- Focused Observation
- Viewing Products
- Conversations.

| ASPECTS OF VIEWING | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ASSESSMENT TOOLS | Use of Texts | Contextual Understanding | Conventions | Processes and Strategies |
| **Focused Observation** | | | | |
| Informal | | | | |
| Formal | | | | |
| **Viewing Products** | | | | |
| Self-assessment formats | | | | |
| Two Stars and a Wish | | | | |
| Personal goal-setting | | | | |
| Logs | | | | |
| Journals | | | | |
| Think-Alouds | | | | |
| Work samples | | | | |
| Retells and Reviews | | | | |
| Surveys and questionnaires | | | | |
| Tests | | | | |
| **Conversations** | | | | |
| Conferences | | | | |
| Interviews | | | | |

**Figure 3.4 Select a data collection tool to make judgements about different aspects of viewing**

While Focused Observation, Viewing Products and Conversations will be described individually, it is important to note that in any successful assessment regime, each one is generally used in combination with another. For example, a teacher who has observed something about a student's work (as part of focused observation) and recorded the observations as anecdotal notes may then discuss these notes with the student (as part of a conversation).

## *Focused Observation*

Assessment takes place as an integral part of the teaching and learning cycle. It occurs as part of everyday teaching and learning when teachers are observing students at work in regular classroom activities. Teacher observation involves much more than simply watching or listening to students in the classroom; it involves systematic collection of observable data and analysis of that information. It is one way of discovering what students know and can do in viewing. It allows teachers to assess specific strategies that students use, or understandings they demonstrate, either during specific viewing lessons, or in other learning areas. Focused observations in viewing will include observing the students' viewing behaviours in a range of different contexts and groupings, from individual to paired, small-group and whole-class interactions.

### *1 Informal Observations*

Informal observations are unplanned. The teacher simply notes viewing behaviours as they naturally happen. Viewing data may be obtained from observing students in situations that occur naturally as a result of interactions within particular contexts. Informal observations require teachers to watch and listen to students in order to form ideas about their development across the four aspects. The information that is obtained from any observation needs to be not only noted, but also carefully reviewed, if it is to be of any benefit to a student's progress.

Figure 3.5 A teacher informally observes a student

### *2 Formal Observations*

Formal observations, sometimes called structured or systematic observations, are planned with a pre-determined focus; this could be the viewing behaviours to be targeted, or students that will be observed. The teacher also decides when and how often formal observations will occur, and how they will be recorded.

Students learn from being observed and receiving feedback but just as powerful for student learning is when they become observers of their peers' interactions.

## What Information Can Be Collected?

Focused observations can provide teachers with information about student attitudes and student performance in the four aspects:

Use of Texts, Contextual Understanding, Conventions, Processes and Strategies. The following checklist may provide a focus for observation.

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1 Know what learning outcome is being assessed.

2 Plan what will constitute evidence.

3 Tell students what is expected of them.

4 Make sure any record-keeping reflects the purpose.

5 Provide students with feedback.

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**Figure 3.6 Checklist: a focus for observation**

# Viewing Products

The assessment of both process and product is important when making decisions about supporting students' viewing development. Teachers can assess not only the final products that are a result of learning, but also products that have been created during the process of learning. The *Viewing Map of Development* can provide the support necessary when analysing selected work products and the process used before, during and after the construction and comprehension of such products.

Observation and analysis of students' products such as self-assessment forms, Think-Alouds, work samples (including multimodal texts), surveys or questionnaires all provide insight into viewing development. The following products will support teachers in gathering information about students' viewing development:

1 Student Self-Assessment Products
2 Two Stars and a Wish
3 Personal Goal-Setting
4 Viewing Logs
5 Journals

6 Think-Alouds
7 Work Samples
8 Retells and Reviews
9 Surveys and Questionnaires
10 Tests.

## 1 Student Self-Assessment Products

Self-assessment is a critical part of developing a student's responsibility for his or her own learning. Self-assessment can provide teachers with insights into viewing development that otherwise might not be apparent. It is critical that any formats students are to use be modelled and provided as a framework for recording information and reflections. With teacher support and guidance, students can develop the skills necessary for them to assess their own and others' responses to multimodal texts. Phase-specific, student self-assessment formats are provided on the *Viewing CD.*

These are designed to:

- support teachers as they involve students in data collection
- support students to reflect on their own viewing and to set goals for improvement
- reflect the behaviours for each phase written in student-friendly language
- be completed by the students.

Just as powerful as self-assessment is a student's ability to assess others' learning — peer assessment. Students are able to compare their knowledge and understanding with those of others and this helps to clarify their own understanding of the concept or task.

## 2 Two Stars and a Wish

Two Stars and a Wish provides students with a simple framework for reflecting on the positive aspects of their work (the stars) as well as focusing on an area for improvement (the wish). It also provides a simple framework for peer assessment.

### What Information Can Be Collected?

Information for any of the four aspects of viewing can be gathered using self-assessment formats.



Figure 3.7 Me as a viewer: A student's self-assessment sheet
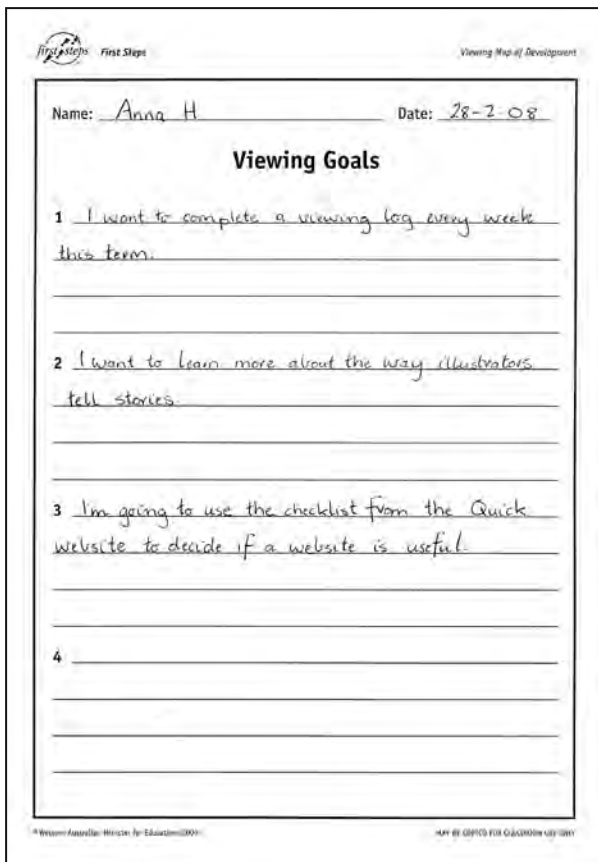
Figure 3.8 A sample of a Two Stars and a Wish framework

## 3 Personal Goal-Setting

Setting viewing goals and assessing the achievement of these goals is another form of self-assessment suitable for all students. It can provide the teacher with valuable information about the viewing strategies that students are using, and can assist students to develop independence in viewing. Goals can be recorded in many ways. They may be written in students' viewing journals or recorded on goal-setting sheets. Once a goal is recorded, the teacher and student can work together to monitor its achievement. The cumulative record of goals can provide evidence of successful learning, showing both teacher and student the specific viewing strategies or understandings that have been learned. A record of goals also clearly demonstrates the progress being made towards improving viewing. For those students who are just beginning to set goals, they may find it useful to record them on goal-setting frameworks. A variety of goal-setting frameworks are provided on the *Viewing CD*.

### What Information Can Be Collected

Reviewing students' viewing goals provides information about the processes and strategies they are using to interpret, analyse and produce multimodal texts.
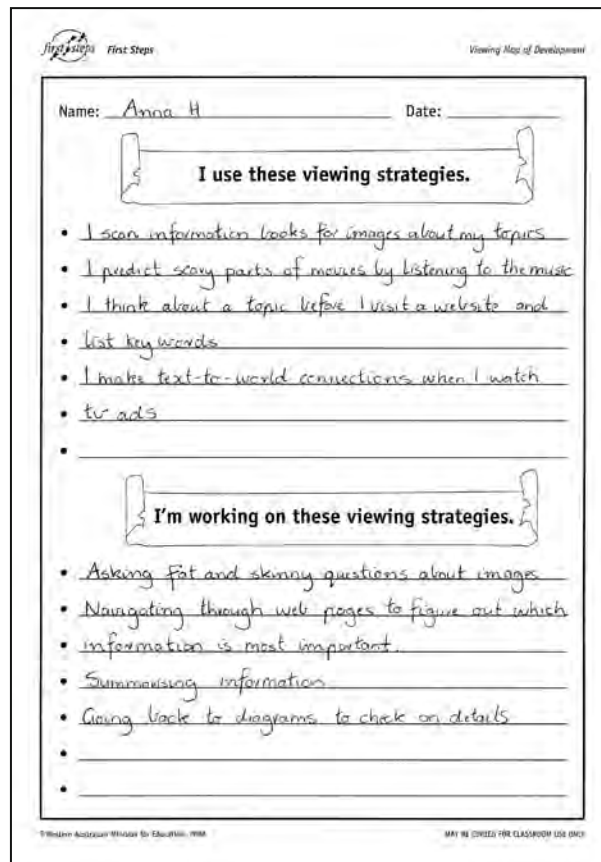


**Figure 3.9 Viewing Goals framework**
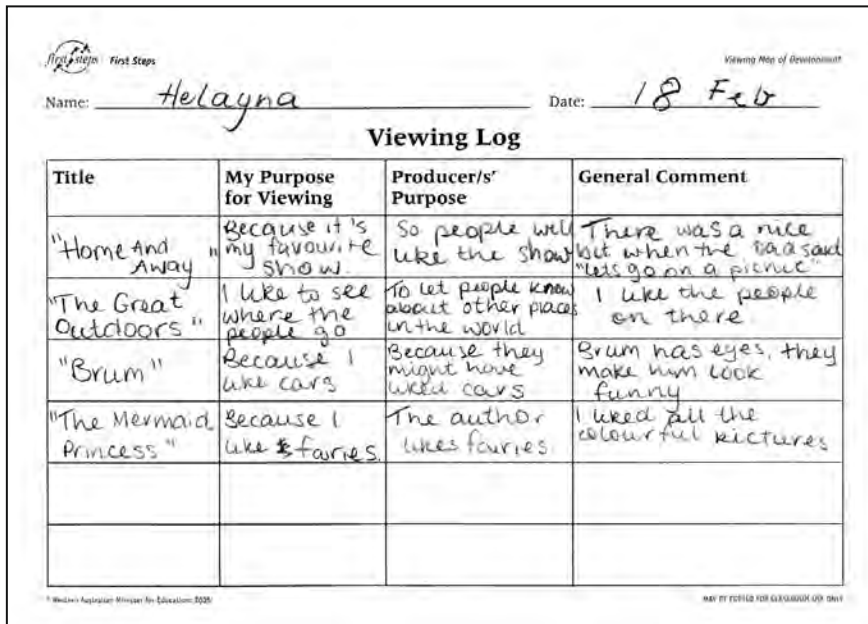
**Figure 3.10 Viewing Strategies framework**

## 4 Viewing Logs

A viewing log, in its simplest form, is a place in which to record the types of texts that have been viewed. Logs contain concise, objective factual information and are impersonal in tone. The purpose of the viewing log, together with the age and experience of the student, will determine the way it is used and structured. Logs will show the range of multimodal texts that students are engaging with. Teachers will encourage students to analyse their records of text types and refer to this and their own analysis to plan future learning experiences. The sample of a viewing log (see Figure 3.11) provides a suggestion of the types of entries that can be made. The viewing log frameworks are provided on the *Viewing CD*.

### What Information Can Be Collected?

Viewing logs provide teachers with information about the Use of Texts Aspect, as well as gaining insights into a student's interests, preferences, attitudes or understandings.



Figure 3.11 A sample viewing log

## 5 Journals

Viewing journals allow students to record their personal expectations, reactions and reflections before, during and after a viewing event. Journals can be organised and used in many different ways depending on the purpose. The different kinds of viewing journals include:
• response journals
• reflective journals
• metacognitive journals
• summative journals.

Viewing journals provide a framework for students to:
• record their responses to multimodal texts
• reflect on their selection of texts
• record their relevant background knowledge and experiences

• reflect on their viewing development

• record their thought processes when constructing multimodal texts

• reflect on the effectiveness of their viewing with a range of audiences and contexts

• reflect on their previous learning and consider it for future application to new learning

• clarify their thoughts about the messages and purposes of authors and illustrators

• share their thoughts with others.

All journal writing requires clear guidelines. All types of responses need to be modelled prior to students using them independently. Until students are familiar with journal writing, teachers can provide possible frameworks, sentence starters or questions as prompts for responses and reflections. The emphasis of recording in a journal should be on content and meaning, not on the mechanics of writing. Guiding questions for exploring, investigating and analysing multimodal texts are provided on the *Viewing CD*. Students can refer to these questions and they can also be encouraged to create their own journal entries. Students should be encouraged to respond to multimodal texts in a variety of ways e.g. **writing, drawing, taking photographs**. Journals need not be limited to paper-based technologies; students can be encouraged to present their journals as visual diaries, digital scrapbooks, etc.

---

**Viewing Response Journal Prompts**

**Personal Responses:**

Describe what you see.

How did you respond to the text?

Why do you feel this way?

What connections, feelings or associations did you have to this text?

Do you agree or disagree with what you are seeing?

What has this text taught you?

How does this text compare with visual texts you have previously viewed?

**Analytical Responses:**

Who created this text?

What is the intended message?

Who is the intended audience?

What type of text is it?

How is the visual text constructed?

What elements are used to catch your attention?

What questions do you have for the text designer?

---

Figure 3.12 Viewing response journal prompts

## What Information Can Be Collected?

Journal entries can provide a source of information about any of the four aspects of viewing depending on the structure of the responses.

## 6 Think-Alouds

Think-Alouds are articulations of thoughts before, during and after viewing. They may be spontaneous reactions to the text by students or may be responses encouraged or requested by the teacher. The analysis of Think-Alouds can provide a rich source of

information about the processes and strategies that a student uses when viewing. Although Think-Alouds are not exact replications of a student's complete thinking, they can reveal the hidden processes that are taking place in the student's mind.

### What Information Can Be Collected?

When analysing a Think-Aloud, the teacher will be looking for patterns in the student's responses. These patterns will reveal the processes and strategies the student is using to comprehend.

## 7 Work Samples

A collection of samples gathered over time provides a clear picture of how a student has improved. Samples can be collected at any stage of the viewing process. Samples may show work performed independently or in a group. Work samples should be collected across all learning areas. Chapters 4 to 9 of the *Viewing Map of Development* provide phase-specific activities that may provide a collection of work samples.
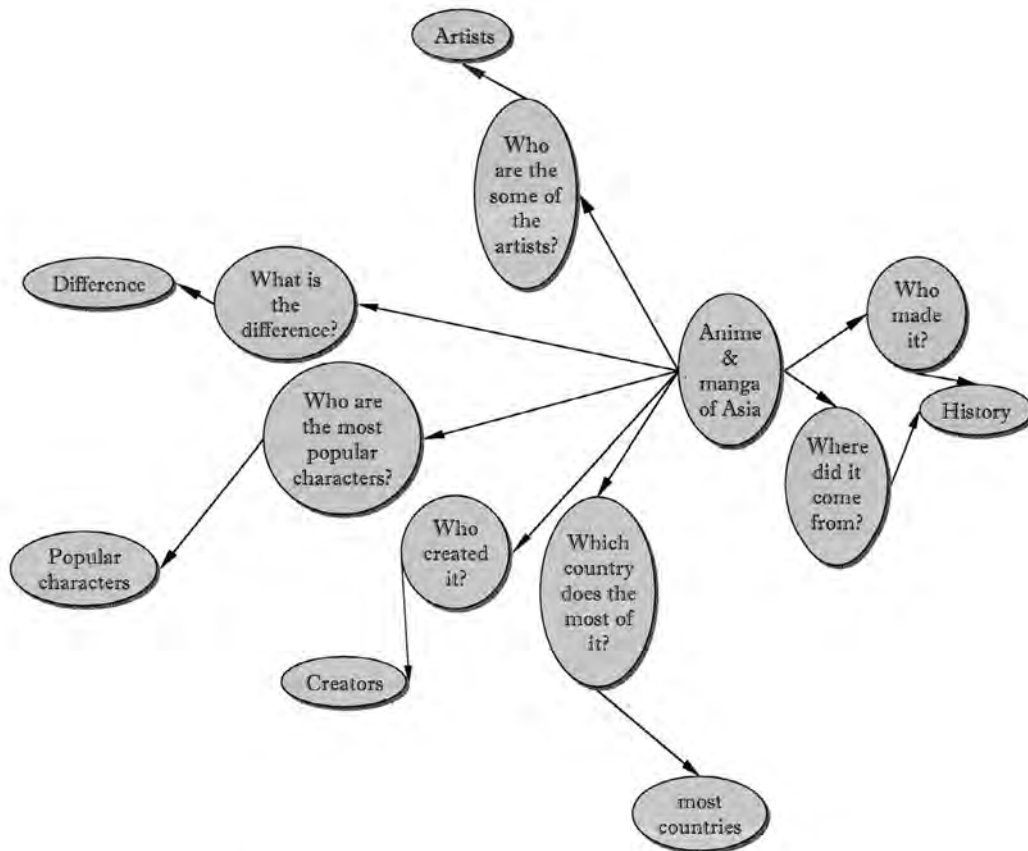


**Figure 3.13 A student's work sample**

### What Information Can Be Collected?

Information for any of the four aspects can be gathered from students' work samples. A range of samples across a period of time can clearly demonstrate a student's progress.

## 8 Retells and Reviews

Reviewing and retelling actively involve students in the construction of a text and allow them to consider the meaning they have made during viewing. It is an effective activity from which to observe or ascertain the level of comprehension — it requires students to focus on selecting and correctly sequencing information and events from a range of multimodal texts.

### What Information Can Be Collected?

Oral, written or multimodal reviews and retells can provide teachers with valuable information about any of the four aspects as outlined below.
• Use of Texts: e.g. selecting and sequencing the ideas or events, using explicit and/or implicit information to make inferences
• Contextual Understanding: e.g. retelling text from a different point of view
• Conventions e.g. text structure, text organisation or codes and conventions of the semiotic systems
• Processes and Strategies e.g. determining important information, summarising, synthesising.

## 9 Surveys and Questionnaires

Surveys and questionnaires about viewing can take many forms and address a range of topics. They typically consist of a series of statements or questions about which the students or parents are asked to express agreement or disagreement (sometimes using a scale). The items to be included on the survey or questionnaire will be determined by the type of information required. The *Viewing CD* contains some sample surveys and questionnaires that can be used with either individual students or a whole class.

### What Information Can Be Collected?

Surveys and questionnaires can be used to ascertain students' viewing attitudes and interests, or provide information about their social viewing practices.
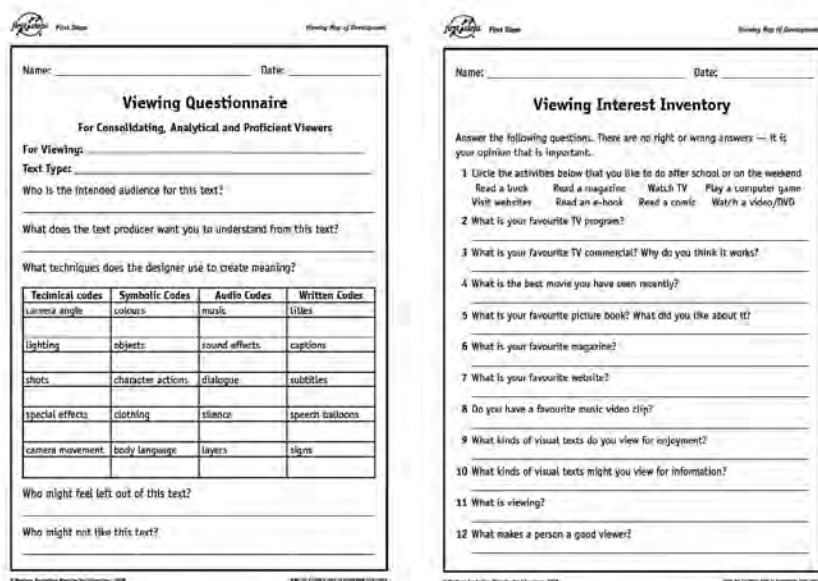


**Figure 3.14 Samples of viewing questionnaire and surveys**

## *10 Tests*

Testing is another way of gathering data about a student's viewing development, and should be used in conjunction with other data collection tools. Using tests to collect data about viewing needs careful consideration since viewing is dynamic and varies much more than other activities such as writing or reading. Several types of tests are available, but generally they can be categorised under the following headings.

### CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Criterion-referenced tests are designed to measure how well students have learnt a specific body of knowledge or certain skills. They can provide information related to strengths and weaknesses.

### NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

Norm-referenced tests are often referred to as Standardised Tests. They are the formalised tests in which scoring, norms and administration have been established as a result of each having been given to a large number of students. They are administered under specific conditions adhering to the directions set out in the examiner's manual. The performances of other students are presented as norms for the purpose of comparing achievement.

Standardised testing is sometimes useful at a system level, but often does not provide teachers with information they can use to develop a cohesive classroom viewing program that is responsive to student needs.

### TEACHER-MADE TESTS

Many teachers devise their own tests to measure students' progress in viewing. These are generally criterion-referenced, and measure students' abilities in what has been taught. The advantages of these tests are that they can be tailored to suit a specific group of students or can be designed to elicit specific information the teacher is seeking.

### *What Information Can Be Collected?*

Tests give information about a student in a particular context and may not be applicable to other contexts. Tests may provide information about elements of the four aspects. Since context influences viewing as shown in the Multidimensional Model of Viewing, the information gained from a test will show the viewing that occurs in the context of that test.

## *Conversations*

As well as using focused observation and the collection of products, teachers can also consider what further information can be gathered through conversations.

Both incidental and scheduled conversations will provide valuable information to show students' development. Teachers who have conversations with individual students on a regular basis, as well as providing opportunities for students to engage in conversations about their viewing, will be able to gain a deeper understanding of the students' viewing development. Information about the following types of conversations is outlined below:

**1** Conferences

**2** Interviews.

## *1 Conferences*

There are a variety of ways to involve students in conferences. These include:

• one-on-one conferences: teacher and student

• peer conferences: student and student

• small-group conferences: students

• three-way conferences: student, teacher and parent.

Each of these situations can provide a teacher with a data-collection opportunity; however, the one-on-one conference can also provide the opportunity for individual instruction. Effective one-on-one conferencing centres on building relationships with individual students. For conferences to be successful students need to know what is expected of them; for example, what their role will be, the conference structure, and the records that will be kept. Each student-teacher conference will be unique but it can be helpful to have a planning framework, such as the example shown below (see Figure 3.15).

---

**Ask questions.**
Why have you chosen this text?
How are you using this text in your research?

**Identify the focus of the conference.**
What are your viewing goals?
Have you achieved them?
Is there anything you are having particular difficulties with that you would like me to help you with?

**Listen to input from the student.**
Share the text; discuss responses.

**Offer praise and emphasise strengths.**

**Set directions for the future.**
Set a new viewing goal if appropriate and discuss the possibility of a guided practice activity or a lesson, targeting a particular aspect, strategy or skill.

**Closure.**

---

**Figure 3.15 Teacher–student conference framework**

Figure 3.16 on page 38 demonstrates very well how important it is to introduce, practice and reinforce the use of metalanguage and ensure students engage in metacognitive practices as they do so. Here the teacher first checks students understand the meaning of the metalanguage (gaze, offer and demand) and then encourages them to demonstrate their understanding by finding examples and justifying their findings. This is a good example of ensuring there is an explicit relationship between the learning objective (teaching metalanguage, the understanding and use of specific terms and metacognition) and the type of teacher talk and classroom interaction needed to achieve that objective.

> **Teacher:** Look at the cover of this book. Tell me what you think the book will be about?
>
> **Student 1:** It's about Edwina the Emu!
>
> **Student 2:** I think that it will be a funny book.
>
> **Teacher:** I like the way you both looked at the cover of the book and thought about your answers … Remind me what you think is meant by a demand or an offer.
>
> **Student 1:** A demand is when two people are looking straight at me.
>
> **Teacher:** Super! … And an offer is … ?
>
> **Student 2:** An offer means that the characters in the book are not looking directly at each other or at the person reading the book. They are looking somewhere else.
>
> **Teacher:** Fantastic!
>
> **Student 2:** This is a demand because Edwina and Edward are looking directly at me.
>
> **Student 1:** This one is an offer. Edwina and Edward are looking at the emu eggs.
>
> **Teacher:** Great! Now, what about this picture which shows Edwina travelling on the bus?
>
> **Student 2:** That picture shows an offer. Edwina and all the characters are looking straight ahead.
>
> **Teacher:** Very good! Now, on this final page, what do you think this is? Is it a demand or an offer?
>
> **Student 2:** I know!! It is a demand because 'Yeek' the baby emu is looking at us.

**Figure 3.16 A transcript of a discussion about the picture book *Edwina the Emu* by Knowles, S. & Clement, R. (1996)**

The following charts (see Figures 3.17 and 3.18) provide some guidance on the roles of the teacher and student in creating a successful viewing conference.

It is useful for teachers to use recording sheets before, during or after conferencing with students. These recording formats can provide a focus for conversations and for keeping records of shared information.

## *What Information Can Be Collected?*

Conferences can be used to gain information in any of the four aspects, depending on the focus of the conference.

- Be prepared.
- Have current viewing material and topics ready for discussion.
- Discuss any viewing problems you have with the teacher.
- Review the viewing goals you have set. Discuss problems or successes in achieving the goal.
- Be prepared to set a new viewing goal or re-focus on the previous goal.

- Select a particular focus.
- Encourage the student to talk.
- Introduce new strategies and processes.
- Provide feedback to the student.
- Review the student's viewing goals and assist him or her to set new ones.
- Record information after each conference.
- Use the information from the conference to plan future learning.

**Figure 3.17 The role of the student in conferences**

**Figure 3.18 The role of the teacher in conferences**

## 2 Interviews
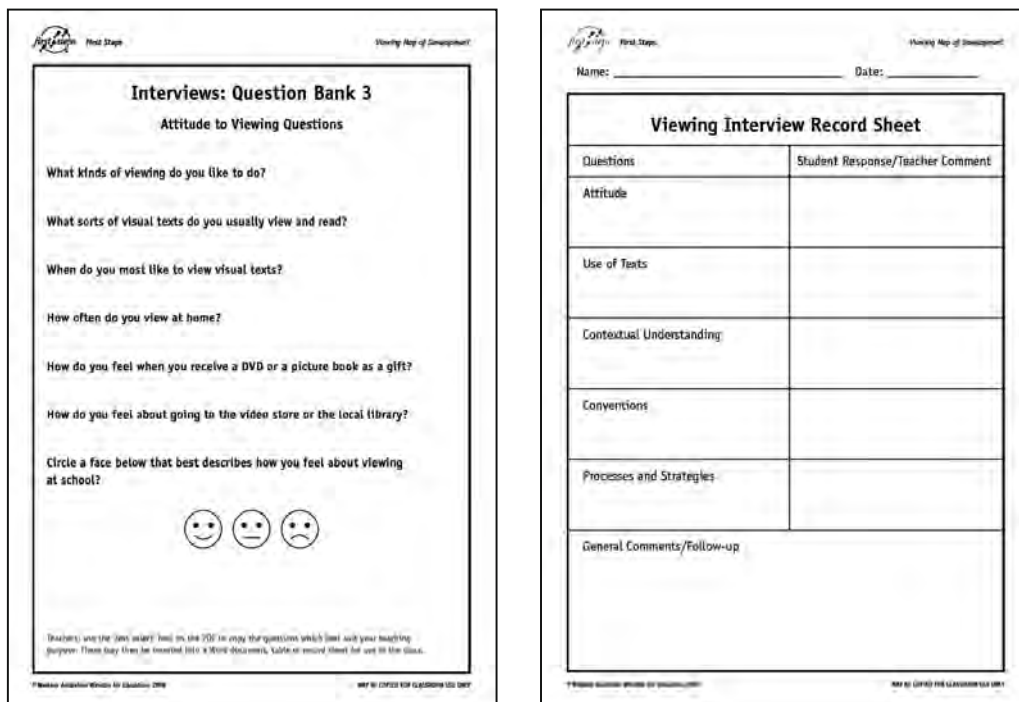
Interviews are one-on-one, prepared question-and-answer conversations between a teacher and a student or between a teacher and a parent. Teacher–student interviews provide an opportunity for teachers to actively listen to students and encourage them to verbalise their thought processes. Teachers can design questions to focus on different aspects of viewing, depending on the purpose and the desired outcomes of the interview. However, planning questions that elicit useful information and encouraging students to do most of the talking is a challenge; effective questions should be focused, open and probing so students respond with more than one-word answers. Further examples of viewing interview questions can be found on the *Viewing CD*.

Interviews with parents or care-givers can also provide useful information about a student's viewing habits outside school. In all interviews, it is important to consider the following points:

- Explain the reasons for the interview and limit questions to those that will yield the most useful information so parents won't feel 'interrogated'.
- Let the parents know that you will be taking notes and the reasons for this.
- Be sensitive to parents' home and personal language usage as well as their levels of literacy.

### What Information Can Be Collected?

Interviews can provide information about any of the four aspects, depending on the questions being asked. The questions on the CD-ROM are suggested as a guide only and can be adapted to suit different students or teaching contexts.



**Figure 3.19 Samples of interview questions and recording sheet**

# How Can Information about Viewing Be Recorded?

Teachers use a range of ways to record the information they gather about students' viewing development. The use of computers or Palm Pilots™ often helps streamline the time it takes to record information.

The following ways of recording information, on paper or electronically, are detailed:

1 Anecdotal notes
2 Checklists
3 Rubrics
4 Annotations
5 *First Steps Viewing Map of Development.*

## 1 Anecdotal Notes

Anecdotal notes are short, objective, factual descriptions of observations recorded at the time an event or activity occurs, or soon thereafter. Behaviours listed on the *First Steps Viewing Map of Development* will provide a focus for observations.

- Making useful anecdotal notes takes time and practice. They should record an accurate description of the situation and information about a student's strengths and weaknesses, and include comments and questions that may guide further observations.
- Notes should be written daily, and as soon as possible after an observation has been made. They can be written during a variety of viewing contexts, using a range of functional spoken texts, for example, unplanned spontaneous conversations and guided viewing sessions.
- The recording format should suit the teaching situation, the students and the teacher's personal style, e.g. grids, adhesive notes, *Viewing Map of Development*.

The notes should be examined and analysed regularly to be sure that comments are made for every student on a variety of viewing behaviours in different contexts. The notes also need to be analysed to inform the teacher of future teaching directions.



**Figure 3.20 A viewing cross-curriculum grid. This format appears on the *Viewing CD***

## 2 Checklists

A checklist is a list of skills or behaviours to be checked off as they are observed. However, it is critical to acknowledge that checklists, whether teacher-made or commercially produced, are static. Most may not be applicable to every student in one classroom at the same time.

## 3 Rubrics

Rubrics are recording frameworks that feature short, descriptive statements along a continuum of excellence. Teachers or students determine the quality of a performance against a set of predetermined criteria; for example, a retelling rubric may assess performance using criteria such as selection and sequencing of ideas and events, introduction to the characters, and setting the scene. Rubrics can be scored using either a numerical system or descriptive words or phrases, such as 'well-developed', 'partially developed', and 'not developed'. Rubrics can be reused, adding levels of achievement as students' skill level increases or adding additional criteria for new concepts, skills or aptitudes they display. There are many publications and websites that offer ready-made rubrics; however, many teachers may wish to create their own.

### CREATING A RUBRIC

*Deciding on the criteria*
Students can be involved in brainstorming the criteria. If they have not had experience in generating criteria for evaluation, teachers may wish to show them some models of completed work. Characteristics of effective and not-so-effective samples can be listed and discussed for inclusion as criteria on the completed rubric.

*Articulating the qualities*
It is often easier to decide on the two extremes first; that is, what makes 'best' performance and what makes 'worst' performance.

*Deciding on the number of gradations*
It is a good idea to have an even number of gradations as this eliminates the tendency to rank in the middle.

*Deciding on the labelling*
Labels to be used for the gradations need to be considered; either a numerical value or a descriptive word can be used. Some teachers prefer to use 'neutral' words for the gradation labels; others prefer words that signal excellence, such as Lead, Bronze, Silver and Gold rather than Unsatisfactory, Satisfactory, Competent and Excellent.

Students may be involved in self- or peer-assessment, using the completed rubric, before work is formally submitted for teacher evaluation. Rubrics can be 'holistic' or 'analytic' in nature; holistic rubrics evaluate the task as a whole, while analytic rubrics evaluate each separate criterion. Figure 3.21 on page 42 is an example of an analytic viewing rubric.

| Criteria | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Viewing strategies** | Consistently uses a range of viewing strategies. Is able to reflect on and adjust strategies used. | Usually selects an appropriate strategy when viewing. | Uses a small number of strategies when viewing. | Uses a limited number of strategies when viewing. |
| **Locating information** | Recognises and can discuss the link between implicit and explicit information in a visual text. | Identifies explicit and implicit information in a visual text. | Identifies explicit and some implicit information in a visual text. | Identifies explicit information in a visual text. |
| **Understanding conventions** | Analyses and discusses the effectiveness of visual conventions and elements within a visual text. | Identifies and discusses how visual conventions and elements have been arranged within a visual text. | Identifies how visual conventions and elements have been arranged within a visual text. | With teacher support, can identify how visual conventions and elements have been arranged within a visual text. |

**Figure 3.21 Analytic rubric for viewing, adapted from Saskatchewan Learning 2004**

## 4 Annotations

Annotations are short descriptions of judgements made about a student's work, recorded directly onto the work sample. Annotations may be completed at the time of the event, but this can be done at a later time if the work sample, such as written work, is portable. Annotations need to be objective, factual comments, and should lead to the recognition and interpretation of individual patterns of learning over time.

## 5 The First Steps Viewing Map of Development

*The First Steps Viewing Map of Development* is an excellent framework for recording information about viewing development. Some teachers choose to record observations, the outcomes of conversations, or their analysis of products directly onto the Viewing Map; this can be done by writing comments on adhesive notes, highlighting the indicators or recording the date when behaviours were displayed. Others prefer to use another recording method first — such as checklists, observations, analysis or rubrics — and then transfer the information onto the *Viewing Map of Development*. It is important that teachers monitor and balance the assessment of their students' learning.

The following recording formats can be found on the *Viewing* CD-ROM, and may be photocopied for classroom use:

1 Phase Profile Sheet
2 Individual Student Profile Sheet — Key Indicators only
3 Individual Student Profile Sheet — All indicators
4 Class Profile Sheets — Key Indicators only
5 Class Profile Sheets — All indicators.

# Beginning Viewing Phase



**Figure 4.1 A young child interacts with an online e-story**

## Global Statement

*Students make simple interpretations from multimodal texts. They demonstrate their emerging awareness of the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems. Students use these codes and conventions to predict and construct meaning as they interact with a range of multimodal texts, e.g.* illustrations, colour, facial expressions. *They produce multimodal texts through making connections and creative play.*

# Beginning Viewing Indicators

## Use of Texts

- ◆ **Makes use of images to 'read' simple picture books and signs.**
- ◆ **Makes meaning from personally significant multimodal texts,** e.g. picture books, films, catalogues and television programs.
- ◆ **Produces simple multimodal texts,** e.g. draws, makes pictures.
- ◆ **Selects simple multimodal texts primarily for enjoyment.**
- ◆ **Displays viewing behaviours,** e.g. using icons.
- • Makes predictions based on both images and print.
- • Begins to develop viewing behaviours, e.g. uses remote to turn TV on and off.
- • Discusses favourite multimodal texts and identifies features that appeal to them, e.g. action segments, scary parts.
- • Selects own texts for personal viewing, e.g. books, computer games.

## Contextual Understanding

- ◆ **Expresses personal views about characters or people in different multimodal texts.** e.g. I like Shrek because it is good.
- ◆ **Recognises common signs and symbols used in the environment,** e.g. stop signs, exit signs.
- ◆ **States purpose or audience for own multimodal texts,** e.g. I have made this e-card for Nana.
- • Makes links to own experiences when viewing.

## Conventions

- ◆ **Distinguishes written words from images.**
- ◆ **Shows beginning awareness of some of the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems,** e.g. volume, simple facial expressions, light and dark colours.
- • Recognises familiar symbols in relation to codes and conventions, e.g. smiley face.
- • Recognises some viewed texts through simple codes and conventions, e.g. audio code — the theme music for favourite TV show.
- • Identifies a sequence of events by using visual clues, e.g. setting changes, character actions.
- • Uses knowledge of the structure of familiar television programs to predict what might happen next.

## Processes and Strategies

- ◆ **Relies on a range of familiar strategies to make meaning,** e.g. connecting, predicting.
- ◆ **Begins to use familiar codes and conventions of the semiotic systems to make meaning,** e.g. sound effects, colour, appearance.
- • Predicts plot development based on cause and effect relationships in texts, e.g. the animals find the riverbed is dry and go searching for water.
- • Predicts future actions of familiar characters, e.g. the hero will solve the problem.

# Major Teaching Emphases

## Environment and Attitude (see p. 46)

- Create a supportive classroom environment that provides access to a range of multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to select their own multimodal text materials according to interest or purpose.
- Foster students' enjoyment of purposeful viewing.
- Encourage students to explore new technologies when viewing.

## Use of Texts (see p. 51)

- Expose students to a range of multimodal texts discussing purpose, e.g. advertisements are trying to persuade.
- Build awareness of simple organisational and structural features of different multimodal texts.
- Provide opportunities for students to produce a small range of multimodal texts for specific purposes, e.g. a poster to persuade.
- Provide opportunities for students to read and view a variety of multimodal texts, e.g. web pages.
- Encourage students to respond to texts in a variety of ways, focusing on the meaning of images and print.
- Model the use of print and digital electronic resources, e.g. using a mouse and icons to access a computer game.
- Teach students simple metalanguage associated with viewing and encourage its use, e.g. point of view, layout.

## Contextual Understanding (see p. 64)

- Provide opportunities for students to talk about multimodal texts and relate them to their own experiences.
- Draw students' attention to the way people, characters, ideas and events are represented in multimodal texts.
- Expose students to devices used in the environment, e.g. repetition of symbols.
- Discuss the audience and purpose of a range of multimodal texts.

## Conventions (see p. 71)

- Introduce new codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.
- Provide opportunities for students to explore the use of the five semiotic systems (linguistic, visual, audio, gestural and spatial) when consuming a range of multimodal texts.
- Develop an understanding of, and ability to use and critically reflect upon, the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.

## Processes and Strategies (see p. 83)

- Teach students strategies for comprehending and producing multimodal texts, e.g. connecting , predicting, comparing.
- Teach students to select multimodal texts for different purposes, e.g. DVD for information, interactive book for enjoyment.
- Model how to reflect on the viewing process and encourage students to do the same.
- Model simple ways to plan and produce multimodal texts, e.g. making a sketch for a poster or an e-card.

# Teaching and Learning Experiences

## ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE

| **Major Teaching Emphases** |
| --- |

- Create a supportive classroom environment that provides access to a range of multimodal texts.

- Encourage students to select their own multimodal text materials according to interest or purpose.

- Foster students' enjoyment of purposeful viewing.

- Encourage students to explore new technologies when viewing.

## Teaching Notes

Viewers in the Beginning phase of viewing will have a diverse range of experiences with visual images. Research indicates that young viewers are engaging with a variety of texts that are no longer just print-based and include DVDs, e-books, computer games, television programs and other texts found in their homes and communities. Students in this phase will be supported and stimulated in a classroom environment that offers them the opportunity to interact with a range of multimodal texts for both enjoyment and school-learning purposes.

The experiences teachers provide for students in the Beginning phase will have a strong focus on developing their awareness of the way image and print text work together to create meaning. Throughout this phase, students will learn about the different ways meaning is built into texts through the written word, images and sound. For example, during shared reading of an informational text, a teacher may use a Think-Aloud to show students how information from a diagram contributes to meaning or the way photographs support the text.

The focus for developing a positive attitude towards viewing, as well as providing a supportive environment for Beginning viewers, is organised under the following headings:
- The Relationship between viewing and reading
- Creating a supportive classroom environment
- Encouraging discovery and exploration
- Fostering an enjoyment of viewing
- Viewing as a social practice.

## The Relationship between Viewing and Reading

Many students in this phase are just beginning to read printed texts. They depend on images in the books to make meaning of the text. The placement of visual images in texts is very important at this early stage. These images support the development of early reading and viewing behaviours as students follow the left to right sequence and use the images to confirm their predictions.

To assist Beginning viewers, it is essential that teachers specifically select texts with images that strongly support the print. Regular modelling of the use of images when reading will develop students' awareness of the role images play in the meaning-making process in both literary and informational texts. Students should be encouraged to look closely at the images and discuss the action or concepts they observe. To support their learning in this area, students will need to be exposed to the many different ways images and texts work together in a wide range of texts including picture books, cartoons, information texts, posters, websites and advertisements.

## Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment

Students in this phase can readily recognise and interpret signs and symbols in their home and community. It is therefore valuable to discuss the features of familiar signs students are exposed to in their community. The teacher may also wish to draw students' attention to the use and significance of colour, shape and line in the signs.

*Building on the vast literacy repertoires that children bring to early childhood care and education contexts and introducing a range of literacy practice that appears to be specific to preschool, nursery, kindergarten and school helps children to develop their literacy competence in ways that enable them to take part in the wider society as well as their own community.*

Barrett-Pugh, C. & Rohl, M. (eds), 2000
*Literacy Learning in the Early Years*

### Physical Environment

Students in this phase are beginning to recognise familiar print and images used in the classroom (labels, classroom signs and logos) and are able to provide relevant meaning according to the context, for example students can use the images on the 'helper's chart' to explain the different roles or follow the icons on a computer game.

A jointly constructed environment which contains a variety of multimodal texts for different purposes provides students with an opportunity to experience the relationship between different components of multimodal texts. It is important that the classroom environment provides many examples of print and images, including posters, charts, work samples, books, labelled artefacts from different lessons, videos, electronic and web-based texts.

- A *multimodal text walk* can be introduced as part of the daily classroom routine. During this time, students are involved in activities using different multimodal texts. By participating in a visual walk around the classroom, students will develop an understanding about the different way images convey meaning. They will learn that

images and print work together to convey meaning in both linear and non-linear texts. Understandings that could be developed include:

– Images are presented in many different ways.

– Images carry a message.

– Images support the printed text.

– Colour, size and placement within multimodal texts can affect meaning.

– Information can be presented in different ways, e.g. photographs, diagrams, tables and maps.



**Figure 4.2 A young child interacting with a multimodal text**

• The introduction of a *learning wall* in the classroom can establish a space to record parts of discussions, findings and questions from students' conversations. Over time, the learning wall can become an 'audit trail' that includes photographs, drawings, quotes from children, newspaper clippings, transcripts of conversations and Internet print-outs.



**Figure 4.3 An example of a learning wall**

• *Learning centres* can provide opportunities for students to interact with a range of multimodal texts for different purposes. They allow students to engage with carefully structured learning tasks designed with particular outcomes in mind. Learning centre activities can be designed to focus on a particular code or convention or particular multimodal text form. Activities at the Beginning phase of development should be planned as part of a unit of work and designed to consolidate new learning. In this phase learning centres could incorporate a range of multimodal texts including picture books, laptops, a DVD player and e-books.

**Figure 4.4 A classroom learning centre**

## *Encouraging Discovery and Exploration*

Students can be encouraged to discover and explore multimodal texts by:

- making a wide range of texts available in activity centres for the students to view independently or with a friend
- inviting them to respond to texts in their own way, e.g. through discussion, modelling with clay, drawing, role play, emailing
- inviting them to share a favourite picture book or video with others
- using e-books with individuals and small groups on a regular basis
- selecting themes or topics based on students' interests
- using a digital camera to record learning experiences
- ensuring they have many opportunities to talk about multimodal texts.

## *Fostering an Enjoyment of Viewing*

The classroom program provides many opportunities for Beginning viewers to engage purposefully with a range of multimodal texts. In the context of different activities, students can read and discuss literary and informational picture books, follow icons on a computer program, engage with an online book or discuss a cartoon character from a popular television program. Through teacher modelling and discussion, students can develop an awareness of the features of different multimodal texts and the way that print and images work together.

Beginning viewers need opportunities to engage with a variety of multimodal texts in both planned and unplanned situations. While teachers will plan learning experiences with the students' specific viewing needs in mind, it is important that students are able to select and view texts for their own purposes and enjoyment.

This enjoyment can be achieved in the following ways:

- Read or view a text every day just for fun.
- Encourage students to read or view self-selected texts every day.

- Set up computers in the classroom and provide regular opportunities for students to read along and interact with e-texts and other computer programs, e.g. Kid Pix®, Max's Sandbox®.
- Provide a variety of viewing situations, for example, individually, in pairs, small and large groups.
- Ensure that a wide selection of multimodal texts is available in the classroom.
- Provide opportunities for repeated viewings of picture books, videos, websites and e-texts.
- Plan units of work that incorporate a range of multimodal texts, e.g. picture books, websites, films, etc.
- Provide authentic viewing experiences that link to students' interests and experiences, e.g. make a display of digital photographs taken on a class excursion.

The Internet provides teachers with a rich selection of digitally mediated texts and is an excellent resource for finding different forms of multimodal texts. While traditional print-based texts comprise two types of media — print and two-dimensional graphics — the Internet or web-based texts integrate a range of symbols, animations, video, audio, hyperlinks and interactive features.

There are many good quality websites available to teachers of students in the Beginning phase. A selection of recommended websites is available by linking to www.steps.com/weblinks.

The icons are easy to follow and, as students run the cursor over the web page, each icon highlights its function.

## *Viewing As a Social Practice*

Students interact with multimodal texts for different purposes at home, in the community and at school. Over time, they need to develop an awareness and understanding of different kinds of multimodal texts and their uses. They will benefit from discussions about:

- How is an email different from a postcard?
- Who might read or view this text?
- How is a cartoon different from a book?
- Do you think the events in this story could really happen?
- What did you learn from this multimodal text, e.g. DVD, picture book, sign, poster?
- Should we write a letter, send an email or make a list?
- Who do you think would enjoy this television program?
- What have you learnt about the characters in the story from the illustrations, photographs or diagrams?

For further information about Environment and Attitude, see
*Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning*:
- Chapter 5: Establishing a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment
*Viewing Resource Book*:
- Chapter 1: Use of Texts

# USE OF TEXTS

## Major Teaching Emphases

- **Expose students to a range of multimodal texts discussing purpose, e.g.** advertisements are trying to persuade.

- **Build awareness of simple organisational and structural features of different multimodal texts.**

- **Provide opportunities for students to produce a small range of multimodal texts for specific purposes, e.g.** a poster to persuade.

- **Provide opportunities for students to read and view a variety of multimodal texts, e.g.** web pages.

- **Encourage students to respond to texts in a variety of ways, focusing on the meaning of images and print.**

- **Model the use of print and digital electronic resources, e.g.** using a mouse and icons to access a computer game.

- **Teach students simple metalanguage associated with viewing and encourage its use, e.g.** point of view, layout.

## Teaching Notes

Beginning viewers benefit from interacting with a variety of multimodal texts to develop their awareness of the ways different texts are structured and the relationships between print, images and meaning. It is important that students have frequent opportunities to select and use texts for different purposes. These texts should include a balanced range of literary, informational and everyday multimodal texts. It is vital that teachers select texts that are delivered through a variety of different technologies, e.g. live, paper or digital electronic. Because young children are no longer living in a world dominated by print-based texts, they have increasing access to and mastery of a variety of multimodal texts delivered in different ways, e.g. computer games, DVDs, web-based texts such as e-books, websites, e-zines.

Students in this phase need to be encouraged to make predictions and connections between their own experiences and the new ideas and information introduced in multimodal texts. Teachers can scaffold discussions about multimodal texts and draw attention to the way images and print work together to build meaning in both literary and informational texts. Students should be encouraged to observe patterns and repetition in images and to consider how these may be connected with meaning. It is important that students are introduced to the specific metalanguage used when discussing multimodal texts.

If provided with support and the opportunity to examine different multimodal texts, Beginning viewers begin to effectively read, comprehend and use these texts. As the visual literacy researcher Morag Styles noted, teachers should never underestimate what a young child is capable of when they receive the appropriate explicit instruction, and scaffolded learning experiences. She notes that young children can 'interpret the subtle interplay of word and image, understand metaphor and allusion, relate pictures to cultural icons and generally show themselves capable of being sophisticated readers of multilayered illustrated texts' (E. Arizpe & M. Styles, 2003).

The focus for supporting students in this aspect is organised under the following headings:
- A Variety of Multimodal Texts
- Viewing and Responding to Multimodal Texts
- Producing Multimodal Texts
- Developing Metalanguage.

## A Variety of Multimodal Texts

Students in the Beginning Phase will benefit from activities that involve discussing and interacting with a variety of multimodal texts including picture books, e-stories, cartoons, DVDs, CD-ROMs, catalogues and photographs. CDs and taped stories are ideal for focusing on the contribution of sound effects and music to meaning.

### Picture Books

Images in picture books are used in different ways. In some picture books, the images alone are used to create the meaning while in other picture books, images and print work together to carry the storyline. When using picture books with students in the Beginning phase, the initial focus will be on the illustrations and the development of the story through the actions and concepts portrayed in the illustrations. Teachers can draw students' attention to the content of the illustrations, the composition and the layout and how these features change as the story develops. During and after reading, teachers can scaffold ways of thinking about the text through Think-Alouds or questions that focus on the following:
- What catches your eye first?
- What are the characters doing in the pictures?
- Where are the characters looking?
- What have you noticed about the setting?
- What have you noticed about the layout?

### e-stories

Electronic or digital storybooks, often referred to as e-texts, e-books or e-stories, are a form of interactive media texts. E-texts include both literary and informational texts. They combine multimedia effects such as video images, voiceovers, music, sound and animation with written text and illustrations found in traditional print-based texts. While these electronic stories and books do not replace printed or static text in early childhood classes, they do enrich and broaden the multimodal text experiences of young children.

The interactive nature of e-texts is very engaging for young students with the multimodal presentation, providing them with a range of options regarding the storyline and reading path they may choose to follow. As students are exposed to different elements they are provided with new opportunities to interact and respond to the text: live-action video, digital graphics, animations, movies, sound effects and interactivity of text. Teachers may choose from a wide range of e-texts now available in CD/DVD formats and from online sources. However, teachers need to be cautious in their selection as many e-books and e-stories may have little or no educational benefit. The overall quality of texts can vary significantly as many are disguised as a means of promoting a commercial product.

It is important that teachers become skilled at assessing and selecting age-appropriate e-texts that will support the literacy development of their students rather than becoming entertaining distractions.

The Tumble Book Library website provides an online collection of animated talking picture books that are easily accessible with a click of a button and requires no downloads. The International Children's Digital Library is an online resource located at the University of Maryland in USA that offers over a thousand online books in many different languages. Link to www.stepspd.com/weblinks to access these two websites.



**Figure 4.5 A student enjoys reading Janell Cannon's *Stellaluna* as an e-book.**

## Criteria for Evaluating
## CD/DVD Storybooks and e-books for Young Children

| Phase-appropriate | *Is the story's structure phase-appropriate?* Beginning students should only be exposed to simple structures, e.g. one main problem followed by a solution, while students in the Early phase can be exposed to more sophisticated structures, e.g. a series of problems and solutions. *Is the story's written register appropriate?* The written register of an e-text should be developmentally appropriate and if the text is too complex, the teacher should scaffold it. *Is the font size appropriate?* In order for children to follow the print in an e-text, the font size should be sufficiently large and clear enough and appropriate for the developmental phase. *Is the amount of text on each screen appropriate?* *Is the written text highlighted?* | **Yes/No** |
|---|---|---|
| Child control | Does the e-text include: <br>• separate modes? (e.g. read only, read and play, and play only) <br>• reading options? (e.g. forward and backward buttons, interrupting, restarting, re-reading text parts, overview screen) <br>• dictionary option? (Good quality e-books offer an interactive dictionary option to explain unknown words, phrases or concepts. This option format may include pictures, animations or oral explanations.) <br>• print option? (This option increases students' exposure to print and encourages them to work with text and images, e.g. copying letters, words, images and adding their own text and drawings.) <br>• activate illustration option? (This option prompts a still illustration to become activated; the illustration will move, talk, or respond in a particular way when the cursor is moved over it.) | |
| Clear instructions | Are the instructions in the e-text: <br>• simple and precise? <br>• accompanied by pictures? <br>• given verbally? | |
| Independence | Does the e-text allow students to master the program with minimal help? | |
| Process orientation | Does working with the e-text promote a sense of discovery? Do the activities align with the story's content? Does the e-text include a separate game mode? | |
| Technical features | Does the e-text: <br>• install easily? <br>• operate consistently? <br>• include music, animation, moving graphics, narration, etc.? | |

**Figure 4.6 A checklist for evaluating the suitability of e-texts for Beginning viewers (from Shamir, A. and Korat, O., 2006)**

## Cartoons

Most young children are very familiar with cartoons (both print-based and electronic) so they are an effective resource for developing an awareness of the different codes and conventions employed in this text form, e.g. the conveying of movement through animation techniques; how sound effects are used to convey meaning. Cartoons can also be viewed to focus on the development of character and storyline.

Students can be involved in activities that focus on the following:
- identifying structural and organisational features of cartoons
- identifying regular formats
- discussing types of characters
- discussing use of colour, music and sound effects
- discussing how movement and sequence are shown.

## Catalogues

Catalogues are a very useful resource for teaching the different codes and conventions of multimodal texts. For example, students may examine the use of captions, colour, layout, camera shots. They may consider the intended target audience.

Teachers can support Beginning viewers to identify the way different codes and conventions are used in catalogues. For example, teachers can ask students to look at a toy catalogue and:
- Sort pages according to colour, e.g. pages that are intended to appeal to girls can look very pink, while pages for boys can look very grey, blue or black.
- Cut out pictures of toys for boys and toys for girls and discuss what students notice.
- Discuss how a toy catalogue is different from a picture book.
- Discuss the use of photographs and what they notice about the children who appear in the photographs, e.g. they are all smiling, they all have blond hair, etc.



**Figure 4.7 A student selects her favourite toy from a toy catalogue**

## *Viewing and Responding to Multimodal Texts*

Teachers can scaffold students' interpretation of multimodal texts through modelling and discussion. It is essential to provide students with the opportunity to interpret and respond to a range of multimodal texts such as literary texts, e.g. picture books, films, television programs; information texts, e.g. reference books, charts, graphs, web pages; and everyday texts e.g. birthday cards, comics, posters, cartoons, signs, etc.

Students can learn about the relationship between print and images, colour and feelings, size and importance by interacting with a range of multimodal texts. They use a combination of personal experiences and their knowledge about codes and conventions to make meaning from a text, e.g. look at pictures and prices when reading catalogues; consider sound, movement and colour when playing a video game.

Scaffolded engagement with a range of multimodal texts reinforces important early viewing behaviours such as:
- recognising the beginning and end of a viewed text
- looking at images from left to right to support reading print
- using the title, cover and illustrations to predict what the book might be about
- using images to support decoding print
- combining print and images to construct meaning from a picture book
- recounting some of the main events of a viewed text
- comparing the representation of a character in a book with the same character in a film.

Students in the Beginning phase need regular opportunities to respond to texts in a variety of ways. These opportunities may include responding through structured or unstructured play, discussion, or by some creative endeavour such as drawing, painting, writing or role playing.

## *Producing Multimodal Texts*

Students in the Beginning phase benefit from opportunities to compose a variety of multimodal texts for different purposes and audiences. Many students have had experience with multimodal texts before coming to school and teachers can capitalise on some of the knowledge students already have.

In Modelled, Shared and Guided Viewing sessions teachers can demonstrate how and why multimodal texts are constructed in certain ways.

These sessions can be used to demonstrate the following:
- Multimodal texts are organised in certain ways, e.g. print, images, sound.
- Multimodal texts have special features, e.g. electronic texts have icons for navigating the text, screen prompts, drop-down menus.
- Multimodal texts have different purposes, e.g. a greeting card to socialise, a catalogue to persuade.
- Different multimodal text forms are constructed differently, e.g. an informational text may have headings, diagrams and maps; a literary text may have drawings and different font types.

It is important to give students opportunities to experiment with emerging knowledge about the production of multimodal texts. Opportunities may be provided in a number of ways in the classroom, for instance:

- establishing learning centres with a focus on producing multimodal texts for different purposes and audiences
- providing 'creative corners' containing the appropriate resources to encourage students to experiment to produce multimodal texts for that purpose, e.g. computer, digital camera and sample species in a botanist corner
- providing resources for students to produce multimodal texts for their own purposes, e.g. materials to make a Get Well card for a sick relative.

## Developing Metalanguage

The vocabulary used to talk about language is known as metalanguage. Teachers need to explicitly teach the language associated with viewing when discussing multimodal texts such as camera shots background, setting or layout.

Encouraging students to use the metalanguage of viewing when discussing multimodal texts will assist the meaning-making process, e.g. I think that it is a long shot because the boy looks far away. This knowledge also helps students to understand the directions and feedback provided by the teacher. It is important that teachers also use appropriate viewing language and terminology in their everyday interactions with students.



**Figure 4.8 Students use metalanguage as they engage in viewing tasks**

| What to do | Teachers could, for example: |
|---|---|
| Record discussions about images on the learning wall. | Use captions, speech bubbles. Label advertisements and posters focusing on salient (most obvious) features. |
| Introduce specific terminology. | Create word walls listing terminology being developed. Add pictures or diagrams to illustrate. |
| Support students in building their vocabulary. | Cut out relevant words in different fonts from magazines and newspapers. Develop lists. |
| Describe their viewing experiences. | Discuss, then add brainstorming notes to the learning wall. |

**Figure 4.9 Teaching metalanguage**

The semiotic systems contain the codes and conventions of viewing. These codes and conventions provide much of the specialised metalanguage of viewing. Detailed information about the suggestions of appropriate metalanguage can be found in the Conventions chapter of the Viewing Resource Book and the Conventions aspect of each of the phases of development.

For further information about the Use of Texts aspect, see *Viewing Resource Book*:
• Chapter 1: Use of Texts
• Chapter 3: Conventions
• Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

# Involving Students
## 1 Communication Centre

Setting up a learning centre in the classroom with a specific focus on communication provides an opportunity to develop awareness of the different ways information is shared. As students are involved in sending and receiving messages, they become aware of the features of printed and electronic texts.

Communication centre activities can include the following:
• Write daily messages on the laptop, which can be connected to the smart board/ interactive whiteboard.
• Students link up with another class and send a daily message to students in this class. Print and display the messages in the communication centre.
• Display the timetable for the day; add colour and different font styles to the display.
• Highlight classroom routines and procedures in the communication centre, e.g. no hat, no play.
• Ask students to write emails to individual students and encourage them to respond.
• With the class, compose an email to students at another school, town, city or country.

- Students can write postcards to individual students, sending them through the class post office box. Invite students to take the postcards home and view them with an adult.
- Provide access to the ABC e-cards website for students. For further information go to stepspd.com/weblinks
- Suggest that students write messages and reminders for their parents or care-givers, e.g. library day, fruit roster, etc.
- Ensure that the communication centre is equipped with paper and pencils, felt pens and crayons so students can write messages to a friend at school, the class or family members.
- Provide access to a digital camera.
- Provide access to a website that enables students to interact with a visual text by choosing their own colour and painting pictures.

## 2 Viewing Literacy Backpack

The Viewing Literacy Backpack enables students to engage in creative stimulating viewing activities at home. The viewing activities and instructions are placed in a backpack which students take turns in taking home. It may be necessary to hold a class meeting with parents to explain the purpose and process for making use of the Viewing Literacy Backpack. The information provided could include the following:
- the content and purpose of the backpack
- cue cards demonstrating the focus of each activity
- a sheet of interesting and age-appropriate websites
- questions and reflections sheets to prompt both the parents and their child
- guidelines for parents
- a journal to record activities
- a digital camera
- a toy character
- pictorial reflection sheets to rate visual texts they enjoyed.

Each student has the opportunity to take the Viewing Literacy Backpack home for a week. When the student returns the backpack, the student is encouraged to share his or her experience with the class. A space on the learning wall could be created for students who wish to display their work. Refer to the *Viewing CD* for the contents and the variety of support materials for the Viewing Literacy Backpack.



**Figure 4.10 Students explore the contents of a Viewing Literacy Backpack**

| Activity (Purpose) | Focus | Resources |
|---|---|---|
| Watch a cartoon. | To identify picture sequences and character actions | cartoon video or DVD |
| Make a poster. | To find out how colour is used | sample poster, card, crayons, scissors, glue or paste |
| Read a picture book. | To follow a sequence | picture books |

| Activity (Purpose) | Focus | Resources |
|---|---|---|
| Search through toy catalogues. | To identify the features of a toy catalogue e.g., colour or action lines | toy catalogues, scissors, paste, coloured paper |
| Find images you can touch. | To recognise texture in images | travel brochures, picture books |
| View an interactive DVD and comics. | To discuss different facial expressions | an interactive DVD and comics |
| View a picture book or e-story. | To role-play picture books and e-stories | picture books, e-stories, puppets, cardboard stage |
| Make flip books. | To show how movement is made | paper, scissors, pictures, glue, staples, a stapler |
| Use a digital camera to take a photograph. | To recognise close-up camera shots | collection of photos/camera shots, a digital camera |
| Find signs and symbols in advertising | To find the meaning of signs and symbols | advertising poster/collection of signs and symbols |
| Classify images in brochures and advertisements | To notice the difference between photographs and drawings | magazines, travel brochures, scissors, glue |
| Find basic maps and tables. | To develop an awareness of maps and tables | magazines, brochures, newspapers, junk mail |

**Figure 4.11 Activity, focus and resources chart for the Viewing Literacy Backpack**

## 3 Class Visual Literacy Journal

The Class Visual Literacy Journal is a place for students to record their thoughts and reflections about the different viewing activities they have participated in, as well as explore what they have learnt about visual texts. For example, students complete a storyboard about a class visit or include a photograph (with speech bubbles attached) taken during a class activity. The journal would include responses from individual students, class discoveries, questions and discussions and could be a book or an online document.

The journals may include:
- cuttings from magazines relating to a particular device, e.g. colour, size, camera shot
- students' responses to particular images
- visual representations of stories, e.g. story maps, storyboards
- examples of different signs and symbols and their meaning
- digital photographs.

**Figure 4.12 Different ways to present Visual Literacy Journals**

**Figure 4.13 Students use a class learning journal**

## 4 Draw and Label

This activity provides the opportunity for students to demonstrate what they have learned or noticed about a character in a book that has been read to them or a cartoon they have viewed. Students draw and label characters from the book or cartoon. The labels will capture the particular features of the character such as appearance, dress or emotions.

Extension activities could include:
* Draw a character from a text and attach a speech or a thought bubble.
* Draw, label and compare characters from two different books, e.g. different representations of aunts or grandmothers, etc.
* Draw and label stages in the growth of a plant. This can be done as a whole-class activity. Each week, students look at the bulb and draw it and then 'write' the label, which will have been modelled by the teacher.
* Draw and label changes in animals or insects, e.g. record the life cycle of tadpoles into frogs.
* Draw and label a sequence of frames involving a cartoon character.

## 5 Image Wall Stories

Image Wall Stories are an effective way of helping students focus on the role of images as they reconstruct a text they have read or viewed. Students can work as a whole class or in pairs to create Image Wall Stories.
* Read the text to students.
* Students retell the text in pairs, facing each other. (The text may be fictional or informational.)
* Work with students to elicit and record the main events of the text on a chart or on cards. It may be necessary to model the process of returning to the text to ensure that students record the events in the correct sequence.
* Students work in small groups as they illustrate the main events.
* Display the Image Wall Stories and refer to them frequently during classroom print walks.

## 6 Pop-Up/Novelty Picture Books

Pop-up and novelty picture books are a valuable resource in assisting students to understand the role of illustrations in making meaning. Students become aware that the 'pop-up' feature in these books contributes to knowledge of character's actions or the main events in a story.

- Set up a display of pop-up books together with other picture books and posters. The texts can be both literary and informational.
- Encourage students to observe and discuss the way the movement in pop-up books is integral to the development of the storyline or characters.
- Ask students to consider why the author chose to present the picture book in this way.
- Students then proceed to make their own pop-up books.

## 7 Working with Flip Books

Flip books are another excellent resource for demonstrating to students how a sense of movement is created and conveyed. This activity can also be linked to the development of cartoons. Flip books are easy to construct and young students enjoy using them. They can be used to depict stories, events, feelings, personal histories or scenes from a book. In this activity, students have the opportunity to discuss what they notice about how flip books work. They can also make their own flip book.

Flip books can be used to demonstrate to students:
- how movement is represented in still (flip books) and moving (cartoons) images
- the development of a character created by the class
- how cartoons and animated films are constructed
- the sequencing of a character's actions
- the changes in a setting depending on a character's actions
- the relationship between still and moving images
- simple hand-held animation.

## 8 Post Office Learning Centre

The Post Office Learning Centre will assist students in recognising all the visual imagery and environmental print associated with the post office such as the colours, fonts, logos, signs and symbols. Most young children will have had some experience in going to the post office so they will be able to make some connections as they engage in the learning tasks.

The Post Office Learning Centre provides an opportunity for students to identify the different functions of the post office and the visual texts that relate to these functions, e.g. students can engage with texts such as letters, postcards, parcels, guidelines, passports, advertising, and so on. Some of the following suggestions are designed to encourage students to focus on the various features of these texts and to discuss their differences.

- Set up a table with envelopes, faxes, old stamps, cards and postcards. Provide materials such as wrapping paper, boxes, old books, plastic cameras, posters, advertisements, catalogues, magazines, etc. Include items that can be purchased from a post office such as diaries, pencil cases, mobile phones, cards, aerograms, etc. Include a cash register.

- Set up a wall area nearby with a sheet of white paper on it, and a camera to take a passport photograph. (Display old passports, too.)
- Supply materials for students so they can make their own passports and visas.
- Provide a letterbox or students can make it so they can post letters, parcels and postcards.
- Collect postage stamps from around the world and discuss the images on them.
- Encourage students to make signs and symbols relating to a post office.
- Organise a class visit to the local post office.



**Figure 4.14 Students participate in a classroom Post-Office Learning Centre**

## 9 Featuring a Picture Book

The purpose of this activity is to enhance students' understanding of the link between illustrations and the development of meaning in picture books. Illustrations in picture books are designed to convey and show the actions and relationships between characters. Students are encouraged to notice patterns in images and the way characters are depicted in relation to each other.

- Look through a picture book with students and only focus on the illustrations.
- Allow students enough time to comment on the illustrations.
- Read the text that relates to each illustration.
- Discuss how the illustrations support the text or provide additional meaning. Prompt students to look closely at any differences and similarities in illustrations, for example, colour and line.
- Students work with a partner to make a modelling clay model of their favourite part.

## 10 Wordless Picture Books

Wordless picture books can be used in a range of different ways so students can understand how a story can be created through images only. Illustrations in textless books are so the viewer can easily understand the meaning of the story.

- Introduce the book to the class by asking students to look at the cover and title. Ask them to predict what they think the story might be about.
- Students then share with a partner what they think might happen in the story.
- Look at the book again with the whole class and then ask students to discuss their version of the story.
- Scribe students' sentences about each page or ask students to write speech bubbles.

The picture book may be revisited a number of times to encourage students to make meaning of the story.

# CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING

## Major Teaching Emphases

- **Provide opportunities for students to talk about multimodal texts and relate them to their own experiences.**

- **Draw students' attention to the way people, characters, ideas and events are represented in multimodal texts.**

- **Expose students to devices used in the environment, e.g.** repetition of symbols.

- **Discuss the audience and purpose of a range of multimodal texts.**

## Teaching Notes

Young students draw on a diverse knowledge and experiences as they attempt to interpret and make meaning from different multimodal texts. The meanings and interpretations they make will depend on their individual experiences at home and in the community.

Images in multimodal texts are constructed in many different ways. Drawings, photographs, diagrams, signs, and symbols — all of these visual images draw on the viewer's cultural knowledge to make meaning. To avoid making assumptions about students' particular knowledge and understandings, it is essential that teachers look critically and evaluate the cultural context and content of the images they are using. A particular image may portray a situation that some students have no experience of, e.g. using sun-cream at the beach. Therefore, teachers need to consider what additional information is required to assist students' interpret a particular image.

The focus for helping students to develop contextual understanding is organised under the following headings.
- Understandings about purpose and audience
- Discussions about signs and symbols
- Discussions about the representation of people and characters in multimodal texts.

### Understandings about Purpose and Audience

In this phase it is important that students begin to develop an awareness that all texts are constructed from a certain perspective and with a particular purpose and audience in mind. Students in the Beginning phase will engage with a range of both literary and informational texts. Students in this phase may have had experience with different kinds of fictional texts including picture books, cartoons, films, television programs, e-stories and comics. They may also be familiar with a range of informational texts such as posters, signs, logos and catalogues. They may be reading informational texts and viewing DVDs about real-life topics.

Discussions about multimodal texts may focus on the different ways information is communicated, for example, exploring how a picture book is different from a poster or comparing an advertisement for a toy on television with an advertisement in a magazine.

Some questions to encourage students to discuss texts are:

• What is the purpose of this text?
• Who do you think it was created for?
• What does the text make you think about?
• How has the text been created?
• Do you like this text and why?
• Who else do you think would like this text and why?
• Who wouldn't like it and why?

These understandings will be achieved over time as students become familiar with a variety of different multimodal texts in their daily classroom activities. The selection of texts to support specific viewing outcomes is a very important part of the planning process.

Texts are selected to develop students' understanding of the organisational features of a small range of print, electronic and digital texts. They need to develop an awareness of the different ways that meaning is constructed.

## Discussions about Signs and Symbols

Students in the Beginning phase typically make connections with what they hear and see through their own experiences. Their understanding of different signs and symbols will vary according to their interactions at home and in the community. For example, students living in the metropolitan area will most likely be aware of the function of stop signs on roads while students living in a rural area understand what is meant by a sign stating 'Trucks entering'. Some students will be aware of brand names on clothing while others will recognise logos and symbols through advertising on television.

Class learning experiences should focus on developing students' awareness of the following:
• connections between signs and locations
• how symbols are used to convey meaning, e.g. balloons on birthday cards
• the symbolic use of music in films
• the use of people and animals in advertising.

## Discussions about the Representation of People and Characters in Visual Texts

Students in the Beginning phase will be developing an understanding of what is meant by the word 'character' and may have their favourite characters from stories, cartoons or films. Teachers will model and scaffold discussions about characters that encourage students to identify similarities and differences in relation to appearance, personality, temperament and actions. As many of the characters in children's books and cartoons are animals, teachers may develop a unit of work around a popular animal character.

This may motivate students to develop their own animal character and to create their own picture book and/or cartoon series.

The following activities will support students' understanding of the concept of 'character'. Suggest that students:

- draw and label a character from a favourite book or film
- compare two different animal heroes
- make a visual map showing character actions
- draw a character and attach a speech or thought bubble to him or her
- discuss the adventures of an animal character in an e-book
- develop a storyboard for a new adventure of a favourite character.

In the context of work with different texts, students are encouraged to engage with characters in the following ways:

- comparing characters and people in texts with their own lives
- comparing characters from different books or films
- encouraging them to share opinions about why a particular character is liked or disliked
- encouraging them to think about what would have happened if a character had behaved differently
- inviting them to imagine themselves in the text, for example, as the main character.



**Figure 4.15 A student enjoys discussing the adventures of his favourite characters**



**Figure 4.16 These students have made masks to represent an animal character**

For further information about the Contextual Understanding aspect, see *Viewing Resource Book*, 2nd edn:
- Chapter 2: Contextual Understanding

# Involving Students

## 1 Character Rating Game

This activity introduces students to some of the vocabulary used to describe different characters, e.g. brave, sad, helpful, angry and happy. The teacher will select the criteria that will appropriately correspond with the texts to be used in the activity.

- The Character Rating Game involves students giving a rating to people or characters in a text. They base their rating on information in the text and their personal experiences.
- It would be beneficial to complete this activity as a whole class first, and then students can work in small groups.
- Students can choose two or three main characters from a range of visual texts.
- The characters are ranked according to selected criteria, e.g. the meanest, the kindest, the funniest or the smartest.
- Explain to students they will need to choose one or two actions, events or illustrations in the text to justify their ranking of the character against the criterion.
- Record their suggestions on a class chart so students can refer to them as a future reference and display the chart on the learning wall.

## 2 Like or Unlike

Like or Unlike is an activity that helps students make connections and comparisons between what they know about the world in which they live and the way people or characters are represented in a text.

Select a main character or person in a text, e.g. an aunt in a story.
Before reading the text, invite students to:
- share what they know about that type of person in real life, e.g. ask them to describe their aunts
- record their responses on a class chart
- draw and label a picture of their person
- share their drawings with the whole class, discussing the characteristics they have included.

Now read the selected text to the class. Encourage students to:
- discuss how the selected character or person in the text has been represented. Record their responses on a class chart.
- draw and label a picture of the selected character in the story
- compare the character in the text with the real-life person.

## 3 Signs and Symbols

Signs and Symbols is an activity that will assist in developing students' awareness of the meaning of signs and symbols in different locations in the community.
- Have students discuss the signs and symbols that are located around the playground, classroom and on the road near the school.
- Organise a walk with students around their school and the community to discuss the signs and their location.

- Discuss with students any other signs and symbols that they know of that are located around their local community, e.g. at the shopping centre, the sports centre, the swimming pool, building sites, etc.
- With a digital camera, take photographs of the various signs and symbols during the walk. Display photographs of these signs and symbols with students' comments underneath.
- Have students design and explain their own sign or symbol, e.g. they could design a sign/symbol that relates to safety in the classroom or playground.

## 4 Locate a Sign

Beginning students recognise many signs and symbols in their community because of the context in which they are located, e.g. stop sign, petrol station logo. This activity reinforces this understanding, as students have to match each of the sign cards to the location cards, e.g. a crosswalk on a road with a crosswalk sign. The Locate a Sign activity will assist students in understanding the relationship between a sign and its location. Students will match signs with locations and justify their choices.

As an extension activity, students can make their own signs and ask other students to try and guess where their location might be, e.g. you would find this sign at the beach.

## 5 Our Logo Scrapbook

Our Logo Scrapbook is an activity that develops students' awareness of the use of logos to convey meaning. In this activity, students focus on the concept of logos and discuss their features and purpose.

- Before introducing the activity, compile a number of different logos
- Ask students to look closely at the collection
- Students collect other examples of logos to discuss with the class. (Have an array of photos of logos, either digital or cut out from magazines.)
- Students sort the logos in different ways, e.g. they can categorise them according to education, food, sport, etc
- Display logos on the Learning Wall with captions underneath them or in a Class Logo Scrapbook
- Invite students to design their own family logo. Ask students to explain why they chose those features.

## 6 Devices Used in Informational Texts — Photographs

Students in the Beginning phase will often select informational picture books to read. They are attracted to the photographs and the content. Through informal discussion and planned modelling, the teacher develops students' awareness of the features of these texts such as:
- headings, indexes, contents page, glossaries
- photographs, diagrams, tables and maps.

To explore photographs, select an informational text that relates to a current class topic. Make sure the informational text has a number of large photographs. A non-fiction big book would be ideal.

- Ask students to look at the cover.
- Discuss the title and the topic and invite students to brainstorm what they know about the topic and list their ideas.
- Read through the text, making sure that students are focused on the photographs.
- Read the text again, and this time, guide an in-depth discussion about the details of the photographs.

Invite students to consider the following elements of photographs:
- camera shots (close-up and long-distance, etc.)
- the vector (the direction in which the eye moves across the image)
- text layout, e.g. are the photographs big or small? Are they in colour or black and white?
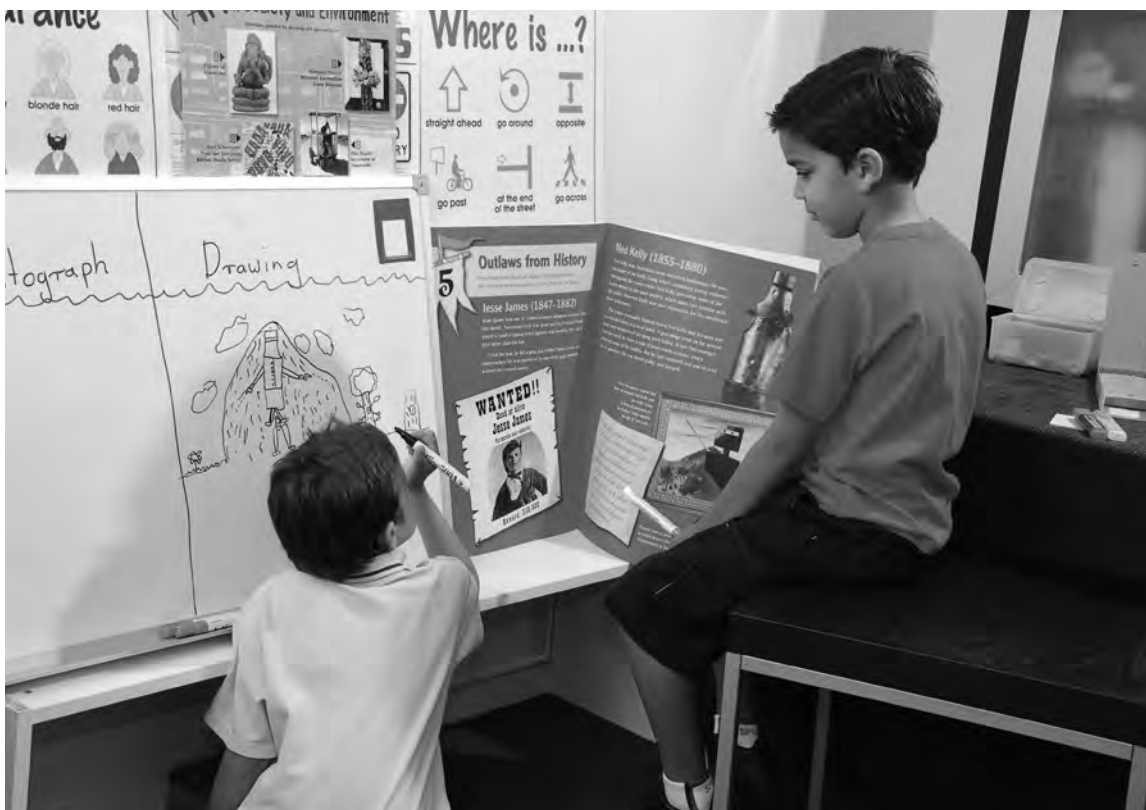


**Figure 4.17 Students compare the photographs to the illustrations in a visual text.**

## 7 What a Lot of Catalogues!

Searching through catalogues and brochures allows students to make connections and comparisons between what they know about the world in which they live and the ideas being presented in these types of visual texts.

This activity (adapted from Saskatchewan Learning) focuses on developing students' understanding of the decisions text designers make when creating catalogues or brochures, e.g. the way people or characters are represented, the use of colour and placement of images, etc.

- Collect a range of similar catalogues and brochures, e.g. junk mail, advertising catalogues focused on selling a particular product such as toys, clothing, books, or catalogues from a certain time of the year such as Christmas, Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Valentine's Day, etc.
- Students can skim through the catalogues. Discuss the kinds of items for sale and who would be most likely to buy them.
- Scaffold students' discussions about which images are presented in the different catalogues. Use guiding questions such as
  - Who or what can you see in the pictures?
  - In what way are the people in the photographs the same?
  - How do you think the people in the photographs look? e.g. do they look sad, happy, serious, etc.?
  - How do you know this, e.g. are they smiling?
  - What colour is used the most? Why do you think that is so?
  - Do pictures and drawings appear in the catalogue or realistic photographs?
  - Who do you think would buy things from this catalogue?
- Encourage students to collect catalogues and brochures they find appealing, and allow time for them to share their choices with others.

# CONVENTIONS

## Major Teaching Emphases

- ■ **Introduce new codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.**

- ■ **Provide opportunities for students to explore the use of the five semiotic systems (linguistic, visual, audio, gestural and spatial) when consuming a range of multimodal texts.**

- ■ **Develop an understanding of, and ability to use and critically reflect upon, the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.**

## Teaching Notes

Students in the Beginning viewing phase are becoming aware of how multimodal texts are constructed using two or more of the five semiotic systems and their associated codes and conventions. It is important that students are engaged in activities that develop their awareness of which semiotic systems are present in a text and what they contribute. They should also be developing an awareness of the specific codes and conventions used and be able to discuss these using the appropriate metalanguage.

> *The codes and conventions of the semiotic systems are the tools that enable the reader/viewer to work out the meanings of all the elements of the text and then consider how they come together to make meaning. The codes of each semiotic system provide a grammar and terminology that enables the reader/viewer to identify and describe how attention is captured, how emphasis of particular elements is created and therefore how meaning is shaped.* (Bull and Anstey, 2010: 34)

The support that Beginning Phase students need to develop understandings about the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems is organised under the following headings:
- Structures and features of multimodal texts
- What students need to know and be able to do with the conventions
  – Codes and conventions of the visual semiotic system
  – Codes and conventions of the audio semiotic system
  – Codes and conventions of the gestural semiotic system
  – Codes and conventions of the spatial semiotic system
  – Codes and conventions of the linguistic semiotic system.

**Figure 4.18 Students interact with websites and e-stories**

## *Structures and Features of Visual Texts*

Teaching and learning experiences are designed to support students in developing awareness of the features of multimodal texts. It is important that students in the Beginning phase are involved in learning activities with different kinds of multimodal texts. For example, they might be engaged in following the icons to read an e-book or play a computer game. During these activities, their attention could be drawn to features such as organisation and layout of these texts. Questions drawing attention to the features of the text should also draw attention to their function. *How did you know where to look? What was the feature of the text that told you this?* Ensure that you model and reinforce students' use of the appropriate metalanguage when conducting these discussions.

Throughout this phase of development, students will realise that:
* there are different kinds of multimodal texts, e.g. picture books, photographs, posters, advertising, maps, illustrations, cartoons, computer games, feature films, video clips
* texts have different features
* different multimodal texts have different purposes, e.g. to entertain or inform
* stories can be told in different ways and be conveyed by different technologies (live, paper and digital electronic), e.g. a picture book, e-book, cartoon, film, interactive computer game, plays
* multimodal texts may incorporate more than one semiotic system, e.g. a picture book uses both visual and linguistic semiotic systems when conveyed by paper, but an electronic picture book may also incorporate the audio semiotic system if the book is read aloud and sound effects or music are added.

## What Students Need to Know and Be Able to Do with the Conventions

Teachers and students will use a range of multimodal texts conveyed by paper, digital electronic and live technologies to explore the five semiotic systems and develop an understanding of, and ability to use, their codes and conventions. All learning activities will engage students and teachers in using the appropriate metalanguage for each semiotic system. At this stage of development many of these explorations will be conducted in concrete ways with hands-on activities, which will assist Beginning Phase students to make links between the concept and its associated codes and conventions. For example, when exploring the codes and conventions of the visual semiotic system and the codes and conventions of colour, students might draw conclusions and make statements such as 'Happy colours are bright and dull colours are sad'.

The following sections serve only as an introduction to the concepts and understandings about the codes and conventions of each semiotic system that should be developed in this phase. They focus on how these codes and conventions support the viewer in making meaning of, and constructing, multimodal texts. For a full description and definitions of all the codes and conventions for each semiotic system see Chapter Three of the *Viewing Resource Book*.

The following tables, 4.1 to 4.5, provide the codes and conventions of the semiotic system to be introduced in the Beginning phase. The metalanguage that students are introduced to around these concepts in the Beginning phase has been italicised. Ensure that teaching and learning activities around the Semiotic Systems engage students with the exploration of texts delivered via all three technologies: paper, digital-electronic and live.

## Codes and Conventions of the Visual Semiotic System

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Colour** | • Introduce the *colour wheel* to students and talk about the placement of colours upon it and how those close together are harmonious (*go together*) and those on opposite sides are discordant (*clash*). Look for examples of the use of harmonious and *discordant* colours and talk about why they may have been selected and how they add meaning to the text.<br><br>• Talk about the quality and type of colours that have been used in texts and how they convey information about mood, environment or emotion (*happy, sad, cool, warm, dark, solid, see-through*)<br><br>• Discuss the *placement* of particular colours in texts to lead the eye or draw attention.<br><br>• Create visual texts using colours to convey different emotions. |

| Colour continued | • When reading picture books to students do not immediately show the image but ask students picture it in their head and to think of colours they would use to show that scene or event or the emotions the character is feeling. Discuss, then examine the images accompanying the text and whether they use any of the colour schemes the students identified. Draw conclusions about particular colours and particular emotions, feelings or settings. |
|---|---|
| **Texture** | • Discuss the use of texture in texts to remind or show the viewer how things might *feel* if they could *touch* them. Consider the different emotions associated with particular textures. One activity might be to use a 'feely box' to help students understand this abstract concept and talk about the feeling of something and then look at it and relate the feel of something to its texture. Then look at how that texture is presented in various images. |
| **Line** | • Examine the use of *line* in texts. Discuss the quality of the *line* (*thick, thin, heavy, light, straight, curved, jagged*) and how it conveys particular meanings about, for example, emotion, mood or environment.<br><br>• Relate the use of line to concepts about *texture*<br><br>• Involve students in creating *lines* using different media and implements to convey different meanings<br><br>• Identify the use of *real* or *imaginary* lines to lead the eye of the viewer and talk about how this supports the viewer. |
| **Shape** | • Discuss how the *shape* of something supports the viewer in identifying things. Examples might be the use of silhouettes, icons and symbols in public spaces and on maps. |
| **Form and Juxtaposition** | • No items for this phase |
| **Point of View** | • Talk about where the viewer has been positioned by the producer of the text to view a scene or image (*bird's-eye, worm's-eye, eye level*) and how this influences what you see. The terms being used at this stage are designed to help students have a mental image that will aid their understanding of the concept. Role play would further assist: e.g. students lie on the floor like a worm and describe what they see and then compare that with looking down from a higher vantage point like a bird.<br><br>• Discuss why the viewer might want you to look from a particular place, how it supports you as a viewer or influences your meaning-making.<br><br>• Find examples in texts and use digital cameras to photograph the same objects from different points of view. Compare them and what they convey. |
| **Framing** | • Use digital cameras to examine how a scene or object changes when a *close-up shot, medium shot or long shot* is used. Compare them and what they convey. At this stage students need only understand that a close-up shot makes the object big and a long shot makes it small whereas a medium shot is in between. |
| **Focus** | • No items for this phase |
| **Lighting** | • Identify the use of *bright* and *dull lighting* in texts and talk about how they influence meaning-making by conveying information about such things as mood, environment or emotion. |
| **Editing** | • No items for this phase |

**Table 4.1 Codes and conventions of the visual semiotic system**

## Codes and Conventions of the Audio Semiotic System

Role-playing activities are a good live context for exploring the qualities of volume and audibility in a variety of contexts. However, reading aloud from picture books (delivered via paper technology) and viewing film, advertising, animations and websites that have sound are other contexts in which teachers can model and discuss these concepts.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Volume and Audibility** | • Students need to understand that a sound track might comprise *sound effects*, *voice* and/or *music*. They need to understand the different purposes of each in adding meaning. View texts that have some or all of these and compare.<br><br>• Introduce students to the concept of volume by exploring *loudness* and *softness* of *sound effects*, *music* and *voice* and when and why volume might be important to meaning making. For example, discuss how they might portray emotion.<br><br>• Identify and discuss *high* and *low* sounds (pitch) when they are used and how they support the viewer's meaning-making when viewing multimodal texts that include the audio semiotic system. |
| **Pace** | • Help students develop the concept of *fast* or *slow* paced music and how it relates to plot or action in film by comparing examples of both. |

**Table 4.2 Codes and conventions of the audio semiotic system**

## Codes and Conventions of the Gestural Semiotic System

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Bodily Contact** | No items for this phase |
| **Proximity** | No items for this phase |
| **Orientation or Body Position** | No items for this phase |
| **Appearance** | • Draw attention to the appearance of characters in text, in particular, *clothes, costume, hairstyle, jewellery, make-up*. Discuss how these factors contribute to the overall appearance of the character and how the viewer interprets the type of person that character might be.<br><br>• Compare and contrast different types of characters in texts and how their appearance is portrayed. |
| **Head Movement** | • Discuss how we use head movement to convey information, in particular, *nodding* and *shaking* the head to indicate agreement or disagreement.<br><br>• Look for examples of head nodding in texts and discuss if and how it adds to meaning. |
| **Facial Expression** | • Discuss how we use facial expression to convey information such as emotion or mood, in particular, the *mouth*, *eyes* and *eyebrows*. Consider how particular meanings are attributed to the following: *smile, frown, squint* and *eyebrow positions*.<br><br>• Find examples in texts and role play. |

| Kinesics | • Explore how we use body movement to convey information such as directions, emotion or mood, in particular, the head, arms, legs, hands and feet. |
| | • Find and compare examples in texts and role play. |
| **Posture** | • Examine the different postures that people and characters use in texts and consider if the posture provides any additional meaning to the viewer, for example, if a character is *sitting slumped* in a chair or the character moves from *standing tall* to standing in a more slumped position. Talk about whether this provides information about the how the character is feeling emotionally and/or physically. |
| | • Look at the different body shapes of characters too and consider, for example, what being *tall* or *short* might convey. |
| **Gaze and Eye Movement** | • Talk with students about how examining where a character is *looking* can provide extra information. Find some examples in various text forms (magazines, picture books, brochures, signs) to demonstrate this and then ask students to find some of their own. Use plastic overlay to draw a line from the person's eyes to where they are looking to make this more concrete at the beginning. Repeat with stills in moving images, such as advertising, where characters look admiringly at a product. |
| | • When looking at film or using live texts, such as plays and role-playing, consider the *length of a look* and what additional information that might convey. It would be useful to get students to first think about this in relation to their everyday life. For example, discuss with them how long they might stare at someone with an angry expression if they were upset. Would they just quickly look at them or *look* for a longer time? |

**Table 4.3 Codes and conventions of the gestural semiotic system**

## *Codes and Conventions of the Spatial Semiotic System*

At this stage of the students' development, teaching and learning activities around the spatial semiotic system are probably best explored in terms of two-dimensional texts delivered on page and screen. Alternatively, role-playing a single scene or setting and photographing it might also be a useful way of applying concepts. Jointly constructing a page or screen layout of words and pictures using or not using frames and discussing which is best and why would be another application of the concepts.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Position** | No items for this phase |
| **Distance** | No items for this phase |
| **Framing** | • Introduce the concept of a *frame* to students as a way of *bringing together* objects, people or information on a page or screen and *separating* them from others. Look at examples in picture books, particularly where *frames* are used across the page to separate scenes. |
| | • Discuss how the different ways in which *frames* have been used on page or screen support the viewer in making meaning or interpreting things such as the sequence or order of events or where to look. |

**Table 4.4 Codes and conventions of the spatial semiotic system**

# Codes and Conventions of the Linguistic Semiotic System

At this stage students need to have opportunities to develop understandings that codes and conventions will be selected and used in particular ways in different text forms. It is important to ensure that students are exposed to factual texts and are not limited to fiction. Dealing with a range of contexts, particularly more informal settings and spoken language, is a critical factor in the linguistic semiotic system. These understandings will come from opportunities to apply their knowledge critically across all curriculum areas, not only when consuming texts but also when they are producing them. When engaging in these activities students should consider the importance of the linguistic semiotic system in relation to the other semiotic systems especially when dealing with texts delivered by live and digital technologies.

Teachers should consult the relevant English Curriculum Scope and Sequence for their teaching context for a comprehensive list.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and Suggested Focus for Teacher Talk |
|---|---|
| **Parts of Speech** | Introduce the concept of a *word* as being made up of combinations of letters and/or syllables that make sense. Students need to understand that:<br><br>• *Words* make up what we call language. Practise using words accompanied by different facial expressions, tones of voice and gestures to show how combinations of semiotic systems can produce different meanings.<br><br>• Language, when it is written, is unlike spoken language in everyday use. Provide many contexts where using the audio, gestural and spatial semiotic systems changes the emotions that are expressed.<br><br>• *Words* can be written down using letters of the alphabet. Talk about how varying context, purpose or audience changes the *words* that are used.<br><br>• Recognise that texts, both stories (imaginative) and those that provide information (factual), are made up of *words*. Look at simple factual (informative) texts to see how some *words* are repeated through the text.<br><br>• *Words* can be used to express needs. Provide opportunities to illustrate how varying volume and pace impacts on expressing emotions. Practise turn taking as a way of supporting people to express their needs.<br><br>Once the concept of *word* is understood then nouns, pronouns and verbs can be introduced.<br><br>• *Nouns* and *pronouns* can be introduced as having a naming function (or job) to represent places, people, ideas and things. The visual semiotic system can be used through the use of images (both still and moving) to demonstrate how *nouns* and *pronouns* are represented. Practising the identification and use of *nouns* and *pronouns* frequently through the use of spoken activities, rather than only through written exercises, allows for more practice and more variety of contexts to be presented.<br><br>• *Verbs*, as action words, can similarly be presented through the visual semiotic system using both still and moving images. *Verbs* can also be represented using the gestural semiotic system through the use of gestures to demonstrate actions. |

| Punctuation | Once students understand that language can be spoken or written (see Parts of Speech above) then they will understand the need to distinguish sentences in written language using punctuation. |
|---|---|
| | • Students can be asked to use pause, tone and emphasis in spoken language (using the audio semiotic system) to identify each separate sentence. |
| | • *Capital letters* and *full stops* can be used to demonstrate how punctuation marks can be used to do the same work in written language as pause does in spoken language. |
| | • *Question marks* and *exclamation marks* can then be used to demonstrate how punctuation marks can be used to do the same work in written language as variation of tone and emphasis do in spoken language. The use of facial expression and gestures (the gestural semiotic system) can be used to demonstrate the difference between *exclamations* and *questions*. |
| | • The audio and gestural semiotic systems can also be used with spoken language to demonstrate how pause, tone, emphasis, facial expression and gesture can be used to distinguish between *statements* and *commands*. Again, spoken activities, rather than only written exercises, allow for more practice and more variety of contexts to be presented. This practice enables students to understand how punctuation marks allow emotion to be expressed and meaning to be clarified in written language. |
| **Phrases, Clauses and Sentences** | Once students understand that language can be spoken or written then they will understand the need to distinguish sentences in written language in a similar way to what is done in spoken language using such things as variation in pause, tone and emphasis. |
| | Students need to understand that: |
| | • Words, and groups of words, construct things called sentences. |
| | • *Sentences* are the key units used to express ideas. |
| | • *Sentences* are formed using groups of words that express a complete thought. |
| | • *Sentences* that have a verb and a subject are *simple sentences* and contain parts that represent 'What's happening?' and 'Who or what is doing or receiving the action?' |
| | Familiarisation with the concepts of *sentences* and *simple sentences* can be achieved using print, live and digital electronic technologies. *Sentences* need to be presented not only in spoken form (in discussions and other conversations) and in written form (in personal stories and in books), but also as part of images, diagrams and on websites. *Sentences* need to be represented using the linguistic, audio and visual semiotic systems. |
| **Cohesive Devices** | As students begin to understand the differences between *written* and *spoken text* they need to come to an appreciation of how *language* becomes connected into a logical order to aid meaning (coherence). |

| Cohesive Devices continued | Students need to understand that:<br><br>• *Repetition* of certain words (nouns) helps relate sentences to one another to aid meaning.<br><br>• Replacement of nouns with pronouns still relates sentences to one another but also helps the even flow of language as it is *spoken* or *written*.<br><br>• The use of 'and' continues the meaning contained in the sentences while the use of 'but' introduces a *contrasting* meaning. |
|---|---|

**Table 4.5 Codes and conventions of the linguistic semiotic system**

For a full description and definitions of all of the codes and conventions for each Semiotic System, see *Viewing Resource Book*, 2nd edn:
• Chapter 3: Conventions

# Involving Students

## 1 Photograph Gallery

Students in the Beginning phase are introduced to the idea of long and close-up camera shots as part of learning how images are constructed.

• Discuss and review with students the different ways that photographs can be taken and how they can recognise different views and perspectives.
• Invite students to look through a range of photographs from magazines and to sort each one according to whether they think it is a close-up view or a long shot.
• Each student selects their favourite photograph and stick it onto a piece of paper.
• With the teacher's assistance, they write a caption and place it underneath the photo. The caption can also describe the type of camera shot.
• In pairs, students discuss their photographs.



**Figure 4.19a A close-up perspective**



**Figure 4.19b A long-shot perspective**

## 2 Viewing Learning Centre

This learning centre provides an opportunity for students to select a text to read and then choose a follow-up activity to do.

- Set up a display with a variety of visual texts such as books, comics, magazines, TV guides and posters.
- Provide films (DVDs and videos), interactive books, CD-ROMs, DVD stories or a laptop computer for e-literature.
- Place some cushions and beanbags in the learning centre so students watch the visual texts.
- Prepare the activities presented on the *Viewing CD*.

A website located at stepspd.com/weblinks is recommended for this activity.

## 3 Birthday Card Learning Centre

As they develop as viewers, students begin to recognise different signs and symbols in familiar contexts, e.g. road signs, the post office, banks, petrol stations, etc. As most students in the Beginning phase will be familiar with birthday cards, they are an excellent resource to develop their awareness of the way images construct meaning, e.g. cake and candles on a card mean it is someone's birthday.

- Promote discussion about birthday cards and ask students to think of the typical features and symbols that appear on them.
- Set up a display with a variety of different birthday cards.
- Discuss the signs and symbols on the cards, their purpose and the audience they are intended for.

Encourage students to identify the devices used by card manufacturers, for example:
– candles, cakes, balloons, animals, numbers, cartoon characters and flowers
– different birthday cards for boys and girls
– cards for each age
– funny cards
– collage cards.
- Students categorise the cards according to colour, fonts and the size of the image on the front of the card.
- Students may like to design and make cards for a family member. Suggest that they consider some of the design techniques already explored. Provide students with a supply of old cards, envelopes, postcards, crepe paper and birthday wrapping paper to make their cards.
- Provide a computer laptop for making an e-card.
- Set up a post box so students can post their cards. Have a student act as a postie at the end of each day and deliver them to students.

## 4 Exploring Cereal Boxes

Cereal boxes are engaging texts to use with students in the Beginning phase. Activities planned around these texts are designed to encourage students to use visual cues and symbols to help make meaning. Students are involved in a range of activities in which they focus on the different features of the cereal boxes, such as the use of colour, different fonts, numbers and images. The teacher may select a range of cereal boxes for students to work with. Activities may include:

- Listing the different features found on the cereal boxes, e.g. photographs, diagrams, numbers, illustrations, cartoon characters, etc.
- Identifying the main colours that appear on the boxes.
- Discussing the dominant images and suggesting why they have been chosen.

Students select their favourite cereal box and explain why it is their favourite.

## 5 What about the Setting?

This activity with picture books is designed to focus students' attention on the setting of images. This activity reinforces information that students will have gained from previous discussions about setting. The teacher introduces a picture book and, as the story is read, focuses students' attention on the setting. With a second reading of the text, students are asked to describe what they notice about changes in the setting and how this may connect with the story line. Focus questions may include:

– What have you noticed about the setting?
– What does the setting tell you about the main character?
– How has the setting changed?
– What does the setting tell you about the weather?

Look at the setting and tell your partner what you think is going to happen next.

Extension activities may include:

- adding another frame to a picture book
- changing the setting of a well-known story
- using the setting to sequence a series of pictures.

## 6 Photographer of the Week

Photographer of the Week helps students to recognise the difference between a close-up shot and a long shot. Students review what they have learnt about camera shots recorded in the class viewing journal. They look at a range of different pictures from magazines, classifying them as long, medium or close-up shot. When students have discussed and found camera shots, e.g. close-up, head only, long shot, people and setting, introduce them to a digital or video camera.

- Discuss with students the careful handling of the digital or video camera.
- Ensure all students are able to identify the difference between close-up and long shots.
- Students can take a number of close-up and long shots during the week.
- At the end of the week, the class can look at and discuss the photographs.
- Save and store the students' photographs onto a memory stick for reference later in the year, or to send home with their individual assessments.
- Photographs can be displayed on the classroom laptop as a screen saver.

## 7 What Else Do We Know?

What Else Do We Know? is an activity designed to further develop student awareness of the way images support the text, e.g. images may provide additional information.

- Read a story to the class but do not show the illustrations to them.
- Invite students to discuss their impressions of the main character. As they converse, record their ideas onto the whiteboard.
- Show the illustrations to students.
- Ask them what else they know about the character.

- As a class, create some speech bubbles for the character that can be placed onto the illustrations. The speech bubbles can be written on paper and attached to the relevant page.

## 8 Discovering Texture

Discovering Texture is an activity that provides students with the opportunity to consider how texture may be used in visual texts to enhance their engagement with the text and to convey a more realistic meaning. Illustrators and text designers will often use a variety of different media or visual elements to create a visual image. Students in this phase of development will be reading many picture books that include texture as a major design element. When reading these texts, children will often run their fingers over the pages in an attempt to 'feel' the image, e.g. **the softness of grass or the smoothness of a mirror**. Jeannie Baker is a well-known Australian author and illustrator who uses the technique of collage to illustrate her stories. She creates texture from objects and materials found in nature and daily life.

Illustrations may also have the appearance of texture created by patterns and the layering of colour, paints, line and other design elements. Three-dimensional media such as folded paper and modelling clay also add a textured impression to an illustration.

- Select and display a variety of picture books that are illustrated using different textured media. Teachers may choose to concentrate on one author or display a selection from various illustrators.
- Allow students enough time to look at the books and invite them to share their responses with other students.
- As a whole class, try to identify the different materials that have been used to create the illusion of texture.
- Discuss whether the illustrations support the text or add an extra element to the story.
- Encourage students to discuss their favourite text or page and to explain why they like it.

### Extension Activity

- Allow time for students to create their own textured illustrations.
- Teachers and students can be involved in the collection of suitable collage material.
- Using photographs as the collage background can be a simple way to engage students at this phase. Students can then stick various materials onto the photographs to give a sense of texture, e.g. **they may use cuts or scraps of material to simulate clothing**.
- Illustrations may be individually produced or created as a whole-class activity.



**Figure 4.20 An example of Jeannie Baker's textured collage artwork (from *Millicent* by Jeannie Baker)**

# PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES

**Major Teaching Emphases**

- **Teach students strategies for comprehending and producing multimodal texts, e.g.** connecting , predicting, comparing.

- **Teach students to select multimodal texts for different purposes, e.g.** DVD for information, interactive book for enjoyment.

- **Model how to reflect on the viewing process and encourage students to do the same.**

- **Model simple ways to plan and produce multimodal texts, e.g.** make a sketch for a poster or an e-card.

## Organisation of the Processes and Strategies Aspect

There are several differences in the organisation of the Processes and Strategies aspects in the *Viewing Map of Development*. Both the Teaching Notes and the Teaching and Learning Experiences (Involving Students) are in *Viewing Resource Book*, Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies. The rationale for this difference in organisation is that the processes and strategies of viewing are not conceptually hierarchical and therefore not phase-specific. In all phases, a variety of viewing processes and strategies needs to be introduced, developed and consolidated.

What varies from one phase to the next is the growth in:
- the number and integration of strategies used throughout the process of viewing
- the awareness and monitoring of strategies
- the efficiency in the use and selection of strategies
- the ability to articulate the use of strategies in the process of viewing
- the awareness of how the use of strategies helps with making meaning
- the ability to locate, select and evaluate texts.

# Supporting Parents of Beginning Viewers

## General Description of Beginning Viewers

Beginning viewers are able to make simple interpretations of the visual texts they see around them. They are able to identify symbols and signs used in familiar contexts, e.g. pictures and prices in catalogues, road signs, bank logos, etc. They can construct simple meanings from illustrations and other visual cues such as setting, use of colour and facial expressions. They respond to visual texts by making connections to their own lives or predicting what might happen next or acting out part of the story.

## Supporting Beginning Viewers at Home

A parent brochure that provides many valuable tips on supporting young viewers in the home can be located on the *First Steps Viewing CD*. The brochure contains information about the kinds of viewing activities that Beginning students will be engaged in at school and why the teaching of viewing is an important part of the school curriculum. It also offers information about appropriate viewing practices, and the ways that parents or care-givers can help their children develop critical viewing habits.

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**Parent Brochure (see Parent Brochure 1)**
1 Why Teach Viewing?
2 The Development of Viewing
3 Supporting Your Child
4 Resources
5 Things to Do When Viewing with Your Child
6 Viewing at School.
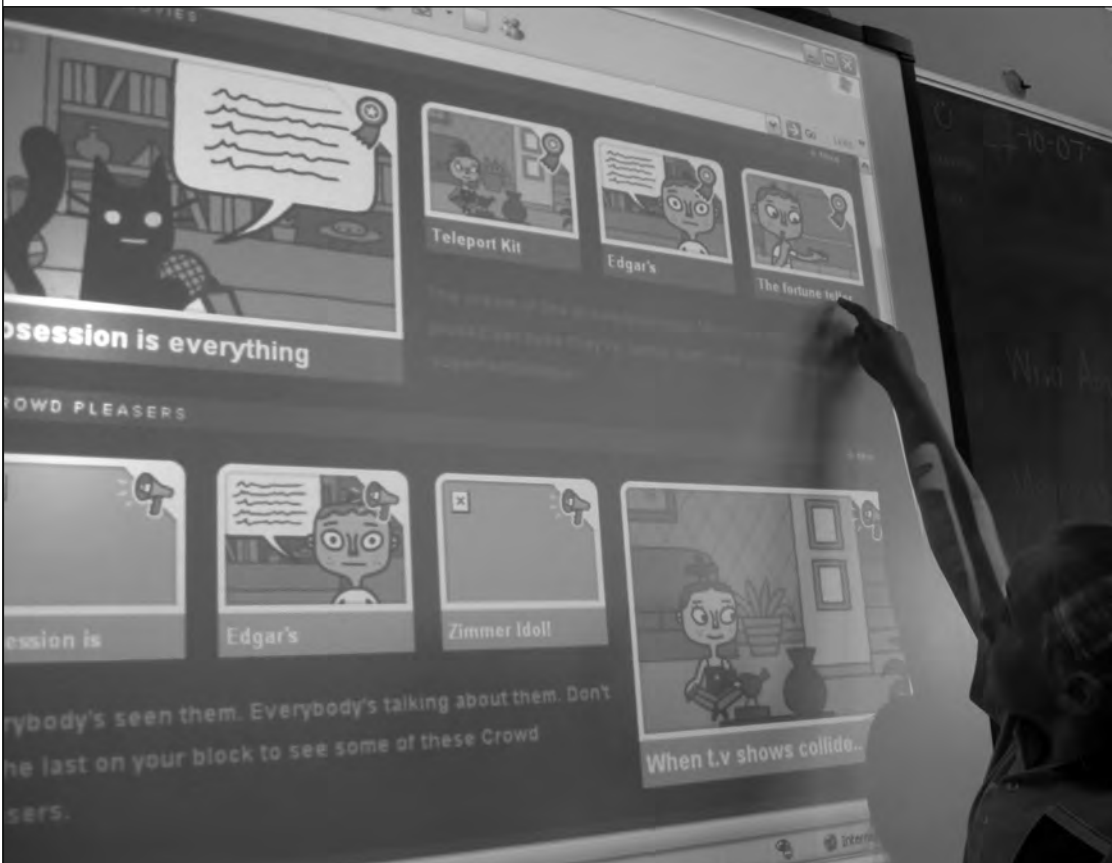
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**CHAPTER 5**

# Early Viewing Phase



Figure 5.1

## Global Statement

*Students make meaning and respond to a small range of multimodal texts that have familiar topics and predictable text structure. They demonstrate their awareness of the organisational and structural features and the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems in a range of multimodal texts. They use some specific codes and conventions, when producing simple multimodal texts.*

# Early Viewing Indicators

## Use of Texts

◆ **Makes meaning from a small range of multimodal texts by using images and print and identifying key events and supporting details.**

◆ **Produces a small range of multimodal texts to achieve a specific purpose,** e.g. greeting cards, warning signs.

◆ **Selects information in multimodal texts to achieve a simple purpose,** e.g. selects clip art to make a poster, explains that this pictograph shows how students travel to school.

◆ **Identifies some of the organisational and structural features of multimodal texts,** e.g. photos, line drawings, graphs.

• Makes simple inferences from information and images in multimodal texts.

• Identifies some key events from information that is closely related in a multimodal text.

• Retells ideas from multimodal texts commenting on things learned or questions raised.

## Contextual Understanding

◆ **Expresses an opinion about multimodal texts but may not always be able to justify it,** e.g. I like this video game because it's cool.

◆ **Talks about how characters, people, events and ideas are represented in multimodal texts.**

◆ **Identifies the purpose of a small range of multimodal texts,** e.g. email, poster, video game, factual book.

◆ **Selects appropriate multimodal texts to suit a small range of purposes.**

◆ **Links familiar devices with their purpose,** e.g. loud music to indicate fear.

• Recognises that multimodal texts represent real or imaginary experiences.

• Identifies simple similarities and differences in representations of people in different multimodal texts.

• Produces multimodal texts with little regard for purpose or audience, e.g. chooses bunnies for an adult male birthday card.

• Can identify some devices used in multimodal texts.

## Conventions

◆ **Recognises the use of simple codes and conventions of the semiotic systems when making meaning from multimodal texts,** e.g. visual – lighting.

◆ **Uses simple codes and conventions of the semiotic systems when creating multimodal texts.**

• Links familiar signs and symbols in the environment with a function, e.g. fast food symbol – hamburger.

• Recognises some of the features of multimodal texts in point and electronic forms, e.g. photographs, line drawing, animation images.

• Identifies the opening and closing of programs using the codes and conventions of the linguistic and audio semiotic systems.

• Draws on some organisational features of multimodal texts, e.g. headings, credits.

## Processes and Strategies

◆ **Uses a limited range of strategies for comprehending and producing multimodal texts,** e.g. inferring, comparing.

◆ **Draws upon a small knowledge base from the semiotic systems when comprehending and producing multimodal texts,** e.g. linguistic, visual.

◆ **Decides how own multimodal text will be planned.**

• Makes connections and confirms predictions using codes and conventions, e.g. audio, visual.

• Makes comparisons between familiar multimodal texts, e.g. may recognise similar images in a familiar picture book with a film version.

• Draws inferences from directly stated information, images and supporting detail.

• Beginning to self-monitor own viewing to maintain continuity of understanding, e.g. replay film or refer to previous illustrations.

# Major Teaching Emphases

## Environment and Attitude (see p. 88)

- Create a supportive classroom environment that provides access to a range of multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to select their own multimodal text materials according to interest or purpose.
- Foster students' enjoyment of purposeful viewing.
- Encourage students to explore new technologies when viewing.

## Use of Texts (see p. 92)

- Continue to expose students to a variety of multimodal texts, discussing the features of each, e.g. purpose, audience and structure.
- Teach students about the purpose, organisation and structural features of a range of multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to use the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems to produce a range of multimodal texts for different purposes.
- Provide opportunities for students to read, view and respond to a variety of multimodal texts using explicit information.
- Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with viewing, e.g. lighting, gesture, gaze.

## Contextual Understanding (see p. 102)

- Provide opportunities for students to share and justify opinions and feelings about multimodal texts.

- Draw attention to the different ways ideas, events, characters and people are represented in multimodal texts.
- Discuss the devices used in the construction of multimodal texts, e.g. the colour red is used as a warning.
- Continue to discuss the target audience and purpose of a range of multimodal texts.

## Conventions (see p. 110)

- Introduce, revise and extend the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.
- Teach students to use and critically analyse the codes and conventions used in a range of multimodal texts conveyed by paper, digital electronic and live technologies.
- Examine the codes and conventions of different text types used in learning areas.
- Develop students' understanding that the purpose, audience and context of a text will influence the selection and use of particular codes, conventions and semiotic systems.

## Processes and Strategies (see p. 127)

- Continue to teach students strategies for comprehending and producing multimodal texts, e.g. navigating, self-questioning.
- Model how to reflect on the viewing process and encourage students to do the same.
- Teach students a variety of ways to plan and produce multimodal texts, e.g. use a graphic organiser to plan a news broadcast.

# Teaching and Learning Experiences

## ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE

**Major Teaching Emphases**

■ Create a supportive classroom environment that provides access to a range of multimodal texts.

■ Encourage students to select their own multimodal text materials according to interest or purpose.

■ Foster students' enjoyment of purposeful viewing.

■ Encourage students to explore new technologies when viewing.

## Teaching Notes

Students in the Early viewing phase are using simple print-based, digital and electronic texts effectively for a range of purposes. An environment that supports Early viewers is one that provides opportunities for students to explore and interact with a range of multimodal texts including literary, informational books and everyday texts such as picture books, interactive CDs, cartoons, comics, films, web pages, catalogues and brochures.

As students engage in learning experiences at school, they will benefit from participating in activities such as:
• interacting and engaging with multimedia storybooks
• interacting with information presented on a CD-ROM
• sending and receiving emails
• responding to cartoons
• reading websites
• discussing devices used in illustrations in picture books, catalogues, brochures, videos and e-texts
• interpreting tables and diagrams
• creating photo stories
• exploring animation.

Early viewers need to have access to an assortment of multimodal texts: texts that they can understand and use without support; texts that they can read with support from the teacher; and texts that they may not be able to read but can browse through.

The focus for developing a positive attitude and providing a supportive environment for Early viewers is organised under the following headings:

- Creating a supportive classroom environment
- Encouraging discovery and exploration
- Fostering an enjoyment of viewing
- Viewing as a social practice.

## Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment

Teachers need to ensure that students have the opportunity, on a daily basis, to engage with a range of multimodal texts. This range will include different types of multimodal texts such as films, computer games, picture books, signs and magazines. It is important to ensure that students are working with both literary and informational texts. Planning considerations for supporting students in the Early phase of development will not only include specific viewing lessons but also as part of other learning areas. For example, in a science or society and environment lesson, students may view a video or an online digital learning resource to gather background information.

### Print Walk

The daily print walk provides an opportunity to focus on particular codes and conventions used in multimodal images. Teachers may ask students to identify similarities and differences in dominant images that appear in texts, such as in picture books or class posters around the classroom; or categorise different camera shots used in a range of images.

### Learning Centres

Well-designed learning centres can provide opportunities for students to consolidate and further develop their understandings about the way multimodal texts work. The teacher's responsibility is to ensure that the activities, while carefully scaffolded, require some level of problem solving for students.



**Figure 5.2 Students participating in a classroom print walk**

*Internet Cafe*

The Internet cafe learning centre allows students to become familiar with and engage with community texts, in this instance the cafe/digital experience. Students need to be involved in discussing and setting up the learning centre. This may include setting up tables for the Internet cafe, creating the menu, planning the layout 'serving' the customers. An internet cafe learning centre may include:

- paper and digital electronic resources such as menus, posters, advertisements, recipes (print and e-recipes) and TV shows presented on DVDs
- laptops with relevant interactive games
- instructions to access the Internet and purchase options.

*Television Station*

This learning centre assists in developing students' knowledge of camera shots and camera angles.

- Display an old television screen, a director's chair, a microphone, children's karaoke machines, cameras and lights.
- Set up a news presenter's desk with a laptop and a desk for reporting the weather.
- Provide props such as signs, labels, symbols, a lamp and TV magazines.
- Invite students to role-play television jobs, such as TV presenter, camera operator or director.
- Provide an opportunity for students to plan and produce a short film using a video camera.

## Encouraging Discovery and Exploration

Students can be encouraged to discover and explore paper and digital electronic resources in the following ways:

- Encourage them to select their own multimodal texts to view independently or with a friend.
- Invite them to respond to texts in their own way, e.g. through discussion, drawing, role play, email.
- Invite them to share their favourite texts with others, e.g. a student might explain and interpret an interactive CD-ROM story to another student and explain how the different camera shots were taken.
- Model thinking aloud about an aspect of the text, e.g. comment on the part of an image that your eyes are drawn to or demonstrate which icon to click on to activate the sound.
- Invite students to bring their favourite multimodal texts from home to show the class.
- Introduce them to new e-books and other paper and digital electronic texts.
- Incorporate the use of digital electronic texts into classroom activities.
- Ensure students have many opportunities to talk about their learning and ask questions.

## Fostering an Enjoyment of Viewing

Early viewers will be regular consumers of multimodal texts such as picture books, cartoons, video games, television, films, advertising and signage. While teachers will plan learning experiences with specific learning needs in mind, it is important that

these activities do not detract from the enjoyment students will receive by interacting with these texts. This enjoyment can be achieved in the following ways:

- Read or view a multimodal text with the class every day just for fun.
- Provide time every day for students to read or view texts they have selected themselves.
- Set up computers in the classroom and provide regular opportunities for students to read along and interact with e-books.
- Provide a variety of viewing situations, e.g. individually, in pairs, small groups and large groups.
- Ensure that a wide selection of both paper and digital electronic texts is available in the classroom.
- Provide opportunities for repeated viewings of materials currently being used so students develop an understanding over time.
- Incorporate a range of multimodal texts, e.g. picture books, graphs, maps, posters, charts, signs, websites and films in the learning program.
- Share your reading and enjoyment of multimodal texts and explain how you make meaning from them, why they might appeal to students, or why they might be a helpful source of information.
- Accept and praise diverse interpretations of texts, encouraging students to share and consider different points of view.
- Provide authentic viewing experiences that link to students' interests and experiences, and have a clear purpose or focus.
- Create well-organised, consistent routines for viewing experiences.

## *Viewing As a Social Practice*

Students interact with multimodal texts for different purposes at home, in the community and at school. Over time, they develop an awareness of the ways these texts are used in different contexts. Students in the Early phase need to be supported in developing their understanding of the connection between the text, audience and purpose. They benefit from discussions involving questions such as:

- For whom do you think this text was designed?
- Should we write a letter, send an email or write a list?
- How would you change this cartoon to make it more suitable for younger children?
- Who do you think is the target audience of this page in the toy catalogue?
- How would you change this comic strip to make it more interesting for girls/boys?
- What else have you learnt about the characters in the story from the illustrations?
- Does our photo story show everything we did at the zoo?

For further information about Environment and Attitude, see *Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning*:
- Chapter 5: Establishing a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment
*Viewing Resource Book*:
- Chapter 1: Use of Texts

# USE OF TEXTS

## Major Teaching Emphases

- **Continue to expose students to a variety of multimodal texts, discussing the features of each, e.g.** purpose, audience and structure.

- **Teach students about the purpose, organisation and structural features of a range of multimodal texts.**

- **Encourage students to use the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems to produce a range of multimodal texts for different purposes.**

- **Provide opportunities for students to read, view and respond to a variety of multimodal texts using explicit information.**

- **Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with viewing, e.g.** lighting, gesture, gaze.

## Teaching Notes

Early viewers are aware of the features of a small range of familiar texts and are able to make comparisons with regard to function, format and structure of texts such as comics, cartoons, diagrams, web pages and maps. They use both print and images to identify the main idea, key events and supporting details in multimodal texts. They use a combination of image, text, movement and sound to make meaning. Teaching and learning programs for students in this phase should be designed to promote their understanding of a range of multimodal text forms. Teachers need to model and teach the specific viewing behaviours so students can use these texts effectively.

The focus for supporting viewers in the Early phase is organised under the following headings:
- Exposure to a variety of multimodal text forms
- Using and responding to multimodal texts
- Producing a range of multimodal texts
- Developing metalanguage.

### Exposure to a Variety of Multimodal Text Forms

Teachers need to plan learning experiences that engage students in viewing to gather information and for entertainment. In this phase, there is an increased focus on reading and interpreting multimodal texts that are integral to learning areas such as science, society and environment, health and mathematics. These multimodal texts may include graphs, diagrams and tables, non-fiction picture books, factual CD-ROMs and online information reports.

Students will benefit from activities with multimodal texts in the context of different learning areas; for example, students may be involved in using an information picture book and an online information report to research a science topic. They are required to identify the main topic and supporting details, discuss what they have learnt and prepare a report. This report may include:

- a concept web (a diagram where connections are made between ideas or concepts)
- diagrams
- a flow chart
- a photo diary.

| Visual Text | Purpose | Example |
|---|---|---|
| Picture glossary | • names part of a picture<br>• shows relationships<br>• summarises | |
| Cut-away diagram and cross-section | • helps the viewer to see inside a subject | |
| Scale diagram | • relates to large and small objects<br>• compares subjects<br>• assists understanding | |
| Bar and column graphs | • compares and ranks information<br>• summarises information | |
| Flow diagram | • explains a process<br>• presents a set of instructions<br>• shows changes over time | |

**Figure 5.4 Interpreting diagrams and graphs (based on *I See What You Mean,* Steve Moline 1995)**

It is also important for teachers to ensure that students have opportunities to interact with texts designed for entertainment, for example, picture books, cartoons, animated films, e-books, puppet plays, videos or DVDs or websites.

## *Using and Responding to Multimodal Texts*

In the Early phase of viewing, students need the opportunity to use a range of multimodal texts. It is important to teach students the knowledge and behaviours they need to use these texts effectively. This includes:

- identifying and using navigational elements of multimodal texts, e.g. icons, signs, symbols, colour, fonts and lines

- using icons for selecting, searching and scrolling
- using search engines
- using technology to print their own texts
- using software programs to prepare a slideshow presentation.
- identifying and using different layouts and elements of an image
- using framing of photographs, illustrations, web pages, screens and windows to create desired effects.

Teachers can provide opportunities for Early viewers to respond to multimodal texts in a variety of ways. These include:
- Providing guided practice activities
- Providing opportunities to discuss various features of texts
- Providing opportunities for a physical response
- Provide opportunities to produce a range of multimodal texts.

When responding to multimodal texts, students in the Early phase of development need opportunities to engage in discussions and conversations with different groupings, e.g. **whole class, small group**. Conversations provide students with a means to explore their own knowledge and understandings about a text, while drawing on the knowledge and understanding of others. The following examples provide a starting point for discussions about multimodal texts.
- Describe: What did you see?
- Interpret: What did you think about? What did you think it meant?
- Connect: What did it remind you of?

The stages of response that viewers go through is summarised in the following table:

| Types of Responses | Definition |
| --- | --- |
| *Personal Response* | Students express feelings and opinions, relate to characters and evaluate images. |
| *Informative Response* | Comments focus on the content of images, the storyline, text-to-text life observations, comparisons with other texts. |
| *Imaginative Response* | Students enter into the life of the image or characters in a book, film, digital game, etc. |
| *Heuristic Response* | Problem-solving is involved, inferences are made and hypothetical language is used. |

**Figure 5.3 A summary of Arizpe and Styles discussion of Kiefer's research from** *Children Reading Pictures: Interpreting Visual Texts*, **edited by Arizpe, E. and Styles, M., 2003**

## *Producing a Range of Multimodal Texts*

Students in the Early phase benefit from opportunities to compose a variety of multimodal texts for different purposes and audiences.

In Modelled, Shared and Guided Viewing Sessions teachers can demonstrate how and why multimodal texts are constructed in certain ways.

These sessions can be used to demonstrate the following:

- Multimodal texts are organised and structured in different ways, e.g. there is usually a dominant image, colour is chosen to appeal to an audience.
- Multimodal texts have special features, e.g. informational texts have diagrams which may include cross-sections or cut-aways.
- Multimodal texts have different purposes, e.g. an interactive game to entertain.
- Different multimodal text forms are constructed differently, e.g. a live performances use costume, make-up and sets.

It is important to give students opportunities to experiment with emerging knowledge about the production of multimodal texts. Opportunities may be provided in a number of ways in the classroom, for instance:

- establishing learning centres with a focus on producing multimodal texts for different purposes and audiences, e.g. catalogues to persuade
- providing 'creative corners' containing the appropriate resources to encourage students to experiment with the production of multimodal texts for a purpose, e.g. computer, video camera and news desk in a television corner
- providing resources for students to produce multimodal texts for their own purposes and audiences.

## Developing Metalanguage

Students in this phase of development have been exposed to specific vocabulary related to viewing and will be beginning to use some of this language when discussing the construction or their interpretation of different multimodal texts. It is important that there is consistency in the language being used to interpret these texts. Students need to be explicitly taught the correct terminology across the phases.

The semiotic systems contain the codes and conventions of viewing. These codes and conventions provide much of the specialised metalanguage of viewing. Detailed information about the suggestions of appropriate metalanguage can be found in the Conventions chapter of the *Viewing Resource Book* and the Conventions aspect of each of the phases of development.

An important part of teaching the use of metalanguage and metacognitive skills is to model one's own use of metalanguage and the thinking behind its choice and application. Audiotaping and or/transcribing lessons to monitor your use of metalanguage and modelling of metacognitive skills is a good way to check your teaching practice in this area and ensure students are seeing the models they need. Asking a colleague to observe the use of particular metalanguage and metacognitive skills in a lesson is another way of doing this.

One way in which to ensure students become aware of their thinking processes, that is, how they choose to apply metalanguage and use it to analyse images, is to ask them to justify their answers. Such questions can take many forms — for example, asking them the clues they used, where their evidence was found, how they worked it out — the common element is that they require the students to reflect on their thinking and their choice and use of particular metalanguage.

For further information on the Use of Texts aspect, see *Viewing Resource Book*:
- Chapter 1: Use of Texts
- Chapter 3: Conventions
- Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

# Involving Students

## 1 Puppet Storyboard

Puppet storyboard provides students with opportunities to re-tell and interpret the main events of a text using puppets. The text can be one that is familiar to students, for example a fairy tale. Use puppets from the classroom collection or puppets can be made by students, e.g. paper bags, pop sticks.
- Read a familiar text to students.
- Invite students to role-play the story, using the puppets. This will help students to become familiar with the sequencing of visual elements of the texts and enhance their understanding of recognising the main idea in a story.
- Provide students with a blank paper or a storyboard to complete.
- Students work in groups of four.
- Suggest that students videotape each other's play. They can then review the play, focusing on the main elements of a narrative.
- Students add voiceovers, sound and music to their plays.
- Students review their work considering the camera shots and image framing.

## 2 Visual Story Maps

Visual Story Maps provide an alternative way for students to represent their understanding of a visual text such as a picture book or a film. On an A3-size sheet of paper, students illustrate the sequence of events that occur in the story — from the beginning to the conclusion.
- Have students view a DVD, picture book or taped story that they are familiar with.
- Model how a story map is constructed.
- Provide support as students work in pairs.
- Once students have completed their illustrated visual story map, they can make the central characters using 3D-clay models or action figures.
- Students photograph their story maps (using a bird's-eye-view perspective) and display them in the classroom, either on the learning wall or on a laptop computer as a record of their work.



**Figure 5.5 Students at work on visual story maps**

## 3 Visual Sequencing

The ability to sequence information using both visual and linguistic semiotic systems is important for comprehension. This activity provides the opportunity for students to view and sequence a familiar visual text by focusing on the content of a still image. In this activity, students place images in the correct sequence and retell the story or report.

- Provide cards. These can be cards made by the students or commercial products or laminated photographs of a familiar visual text, for example a well-known fairy tale, a school event, a picture book or diagrams that may relate to a science and/or maths topic (e.g. a diagram of a life cycle).
- In pairs, students sequence a series of images.
- Students then retell the story to their partner.



**Figure 5.6 Students sequence an animated film.**

## 4 Cartoon Storyboards

This activity continues to develop students' knowledge and understanding of cartoons as a visual medium and explores how they are created from both fiction and non-fiction texts. In this activity, students create their own cartoon storyboard.

- Ensure students understand how a cartoon storyboard is created by viewing different cartoons.
- Discuss how characters and storylines are developed.
- Model the development of a cartoon storyboard and develop criteria with students.
- Students illustrate their own cartoon storyboard with their favourite cartoon character.

| 1 Hero enters. | 2 Hero sees the problem. | 3 Villain enters and makes the situation worse. |
|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |
| 4 Hero tackles the problem. | 5 Hero overcomes villain. | 6 Happy ending for the hero. |
|  |  |  |

**Figure 5.7 A cartoon framework**

## 5 Visual Diary

A visual diary assists students in reflecting on the devices used in creating digital images. The teacher discusses with students the type of camera shot to be taken. Students use a digital camera to take photographs of an event such as a visit to the school library, a school event, a classroom science experiment or a school assembly, then follow up with the activity below. The activity is then recorded in the visual diary for the whole class.

- Students work in pairs to edit their digital images and label them with the appropriate language, e.g. taking one of the following shots through the eyes of the camera such as a close-up shot, medium shot, long shot and angles.
- Assist students in loading and storing their digital images onto the class laptop computer and placing labels or captions next to the correct images, e.g. students might take digital photographs of a school event and provide a printed text to correspond with the photographs.
- Invite students to share and explain their visual diary to another class.

## 6 Visual Recipe Book

The Visual Recipe Book assists students in describing, recording, photographing and illustrating relevant information about a class cooking experience. This activity can also be found on the *Viewing CD*.

- Provide opportunities for students to take part in language experience, e.g. cooking popcorn, making fruit kebabs, making pancakes, etc.
- Students take photographs of a class cooking experience.
- Remind and support students to focus on image framing, e.g. bird's-eye-view perspective, low camera and high-camera angles.

Pose the following question to students: Why do they think photographers mainly use bird's-eye-view angles when taking photographs of ingredients, utensils and steps of a procedure? Students may wish to refer to recipe books when considering this question.

## 7 Television Formats

This activity is designed to enhance students' understanding that television shows can be presented in different formats; the focus is on two well-known children's shows with very different formats: *Play School* and *Sesame Street*. *Play School* is co-presented by adults who entertain and educate preschool-aged children. *Sesame Street* is presented by puppet characters that live in a street and there are several characters in the show who entertain and educate children about various themes. Celebrity guests also appear on the show.

- Develop students' awareness of the different presentation formats that are used in these two children's television programs
- Give students the opportunity to identify and discuss the different features of two programs
- Analyse the features of the two different types of children's television programs, using a T chart
- Discuss the different points of view
- Talk about the different target audiences
- Have students compare how the two shows are similar and different.

| *Play School* | *Sesame Street* |
|---|---|
| Gains the viewer's attention by:<br><br>• having two adult presenters<br>• setting the program at a fun, fast pace<br>• including cartoons as well as real events<br>• setting the program in a studio<br>• encouraging children to wonder, think, feel and imagine<br>• including a story, some songs and a variety of play activities with things to make and do in each program<br>• developing a theme each week<br>• structuring the program around a daily format of a calendar, the clock and a look outside the play school through the window. | Gains the viewer's attention by:<br><br>• including music, puppet animation<br>• setting the program in a street<br>• having puppets co-host the program with young children<br>• including stories, songs and activities<br>• basing each episode on curriculum topics that include literacy, maths and social topics<br>• including a letter of the day, rhyming and story-telling<br>• including a number of the day<br>• having characters that model thinking skills<br>• including a children-from-around-the-world segment<br>• including animation segments. |

**Figure 5.8 Television formats — children's television programs**

## 8 Advertisements

The purpose of an advertisement is to encourage a specific audience to buy goods and services. Advertisers use a wide range of devices to attract their audience, e.g. colour, objects, framing, people, animals, etc. This activity challenges students as they are encouraged to critically assess and deconstruct the visual texts of advertisements. They will explore their understanding of what they think advertisers are really trying to sell and the devices and techniques they use to make their product appealing. The teacher provides students with magazines and newspapers so they can select different advertisements.

- Initiate a class discussion about the visual and graphic features in advertisements, e.g. the use of colours, the layout, lines, shapes and texture in the advertisement to make it more appealing. (Refer to the advertisement (see Figure 5.9) or the image can be accessed on the *Viewing CD*.)
- With students, list the features of the advertisement onto a chart or the interactive whiteboard.
- Students then plan their own advertising poster.
- Students discuss the use of colours (which express emotions), lines, shapes and texture.
- Students design and construct their own advertisements supported by the teacher.
- Display the advertisements in the classroom after students have labelled them, drawing attention to the particular codes and conventions, e.g. shapes and texture, and devices that create a reading path for the reader/viewer.



**Figure 5.9 Teachers can use the above text to explain the way codes and conventions of the semiotic system are used in advertisements**

## 9 e-cards

An e-card is a card presented in an electronic format. Students learn to navigate around a web page to complete an e-card by following iconic information. Students can add a printed text to the card and send it to someone, provided they know the person's address. (They just fill in the card and email it.) Most e-cards contain birthday messages or simple greetings.

- Model the use of computer icons to send an e-card to another class. To link to an e-card website, go to stepspd.com/weblinks.
- With a partner, students can discuss the type of message they intend to write in their e-card. Have students check each other's work to ensure that messages make sense.
- Assist students in writing their messages and following the icon prompts.
- Students then send their e-card to a classmate or a friend in another class. Messages could include something the student has achieved in class, at sport, or something they did on the weekend.

## 10 Let's Make a Movie

Let's Make a Movie demonstrates how still images can be transformed into moving images and introduces students to filming and editing their own movies. The teacher can demonstrate a number of techniques to the whole class, using the interactive whiteboard. These techniques could include how to save photographs in a folder and import the folder, dragging and dropping photographs and adding a credit list to the beginning and end of the movie. Students could start with a minimum of six frames, including the credits. Students need to be able to import a folder that contains photographs or illustrations. The teacher could work with groups of three students. Various movie-making software programs are available such as Windows® Movie Maker™ and iMovie® (Mac).

When evaluating the capabilities of students, consider the following:
- Does the movie make sense? Is there a beginning, middle and end with a message?
- Were different fonts and colours used in the credits?
- Has the student used different borders and layouts?
- A storyboard and the activity appear on the *Viewing CD*.

# CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING

## *Major Teaching Emphases*

- **Provide opportunities for students to share and justify opinions and feelings about multimodal texts.**

- **Draw attention to the different ways ideas, events, characters and people are represented in multimodal texts.**

- **Discuss the devices used in the construction of multimodal texts, e.g.** the colour red is used as a warning.

- **Continue to discuss the target audience and purpose of a range of multimodal texts.**

## Teaching Notes

Students in this phase need to be supported in understanding that viewers may make different meanings from multimodal texts, which can be influenced by home and community experiences. They need to be provided with opportunities to explore the content and structure of multimodal texts, and to discuss their opinions and feelings with others. Discussions and conversations will allow them to understand that others may have different interpretations of the same texts, and that these interpretations may be as valid as their own. Students need to be encouraged to respect the views and opinions of others.

Modelled, Shared and Guided Viewing sessions need to include discussions about the structure, purpose and audience of multimodal texts. In these sessions, teachers can support Early viewers in becoming aware that their prior knowledge and experience contribute to the meaning they make of a text. Through modelling and Think-Alouds, teachers can demonstrate how active viewers may question the representations, information and beliefs presented in a text. Students will also benefit from opportunities to work with others in whole-class and small-group interactions. The resulting discussions may motivate students to share their opinions and justification of texts while considering the views of others.

The focus for supporting Early viewers in this aspect is organised under the following headings.
- Discussions about multimodal texts
- Discussions about the decisions text producers make
- Exploring representations in multimodal texts.

## Discussions about Multimodal Texts

Students in the Early viewing phase will benefit from viewing and interpreting literary texts in illustrated books, cartoons, films, CD-ROMs and websites. They should also view and interpret simple informational texts that recount, explain and describe. The texts may be from local newspapers, children's magazines, advertisements, television programs, CD-ROMs or websites.

In Modelled, Shared and Guided Viewing sessions teachers can support students in understanding the following points:

- There are many forms of multimodal texts.
- Multimodal texts can represent reality or imagination.
- Multimodal texts can be used for different purposes, e.g. to describe, to entertain.
- Viewers make connections to themselves, other texts and their world.
- Viewers can question the representations presented in multimodal texts.
- Multimodal texts represent people, characters events and ideas in particular ways.
- Multimodal texts can be experienced in different contexts, e.g. in the home, classroom, shopping centre, movie theatre, etc.

In the context of regular class activities teachers can provide opportunities for students to work with and discuss a wide range of multimodal texts e.g. web pages, e-books, newspaper articles. Students can be encouraged to:

- make connections between the texts they have viewed and their own personal experiences
- compare events, characters, people and ideas in texts with those in their own lives or with another text they have read or viewed
- think beyond the literal meaning as they view a multimodal text, e.g. Ask: What did you learn about the characters from their facial expressions?
- consider how a character might have been represented differently and discuss what the consequences might have been
- consider different opinions about problems and solutions in texts
- discuss why an author may have selected a particular text form
- consider how the text was produced, e.g. Ask: Why do you think this colour was used? Why do you think they used sharp lines in this picture? Why is the face in the photograph looking right at you?
- identify and give reasons why or why not a particular multimodal text could be based on something that occurred in real life, e.g. Ask: Could this really have happened?
- consider alternative ways that information could be told or presented
- consider the intended audience of a visual text, e.g. Ask: Who do you think would watch this DVD? Who do you think might use this text?

## Discussions about the Decisions Text Producers Make

The decisions that text producers make about the different elements of a visual text contribute to the way meaning is created by the viewer. Teachers can support Early viewers to become familiar with some of these decisions, and how they have an impact on a viewer's understanding of a text. The focus in this phase of development will be on exploring and discussing the following choices.

Devices used by illustrators and/or graphic designers may include the:
- use of colour, line and texture
- use of light and shade
- use of lighting
- font type and size
- size of characters and objects relative to each other and their setting
- delivery technology, e.g. printed (photograph), digital electronic (web page), live (theatre)
- position of the main part of the image on the page or screen, e.g. the most important element is often in the centre foreground

Codes and devices used by the text producer may include the:
- choice of language, e.g. emotive, descriptive, technical
- choice of text form, e.g. narrative, documentary, poster
- inclusion or omission of details in a text
- use of humour
- use of repetition.

Early viewers need to be explicitly taught to recognise these codes and devices (see Figure 5.10) and understand how they contribute to the meaning of a text. They need to be involved in whole-class and small-group exploration and discussions about different multimodal texts.
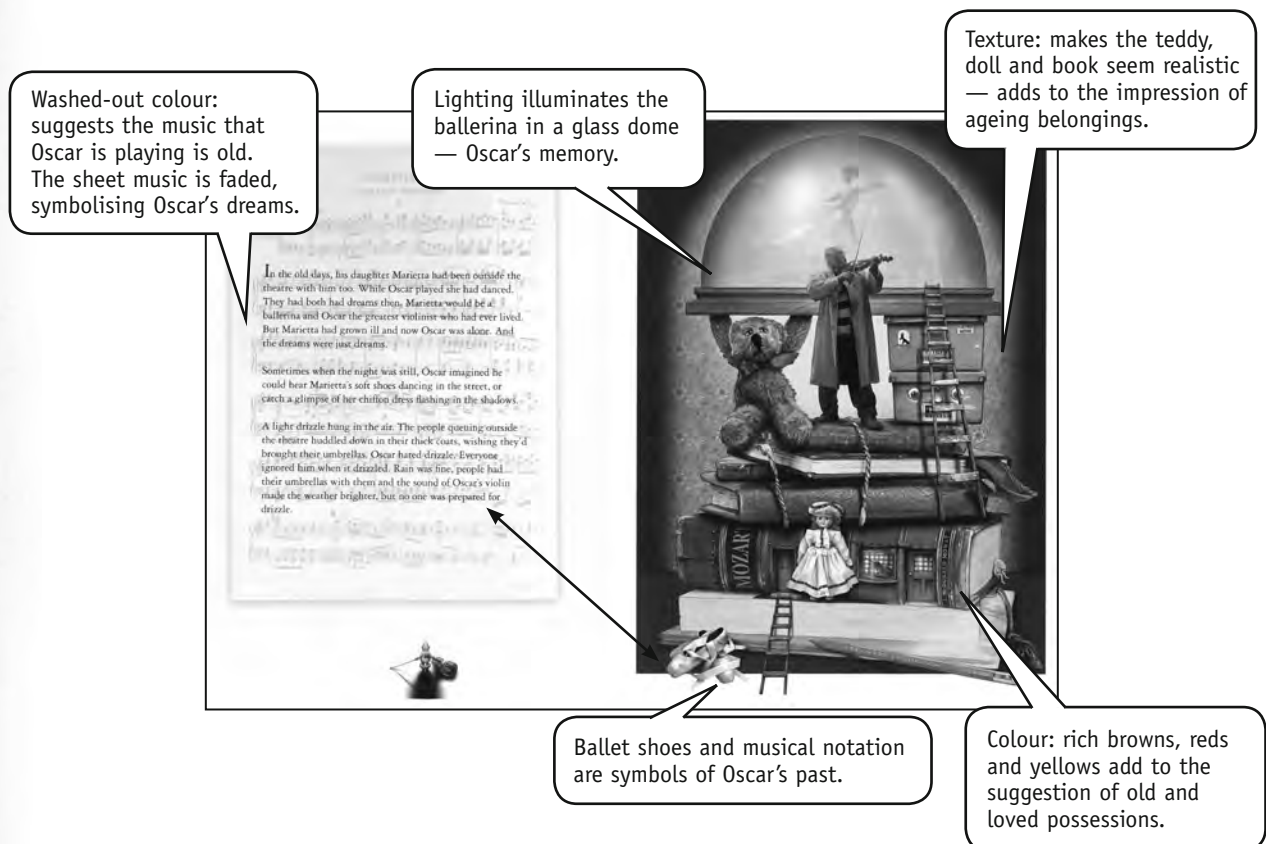
**Figure 5.10 Codes and devices in the picture book *The Violin Man* by Colin Thompson. This annotated illustration also appears on the *Viewing CD*.**

The following list provides starting points for discussions with students:
• What codes and devices did the illustrator use to connect you with the emotions of the main character?
• Why do you think the text designer chose to illustrate the book in this style? (Consider colour, texture, line, layout, framing.)
• What objects or images stand out in this picture?
• What would the text designer have needed to know to produce this text?
• How do the illustrations help you to understand this text?
• Why do you think the text designer chose to present the characters in this way? What devices were used? (Consider the colour and lighting.)

## Exploring Representations in Multimodal Texts

In the Early phase of viewing development, students need to be encouraged to examine and discuss why and how text designers choose to represent people, characters or events in certain ways.

All forms of text, literary, informational and everyday texts contain representations that may be questioned.

Consider posing the following kinds of questions when discussing a visual text:
• How has the text producer represented events, facts, people or characters in the text?
• Do you know any real people who are like the people or characters in the text? Who are they? How are they similar? How are they different?
• Who is telling the story? Whose voice can you hear in the text?
• Would you like to be anyone in the text? Who? Why?
• How is a particular character portrayed from one text to another, for example, *Dora the Explorer?*
• Do you know anything about this topic that has not been included in the text? Why do you think that it may not have been included?
• What do you think was the main purpose or message in this text? How do you know? How was it achieved?
• How is the same event or character presented in different texts? e.g. how are nurses represented across several texts?
• How is information on a particular topic presented in several texts? How is the information similar or different?
• What have you noticed about the representation of heroes in texts? Heroines?

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For further information about the Contextual Understanding aspect, see *Viewing Resource Book*:
• Chapter 2: Contextual Understanding

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# Involving Students

## 1 Clever Comparisons

This activity helps students make connections and comparisons between different adaptations of the same text such as a book and a film that have the same title, e.g. animation, films (fiction and non-fiction), etc.

- Select a film and a book that are adaptations of the same story, e.g. *Charlotte's Web, Blinky Bill, Whales and Fish*. Read the story to students.
- Students discuss the story and describe the different characters and the setting.
- Students view the film and discuss how the characters are portrayed.
- Students compare how the codes and conventions of the visual semiotic system are used to represent the characters in both the book and the film. Students summarise their discoveries by completing the table provided on the CD-ROM.
- In groups of three, have students explore the similarities and differences of the two adaptations of the story.
- Students construct a poster of the book and film that focuses on the differences and similarities between the two adaptations.



**Figure 5.11 Students compare different adaptations of a visual text**

## 2 Heroes and Villains

Heroes and Villains invites students to identify the similarities and differences in cartoon heroes and villains. This activity helps students to identify the devices used by cartoonists to create a cartoon hero and a villain. Cartoons can be both electronic and print-based.

- Introduce students to those devices that cartoonists use when creating characters and cartoon stories, e.g. image framing, colours, clothes, signs, symbols, music, actions, lines, shapes.
- Students view a cartoon and focus on the hero.
- The students, as a whole class, then rate the hero according to a rating scale. Students view the cartoon again to focus on the villain and complete a rating scale for the villain.

- Students work in groups to present a PowerPoint™ presentation on the results of the similarities and differences between heroes and villains
- Students share their final presentation with a partner.
- Alternatively, show the DVD or a cartoon to the whole class.
- As an extension activity, students could use an interactive CD such as the *Cartoon Maker*™ CD to reconstruct a cartoon with heroes and villains.
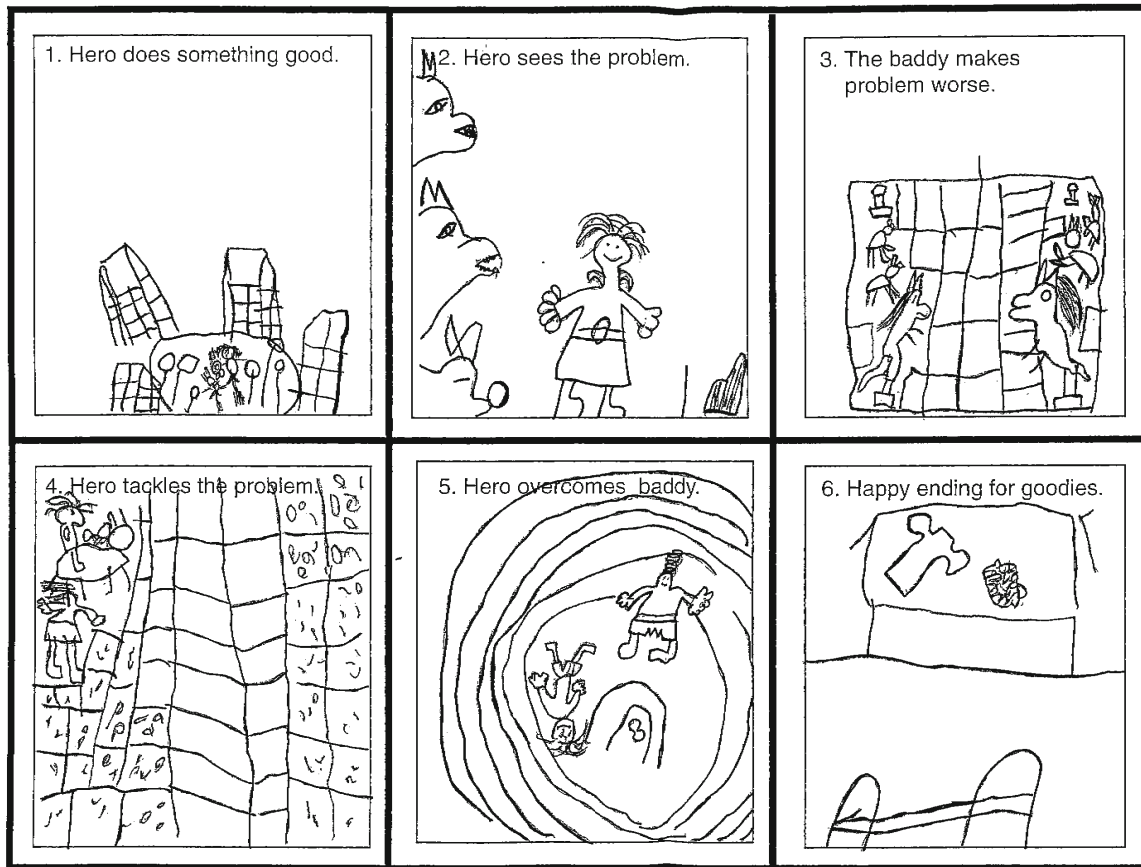
A variety of formats are provided on the *Viewing CD*.

| 1. Hero does something good. | 2. Hero sees the problem. | 3. The baddy makes problem worse. |
|---|---|---|
| 4. Hero tackles the problem. | 5. Hero overcomes baddy. | 6. Happy ending for goodies. |

**Figure 5.12 A student's storyboard for the Heroes and Villians activity**

## 3 Catalogue Searches

Catalogue Searches assist students in identifying the influence of advertising by focusing on advertisements in catalogues. Students will also become aware of how advertisers attempt to influence and attract potential customers in the design and layout of the advertisements and the use of catch phrases and gimmicks. Catalogues are an excellent resource as they are easily accessible. This activity can be found on the *Viewing CD*.

- Provide students with a variety of store catalogues, e.g. those from hardware stores, supermarkets, department stores, etc.
- In pairs, students look at the catalogues and identify some of the devices used by advertisers to entice people to visit 'their store'.
- Guide students to focus on particular devices, e.g. colour of the type and headings, objects, people, the positioning of items, lines, and movement.

- Working in small groups, each group chooses one particular device and looks for other examples of this device in a variety of catalogues. They can use stick-on notes to mark the device.

### *Extension Activity*

Students can compile and create their own catalogues.

- '*Catalogues and Dogalogues*' — Students create their own 'catalogue' or 'dogalogue' with items suitable for a cat or dog.
- '*Personalogue*' — Students select one person from a suggested list, e.g. **a policeman, nurse, teacher, grandparent, parent, fairy, etc.,** and create a catalogue of products for that person.
- '*Mysteriouslogue*' — Students create a catalogue for a particular shop but do not reveal the identity of the shop. Students then share catalogues with another student who tries to guess the shop's identity.
- '*Travelogue*' — Students create a travel brochure to their favourite holiday destination and include such items as clothing, food, accommodation needs, sporting equipment, etc.
- '*Onlinelogue*' — Many students will be familiar with choosing and ordering items online from sites such as eBay and Amazon. Support students to create an online catalogue using software programs and websites such as Microsoft's Kid Pix®, Clipart, Google™ Image Search or any other basic computer graphic program or students can use their own scanned drawings.

## 4 Celebrities and Elite Sports People in Advertising

This activity requires students to investigate the endorsement of products by celebrity and elite sports persons in advertising. Celebrities and elite sports people symbolise wealth and knowledge of a product and they convey the message to consumers that because they are wearing or using the product, then it must be worthwhile and reliable. They also represent their sport and profession. Advertisers believe that this is a successful way to promote and sell a product.

- Students view a number of print and non-print advertisements with celebrities or elite sports people. These can be provided by the teacher or students can bring in some examples from home.
- Initiate a discussion with students to establish why the advertisers have decided to use a sports star or celebrity to sell their product. Record students' comments on a chart or the interactive whiteboard.
- Students could suggest alternative personalities to appear in the advertisement.
- Students design a new advertisement with the alternative personality endorsing the product.

## 5 Look Around and View

Look Around and View assists students in making connections and comparisons between what they know about their world and the way visual texts and mediums are presented in the community. This activity involves students taking a tour of their local shopping centre.

- Arrange a visit to the local community shopping centre. Tell students that they will be focusing on the wide variety of visual texts.

- Students may draw, take notes or photographs of posters, signs, symbols and logos they see as they walk around the centre.
- In the classroom, students can discuss the things they noticed about these different texts.
- Students work in groups of three and create a poster about the different visual texts.
- Each group presents their poster to the class.

## 6 Cartoon Movies

Cartoon Movies is an activity that provides the opportunity for students to understand the technical process of making cartoons by demonstrating how moving cartoon images are, in fact, a series of still images. Students work in groups assisted by the teacher to use the class digital camera and take photographs of each segment of their cartoon storyboard.

- Provide a cartoon DVD for students to view. Students can discuss the devices used in the cartoon, e.g. size, overlap, detail and colour.
- Students independently construct a storyboard cartoon.
- Students then take photographs of each individual frame of their cartoon storyboard, using the classroom digital camera. Some teacher assistance may be required.
- Students edit their work and add it to a PowerPoint™ presentation after adding voiceovers, music and sound. The teacher can assist students to edit their work, etc.
- Students then present their cartoon 'movie' to a group of three students.
- The cartoon movies can be saved as a future record for assessment.

## 7 Imagine This!

Imagine This! is an activity that demonstrates the abilities of students to interpret information. They will be required to listen to a page from a novel and then use their imaginations to illustrate what they think the images would look like from the description they have just heard.

- Select a page from a popular novel to read to the students, e.g. a novel by Roald Dahl, J. K. Rowling, Paul Jennings, etc.
- If necessary, re-read the page to ensure that all students have listened to the text.
- With a partner, students can discuss what they think the page was about before they illustrate it.
- Students then begin their illustrations.
- Display the different images in the classroom.

# CONVENTIONS

## Major Teaching Emphases

- **Introduce, revise and extend the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.**

- **Teach students to use and critically analyse the codes and conventions used in a range of multimodal texts conveyed by paper, digital electronic and live technologies.**

- **Examine the codes and conventions of different text types used in learning areas.**

- **Develop students' understanding that the purpose, audience and context of a text will influence the selection and use of particular codes, conventions and semiotic systems.**

## Teaching Notes

Viewers in the Early phase will encounter a variety of multimodal texts delivered by live, digital electronic and paper technologies in their work in different areas of the curriculum. They will require explicit instruction and scaffolded support when consuming (reading) and producing (writing) different text forms.

It is important that teachers continue to consolidate and further develop students' knowledge of the codes and conventions of a wide range of multimodal texts. These should be introduced and practised in meaningful contexts. For example, learning in Society and Environment and Science requires knowledge and understanding of maps, tables and diagrams.

Modelled, Shared and Guided viewing sessions provide the ideal way for exploring many of the codes and conventions of multimodal texts. The focus for supporting Early viewers in this aspect is organised under the following headings.
- Structures and features of multimodal texts
- Exploring the codes and conventions of text delivered by different technologies
- What students need to know and be able to do with the conventions.
  - Codes and conventions of the visual semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the audio semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the gestural semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the spatial semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the linguistic semiotic system.

### Structures and Features of Multimodal Texts

Teaching and learning activities for students in this phase focus on further developing their awareness of the structural elements of different forms of multimodal texts. Students in the Early phase will benefit from involvement in activities where they

critically analyse and discuss the structure and features of the different multimodal texts such as:

- non-fiction picture books and picture books that contain illustrations and photographs with limited text
- comics that have a narrative structure with sequenced frames, line drawings, speech bubbles, etc.
- cartoons
- documentaries with factual details and narration
- posters
- diagrams
- computer games
- advertisements
- maps, graphs and charts.

## Exploring the Codes and Conventions of Text Delivered by Different Technologies

As with any text, the construction of multimodal texts follows certain patterns and conventions that enable them to be understood. Early viewers need to be provided with opportunities to recognise and explore how these codes and conventions are used in the construction of different multimodal texts. These explorations must include multimodal texts delivered by paper, live and digital electronic technologies. Students need to be explicitly taught and supported to develop the following understandings:

- Different multimodal texts will use different codes and conventions.
- Texts with visual images will often contain more than one semiotic system, such as linguistic, visual, audio, gestural or spatial.
- People's opinions about the meaning of a multimodal text may be different, depending on their understanding of the codes and conventions in the text.
- The purpose, audience and context of a text will influence the selection and use of particular codes, conventions and semiotic systems.
- Multimodal texts can be delivered by paper, live and digital electronic technologies.

## What Students Need to Know and Be Able to Do with the Conventions

Teachers and students will use a range of multimodal texts conveyed by paper, digital electronic and live technologies to explore the five semiotic systems and continue to develop an understanding of, and ability to use, their codes and conventions. They will also engage in critical reflection regarding how and why particular codes and conventions and semiotic systems are used in a text. At this stage they start to consider and discuss how the information from each semiotic system in a multimodal text contributes to overall meaning. For example, students in the Early phase might look at how the combination of pitch and volume of voice (audio) with body position and facial expression (gestural) reinforces the portrayal of a character's feelings in a scene in a film. It is important that students have the opportunity to both consume and produce multimodal texts in order to practise the application of their developing understandings about the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems. All learning activities need to engage students and teachers in using the appropriate

metalanguage for each semiotic system. When introducing the codes and conventions of the Early viewing phase teachers need to revise and extend the codes and conventions of the Beginning viewing phase.

The following sections serve only as an introduction to the concepts and understandings about the codes and conventions of each semiotic system that should be developed in this phase. They focus on how these codes and conventions support the viewer in making meaning of, and constructing, multimodal texts.

Tables 5.1 to 5.5 provide the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems to be introduced in the Early viewing phase. The metalanguage that students are introduced to around these concepts in the Early viewing phase has been italicised. Ensure that teaching and learning activities around the semiotic system engage students with the exploration of texts delivered via all three technologies: paper, digital electronic and live. It is important that the codes and conventions previously introduced in the Beginning phase continue to be revised and applied in different texts and contexts.

## *Codes and Conventions of the Visual Semiotic System*

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Colour** | Revise any codes and conventions about colour introduced in previous phase. |
| **Texture** | Revise any codes and conventions about texture introduced in previous phase. |
| **Line** | • Examine lines with a focus on direction: define and develop the concept of *diagonal*, *horizontal* and *vertical* lines through lots of hands-on activity, such as drawing, painting and manipulating objects. <br><br> • Discuss how *diagonal*, *horizontal* or *vertical* lines can be associated with feelings. Collect scenes, images and patterns on materials, wrapping paper and everyday objects where *diagonal*, haphazard and jagged lines are used. Discuss what they are portraying (e.g. broken crockery, lightning, things falling, chaotic traffic, busyness) and talk about how these scenes or patterns make you feel (e.g. uneasy, worried, frightened, confused). Explain that using lines in a particular way can help convey feelings and emotions. Ask students to find examples of *diagonal* lines in art, picture books, magazines, newspapers and websites and discuss whether they all portray similar types of scenes, feelings and emotions. <br><br> • Conduct similar investigations and discussions about *horizontal* lines (often used to portray calm) and *vertical* lines (can portray loneliness or isolation) |
| **Shape** | Revise any codes and conventions about shape introduced in previous phase. |
| **Form and Juxtaposition** | Revise any codes and conventions about form or juxtaposition introduced in previous phase. |
| **Point of View** | • In the Beginning phase the terminology used to describe where the viewer has been positioned to view a scene or image (bird's eye, worm's eye, eye level) was designed to help students develop a mental image that would aid their understanding of a concept. It was suggested that role play would further assist: e.g. students lie on the floor like a worm and describe what they see and then compare that with looking down from a higher vantage point like a bird. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Point of View continued** | • In the Early phase students should be introduced to the equivalent and more sophisticated terminology that producers of visual text use: *top down* (bird's eye), *bottom up* (worm's eye). Revise *eye level*. |
| | • Discussion and exploration should focus on why the producer of the text might want you (the viewer) to look from a particular place. Discuss how *point of view* supports you as a viewer or influences your meaning-making. Comparing similar scenes taken from different *points of view* will focus on why *point of view* is important to meaning-making. One way to do this is to look at different portrayals of the same scene or character in the same fairy story and discuss the *point of view* and the effect — what it emphasises or draws attention to. For example, in *The Three Little Pigs* the reader is often positioned at the height of the pig, looking up at the wolf, the effect being to emphasise the size of the wolf and the vulnerability of the pig. |
| | • Compare photographs of sport and images in other curriculum areas in texts delivered by paper and digital electronic means, e.g. in film freeze scenes and discuss the *point of view* and the effect. |
| | • Discuss why the use of a particular *point of view* is important. (e.g. to focus on the example or detail being discussed in the text or present it in the most appealing or meaningful way.) |
| | • Use digital cameras to photograph the same things from different *points of view*. Compare them and what they convey. |
| **Framing** | Revise any codes and conventions about framing introduced in previous phase. |
| **Focus** | Revise any codes and conventions about focus introduced in previous phase. |
| **Lighting** | Revise any codes and conventions about lighting introduced in previous phase. |
| **Editing** | • Introduce the concept of *editing* in the visual semiotic system by relating it to the process of *editing* students use when they are writing or creating a written text. Talk about the different ways they might *edit* the text they are creating, e.g. changing the *sequence* or adding or removing things. |
| | • It may be possible to find examples of storyboards that have been used for film or picture books including commentary by the producer/writer/illustrator about the reasons for the *editing* (changes). Compare the storyboard with the final product. |
| | • Conduct simple activities with picture card *sequences* from picture books, instructions or life cycles and discuss why sometimes it is really important to have a particular *sequence* (e.g. when time is important or in instructions). |
| | • Compare short film *sequences* and animations/cartoons where *speed* is used in different ways and discuss the effect. Contrast *real speed* (i.e. actual real time) *sped up* (e.g. someone runs more quickly than they would in real time) and *slow motion* (things happen more slowly than they would in reality). After viewing several examples of each (*slow motion, real speed and sped up*) ask students if they can think of examples they have seen. Talk about the types of scenes when different speeds are used and why they might be used. |

**Table 5.1 Codes and conventions of the visual semiotic system**

## *Codes and Conventions of the Audio Semiotic System*

Teaching and learning activities around the audio semiotic system will focus mainly on digital electronic and live texts. Role-playing activities are a good live context for exploring the qualities of volume and audibility in a variety of contexts. However, reading aloud from picture books (delivered via paper technology) is another context in which teachers can model and discuss these concepts.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Volume and Audibility** | • Define *pitch* as how high or low a sound is and explore examples of different *pitch* in voice, sound effects and music.<br><br>• Explore how *pitch* in the use of voice can indicate whether you are asking a question (*pitch* rises at end) or making a statement (*pitch* is flat or static).<br><br>• Explore how *pitch* can create mood or emotion; the sudden high-pitched scream of a person or animal and the high-pitched screech of a machine can be frightening. Ask students to think of examples from their own experience and examine advertisements, film clips, and animations or cartoons to compare how *pitch* of music, sound effects or voice is used to create mood or emotion.<br><br>• Practise using *pitch* in live oral presentations or story-telling to create mood or emotion.<br><br>• Introduce the concept and term '*expression*' as a way of describing how changes in the *pitch* and volume of sound effects, music and voice indicate mood and emotion. Such changes can also draw attention to something or someone. |

**Table 5.2 Codes and conventions of the audio semiotic system**

## *Codes and Conventions of the Gestural Semiotic System*

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be Introduced and Suggested Focus for Teacher Talk |
|---|---|
| **Proximity** | • Examine images to see how people are placed at different *distances* from one another in a text. Talk about how the *distance* between people might indicate something about them, for example, how well people know one another or if they are friends or not. Look for examples in magazines, picture books and websites. Compare and discuss how and why distance between people is used differently.<br><br>• Look at how much *space* is left around people. Ask questions such as: Does this affect how you might feel about that person? Does the *space* around the person help your viewing or meaning-making in any way?<br><br>• Compare informative texts with narrative texts and consider whether *space* and *distance* are used differently and why. For example, in a narrative having a character with a lot of *space* around them might make them look isolated, lonely or disliked. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Orientation or Body Position** | • How a person's *body position* is presented in relation to other people can indicate relationships and also the nature of the relationship.<br><br>• A person's deliberate choice of *body position* can indicate how they wish to be viewed or perceived. Ask students to role-play how they might present themselves to someone if they wanted to appear powerful, make someone feel frightened, or appear caring and non-threatening.<br><br>• Discuss some specific *body positions* and their effects. Talk about how looking at someone *face to face* might be interpreted in contrast with standing *facing away* or *to the side* where the person has to turn in order to see them.<br><br>• Look for examples in images in magazines, newspapers and picture books and in film and television advertising, and discuss what information is provided through *body position* and how it helps in making meaning. |
| **Appearance** | • Introduce the term *appearance* as a collective term for discussing the concepts of clothes, costume, hairstyle, jewellery and make-up that were introduced in the Beginning viewing phase. Revise the role of *appearance* and particular parts of *appearance* in interpreting or developing character.<br><br>• Introduce the concept of *props* as objects that might be used to modify a person's appearance and character. For example, a walking stick might be used to depict age or injury. Glasses might be used to make a person look sensible or studious. Various types of hats change appearance and character. Ask students to find examples of *props* and identify how they modify the person's character or what they know about them. Ensure they find examples from still images such as photos, drawings and paintings as well as film.<br><br>• Ask students to engage in role-plays where the same *prop* can be used to create different meanings (e.g. walking stick for age or injury, wearing a baseball cap conventionally or backwards.) Discuss how these different meanings are achieved. |
| **Facial Expression** | • Introduce the term *facial expression* as a collective term for discussing the way in which parts of the face can be used to convey meaning. Revise the parts of the face introduced in the Beginning viewing phase (mouth, eyes, eyebrows, smile, squint, frown, eyebrow position).<br><br>• Introduce the term *grimace* and look for examples of how it is used. For example, it might indicate pain, anger or confusion. Talk to students using clues or information from the codes and conventions of other semiotic systems in the text to assist them in working out exactly what the *grimace* meant.<br><br>• Find examples in texts and role-play. When looking at examples, check whether the *facial expression* confirms or opposes the other information about how the character is feeling and why that might be the case. For example, someone might be smiling but their *body position* might be turned away, indicating they may not be completely comfortable. |
| **Posture** | • Introduce the term *posture* as a collective term for discussing the way someone arranges their body when standing or sitting.<br><br>• Role-play different *postures* and talk about what they might mean: *rigid*, *upright*, *leaning*.<br><br>• Look for examples, compare and contrast the same *posture* with different meanings, e.g. *leaning* on something because you are lazy, tired, injured, *leaning* forward to show you are interested, etc. Discuss how you could ascertain the precise meaning when viewing a person's *posture* in a text. |

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| Posture continued | • Introduce the term *build* as a way of describing a person's body type; *slight* or *heavy*. |
| --- | --- |
| | • Discuss the idea that a particular *height* and *weight* might be used to convey a type of person or character. |
| | • Examine how the *posture*, *build*, *height* and *weight* of people are presented in different ads and official documents and brochures and discuss why certain body types might be used. |
| | • Discuss how a person's *build*, *height* and *weight* might tell you something about that person and how you might confirm that initial conclusion with information provided from other semiotic systems in the text. |

Table 5.3 Codes and conventions of the gestural semiotic system

## Codes and Conventions of the Spatial Semiotic System

At this stage of the students' development teaching and learning activities around the concepts of position and distance can be explored in two-dimensional texts delivered on page and screen as well as three-dimensional texts such as the live role-playing of a scene in a play, book, or everyday life. Setting up and photographing a three-dimensional scene is also a useful way of applying concepts about position and distance. Jointly construct a page or screen layout of words and pictures using real or imaginary frames and discuss which is best and why.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
| --- | --- |
| Position | • Talk to students about how the *position* and *placement* of objects in a text are carefully considered and often deliberate, in order to draw attention to something or help the viewer see the links or relationships between things. Explain that when we are talking about *position* and *placement* on a screen or page this is referred to as *layout*. |
| | • Examine books (fiction and non-fiction) and websites and look for different *layouts* of headings, images, diagrams and written text (words). Compare and contrast different *layouts* and discuss why they might have been used and how they help or hinder the viewer. |
| | • Introduce the concepts of *foreground* and *background* as a way of indicating the relative importance of objects or people in an image. *Placement* in the *foreground* indicates *importance* and in the background lesser *importance*. |
| | • Find examples from as many different types of texts as possible that use different types of images (e.g. photos, paintings, drawings, diagrams, figures, cartoons). After examining them, discuss the types of images where *placement* of objects in the *foreground* and *background* are particularly useful to the viewer. Explore any relationships between the importance of foreground and background to meaning-making and text type. |

| Distance | • Introduce the concept of *distance* and *space* in relation to objects on page and screen as well as in three-dimensional space. |
|---|---|
| | • Point out that *distance* and *space* are used similarly with objects in the spatial semiotic system as they are with people in the gestural semiotic system (to show relationships). |
| | • Discuss the use of *space* and *distance* in layout of objects on page and screen by examining and creating examples. |
| | • Use the terms *close* and *distant* to describe the *distance* between objects. Discuss the meanings that might be conveyed by closeness or *distance* by comparing examples. |
| Framing | • Revise the concept of a *frame* introduced in the Beginning viewing phase. |
| | • Introduce the concepts of *real frames* (an actual drawn *frame* or line around something) or *imaginary frames (*creating a frame with objects or parts of the image*)* with examples. For example, the branches and trunk of a tree surrounding birds in a tree can have the effect of *framing* them and *directing attention* to them as a group. |
| | • Find examples of an *imaginary frame* around objects or people in pictures by using other things in the scene, for example, a doorway can *frame* people, a window can *frame* a view and *draw attention* to something happening outside. Talk about why each picture has been designed this way and the effect of the *frame* on meaning-making. |
| | • Examine examples of *framing* in film. |
| | • Compare and contrast the use of *framing* in fiction and non-fiction texts. (Look at tables and diagrams, as well as images) |
| | • Discuss the role of *framing* in the layout of page and screen when images or written text are *framed* (or not). |
| | • Experiment with *real* and *imaginary frames* in the layout of students' texts on page and screen and also in their artwork. |

**Table 5.4 Codes and conventions of the spatial semiotic system**

## *Codes and Conventions of the Linguistic Semiotic System*

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| Parts of Speech | Following on from the concepts about words and language introduced in the Beginning phase, students in the Early phase need to understand that:<br><br>• Varying audience, purpose and context changes the way language is used in spoken, written and visual forms. Incorporate the audio, gestural and spatial semiotic systems when using the different forms of language. Practise using different semiotic systems to achieve different purposes or using a particular semiotic system with a certain audience. |

| Parts of Speech continued | • Cultural background influences the way language is used and the language choices made to construct meaning. The oral narrative traditions and contemporary literature of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can be utilised to study the impact that culture has on language use and choice. Provide examples of how other cultures use the visual, audio, gestural and spatial semiotic systems differently in order to make meaning. Look at how Indigenous art uses the visual semiotic system (e.g. colour, line) to create meaning. |
|---|---|
| | • Language varies according to the different roles that individuals take on in social interactions. Look at how formal and informal social situations change the way language is used. |
| | As the concepts of language change and choice are understood then further language features can be introduced. |
| | • *Adjectives* can be introduced as words that 'tell about', build up information about, or describe nouns. They provide information about the qualities of a noun. The visual semiotic system can be used through the use of images (both still and moving) to demonstrate how *adjectives* can be used to qualify the meaning of a noun. Practising the identification and use of *adjectives* frequently through the use of spoken activities, rather than only through written exercises, allows for more practice and more variety of contexts to be presented. |
| | • *Articles* are considered to be a special kind of adjective and like other adjectives are always used with, and give some information about, a noun. *Articles* as a special kind of adjective should be introduced only after students have become familiar with conventional adjectives. The two common articles 'a' and 'the' are used very often and have a different function. The sentence 'Tom arrived in a car' suggests that Tom arrived in any car. However, the sentence 'Tom arrived in the car' suggests that Tom arrived in a particular car. Therefore 'a' is used to denote a general example, whereas 'the' is used to denote a special example. Practice with the use of *articles* should take place frequently through the use of spoken activities as a way of immersion in language. While most students will pick up the distinction between 'a' and 'the' as a part of their general use of language, some students whose first language is not English may need more explicit teaching since many languages use *articles* differently. |
| | • *Adverbs* provide extra information about what is going on. They usually tell how, when, where or why something is happening. For this reason they usually change (or modify) the meaning of a verb (She ran quickly. He yelled loudly.). The gestural and spatial semiotic systems are very useful to introduce *adverbs* through the use of gesture and position because the function of an *adverb* is to tell how, when, where and why. Later in this phase introduce *adverbs* modifying adjectives (The rose was very red. The horse was terribly tired.) and adverbs modifying other adverbs (The train was moving too slowly. She ran awfully fast.) can be presented. |

| Parts of Speech continued | • The use of *concrete, proper* and *abstract nouns* is built upon the knowledge of *common nouns* that was introduced in the Beginning phase. |
|---|---|
| | *Proper nouns* are the names of people (Ron, Mrs Smith), places (Canberra, New York) and things (Telstra, Toyota) and always begin with a capital letter. These are easily identified and occur commonly in text forms such as narratives, advertisements, recounts and biographies. Students will need to practise the use of *common nouns* in both print and digital technologies across many text forms. |
| | *Concrete nouns* and *abstract nouns* can be introduced once students have learnt, and can understand, the difference between concrete and abstract. These terms can be introduced across the curriculum in disciplines such as Science and Social Science as well as in the study of language. *Concrete nouns* refer to things that can physically be seen or touched (such as car, water, headland, orange) while *abstract nouns* refer to concepts or feelings that cannot be seen or touched (such as love, hate, freedom, memory). These distinctions can often be best illustrated through the visual semiotic system (pictures of such things as car or headland), the audio semiotic system (what anger sounds like) and the gestural and spatial semiotic systems (how body position, gesture and physical distance are used between two characters to illustrate love or hate). |
| | • As students become more familiar with verbs they will learn to use more than the action verbs that were introduced in the Beginning phase. Students will need familiarisation with saying verbs (such as say, said, reply, report) used when characters speak to one another, with sensing verbs (such as think, know, feel) and relating verbs often called verbs to be (such as am, is, are). Once students become familiar with more types of verbs they will need to be provided with opportunities to consider when particular actions take place and will need to be introduced to the concept of time or *tense*. Practising *present tense* (I hope. I am walking.), *past tense* (I was hoping. I walked.) and *future tense* (I will hope. I will walk.) will require constant immersion over time and frequent oral practice. This will particularly be the case with the many irregularities with verbs and *tenses* (such as begin/began, have/had, know/knew, speak/spoke). |
| **Punctuation** | Because students have already learnt during the Beginning phase that language can be spoken or written then they understand that: |
| | • Each sentence in written language can be understood in a similar way to spoken language using such things as variation in pause, tone and emphasis (using the audio semiotic system). |
| | • Capital letters and full stops can be used to demonstrate how punctuation marks can be used to do the same work in written language as pause does in spoken language. |
| | Building on these understandings students need to understand that: |
| | • *Commas* mark off groups of words in written language in the same way that pause, tone and emphasis mark off phrasing in spoken language. |
| | • *Commas* mark off separate items in a list that forms part of a longer sentence. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Punctuation continued** | The audio and gestural semiotic systems can be used when written language is read aloud to demonstrate how pause, tone, emphasis, facial expression and gesture can be used to illustrate how *commas* can change both phrasing and meaning. Spoken activities, rather than only written exercises, allow for more practice and more variety of contexts to be presented. This practice enables students to understand how punctuation marks allow emotion to be expressed and meaning to be clarified in written language. |
| | *Apostrophes* have two major functions in written language and a more minor function usually used in pronunciation in spoken language. Students need to understand that: |
| | • While the comma is a punctuation mark in written language and a corresponding signal in spoken language (the pause), the *apostrophe* is a punctuation mark in written language but no corresponding signal in spoken language. |
| | • The *apostrophe* essentially indicates possession or ownership (such as the men's choir; the woman's car). |
| | • The *apostrophe* also marks *contractions* where a letter or letters have been omitted (such as It's hot. I'll go.). |
| | • In spoken language multiple contractions are sometimes used (such as I'd've come if I'd known about it. I couldn't've taken the money.). They are much less likely, if ever, to be used in written form. |
| | • There are two common mistakes often made with *contractions* because of pronunciation. Your and you're are not clearly differentiated in pronunciation and are sometimes confused. Similarly should've and should of are also confused. In both cases the last element is, quite correctly, not stressed. Students need to be made aware of these two cases so that they do not make grammatical errors. |
| **Phrases, Clauses and Sentences** | In the Beginning phase students learnt that a sentence was a key unit of language used to express ideas that formed a complete thought. When it contained a subject and only one verb it was called a simple sentence. In the Early phase students need to learn more about sentences and their relationship to clauses. |
| | • Students need to understand that: |
| | • A sentence can include words grouped meaningfully to express a statement, question, exclamation, request, command or suggestion. |
| | • The basic unit of meaning in the English language is the *clause*. The *clause* conveys a message and it provides information about 'What's happening?' and 'Who or what is doing or receiving the action?' |
| | • A simple sentence, the most basic kind of sentence, contains only one *clause*. |
| | • A *clause* consists of a *subject* (the subject matter or topic of the *clause*) and a *predicate* (provides information about, or modifies, the *subject*, such as what the *subject* is doing or what the *subject* is like). The *predicate* must contain a verb. (We [*subject*] shall run down the road [*predicate*]). |

| Phrases, Clauses and Sentences continued | • A *compound sentence* contains two or more *clauses*. Each one of these *clauses* must make sense by itself and is therefore known as an *independent clause*. ('He climbed into the car and he drove down the road' is a *compound sentence* because it contains two *clauses*. Each of the *clauses* 'He climbed into the car' and 'He drove down the road' provide equally important information, can stand on its own and make sense by itself.) |
|---|---|
| | Familiarisation with the concepts of *clauses* and *compound sentences* can be achieved using print, live and digital electronic technologies. *Clauses* and *compound sentences* need to be presented not only in spoken form (in discussions and other conversations) and in written form (in personal stories and in books), but also as part of images, diagrams and on websites. *Clauses* and *compound sentences* need to be represented using the linguistic, audio and visual semiotic systems. Practice with *subject, predicate* and *independent clauses* needs to be frequently presented in spoken form in discussions and other conversations to supplement practice with the written forms. |
| | In a multimodal text the function of clauses in a compound sentence can also be fulfilled by the codes and conventions of other semiotic systems present in the text. For example, in accompanying visual, audio and gestural semiotic systems, colour, line, tone, facial expression, pace and pitch can add meaning to the linguistic text. |
| **Cohesive Devices** | Once students learnt about the use of repetition to make links through a text in the Beginning phase, they understood how this type of word association created cohesion by allowing participants in a text to be easily tracked. |
| | Students need to understand that: |
| | • The repetition of words is one of the *word association* devices that can form chains that can be traced through a text in order to create cohesion. Similarly, in a multimodal text the visual, gestural and audio semiotic systems might employ the repetition of colour, sound, or expression to provide cohesion and lead the viewer through the text. |
| | • The use of *synonyms* (words that have similar meaning such as large, big, huge) can be traced through a text in order to create cohesion. |
| | • The use of *antonyms* (words that are opposite in meaning such as large/small, buy/sell, old/new) can be traced through a text in order to create cohesion. |
| | • Coherence can be created in a text by the way it is divided into *paragraphs*. *Paragraphs* are groups or bundles of ideas that deal with a single topic and support the development of structure in a text. |
| | One of the advantages of using *synonyms* and *antonyms* in a text is that this adds interest to the text by reducing the amount of repetition. While this creates a better quality text it also makes it more difficult to read because it requires a more developed vocabulary. This may create problems for readers who are struggling or students whose first language is not English. |

**Table.5.5 Codes and conventions of the linguistic semiotic system**

For a full description and definitions of all the codes and conventions for each semiotic system, see *Viewing Resource Book*:
• Chapter 3: Conventions

# Involving Students

## 1 Website Questions

This activity supports students in learning how to effectively use a website so they can select the most appropriate information for a specific task. The following questions can be used by teachers to guide students in their use of websites. A teacher may focus on just one or two of the questions as they model how to use a website on the Internet as part of a lesson. (The following questions are based on research by Dr G. Oakley, et al. in *Using and Choosing Hypermedia Texts: A Framework for Teachers,* ALEA state conference (WA) May 2006.)

- Which parts of a website do you usually look at first? e.g. do you look at the pictures, written texts, etc.?
- Do you read everything on the page? How do you choose which parts to read?
- How do you choose which links to click on?
- What do you do if the Internet link takes you to a page that is not useful to you?
- What can you do if you get lost when you are on the Internet?
- What kinds of problems do you sometimes have in understanding the websites?
- In your opinion, what kinds of things make websites tricky to understand?
- What do you usually do with the information you find on websites?
- Do you normally use worksheets of any kind when you are reading websites? Can you tell me about them?
- Do you think that reading a website is similar to reading a book? How is it different?



**Figure 5.13 A children's website. An annotated version of this webpage can be found on the Viewing CD**

## 2 Roll the Pencil

The purpose of Roll the Pencil is to demonstrate how moving cartoons are made and how films work.

- Students select a cartoon character and draw two or more images of the character in different poses.
- Students then wrap a piece of paper tightly around their pencil.
- Students let the paper spring back to show how movement is generated.
- Discuss how this is similar to cartooning.

## 3 Superheroes and Music

Superheroes and Music teaches students how to recognise the elements that contribute to the development of meaning in visual texts, in particular the audio codes, e.g. sound and music.

- Demonstrate how music contributes to the development of meaning by asking students to view some different cartoons, e.g. select a number of cartoons about superheroes.
- Prompt a class discussion about the function of music in cartoons and films.
- Brainstorm ideas about music with students and add their responses to the digital flip charts.
- Focus on the theme of superheroes. Students can discuss how the superheroes in the cartoons could be represented with music, e.g. would the music be scary, funny, fast?
- Provide students with the resources so they can select appropriate music, e.g. classical, rock, hip-hop and pop music, for a CD or PowerPoint™ presentation.

## 4 Television Commercials

This activity demonstrates how to deconstruct television commercials by identifying the use of the dominant images.

- Provide students with opportunities to view a TV commercial and focus on the dominant image.
- In pairs, students discuss what they think is the dominant image in the commercial, e.g. it might be boys playing football.
- Discuss the reading path, that is, identify how the structure of the advertisment guides the reader/viewer through the text.
- Students illustrate a plan for their own TV commercial.
- Students create their own commercial by using various software programs such as Windows™ Movie Maker or iMovie™ (Mac).

## 5 Visual Texts Display

This activity exposes students to a vast array of different visual texts so that they develop an understanding of the different and similar structure and features of visual texts. These texts are as follows:

- catalogues advertising children's games, toys, clothes, food, hardware, etc.
- both print and digital comics
- travel brochures about local and international theme parks, historical places and other places of interest

- interactive DVDs, tape cassettes, CDs, videos, etc.
- picture books
- informational texts
- variety of both print and online recipe books
- television programs: print and digital, e.g. digital television magazines, newspaper sections outlining a weekly television schedule including dates and times and a small synopsis of programs
- print and digital magazines and e-zines, e.g. news clips are available on websites
- advertisements and posters, e.g. movies, food, cars, etc.

Students create their own visual text publication for an audience of their choice. They include props and aids for their presentation to the class, or use a laptop computer or an overhead projector. Provide assistance if required. Storyboard formats can be found on the *Viewing CD*.

## 6 Read the Images Using Picture Books
**(Maureen Walsh, 2006)**

This activity focuses on looking at a number of picture books that have been created by the one writer/illustrator, for example Anthony Browne. This activity develops the students' understanding of the visual elements that contribute to the meaning of the text. This activity demonstrates to students the different devices that illustrators use in different types of texts, e.g. print picture books and online e-picture books. Students are able to identify and discuss if the illustrators use similar characters, settings, and colour, layout of the page and the boundary around the page.

- Students work with a partner or in groups of three.
- They select and discuss images from the visual text that appeal/do not appeal to them.
- Discuss how the image is constructed, e.g. colour, size, texture, layout, balance and shape.
- Discuss the main point of view of the author and what connections students are able to make to their own lives. Ask: how does the text relate to real life? For example, watch a TV commercial about football and then discuss how students play football on the weekend at the local sport facility.
- Have a shared discussion on prediction, visualisation, decoding, meaning-making, imagining and use of colour to create mood and feelings. (Refer to the glossary for detailed definitions of terms.)
- Display the results of the group work on the learning wall.

## 7 Reading Facial Expressions (Thomas A. Sebeok, 2000)

This activity demonstrates how students can gain meaning by reading the facial expressions of characters. Explain to students that facial features add to the expressions of the characters in visual texts.

- Provide students with a number of different examples of facial expressions in print and digital visual texts.
- Provide students with some of their previous work samples that include thought bubbles above a character's head in illustrated cartoons and comics.

- Allow students time to focus on facial details and how they can have an impact on the overall meaning a person makes when reading a character's face, e.g. **wide eyes can indicate surprise, lowered eyebrows can indicate annoyance and a curved mouth can indicate a smile.** Facial features make a significant contribution to the expressions of characters in visual texts.
- Have students create a chart including the different facial expressions they noted and attach a stick-on note to each expression describing what it means.

## 8 Signs and Symbols

This activity demonstrates the important use of signs and symbols (visual sign or shape) that include both fonts and images. Signs and symbols convey messages in a simplified way.

- Initiate a class discussion about the different signs and symbols that can be observed in the environment in both printed and electronic texts. List students' suggestions on a chart.
- Discuss with students how signs and symbols are constructed to make meaning and to highlight a major point in a simple way. With students, make some examples of signs and symbols on the digital flip chart.
- Students create their own sign or symbol using different fonts and images to convey a simple message.

## 9 Soup Packets and Bread Bags

Soup Packets and Bread Bags is an activity that exposes students to the different types of visual texts by focusing on the advertising and branding of soup packets and bread bags. This activity can be found on the *Viewing CD*.

- Display a variety of different soup packets and bread bags so students view and discuss them.
- Brainstorm and discuss with students the visual features on both products, e.g. **lines, shapes, colour, texture, fonts, etc.**
- Discuss with students the purpose of the advertising on the packets and the intended audience. Ask students to consider the message that is being conveyed.
- Provide an arrangement of useful materials, e.g. **plastic, cardboard, felt pens.**
- Students then design their own soup packet and bread bag, using paper and junk material.

## 10 Photographs and Illustrations

Photographs and Illustrations is an activity that assists students in recognising visual devices that appear in different visual texts, and explores how they contribute to meaning. Devices used by photographers are different from those used by illustrators.

- Invite students to bring in a selection of photographs from home, as well as illustrations from classroom magazines, newspapers, web pages and comics.
- Collaboratively construct a display on the learning wall of some photographs (close-up, medium and long shots) and illustrations (colour, texture, line and shape). Add labels.
- Students then select four photographs and four illustrations that are to be placed in a plastic sleeve.
- In pairs, students use stick-on notes to label the devices on their partner's work.
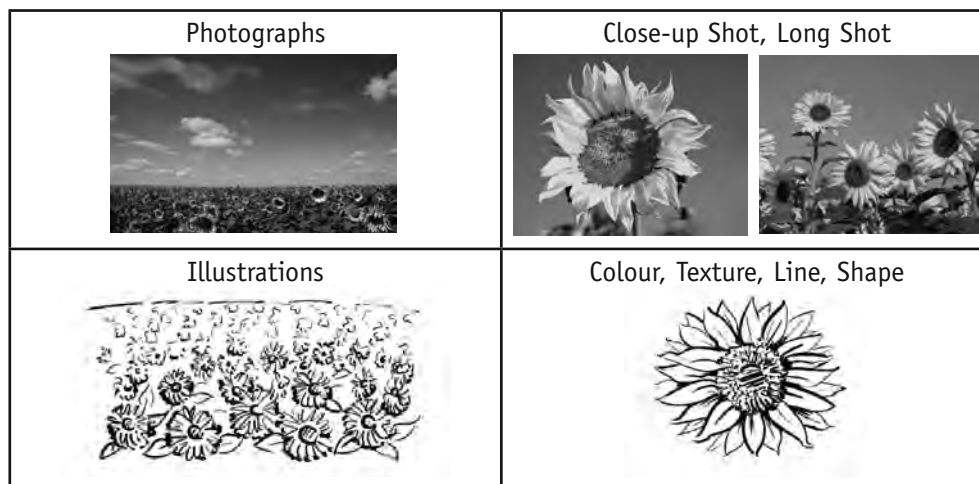
**Figure 5.14 Still image conventions**

## 11 Sports Signs, Symbols and Logos

Sports Signs, Symbols and Logos is an activity that explores the logos, signs and symbols that may be familiar to students by focusing on football logos, signs and symbols. For this activity, copies of a Friday edition of the Pre-Game section from the local newspaper are required.

- Provide pairs of students with a copy of the Pre-Game section (newspapers in other states also include a Friday sports section).
- Each pair works using a felt-tip pen to locate and circle the logos, signs and symbols.
- Students then make a chart of the signs, symbols and logos that they found.
- Students design their own sports logo on a poster and display it in the classroom.

## 12 Patterns for Toys and Cartoon Characters

This activity provides students with opportunities to develop their understanding of visual cues by focusing on clothes and costumes and the visual diagrams or patterns that are used when making an article of clothing.

- Provide students with toy patterns and clothing pattern books, e.g. students discuss the layout of the text. The pattern could be for a glove toy or cartoon character.
- Discuss the concepts of the diagrams and the way they are put together.
- With a partner, students can discuss the use of symbols or icons, the diagrams, graphic instructions and the layout of the pattern and how these still images combine to make meaning.
- Have students design their own clothing pattern for a cartoon character or a toy.
- Students can take a photograph of their completed work; provide help if required. The photographs can be retained as a record of the students' achievements.
- Display students' work on the learning wall with the title 'Visual Texts Include Designs, Diagrams, Signs and Symbols and Graphic Instructions'.

# PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES

## Major Teaching Emphases

- **Continue to teach students strategies for comprehending and producing multimodal texts, e.g.** navigating, self-questioning.

- **Model how to reflect on the viewing process and encourage students to do the same.**

- **Teach students a variety of ways to plan and produce multimodal texts, e.g.** graphic organisers for a news broadcast.

## Organisation of the Processes and Strategies Aspect

There are several differences in the organisation of the Processes and Strategies aspects. Both the Teaching Notes and the Teaching and Learning Experiences (Involving Students) are in the *First Steps Viewing Resource Book*, Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

The rationale for this difference in organisation is that the processes and strategies of viewing are not conceptually hierarchical and therefore not phase-specific. In all phases, a variety of viewing processes and strategies need to be introduced, developed and consolidated.

What varies from one phase to the next is the growth in:
- the number and integration of strategies used throughout the process of viewing
- the awareness and monitoring of strategies
- the efficiency in the use and selection of strategies
- the ability to articulate the use of strategies in the process of viewing
- the awareness of how the use of strategies helps with making meaning
- the ability to locate, select and evaluate visual texts.

# Supporting Parents of Early Viewers

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF EARLY VIEWERS

Early viewers are able to construct meaning and respond to a small range of visual texts. They demonstrate their awareness of some distinguishing features from a range of visual texts such as picture books, cartoons, posters, computer screens and advertisements. They are able to understand that texts are created by people to represent real or imaginary experiences. They can recognise and interpret some basic devices used in visual texts, such as camera shots and the use of colour.

## Supporting Early Viewers in the Home

A parent brochure providing tips on supporting young viewers in the home is located on the *First Steps Viewing CD*. The brochure contains information about the kinds of viewing activities students will be engaged in at school and why the teaching of viewing is an important part of the school curriculum. It also gives information about appropriate viewing practices, and ways parents can help students develop their critical viewing habits.

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**Parent Brochure (See Parent Brochure 1)**

1 Why Teach Viewing?
2 The Development of Viewing
3 Supporting Your Child
4 Resources
5 Things to Do When Viewing with Your Child
6 Viewing at School.

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# Exploratory Viewing Phase



**Figure 6.1**

## Global Statement

*Students begin to integrate a variety of strategies for interpreting multimodal texts. They typically recognise and understand links between the content and purpose and form of multimodal texts. Students identify the ways in which the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems shape meaning. They use known codes and conventions when producing multimodal texts for different purposes. They identify simple symbolic representation and stereotypes.*

# Exploratory Viewing Indicators

## Use of Texts

◆ **Makes meaning from a range of multimodal texts by integrating knowledge of the semiotic systems,** e.g. linguistic, audio, gestural.

◆ **Produces a range of multimodal texts but may not fully control all elements.**

◆ **Explains how multimodal texts differ by identifying text features such as purpose, organisation and structure.**

◆ **Uses multimodal resources effectively to suit purpose.**

• Discusses multimodal texts with attention to main ideas and supporting detail, e.g. in information texts — key information, in literary texts — main character and setting.

• Identifies and discusses links between print information and images.

• Uses multimodal resources to locate information, e.g. menu bars, simple navigational tools, scroll bars.

• Uses appropriate metalanguage when discussing a multimodal text, e.g. sound effects, body language.

## Contextual Understanding

◆ **Expresses and justifies personal responses to multimodal texts.**

◆ **Recognises the different ways characters, people, events and ideas are represented.**

◆ **Identifies purpose and target audience for a range of multimodal texts,** e.g. to persuade teenagers, to entertain children.

◆ **Experiments with the use of devices,** e.g. to suit the purpose of the multimodal text.

• Discusses possible reasons for choices of images in different texts, e.g. advertisements, DVD cover.

• Identifies how a person or event is represented in a particular way, e.g. the scientist wears glasses and has a white lab coat.

• Identifies the ways in which stereotypes are constructed within a multimodal text.

• Attempts to use familiar devices when producing multimodal texts.

## Conventions

◆ **Recognises codes and conventions of the semiotic systems used to produce multimodal texts.**

◆ **Explains how multimodal texts differ by identifying text features such as purpose, organisation and structure.**

◆ **Begins to use the correct terminology of the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems.**

• Identifies predictable organisational patterns in a range of familiar multimodal texts, e.g. television news formats.

• Identifies the use of dominant images and simple font to attract the eye.

• Identifies visual and audio elements that contribute to the representations of people, e.g. costume, make-up, accent.

• Uses knowledge of structure and organisation to construct meaning, e.g. layout.

## Processes and Strategies

◆ **Uses an increasing range of strategies for comprehending and producing multimodal texts,** e.g. determining importance, navigating, self-questioning.

◆ **Begins to adjust viewing strategies for different texts and different purposes.**

◆ **Draws upon an increasing knowledge from the semiotic systems when comprehending and producing multimodal texts,** e.g. gestural, spatial, visual.

◆ **Plans and produces a multimodal text that is beginning to reflect the intended purpose.**

• Uses skimming to identify different text forms.

• Uses scanning to locate specific information.

• Is able to summarise events or actions from a multimodal text.

• Makes some comparisons between information from different multimodal formats and sources.

# Major Teaching Emphases

## Environment and Attitude (see p. 132)

- Create a supportive classroom environment that provides access to a range of multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to select their own multimodal text materials according to interest or purpose.
- Foster students' enjoyment of purposeful viewing.
- Encourage students to explore new technologies when viewing.

## Use of Texts (see p. 136)

- Continue to expose students to a range of multimodal texts and discuss the features and structure of each.
- Continue to teach students about the purpose, organisation and structure of a range of multimodal texts.
- Provide opportunities for students to produce a range of multimodal texts for authentic purposes and audiences using texts conveyed by paper, digital electronic and/or live technologies.
- Provide opportunities for students to respond to multimodal texts using both explicit and implicit information to make connections.
- Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with viewing, e.g. juxtaposition, bodily contact.

## Contextual Understanding (see p. 151)

- Provide opportunities for students to listen to the opinions and justifications of others, realising there are different points of view and interpretations.

- Discuss how and why characters, people, events and ideas are presented in a particular way by the producers of multimodal texts.
- Teach students the use of devices to influence meaning.
- Discuss how texts are produced for different purposes and audiences.
- Provide opportunities for students to discuss how the selection and use of particular codes, conventions and semiotic systems are influenced by the purpose, audience and context of a text.

## Conventions (see p. 164)

- Introduce, revise and extend the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.
- Continue to develop students' understanding of how to select the appropriate codes and conventions for their intended purpose and audience.
- Encourage students to experiment with particular semiotic systems, their codes and conventions as they plan and produce multimodal texts.

## Processes and Strategies (see p. 182)

- Continue to teach students strategies for comprehending and producing multimodal texts, e.g. inferring, summarising, synthesising.
- Model how to reflect on the viewing process and encourage students to do the same.
- Continue to teach students a variety of ways to plan and produce multimodal texts, e.g. create a storyboard for a slide show.

# Teaching and Learning Experiences

## ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE

### Major Teaching Emphases

- Create a supportive classroom environment that provides access to a range of multimodal texts.

- Encourage students to select their own multimodal text materials according to interest or purpose.

- Foster students' enjoyment of purposeful viewing.

- Encourage students to explore new technologies when viewing.

## Teaching Notes

A classroom community that nurtures Exploratory phase viewers is one that promotes exploration and inquiry of different multimodal text forms, while supporting the development of content knowledge and conceptual understandings across all curriculum areas. Emphasis is placed on providing students with a range of opportunities and purposes to use their knowledge and understanding of viewing when comprehending texts from all learning areas. Teachers can support students by helping them to develop strategies they can use when viewing a range of text forms in different contexts.

The focus for developing positive attitudes towards viewing as part of providing a supportive environment is organised under the following headings:
- Creating a supportive classroom environment
- Encouraging exploration and inquiry
- Fostering an enjoyment of viewing
- Viewing as a social practice.

### Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment

Exploratory viewers need the opportunity to explore multimodal texts in an environment that values their existing skills and builds on their strengths and interests. Exploratory viewers will benefit from an environment that allows them to explore and share texts with others, express their personal opinions, present diverse interpretations of texts and begin to question text producers' messages. Such an environment should provide students with opportunities to work individually, in small groups or as part of the whole class. The classroom environment should, above all, encourage students to

regard themselves as successful viewers and to see viewing as an enjoyable meaningful experience that has relevance in their social and academic lives.

## Physical Environment

Opportunities to develop understandings in viewing occur throughout the day in all learning areas, in routine organisation and in social interactions. The physical environment of the classroom will therefore change according to the teaching and learning demands at any particular time. It is important to create spaces for students to independently or collectively engage with a wide range of multimodal texts for a range of purposes.

The following are some considerations for an effective physical environment.
- Provide space for small-group/whole-class interactions. This may be a screening area, an interactive whiteboard or a book stand.
- Provide an area for students to display visual texts of personal significance, topic-related resources or class work samples.
- Provide areas where students can either use multimodal texts individually or share in with a pair or small group. Head-phones, laptops, MP3 players, listening stations and flexible seating will help to manage multiple groups in a small classroom.
- Establish and maintain consistent routines for viewing activities.



**Figure 6.2 Students viewing film clips on an iPod**

## Classroom Culture

As well as providing appropriate materials and a carefully managed physical environment, it is important to develop a positive classroom culture where students are supported to explore and understand the different ways of using, interpreting and producing multimodal texts. Teachers should model the following:
- Reading and viewing a variety of multimodal texts, e.g. graphs and tables in informational texts, web pages, clips from feature films, TV commercials and magazines.
- Identifying a purpose for viewing.
- Reflecting on viewing strategies used and goal-setting to improve or extend the range of strategies used.
- Problem-solving techniques when viewing, e.g. how to find information from a website.
- Encouraging the application of viewing understandings across all learning areas.
- Actively listening to students in discussions about multimodal texts.

## *Encouraging Exploration and Inquiry*

Exploratory viewers need to be encouraged to explore a wide range of text forms, including complex visual texts. Teachers can support students in the following ways:

- Discuss the demands of new viewing contexts, e.g. 'We will watch this film to find out how codes and conventions help to develop a character.'
- Explicitly teach viewing strategies, e.g. 'These illustrations remind me of the way line and colour are used in …' and encourage students to reflect on these strategies.
- Model how to identify the text producer's message.

## *Fostering an Enjoyment of Viewing*

Most students are exposed to visual texts on a daily basis, e.g. advertising, signage, and multimedia, etc. However, much of this viewing is intuitive as students engage with visual texts in different contexts, e.g. across learning areas at school, at home and in social situations. It is important that teachers provide opportunities for students to become aware of the types of texts they are viewing; how they are actually making meaning from them; and how students are positioned by these texts. News reports, advertisements and posters all position the viewer to a particular point of view of the multimodal text. Students need to be provided with opportunities to view different multimodal texts for a range of purposes in different contexts. They need to have opportunities to respond to these texts in a variety of ways:

- Provide a variety of groupings for viewing texts, e.g. individually, in pairs, small or large groups.
- Involve students in Modelled, Shared and Guided viewing sessions on a regular basis.
- Provide a variety of viewing purposes, e.g. view texts for aesthetics, entertainment, pleasure or information.
- Provide a variety of multimodal texts for students to use.
- Allocate time each day for students to read/view independently, selecting their own material.
- Provide opportunities for repeated viewings of multimodal texts used in the classroom. This allows students to build and adjust their understanding over time.
- Provide multiple demonstrations of the viewing strategies that competent viewers use, e.g. predicting, inferring, re-viewing.
- Share your reading of different visual texts with students. Explain how meaning is made, why they might appeal, or why the texts might be a helpful source of information.
- Display students' favourite visual texts. Allow students time to share and explain choices to others.
- Accept and praise diverse interpretations of texts, encouraging students to share and consider different points of view.
- Provide opportunities for students to use a range of digital electronic technologies that present texts e.g. computers, interactive whiteboards, digital cameras or hand-held mobile devices.
- Involve students in conversations about their viewing in all learning areas.
- Be accepting and prepared to consider and discuss the different range of multimodal texts that students engage with outside of school, e.g. video and online games, trading

cards, photo-sharing blogs, hand-held mobile devices, video games or manga comics.

- Provide authentic viewing experiences that are linked to students' interests and experiences and have a clear purpose or focus.
- Create well-organised consistent routines for viewing events.
- Involve students in organised multimodal text discussion groups, e.g. picture book discussion groups, book clubs and film review groups.

**Figure 6.3 Students viewing multimodal online texts**

## Viewing As a Social Practice

Exploratory phase students need the opportunity to engage with many examples of multimodal texts, for a variety of social purposes; e.g. websites that describe, entertain, instruct or persuade; picture books that explain, recount or describe; and photographs that explain or seek to persuade. It is important that students at this phase are supported to become aware of the purpose for which a multimodal text has been created, and begin to view such texts from a number of perspectives.

Students will benefit from the following activities:
- Have students take a series of photographs to recount school events and compare these with photographs which explain or instruct.
- Provide students with opportunities to deconstruct a local newspaper to examine the way images, headlines and text serve the various purposes of a newspaper, e.g. to inform, to comment, to serve, and to entertain.
- Provide students with opportunities to retell a picture book from the point of view of a minor character.
- Have students compare or contrast images in a collection: e.g. the way homes are represented in a series of photographs, drawings and paintings of domestic dwellings.

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For further information on Environment and Attitude, see *Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning:*
- Chapter 5: Establishing a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment.

# USE OF TEXTS

■ **Continue to expose students to a range of multimodal texts and discuss the features and structure of each.**

■ **Continue to teach students about the purpose, organisation and structure of a range of multimodal texts.**

■ **Provide opportunities for students to produce a range of multimodal texts for authentic purposes and audiences using texts conveyed by paper, digital electronic and/or live technologies.**

■ **Provide opportunities for students to respond to multimodal texts using both explicit and implicit information to make connections.**

■ **Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with viewing, e.g.** juxtaposition, bodily contact.

## Teaching Notes

Exploratory viewers benefit from the opportunity to view a range of multimodal texts for a variety of purposes. Students need to be supported to understand and use texts effectively for both academic and social purposes. At this phase of development, students will be experiencing increasing demands in both the amount and content of the texts they will be expected to read and understand.

Students need to be able to identify, categorise and make inferences about multimodal texts based on prior knowledge of familiar text features and structures. As they explore multimodal texts, they should have a growing awareness that different types of multimodal texts can be categorised according to their function, content, intended message, the technologies by which they are delivered, e.g. paper based, digital electronic and live, or the semiotic systems they contain, e.g. visual, audio, gestural, spatial or linguistic.

The focus for supporting Exploratory viewers in this aspect is organised under the following headings.
• Variety of multimodal texts
• Structures and features of multimodal texts
• Producing multimodal texts
• Responding to multimodal texts
• Developing metalanguage

## *Variety of Multimodal Texts*

Students in the Exploratory phase will benefit from opportunities to question, discuss and interact with different multimodal text forms. These texts should include a variety of literary, informational and everyday texts. They must also include texts that are delivered using different technologies, e.g. paper based, electronic/digital and live.

Texts need to be selected from all areas of the curriculum, and include those texts students read and view in the community. Teachers could use some of the following types of multimodal texts with Exploratory viewers: sophisticated picture books, informational texts, photographs, poster advertisements, films, television programs, video games, websites, CDs and software programs, for example.



**Figure 6.4 Two examples of informational viewing texts**

Exploratory viewers need to build upon their existing understanding of texts containing images. They need to be aware that these texts may be delivered in different ways using different technologies such as:
* paper-based, e.g. printed books, flyers, newspapers and magazines
* digital electronic, e.g. computers, mobile devices, television programs
* live, e.g. art, drama and music.

To build Exploratory viewers' awareness and understanding of texts, they need to have the opportunity to use a range of visual texts across all learning areas. Teachers need to model how to read these texts by drawing on students' understanding of the elements within these texts that contribute to the overall meaning. For example, a teacher may demonstrate how to understand the meaning of a printed informational text in a science lesson, referring specifically to features such as headings, text, page layout, and the use of colour. Discussions and conversations about texts should occur as part of the normal classroom routine.

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Viewers at this phase of development will be expected to be more adept at using and comprehending texts in both school and social settings. The types of texts they use may contain a variety of images such as narrative and conceptual images. It is important that students are provided with opportunities to explore and use texts that include both, or a combination of these images in all learning areas. Teachers can support students to develop their knowledge of how and why various images are used within these texts to convey a particular meaning and how understanding these images contributes to the overall comprehension of the text.

### Complexity of Texts

Students need to be provided with a range of complex texts that correspond to their developmental needs. Figure 6.5 outlines examples of text complexity that would be expected at the Exploratory phase of development.

| Complexity of Text Form | Text Examples |
|---|---|
| **Personal Texts:** short texts that convey simple messages and ideas | Personal drawings, pictures and photographs, greeting cards, personal Powerpoint slides and videos |
| **Simple Texts:** texts that have simple or basic forms, structures and features | Posters, advertisements, simple picture books, labels, captions, simple brochures |
| **Familiar or Accessible Texts:** texts that are used within the teaching and learning program, that have recognisable forms and structures and easily accessible features to students. These texts have been previously viewed or are very familiar to the student. They are texts that have been explicitly taught to students and include multimodal texts. | Graphs, tables, charts, picture books, familiar magazines, comics, advertisements, web pages, catalogues, diagrams, short films, short animations, documentaries, live dramas and performances |
| **Challenging Texts:** texts used in Guided Viewing with teacher support, e.g. *at this phase of development, teachers should include specific-content area texts such as maths and science.* Most of these texts rely heavily on the use of both conceptual and narrative images and the success of Exploratory students in these subject areas will be directly related to their ability to comprehend and use these texts. | Texts containing both narrative and conceptual images from different learning area texts, e.g. *sophisticated narrative picture books, informational texts, websites; television — news documentaries, current affairs and dramas; instructional texts; advertisements and community texts such as newspapers, magazines, etc.* |

**Figure 6.5 Complexity of texts chart, adapted from 'Being Literate',** *Learning Teaching and Assessment Guide* **from ltag.education.tas.gov.au**

## Narrative Images

These are images that depict human or non-human characters participating in action, reaction and/or oral interactions. Narrative images are those that tell a story; they can be found in picture books, photographs, informational books, newspapers, magazines, advertisements, television programs, films, web pages and video games, for instance.
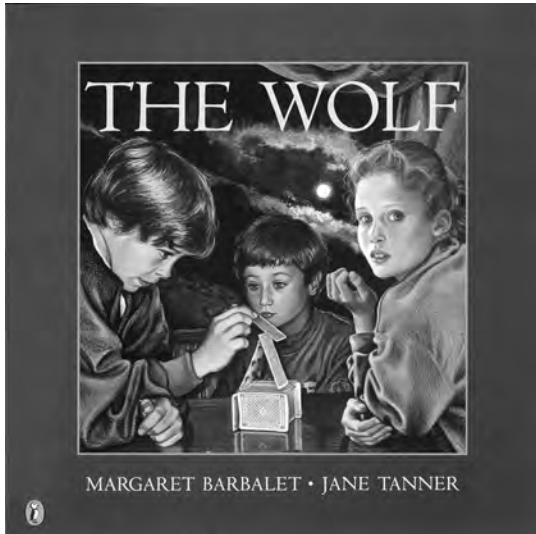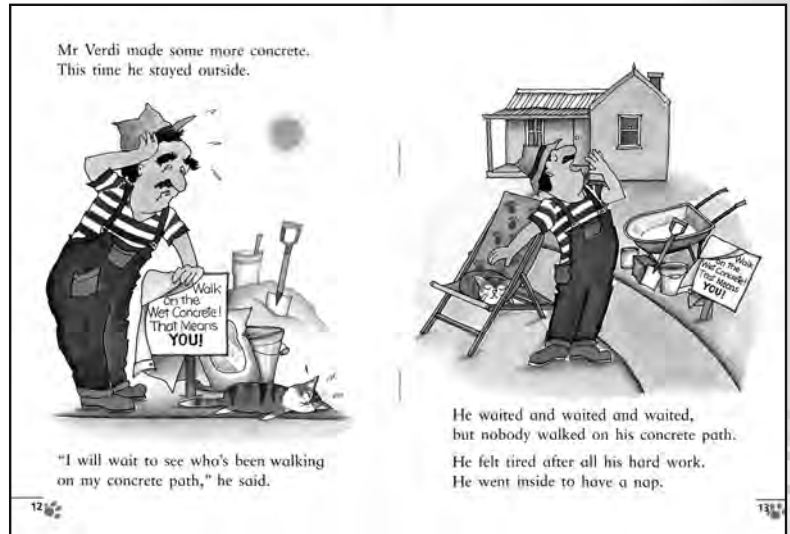
**Figure 6.6 An example of a narrative image**

**Figure 6.7 A narrative image in a picture book**

## Conceptual Images

These are images that depict classifications, part and/or whole representations or symbolic representations. Conceptual images convey specific information; they may be maps, time lines, graphs, cross-sections, flowcharts, figures, symbols, diagrams or typography.

Cross-section diagrams *analyse* the parts of an object.

The internal and external parts of the object (a volcano) are both shown.

A photograph has been placed beside the diagram to show the lava in a realistic way.

The parts of an object in a cross-section diagram are always labelled.

Figure numbers refer readers to the images (diagrams, drawings or photographs).

Figure numbers also link the image to the chapter and section.

The caption explains what is being shown in the image.

Interesting facts — not part of the main text. This is additional information.

**Figure 6.8 Conceptual images. This annotated illustration appears on the *Viewing* CD.**

It is important that teachers begin to explicitly teach students how to recognise and understand how these images contribute to the meaning within a text. Much of the information that students will be required to read and understand in a school setting will depend on their ability to understand the function of the image on the page or screen.

Exploratory viewers need to be taught how to read (and produce) the following information:

- simple diagrams, e.g. labelled diagrams
- analytical diagrams, e.g. cross-sections and cut-aways
- synthetic or sequential diagrams, e.g. flowcharts, time lines, web and tree diagrams
- quantitative diagrams, e.g. pictographs, number lines, bar and column graphs, line graphs and pie graphs
- maps, e.g. bird's-eye views, context maps, flow maps
- tables and charts, e.g. row by column matrices
- typography, e.g. different typefaces, fonts, captions, labels, headings.

- *Conceptual Images* can be classifications, part or whole representations or symbolic representations. Conceptual images convey specific information; they can be maps, time lines, graphs, cross-sections, flowcharts, figures, symbols, diagrams, etc. (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Unsworth, 2006). Teachers need to explain the purpose of specific conceptual images so students understand how to read and interpret the information that is being presented. For example, a *flow chart* summarises a process; *concept maps* show the links between various elements; *Venn diagrams* show shared and different characteristics and relationships (Moline, 1996).



**Figure 6.9 An example of a cross-section diagram**

When reading visual images, students may experience the following difficulties. They may require assistance in understanding:

- abstraction in images: A realistic image is easier to comprehend, e.g. a newspaper photograph rather than an abstract image; a topographical map, a graph or a time line.
- the way or sequence in which an image should be read. Many images that appear in content area texts, for example, a science textbook, are constructed so that they need to be read and interpreted in a particular way. For example, students are required to read legends and labels when deciphering the meaning of tables and maps; the data must be read in two directions before the information can be understood.
- typographical features: These include features such as specific type faces, font size and style, use of bold or italics, the inclusion of text boxes, borders and headings,
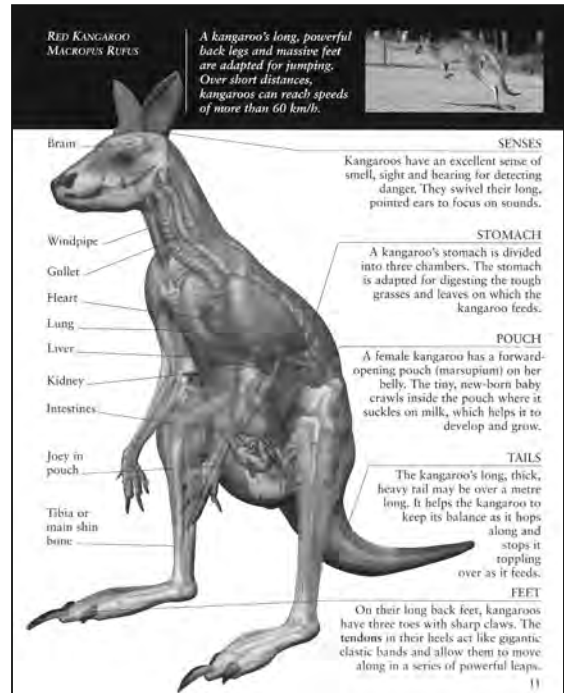
strategic use of space, etc. Students need to be explicitly taught how to read and understand these features and know what they may represent, e.g. the use of bold or italics may emphasise significant words in a text; different font sizes often denote the hierarchical ranking of headings.

Other features students need to become familiar with include:

| | |
|---|---|
| – indexes | – prefaces |
| – glossaries | – legends |
| – appendixes | – side bars |
| – bibliographies | – site maps |
| – hyperlinks | – home pages |
| – footnotes | |

## *Structures and Features of Multimodal Texts*
### *Purpose*

All texts are produced and viewed for a particular reason. The purpose may be to entertain, e.g. films, books or video games, or to present a point of view, e.g. advertisements, newspaper articles or television documentaries. Understanding the intended purpose of a text as well as its possible interpretation will assist students in analysing its organisation and structure.



**Figure 6.10 Visual texts can appear on various platforms such as TV programs, electronic games, magazines, etc.**

### *Text Organisation*

Text organisation refers to the way a text is arranged; its layout.

A layout is used to:
• make connections between elements in the text, e.g. to make connections between the print and images
• organise the information into themes or topics
• signal various entry points into the text for the viewer.

Exploratory viewers need to have an understanding of the organisation of different text forms. For example, the organisation of a scientific text may include headings and sub-headings, picture glossaries or conceptual diagrams such as cross-sections, flowcharts, tables and graphs.

When reading a multimodal text, there is always the possibility for students to misunderstand or misread information. At a basic level, this may occur because they have not read the heading above a picture, or at a more complex level, they have not understood the link between the print and the images. It is essential that students understand the organisational layout of a multimodal text as it provides the reader with clues to support the viewing. For example, students at this phase may be expected to understand and recognise that the narrative structure of a book, film or television program may include a setting, a problem or conflict, a resolution and a conclusion. A documentary film may include other elements such as observation, interview, dramatisation and exposition.

Points for discussion should include attention to the:

• technologies by which the text is conveyed (paper, digital electronic or live)

• purpose of the text and the context in which it is being used

• semiotic systems employed

• types of information conveyed by each semiotic system

• identification of relationships between the semiotic systems used, the type of text, the purpose and context

• critical analysis of the semiotic systems used: were they effective for this purpose and context?

**Figure 6.11 A list of possible discussion points to use with Exploratory viewers (adapted from** *Teaching and Learning Multiliteracies: Changing Times, Changing Literacies* **by Anstey, M. and Bull, G., 2006: 27)**

## *Text Structure*

Text structure refers to the way ideas, feelings and information are linked in a text. These could include:
• problem and solution
• compare and contrast
• cause and effect
• listing: logical or chronological sequence, a collection of details.

Exploratory viewers need to be provided with opportunities to analyse and discuss a variety of multimodal texts that have different structures. Texts will rarely have only one structure; texts will be produced with a combination of several structures. Understanding these structures will assist Exploratory viewers to comprehend multimodal texts.

Familiarising, analysing and discussing continue to be important teaching and learning practices to support students' development in engaging with a range of multimodal texts. Participating in Modelled, Shared and Guided viewing sessions shows students how to successfully make meaning from multimodal texts for different purposes and in different contexts. Providing time for independent viewing with self-selected texts allows students to apply their understandings in real contexts.

## Text Features

Each text form will contain grammars that correlates to the specific structures and features of that text form. For example, films will have a grammar that is specific to the structure and features of this text form. It may include technical codes concerned with the actual structure of the film, screen codes such as costume, setting and props and auditory codes such as soundtracks, voiceovers and dialogue.

## Producing Multimodal Texts

Students in the Exploratory phase benefit from opportunities to compose a variety of multimodal texts for different purposes and audiences. Many students have had experience with multimodal texts in a range of contexts outside of school and teachers can capitalise on some of the knowledge students have already gained.

In Modelled, Shared and Guided viewing sessions teachers can demonstrate how and why multimodal texts are constructed in certain ways.

These sessions can be used to demonstrate the following:
- Multimodal texts are organised in certain ways depending on the purpose and audience, e.g. travel brochures will contain photographs of sunny skies, and advertisements will portray the products in a positive light.
- Multimodal texts have special features, e.g. electronic texts have hyperlinks for navigating between screens.
- Multimodal texts have different purposes, e.g. a documentary to persuade, a text message to socialise.
- Different multimodal text forms are constructed differently, e.g. paper-based texts are linear, digital electronic texts can be non-linear.

It is important to give students opportunities to experiment with emerging knowledge about the production of multimodal texts. Opportunities may be provided in a number of ways in the classroom, for instance:
- establishing learning centres with a focus on producing multimodal texts for different purposes and audiences
- providing 'creative corners' containing the appropriate resources to encourage students to experiment to produce multimodal texts for that purpose, e.g. computer, digital camera and software to edit photos
- providing resources for students to produce multimodal texts for their own purposes, e.g. interactive board game.

## Responding to Multimodal Texts

Exploratory viewers also need to be provided with opportunities to respond to a range of different texts and show their understanding of them. Students need to be given the opportunity to view and interpret multimodal texts over an extended period of time, and be given time to discuss and question their own and others' responses. This allows them to achieve increased engagement and develop a deeper understanding of these texts. All viewers progress through a series of stages when responding to a multimodal text.

| Stages of Response | Definition |
|---|---|
| Impact | *General impression* of the image as a whole, including consideration of subject matter, colour, shape, composition, layout. The impact of an image will either encourage or deter the viewer to move to the next stage of scrutiny. |
| Scrutiny | *Careful looking*: closer examination of the image in a sustained way. |
| Recollection | *Making connections* with their own experiences and asking questions of the image. This stage involves thinking about what is actually seen. |
| Renewal | *Re-examination*: looking more deeply at the image; finding details that may have been overlooked; adjusting or modifying their original ideas in light of their experiences. |

**Figure 6.12 Arizpe & Styles (2003) describe the stages of response to art, postulated by Kenneth Clark in 1960**

Students in the Exploratory phase usually access information that is explicitly stated, but they are beginning to draw on information that is implied. Implicit information often requires viewers to make predictions, connections or generalisations, or to draw conclusions from information that has been either directly or indirectly stated.

Understanding implied information in a text is largely dependent on the viewers' prior knowledge and experience; therefore building this type of schema is a critical part of the teacher's role. Thinking aloud during Modelled and Shared viewing sessions is an effective way of demonstrating how prior knowledge can be accessed and used.

## Developing Metalanguage

When students can use metalanguage to talk competently about their own viewing, it helps them understand how the semiotic systems operate within texts. Developing a shared metalanguage in the classroom also helps students to understand the support and feedback provided by teachers. Developing appropriate metalanguage can be done during explicit demonstrations, during one-on-one conversations with students, or as part of planned Modelled, Shared or Guided viewing sessions. While it is important to use metalanguage as part of everyday teaching in all learning areas, it should remain flexible and open-ended, and never place unrealistic demands on the teacher or the student.

Certain terms may tend to be more prominent when focusing on different multimodal texts or more appropriate at different phases of development.

The following terms may be useful and appropriate for Exploratory viewers.
- Use of Texts: *meaning, text form, images, illustrations, semiotic systems.*
- Contextual Understanding: *audience, purpose, stereotype, representations, consumer, fact, opinion, device, perspective, point of view.*
- Conventions: *symbols, codes, composition, layout, graphics.*
- Processes and Strategies: *reflect, interrupt, infer, compare.*

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For further information about the Use of Texts aspect, see *Viewing Resource Book*:
- Chapter 1: Use of Texts
- Chapter 3: Conventions
- Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

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# Involving Students

## 1 Find a Title

In Find a Title, students scan the visual images within a text to make an initial prediction about the overall meaning of the text. By using a combination of the visual and linguistic semiotic systems, they look at the picture and the heading to get a sense of what the text is about.

Students look at a photograph, illustration or diagram to determine its meaning and match it to a relevant title. A collection of visual texts with titles removed could be added to continuously and could form the basis of an independent or small-group activity.
- Select a range of photographs, illustrations, or diagrams that are of interest to students or relevant to a topic currently being studied by the class.
- Remove the titles.
- Arrange students in small groups or pairs. Have them scan the visual texts and match each one to its title.
- Ask students to discuss and then create some alternative headings for the selected texts.
- Provide an opportunity for them to share their new headings and explain their reasons for choosing these headings.
- Discuss how changing the title can change a person's interpretation of the text or alter its intended meaning.

## 2 Tell a Tale

Tell a Tale is an opportunity for students to retell the meaning they make from a visual text. Students may work in small groups or pairs. They are provided with one of the following visual text collections:
– a collection of pictures or photographs
– a wordless picture book
– a series of graphic images, e.g. frames from a comic, instructional graphics, etc.
  - Organise students into small groups. Have each group select a different visual text collection, or each group can have the same collection, e.g. they all have the same set of photographs.

- Provide ample time for students to look at their text collection.
- Encourage discussion during the activity to assist with interpretation and understanding.
- Allow sufficient time for students to reach an agreement on how the text fits together or should be sequenced so that it makes sense. Make sure there is enough time so students can consider a number of alternatives.
- Invite students to share their interpretation with the class.

The collections may be displayed on charts around the room, and other groups can be invited to provide alternative interpretations.

## 3 Text Favourites

Text Favourites provides students with an opportunity to focus on the features of different visual texts while sharing their favourite texts. These might be picture books, comics, magazines, photographs, CDs, websites, films, television shows, video games, etc. This activity allows students to give opinions and justifications and make recommendations to other class members.

- Select a range of texts for students or ask them to bring their favourite texts from home. It may be necessary to determine what type of visual text form is going to be used.
- Discuss and make a list of the features that are found in the selected text form.
- Have students view their text and use the list of features to make judgements about them.
- Direct students to complete recommendation cards. (Refer to the *Viewing CD* for an example of a recommendation card.)
- Display texts and recommendation cards for all the class members to see.

## 4 Reflect and Review

Reflect and Review is a cross-curricular activity that can become a regular feature of the class routine. It allows students to spend time thinking and reflecting on the type of viewing they have participated in throughout the day, as well as reviewing the different text forms they have viewed. This activity works well if conducted at the end of a task, a session or the day. It can be conducted with a range of groupings: pairs, small groups, as a class or with familiar visitors such as older students (class buddies) or parents/care-givers.

- Model the task for students with another student or another teacher.
- Discuss with students where and how they need to sit, e.g. face-to-face, in a circle, etc.
- Explain to students what they are expected to discuss in their reflection and reviews, e.g. what kinds of viewing did you do today? How did it help you understand what you were learning about? What visual texts did you use? What elements in these texts helped you to understand them?
- Provide the necessary amount of time for students to reflect.
- Provide a thinking framework/graphic organiser as a scaffold for the reflection if necessary.
- Reflections may be recorded individually in journals or as a class summary.
- Teachers may refer to the stages of response outlined in Figure 6.12.

## 5 Visual Stories (Based on Kajder (2006))

Visual Stories is a very powerful activity (or series of lessons) to use with students. The creation of visual stories enables Exploratory viewers to develop an extensive understanding of how visual texts can be structured and presented to show a certain point of view or to suit a particular audience and purpose.

In this activity, students design and produce a three- to five-minute digital story. The teacher may need to support students through a series of steps to craft and record their first-person narratives. These steps might involve:

### Pre-planning: What Is Your Story?

Explain that a first-person narrative is a window into a 'moment in time' based on the student's own experiences and understandings of an event. Model how to brainstorm possible stories, e.g. my strangest memory, the most important event in my life, etc.

### Artefact Search

Students collect five still images that are personally significant to them. They may include photographs, pictures or drawings, magazines clippings, etc.

### Storyboards

Using the storyboard formats provided on the *Viewing CD*, students can plan the sequence of their images; remind them that they will need to consider both content and form:

- Content: Ask: what story will your pictures tell? What do you actually want to say? What emotion do you want to convey? Do the images you have chosen correspond with what you want to say?
- Form: Ask: What soundtrack music or words will you include? How will each image be framed? Will text be added to the image? How long will each image be shown? How fast or slow will the images progress?

Before creating a digital version of their stories, students can share their storyboards.

### Review and Revision

Students work together in pairs, or with the teacher to review their storyboards and to make any necessary adjustments. Students should be encouraged to provide constructive feedback, e.g. I like what you included here … but perhaps in this section you could … If I were doing this, I might try … Have you considered? Feedback should be limited to about three or four suggestions so it is not too overwhelming.

### Creation

Students create their digital stories using available digital resources, e.g. PowerPoint®, MovieMaker®, Dreamweaver®, etc.

### Sharing/Reflection/Celebration

When the digital stories are complete, students should share them with the rest of the class. Students benefit from celebrating their finished products by presenting them to a wider audience, such as another class, school assembly or parents. Encourage students to reflect on the finished product as well as the process.

Useful website addresses that relate to digital story-telling can be found on stepspd. com/weblinks. Many websites contain examples of digital stories created by students.

*Extension Activity*

Students can create digital stories using a 3-D animated program. The Australian Children's Television foundation produces a program titled Kahootz™, which is suitable for students to use. Kahootz™ is a set of 3-D multimedia tools that allows students and teachers to be creators, designers, inventors and storytellers in an animated medium. Kahootz™ also operates as an online community in which students and teachers can publish their work, exchange, share, collaborate, analyse and explore the world of digital story-telling and production with other schools. Go to stepspd.com/weblinks to link to the Kahootz™ website.

## 6 What Do I See? What Do I Think? What Do I Wonder?
**(Richards & Anderson, 2003)**

This is a whole-class or small-group activity that supports students to focus on what is actually happening in the image by asking the following questions.
- What do I see?
- What do I think?
- What do I wonder?

This activity is one that works particularly well when examining picture books and will encourage students to look beyond simple observations and literal meanings. Deeper examination of the image develops critical thinking and encourages students to make connections, predictions and inferences.



*What do I see?*
I see a girl riding on a butterfly in the sky.

*What do I think?*
I think she might be on a secret adventure.

*What do I wonder?*
I wonder why the illustrator has made the girl the same size as the butterfly, and which one has magical powers?

**Figure 6.13 Book covers such as the one above can be used to examine the facial expressions of characters and the way visual elements are positioned**

This activity will help students to think about the characters in a text, their facial expressions, how they are positioned, and even the setting in which they are placed, as well as other elements. This activity enhances students' understanding of the meanings that are conveyed in the images.

For more detail about this activity and a link to the student format, go to *Viewing Resource Book*, Processes and Strategies.

## 7 Image and Word Links

Image and Words Links is an activity that allows students to consider the connections between information presented by both images and words. Understanding these connections will allow students to access all information included within a text. This is a small-group activity that allows students to examine the connections between what is presented verbally in a text and what has been presented visually.

- Explain the purpose of the activity. (It may be beneficial to model the activity before asking students to work independently.)
- Arrange students in pairs or small groups.
- Provide each group with a copy of a visual image from an informational text, e.g, a photograph, drawing, diagram, chart, graph, etc.
- Students discuss the content of the image.
- Have students identify the key features and their understanding of the information conveyed in the image.
- Provide students with the accompanying written text (e.g. a caption, label, etc.) and allow them to compare and contrast information gained from visual and written texts. The teacher may support students by reading the written text orally to the class.
- Individually, students reflect on what they have learnt by considering the following questions:
  – What information did you learn from the visual text?
  – What information did you learn from the written text?
  – Did the written and visual texts work when they were combined? How?
- Provide opportunities for students to share their reflections.
  (See a sample reflection sheet provided on the *Viewing CD*.)
- Finally, work together to make a class chart of each group's activity.

## 8 News Broadcasts

News Broadcasts introduces students to the format of television news. In this activity students role-play and study the features of television news programs. The teacher assists students with planning and presenting the news. News television broadcasts inform people about world events, global and local news, current affairs and some TV news programs include commercial breaks. This activity helps students become familiar with news headlines which they can compare with newspaper headlines and articles. Television news programs are structured in different ways. The following activity will enable students to identify the different features of TV news programs.

- With students, jointly prepare a news broadcast area, e.g. assemble a desk, two chairs, a laptop computer, a microphone, notepaper and pencil, a weather map, a pointer, posters with signs and symbols used in the weather report, headphones for the camera person, etc.
- Initiate a discussion about what might be the general purpose of the news (to inform viewers by giving them a brief account of what has happened in the world or in their community on that day), e.g. local community news might focus on the construction of a new shopping centre or a sporting achievement.
- Brainstorm the particular features of a news presentation and record students' ideas on a visual chart or an interactive whiteboard.
- Prompt a discussion about the type of language used in news broadcasts. Also ask students to consider why the news is divided into segments, e.g. local news, world news, sports report and a weather report.
- Students work in groups of three. The teacher could have input into organising the groups. The group can decide who will play each role initially but all the group members should have a turn at playing each role. The roles are international/local newsreader, sports reporter and a weather person.
- Provide support as students plan and practise their news broadcast. The groups can then present it to the class. The broadcasts should only take about three minutes.
- A class member videotapes each news broadcast.

| International News | Local News | Sport | Weather |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gains the attention of the viewer by giving a brief idea of what has happened recently in the world | Gains the attention of the viewer by presenting a story of local interest | Gains the attention of viewers by satisfying their demand for action, pace and drama of current sporting events | Gains the attention of the viewer by presenting the weather from around the world, country and locally |
| Arouses interest | Arouses interest | Arouses interest | Arouses interest |
| Goes live to the spot where the action is | Invites viewers to participate, e.g. opinion polls | Includes interviews | Uses graphs and charts |
| Includes drama | Includes still and moving images | Includes still and moving images | Can include children reporting on the local weather |
| Includes still and moving images | | | Uses still and moving images |

**Figure 6.14 News broadcast chart from** *A Practical Guide to Teaching Viewing in Lower Primary*, **by Griffiths, A. 2000**

# CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Provide opportunities for students to listen to the opinions and justifications of others, realising there are different points of view and interpretations.

- Discuss how and why characters, people, events and ideas are presented in a particular way by the producers of multimodal texts.

- Teach students the use of devices to influence meaning.

- Discuss how texts are produced for different purposes and audiences.

- Provide opportunities for students to discuss how the selection and use of particular codes, conventions and semiotic systems are influenced by the purpose, audience and context of a text.

## Teaching Notes

There is a tendency for students at this phase of development to believe what they see or are shown; they may focus on the obvious rather than the underlying intent of a text. When working with multimodal texts, students need to be given the time to question and discuss how these texts are produced and how they are understood in particular contexts by particular audiences. Students begin to understand that different people or groups of people interpret texts in different ways. Students in this phase need to be supported to become aware that all texts have been consciously constructed for a target audience, and the texts serve specific social, cultural, political or economic purposes.

Modelled, Shared and Guided viewing sessions should include discussions about the purpose and audience of a text. In these sessions, teachers can support Exploratory viewers to focus on how their prior knowledge and socio-cultural background influences their interpretation of any text, and to recognise and consider different points of view. Students will benefit from opportunities to engage in discussions with the whole class and in small groups. This will allow them to share their opinions and justifications of their interpretation of texts while considering the views of others.

The focus for supporting Exploratory Viewers in this aspect is organised under the following headings.
- Discussions about texts
- Devices text producers use
- Representations of ideas, events, people or characters.

## *Discussions about Texts*

It is important for Exploratory viewers to continue to make connections and comparisons between their own experiences and those presented in a text. Teachers can support students by providing opportunities for students to work with and discuss a wide range of multimodal texts. As students reflect on their own interpretations as well as those of others, teachers should acknowledge and value students' opinions, while helping them to recognise and value the opinions of others. In this way, students will develop an awareness that:

- All texts are constructed for a particular purpose; this may be cultural, economic, social, ideological or political, e.g. the purpose may be to persuade, entertain, recount.
- Texts may be interpreted in more than one way and according to the context and purpose.
- All texts may be interpreted differently by different viewers, depending on the background of the viewer, the context and the purpose of viewing.

In this phase of development teachers can provide opportunities for students to reflect upon the ways in which they make meaning from texts, considering and valuing different points of view and interpretations. The following provide some suggestions:

- Encourage students to discuss and make connections between their personal experiences and the texts they are viewing.
- Have students compare events and characters from texts with their own knowledge and experiences.
- Ask questions that require a response beyond the literal interpretation, e.g. Why do you think …? What may have been an alternative …?
- Support students in accepting different points of view and interpretations.
- Facilitate conversations about texts.
- Encourage students to speculate why authors and illustrators portray events in particular ways.
- Have students consider the way meaning is delivered by the various codes and conventions of the semiotic systems, e.g. How did music affect the meaning? Why were the light and colour so harsh?
- Encourage students to speculate about the intended audience, e.g. Who do you think this text was produced for? What does the text producer want the audience to know? What does the producer assume that the audience already knows?

## *Devices Text Producers Use*

It is important to have regular ongoing conversations about the devices that text producers choose to influence the interpretation of a text. Text producers include authors, illustrators, graphic designers, filmmakers and scriptwriters, web designers, choreographers etc. It is essential to highlight and discuss the choices made and to speculate on the possible reasons for the choices. These discussions and speculations provide Exploratory viewers with a deeper insight into the impact the choices have on the interpretation of texts.

Devices chosen by text producers may include:

- colour
- lighting (text producers manipulate lighting in order to emphasise a particular point in an image or series of images)
- amount of detail included
- font type and size
- size of characters, tables, charts, graphs or diagrams relative to other images
- delivery technology, e.g. printed, digital electronic or live
- inclusion of different semiotic systems
- composition of page or screen, e.g. layout, framing, shot distance and angle
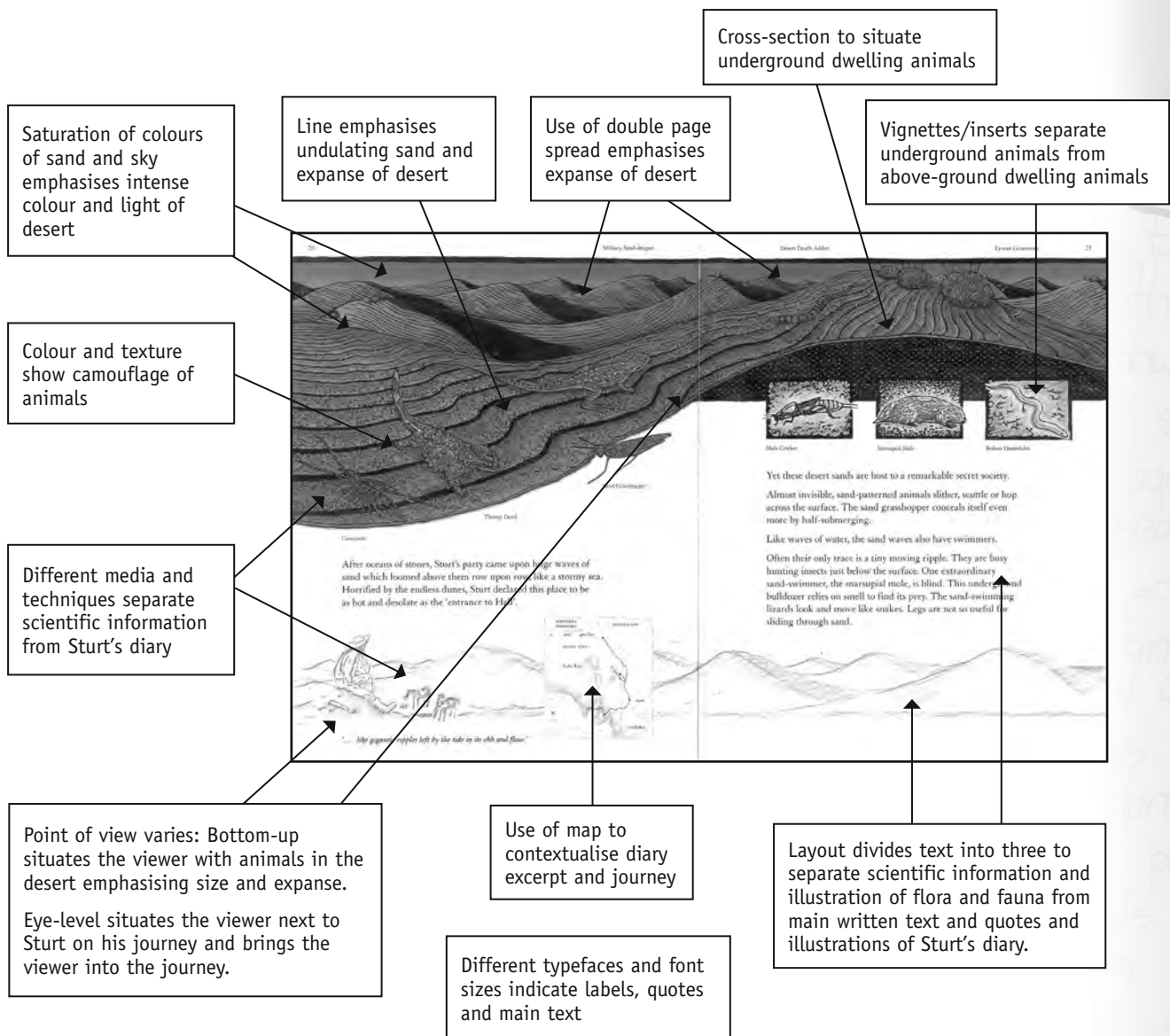- artistic style, e.g. abstract or realistic.

Cross-section to situate underground dwelling animals

Saturation of colours of sand and sky emphasises intense colour and light of desert

Line emphasises undulating sand and expanse of desert

Use of double page spread emphasises expanse of desert

Vignettes/inserts separate underground animals from above-ground dwelling animals

Colour and texture show camouflage of animals

Different media and techniques separate scientific information from Sturt's diary

Point of view varies: Bottom-up situates the viewer with animals in the desert emphasising size and expanse.

Eye-level situates the viewer next to Sturt on his journey and brings the viewer into the journey.

Use of map to contextualise diary excerpt and journey

Layout divides text into three to separate scientific information and illustration of flora and fauna from main written text and quotes and illustrations of Sturt's diary.

Different typefaces and font sizes indicate labels, quotes and main text

**Figure 6.15 illustration from *Sand Swimmers* by N. Oliver – with annotations, showing codes and conventions**

Devices chosen by authors and scriptwriters may include:

- style of language and/or text type, e.g. descriptive, narrative
- inclusion and/or omission of details
- use of irony, wit and humour
- intertextuality — the ways texts interrelate with each other, e.g. a page in a book may resemble a web page
- juxtaposition — the appearance side by side or close together of two unrelated images, e.g. an illustration of a donkey and politician on the same page implies they had something in common.

Exploratory viewers need to be explicitly taught to recognise and understand how devices are used when text producers wish to put forward a certain point of view. When analysing texts with students at this phase, teachers should note that students will find it easier to initially analyse the devices and point of view of the illustrator, then proceed to discuss the author's point of view (Anstey & Bull, 2006).

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- How do the illustrations, images (still or moving) support or aid the text? For example, what do the images add to the meaning? What do graphs, tables or diagrams tell you that words don't?
- How do the illustrations or images detract from your understanding of the text? For example, inappropriate images, incorrect framing and/or placement of images, lack of detail or incorrect sizing of image.
- How do the illustrations or images add to or enhance the text's meaning?
- How does the illustrator or graphic designer show the importance of different aspects of the text?
- Why did the illustrator or graphic designer choose to present the characters in a certain way?
- What other codes or combination of codes have been used in the text to create meaning, for example, voiceovers, narratives, sound effects, music, movement, etc.?
- Why do you think the text designer chose this way to represent the characters, people, events or facts?

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**Figure 6.16 Possible ways that texts may be discussed, adapted from *A Visual Literacy Unit***

## *Representations of Ideas, Events, People or Characters*

It is important that Exploratory viewers be supported to analyse and question why and how authors represent ideas, events, people or characters in particular ways. As students analyse and discuss the text producer's points of view, they can compare it with their own.

The following kinds of questions may be useful when reflecting on and discussing a text:

- How have events or ideas, people or characters been represented in the text? Is this a fair representation?
- How is this like or unlike people or situations you know?
- Whose point of view is being presented? Is there an alternative point of view?

- What do you think was the main purpose or message in this text? How do you know? How was it achieved?
- How is the same event or character portrayed in a series of texts?
- How have similar characters, people or events been portrayed across several texts?
- How is information on a particular topic the same or different across several texts?



**Figure 6.17 The author/illustrator Anthony Browne represents characters as gorillas in his book** *Voices in a Park* **(2001). A page from this book also appears on the** *Viewing CD.*

For further information about the Contextual Understanding aspect, see *Viewing Resource Book*:
- Chapter 2: Contextual Understanding.

# Involving Students

## 1 Viewing Response Journals

A Viewing Response Journal provides a place for students to record their responses, reactions, reflections and thoughts about texts they have viewed. Their responses may be recorded before, during or after viewing a visual text and after class and group discussions. The journals can also be a means of recording and reviewing the visual texts that students are engaging with outside of school. Keeping a viewing response journal provides opportunities for Exploratory viewers to develop their own opinions and interpretation of a text.

Students may consider and make notes about the following:
  – questions of text they want or expect to be answered
  – predictions; for example, What do they think might happen? What do they think is the intent of the text?
  – connections with other visual texts
  – questions they want to discuss with other students.
- Provide opportunities for students to share their journal entries with peers, in student/teacher conferences and with parents.

- Invite them to review and reflect on their journal entries periodically. Have them discuss and/or record what they have learnt about visual texts and the strategies they have developed for viewing them.

It is important that Exploratory viewers realise that their viewing responses can be recorded in many ways. Written responses should not be the only method used; they should be encouraged to draw, include photographs, diagrams, etc. (Refer to Chapter 3 in this resource and the *Viewing CD* for more information about viewing journals. Also refer to page 201 in Chapter 7 for information about creating online visual journals.)

## 2 Photographs: What Happened Before and After?

In this activity, students are given the chance to consider how a photographic image represents a frozen moment in time as seen through the eyes of one person — the person who constructed or took the photograph. The focus of this activity is to have the students consider that every photographic image they see is just one person's construction of events. They can work in small groups or individually.

- Provide students with a collection of photographs, e.g. newspaper photographs, historical photographs. Try and have a selection of both black-and-white and coloured images.
- Select one photograph to consider and discuss — Ask: what is shown in the image? How has the image been constructed? (e.g. close-up, high angle.) What elements have been included? (e.g colour, positioning.)
- Ask students to discuss what might have happened immediately before and after this image was taken.
- Allow students individually to draw their version of a photograph that could have been taken immediately before and after this one. They must think about how they are going to 'take their photograph', e.g. What do you want the viewer to see? How will you achieve this? What will you include or leave out? What shot types will you use? Will your image be black-and-white or colour? How will this choice affect the final image?
- Provide opportunities for students to share and discuss their interpretations. Have them consider why these images may differ.
- Display student-produced images alongside the original photographs.
- Allow students time for recording their reflections in their viewing journals.

## 3 Advertisement Investigations

Advertisement Investigations is an activity that allows viewers to explore the decisions that text designers make to influence a viewer's construction of meaning. The focus of this activity is to examine the decisions that are made in the advertising of products.

- Provide students with a collection of print-based advertisements or advertising catalogues focusing on selling a certain type of product such as clothing, food, games, or electronic goods.

Alternative options could include:
- a series of pre-recorded commercials for students to view
- websites containing advertising banners, inserts or pop-ups
- digital photographs of real advertisements, billboards, shop fronts and signage.

- Have students skim through or view the advertisements, then discuss the product for sale.
- Involve students in a discussion of how the products are presented. Discuss both explicit and implied information, and the influences and impact that this information have on the viewer.

Discussion questions could include the following:

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- What product is being advertised?
- Who is the advertising aimed at? Who is the target audience for the product? (e.g. *children aged 7–13*)
- Who does the text designer think will buy the product? (e.g. *parents*)
- What images and words has the text designer used to persuade the buyer? How have the images been constructed? What can be inferred from these images?
- What other devices has the text designer used to persuade potential buyers to purchase their product? What makes them appealing? (e.g. *choice of words, voiceover, catchy slogans, music, colour, lighting, etc.*)
- How has the designer chosen to represent people in this advertisement? What types of people appear in the advertisements? (e.g. *stars, sporting figures, media personalities, etc.*) Why do you think these people have been chosen?

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**Figure 6.18 Discussion questions, adapted from** *English Online*

As a class, create a list of the devices that are used in advertising to try to influence a viewer's construction of meaning and persuade them to buy particular products. Teachers may refer to Chapter 2 in the *Viewing Resource Book* for a list of possible devices. The *Viewing CD* contains four formats that may be used by students to record information when analysing advertisements containing still or moving images.

*Extension Activity*

Students can create their own advertisements either in the form of still images or moving images, such as a commercial. This activity will enable students to consolidate their knowledge of how advertisers make strategic use of specific devices. Students can work together in small groups to develop an advertisement or commercial that promotes a product or concept. Following are some suggestions for creating a still-image advertisement or a commercial containing moving images:

*Still Images (Advertisements)*

- Students develop a concept diagram or mock-up page; it should include an outline of images, colour and typography.
- Allow students enough time to produce a finished version of their advertisement.
- Display or present the advertisements and allow students to analyse the devices used and their effectiveness.

*Moving Images (Commercials)*
- Develop a storyboard: this can include a series of pictures or scenes containing the outline of the setting, the characters or participants, as well as the technical and audio requirements. (Refer to the *Viewing CD* for a storyboard format.)
- Students may produce a live version of their commercial using a video camera.
- Present the commercials and allow students to analyse the devices used and their effectiveness.

## 4 Device Detectives

Device Detectives is an activity where students try to find the devices employed by text designers in an attempt to position the viewer. Magazines, catalogues, advertising brochures, newspapers and picture books are ideal texts for this activity.
- Organise the students to work in small groups or pairs.
- Provide each group with a different text.
- Have students examine the text and discuss and locate the devices that have been used. Students can record their findings on the formats provided on the *Viewing CD*.
- Invite students to speculate on the text designer's intent.
- Encourage students to suggest alternative devices that would lessen the impact, reverse its meaning or change the audience appeal of the text.

## 5 Concentrating on Character

Concentrating on Character involves students in describing the features of characters presented in printed texts such as picture books, magazines, advertising brochures, etc. The aim of this activity is to encourage students to consider the choices made by the author, illustrator or graphic designer in their representation of people and characters. Discussions could focus on features such as the physical appearance of characters, their clothing, their body language, the setting, use of colour, texture, line, gaze, words, etc.
- Provide each student with a Character Profile chart. (See the *Viewing CD*.)
- Have students examine the text in small groups or individually.
- Invite them to make notes on the chart as they read the text, describing the features. They should also record how the character is being presented overall, e.g. **Is the character represented as being weak, strong, good, untrustworthy, kind, mean, healthy, happy, etc.?**
- Have the whole class use their charts to share and discuss what they noticed about the way characters can be represented.
- Following the sharing session, create a class chart listing the way particular groups or individuals may be represented, e.g. **Ask: how are mothers, children, old people, etc. represented?**

## 6 Thinking about Authors and Illustrators

Thinking about Authors and Illustrators asks students to consider how the backgrounds of authors and illustrators influence the choices they make when designing and presenting texts.

- After reading or viewing a text, have students research the author and/or illustrator. They can refer to the jacket of the text, the Internet or text reviews to consider the following questions.
  - Are the author and/or illustrator male or female?
  - Are the author and/or illustrator young, old, middle-aged?
  - When was the text produced? What year? (Direct students to look at the imprint page to locate this information.)
  - Where did the author and/or illustrator live when creating this text?
  - Where were the author and/or illustrator born?
  - What other texts have the author and/or illustrator produced? Are they the same or different from this text?
- If the author and/or illustrator are different people, have students consider how the illustrations work with or against the words, e.g. in some picture books, the text describes one situation while the illustrations may be telling an entirely different story. *Drac and the Gremlin* is a picture book written by Allan Baillie and illustrated by Jane Tanner that would be suitable to use with Exploratory viewers. Refer to figure 6.19 which also appears on the *Viewing CD.*
- Allow time for students to discuss how finding out about authors and illustrators has helped them to understand choices made in the text.

Other authors and illustrators to consider are Shaun Tan, Matthew Ottley, Colin Thompson, Margaret Wild, Julie Vivas, Jeannie Baker and Kim Michelle Toft.



The character's smiling facial expression, bare feet and garbage bag costume show a young boy at play.

Objects such as the picket fence, garbage bin lid, plants and grass show a domestic garden setting.

The text refers to a 'Groaning Grotto'. This contrasts with the image. It confirms that the words tell a different story to the illustrations.

The message conveyed by the text on this page — *'The Gremlin...quick, quiet and very dangerous'* provides a delightful contrast with the image.

Drac must capture the Gremlin of the Groaning Grotto. She knows he is quick, quiet as a spider, and very, very dangerous. She must be so careful...

**Figure 6.19** *Drac and the Gremlin* **by Allan Baillie and Jane Tanner**

## 7 Review Your P.O.V.

Review Your P.O.V. is an activity that promotes an understanding of points of view and developing opinions. It is important that students understand that others may have different opinions or points of view about the same text. It is also important that students understand how a point of view develops and what influences a person's way of thinking, values and beliefs.

- Decide on a text to review (consider age appropriateness), e.g. a book, a movie, TV show, an advertisement or commercial.
- Have students work in a group to discuss. The following guiding questions may be helpful:

*Questions to guide evaluation of content*
– What type of text is this, e.g. an advertisement, news report? How did you know?
– What was the text about? How did you work that out?
– Who were the main characters or objects in the text? What were the clues that helped you work this out?

*Questions to develop opinions*
– Who is the intended audience? What was it in the linguistic and the visual text that led you to that conclusion?
– What messages is the text giving? Where did you find these messages in the text? Give examples from both the visual and linguistic text.
– What devices are being used to deliver this message? Identify the codes and conventions used and how they influence the message.
– How effective is the text in delivering the message? Justify your answer.
– How do you feel about this text? Why?

As an extension to these discussions, students can be asked to rank the text, giving it a score out of ten or a star rating. Students could then be allocated to different groups to give their review. Students will need to summarise the information that supports their opinion and share their rating.

## 8 How Do I See Myself? How Do You See Me?

This is an activity that encourages students to consider how others may view them, and it provides an opportunity for students to consider the point of view of others.

- Ask students to think of four character traits that best describe how they think of themselves.
- Ask students to think of four character traits that best describe how others may see them. For example, they could choose their parents, their friends, grandparents, teachers, etc.
- Next, ask students to create two posters or displays; one is to be titled 'How I See Myself' and the other titled 'How Do You See Me?'
- An image of the student is placed or drawn onto the poster; scanned or stored images may be used.
- Students then insert the four character traits discussed earlier, onto their image; these could be visually or verbally represented.
- The posters can then be displayed and the images shared and discussed. Discussions should focus on why other people's points of view may be different from our own.

## 9 Four Corners

Four Corners is a small-group activity that provides students with an opportunity to discuss and share different points of view and different interpretations of a visual text. It involves students viewing a common text, recording their thoughts and sharing their interpretations. Visual texts that would be suitable for Exploratory viewers may include photographs, picture books, information diagrams, graphs, tables, flowcharts, as well as websites, video games, pre-recorded television and film segments. Short animations, such as those produced by Pixar Studio and available for purchase via iTunes®, are an excellent resource to use with students in this phase.

- Each group of four is given a large sheet of paper. This provides each student with a 'corner' in which to jot, sketch or write words or phrases that come to mind during individual viewing.
- Organise students into groups of four.
- Have them read/view the text. Encourage them to read or watch the entire text before making any responses.
- During a second reading or viewing, students are asked to record their responses, connections and thoughts about the text in their corners; they may stop to re-read or review if necessary.
- Once students have completed the individual viewing and response, direct them to use the four-corners chart as a stimulus for conversation about text.



**Figure 6.20 Students recording their interpretations of a visual text on an MP3 player**

## 10 Card Capers

Card Capers is an activity that encourages students to think beyond a literal interpretation of a visual text. By examining greeting cards, students are asked to reflect on the structure and features of the card and the way in which cards are presented to convey a particular meaning. This activity will help students understand how text designers use specific devices to achieve a purpose.

- Select a range of different greeting cards for different occasions, genders and ages.
- Arrange students into small groups or pairs.
- Supply each group with a selection of cards.
- Each student from the group selects a card that appeals to him or her.
- All students share the reasons for their choices.
- Each group then chooses one of the cards for further analysis.
- Using the following reflective questions or the format provided on the *Viewing CD*, have the groups analyse their cards.

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- Who is the target audience for your card? Consider age, gender, occasion.
- What message does the cover of the card convey? Look at both the front and inside of the card.
- Are the images life-like or abstract? Why do you think the designer chose this design?
- Look at the written text on the front of the card. What message does it give? What type of font has been chosen? Why?
- What words are used inside the card? Is the message appropriate for the audience?
- Is there a link between the front of the card and the inside cover? (e.g. similar images)
- What colours have been used? Do they contribute to the main message? Are they suitable for the occasion?
- Has texture been used on the front? What other features have been used to make the card more appealing?
- What is the shape of the card? Are there any special effects on the card such as music or pop-ups? What is the effect of these features?
- What is the reading path through the card? Where do you look first?
- How is the reader of the card positioned by the image on the front? If there is a person shown, is the gaze a demand or an offer? Also consider the angles (high, low and eye-level) as well as framing and shot distance (close-up, medium or distant).
- Provide time for each group to share their analysis.

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**Figure 6.21 Reflective questions**

### Extension Activity

As an extension of the Card Capers activity, students can design and produce their own cards. Students will:

- Choose a person and an occasion for their card.
- Plan a design for their card keeping in mind the following:
  - the age and gender of the intended recipient
  - the occasion (Students will need to remember the culturally recognised signs and symbols that are used for many significant occasions, e.g. a birthday cake for birthdays, a key to celebrate a 21st birthday, etc.) Provide assistance if necessary.

– the intended message, selecting appropriate words and fonts

– a suitable 'mood' of the card (happy, funny, sad).

- Students create their cards; these may be produced simply by drawing or students may choose to use the range of digital and graphic media that is available. Remind students to consider both the outside and inside of the card.
- When all cards have been completed, encourage students to share them with the rest of the class and to discuss the reasons for choosing their designs.
- Display the cards in the classroom.

## 11 Shopping Bag Adventures (S. Gill, 2004)

Shopping Bag Adventures is an activity that helps students to analyse the structures and features of a visual text by exploring the connection between the design of a shopping bag and its intended audience. Students work in groups to analyse a collection of shopping bags and place them into various categories. They then brainstorm the features of each category, as well as the intended audience for each shopping bag. Finally, students will demonstrate their understanding, in this instance, a shopping bag, by designing and producing their own bags for a particular product or shop.

- Select a shopping bag. Have students examine the features of the bag such as colour, the logos, symbols, text and font, images, layout, etc. Brainstorm what these features represent: the likely products, the type of shop, the type of shopper, etc.
- Organise students into small groups or pairs.
- Give each group two shopping bags to examine. Remind them of the previous class brainstorming activity. The format provided on the *Viewing CD* may be useful in assisting students.
- Each group selects one of the bags. Encourage students to consider how they would change the design of their bag to appeal to a different shopper. For example, perhaps the design on the bag is for a keen golfer. How would they change the bag if it were to attract the interest of a different type of sportsperson?
- Each group decides on the type of shopper. They then compile a list of the changes they would make to the bag, e.g. does the bag require a different logo, image, illustration, photograph, colours, design, material (paper versus plastic), additional information such as a store location, opening times, location map, web address, etc.?
- Students should take into account what the bag will be used for and the product it will be used to carry.
- Supply each group with a card outlining a shop or a product.
- Individually or in pairs, students can plan, design and create their own shopping bags.
- Students share and discuss their shopping bags and explain their design choices.
- Display the completed shopping bags as well as the students' completed design reflections.

# CONVENTIONS

- Introduce and revise the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.

- Continue to develop students' understanding of how to select the appropriate codes and conventions for their intended purpose and audience.

- Provide opportunities for students to experiment with particular semiotic systems, their codes and conventions as they plan and produce multimodal texts.

## Teaching Notes

Exploratory viewers will be exposed to an increasing variety of visual texts, delivered by paper, digital electronic and live technologies, in learning areas across the curriculum and may require support in reading these new genres and text forms. Modelled, Shared and Guided reading and viewing sessions provide ideal procedures for teaching students about how the five semiotic systems and their codes and conventions contribute to the production of a multimodal text.

Students should also engage in the production of multimodal text as experimentation with the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems will increase understanding.

The focus for supporting Exploratory viewers in developing further understanding about the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems is organised under the following headings:
- Understanding the codes and conventions of text delivered by different technologies.
- What students need to know and be able to do with the conventions
  - Codes and conventions of the visual semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the audio semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the gestural semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the spatial semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the linguistic semiotic system.

### Understanding the Codes and Conventions of Text Delivered by Different Technologies

The construction of multimodal texts follows certain codes and conventions that allow them to be understood. Exploratory viewers are becoming more familiar with these codes and conventions and are beginning to recognise how they are used in the construction of different multimodal text forms. They understand that various types of multimodal texts are governed by different codes and conventions; many texts containing visual images will use more than one semiotic system, and may, in fact, rely on a number of codes within the one text, for example, linguistic, visual, spatial, audio

and gestural. Students at this phase will need to be explicitly shown how these codes and conventions can be deliberately used within a multimodal text to make meaning. They will also need to be supported to understand that these codes and conventions are socially created and have developed over time as shared understandings, and accepted ways of doing things, e.g. in Western cultures, the white dove is a symbol for peace.

Exploratory viewers should be aware that:
- Every text form is constructed from a system of signs that are organised according to the codes and conventions that reflect certain values, attitudes, beliefs, assumptions and practices.
- The meaning of a multimodal text may vary when read by different groups of people, as their reading is dependent on their understanding of the codes and conventions contained in the text.
- The choice of and construction of a text may depend on the purpose and the intended audience.
- The way in which a multimodal text is constructed and presented may influence the way it is interpreted.

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- *Signs, Symbols and Icons* are images that are designed to communicate a particular message. The meaning of any sign is dependent on the social and cultural context.
- The *Codes* of each semiotic system are combined to form a grammar that enables the reader/viewer to identify and describe how attention is captured, how emphasis of particular elements is created, and therefore how meaning is shaped.
- The *Conventions* are the accepted rules or grammar of a semiotic system that facilitate the use of codes to make meaning in a text.

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**Figure 6.22 Signs, Codes and Conventions**

## *What Students Need to Know and Be Able to Do with the Conventions*

In the Exploratory viewing phase students are focusing on the reason for the selection and use of particular codes and conventions in a multimodal text (for example, to create or emphasise particular meanings) as well as identifying and using them. Similarly, when producing a multimodal text themselves, they should be able to justify the selection and use of the semiotic systems and particular codes and conventions in terms of purpose, audience, context and text type. Discussions should focus on how the selection and use of semiotic systems and particular codes and conventions within them are influenced by the purpose of the text, the text type, the audience and the context in which it will be viewed. For example, digital electronic technologies may not always be available or the audience may not be able to use them, therefore paper or live technologies would need to be employed, thus limiting the range of semiotic systems, codes and conventions that can be used.

All learning activities need to engage students and teachers in using the appropriate metalanguage for each semiotic system. When introducing the Codes and Conventions of the Exploratory Viewing Phase teachers should also revise and extend the Codes and Conventions of the Early viewing phase.

The following sections serve only as an introduction to the concepts and understandings about the codes and conventions of each semiotic system that should be developed in this phase. They focus on how these codes and conventions support the viewer in making meaning of, and constructing, multimodal texts.

Tables 6.1 to 6.5 provides the codes and conventions of the semiotic system to be introduced in the Exploratory viewing phase. The metalanguage that is introduced around these concepts in the Exploratory viewing phase has been italicised. Developing understandings about many of the concepts in this phase will benefit from engagement in producing texts and experimentation. For example, students should try mixing colour with white and black to develop concepts about tone and try different media to understand more about the use of transparent or opaque colour.

## Codes and Conventions of the Visual Semiotic System

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| Colour | • Examine the selection of colours, the placement of colour and the use of colour schemes and introduce the terms *harmonious* and *discordant* rather than continuing to use 'go together' or 'clash' from the Beginning viewing phase. Focus discussions on the reasons for selection, placement and colour schemes rather than simply identifying and describing them.<br><br>• Relate colour decisions and reasoning to the purpose, audience, context and text type. For example, ask students to develop different colour schemes, selections and placements for the same text but for different purposes audiences and contexts. Ask them to justify their selections.<br><br>• Discuss the feelings evoked by the use of particular colours and introduce the terms *mood* and *emotion* to describe them. Compare and contrast texts that depict different *moods* and *emotions* and chart colour schemes and colours used. Draw conclusions about relationships between particular *moods* and *emotions* and particular colours.<br><br>• Discuss the fact that cultural background and different life experiences might influence the association of particular colours with particular *emotions*. Try to find examples.<br><br>• Introduce the concept of *tone* to identify and describe the degree of white (lightness) or black (darkness) in both still and moving images. Explain that tone helps the viewer to focus on particular parts of the image. If something is all the same tone then the eye does not know what to focus on. Use black and white images to demonstrate this. Convert colour images to black and white to examine tone. Discuss how the eye is led to lighter tones. Compare good and bad use of tone. Talk about using tone as a strategy to achieve a particular effect when constructing a still or moving image.<br><br>• Define and show *transparent* and *opaque* colours. Relate to different media (e.g. gouache versus watercolour). Demonstrate computer generated transparent and opaque colour. Discuss reasons for selecting and using one or the other. Examine use in artwork, picture books, diagrams, tables and overlays in 3D diagrams demonstrating concepts or tables in film. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Texture** | • Discuss how *texture* is created in still and moving images and why it is used (to activate the tactile memory of something, what it felt like). <br><br> Find examples where *texture* is dominant in an image and discuss why the producer of the text might have decided to do this. |
| **Line** | • Revise the concepts about line from the Early phase (horizontal, vertical and diagonal) and introduce *right angled lines*. <br><br> • Look for examples and discuss what types of ideas, emotions or moods they evoke — *right angled lines* are often in man-made objects or artificial representations of things. |
| **Shape** | • Introduce the idea of a *visual outline* of an object's shape as a way of activating memory and association. Look for examples of visual outlines in texts and everyday settings (often as symbols in signs and warnings) and discuss their uses. <br><br> • Discuss whether some objects are better suited to using a *visual outline* as a symbol than others. For example, have students develop some symbols/signs/warnings using *visual outlines* and analyse their effectiveness. |
| **Form and Juxtaposition** | • Introduce the term and concept *juxtaposition*. It is a term used for examining space and proximity in visual images (still and moving). Juxtaposition refers to how close objects are, whether their boundaries or forms touch, overlap or are apart. These variations show relationships and sometimes mood. Look for and construct examples of juxtaposition that show different relationships and moods. |
| **Point of View** | • Revise any codes and conventions about point of view introduced in previous two phases. |
| **Framing** | • Revise any codes and conventions about framing introduced in previous two phases. |
| **Focus** | • Introduce the concepts of *hard* (sharp) and *soft* (a degree of blur or fuzziness) *focus*. First look at examples of *hard* and *soft focus* in photographs; photograph and print examples of each, and manipulate the same photograph using computer software. Discuss the effect of each and when and why you might use it. Do the same with moving images (film). <br><br> • Transfer this knowledge about *hard* and *soft focus* to the examination of other media: illustrations completed using various painting or drawing materials and digitally produced images. <br><br> • Examine different text forms and different contexts in which *hard* and *soft focus* are used and talk about the effect it has on meaning-making and the effectiveness of the choice in each example. Engage in a critical analysis. Draw general conclusions about why, when and where each might be used. |
| **Lighting** | • Review bright and dull lighting from the Beginning viewing phase. <br><br> • Introduce a more sophisticated understanding by discussing how the absence, presence or *degree* of lighting can tell the viewer about time of day, place (e.g. indoors or outdoors) mood or emotion. <br><br> • Lighting is sometimes associated with particular gender or age groups. For example: *soft* light for women, *harsh* or bright light for men and *soft* light for the elderly, *harsh* or bright for the young. |

| Lighting continued | • Examine still and moving images for examples of different degrees of lighting, particularly *harsh* and *soft* lighting. Advertisements are a good source.<br><br>• Contrast the use of lighting in paper and digital electronic texts, different text forms and curriculum areas. Include information texts of different types, picture books, signs, billboards, etc. |
|---|---|
| Editing | • Revise any codes and conventions about editing introduced in previous two phases |

**Table 6.1 Codes and conventions of the visual semiotic system**

## *Codes and Conventions of the Audio Semiotic System*

Role-playing activities are a good live context for exploring the audio semiotic system, but students should now be encouraged to think critically about the purpose of using particular codes and conventions. The performance of plays, poetry and public speaking are real contexts in which students need to make specific decisions about the use of codes and conventions of pace in order to achieve a particular purpose. Teachers need to model and discuss these concepts.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Volume and Audibility** | • Revise any codes and conventions about volume and audibility introduced in previous two phases. |
| **Pace** | • Introduce the concept and term *pace* to students as the speed at which sound (voice, sound effects and music) is delivered.<br><br>• Discuss context in which fast, slow or medium *pace* might be used and why *pace* might change. For example listen to sport broadcasts on radio or the audio of TV coverage and identify when the *pace* of the commentator speeds up or slows down. Talk about the reasons and how it helps make meaning. Find other examples.<br><br>• Listen to the music soundtracks in film or advertising and note *pace* and its effect. How and when does it vary? Conduct similar investigations with sound effects. Pose/develop investigative questions: does *pace* vary more with music or sound effects or is it the same?<br><br>• After considerable exploration and when some conclusions have been drawn about when and where *pace* might be changed, ask students to plan the *pace* of music that might be used at different stages in a well-known story, sporting event or an advertisement that does not have a musical soundtrack. (Provide the music and story, sport event or advertisement.) Try out different plans, compare and discuss effectiveness.<br><br>• Conduct similar investigations about how *pause* and *silence* are used in sound effects, music and voice. Focus on the relationship between purpose and context and the use of varied *pace*, *pause* and *silence*. Apply understandings in the delivery of oral presentations, poetry and plays. |

**Table 6.2 Codes and conventions of the audio semiotic system**

## Codes and Conventions of the Gestural Semiotic System

As with the exploration of audio codes and conventions, role-playing activities are a good live context for exploring the gestural semiotic system, but students should now be encouraged to think critically about the purpose of using particular codes and conventions to achieve a specific purpose. The performances of plays, poetry and public speaking are real contexts in which students need to make decisions about the use of codes and conventions of facial expression, body position and head movement. Students can then transfer this knowledge and experience to the critical analysis of the use of the codes and conventions of the gestural semiotic system in texts delivered via paper and digital electronic technologies.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Bodily Contact** | • Introduce the idea that the way in which people make *body contact*, and how and where they *touch,* can indicate relationships and the nature of those relationships.<br><br>• Talk about the way different ways in which you might *touch* or make *body contact* if someone was a close relative, a friend, someone you did not like, if you were angry with someone, if you felt very comfortable with someone.<br><br>• Discuss the implications of *touch* and *body contact* in different cultures, social groups and contexts, e.g. when to shake hands and when to hug as greeting.<br><br>• Discuss when this knowledge might be useful, in terms of both producing and consuming texts (live, digital electronic and paper).<br><br>• Look for examples of *touch* and *body contact* in different text forms and technologies and where these codes and conventions are used for different purposes. |
| **Proximity** | • Revise any codes and conventions about proximity introduced in previous two phases. |
| **Orientation or Body Position** | • Revise the notion of body position, face to face, facing away or to the side and what it can mean.<br><br>• Expand the idea of how the *angle* at which one presents one's body to someone can indicate the relationship you have with them. Role-play the angles you might use to indicate trust, respect, liking someone, disliking someone, being unsure or not willing to show definite like or dislike.<br><br>• Discuss how *angle* can be deliberately constructed in film, images or everyday live situations to convey meaning. Compare and contrast examples in different text forms, e.g. narrative and non-narrative. Look at photos in newspaper reports and see how body position and angle are used.<br><br>• Discuss how body position and *angle* might be combined with space/distance, facial expression, touch and posture to reinforce the meaning. Find examples in still and moving images and role play. |
| **Appearance** | • Revise any codes and conventions about appearance introduced in previous two phases. |

| Head Movement | • Revise the use of head movement to convey meaning (nodding and shaking).<br><br>• Introduce the idea that one's head can *tilt* toward or away or at an *angle*, just as the body can and can convey similar meanings.<br><br>• Conduct similar investigations and discussions as for body position and *angle*. |
|---|---|
| Facial Expression | • Revise the concept of facial expression and the examples from the Early viewing phase.<br><br>• Introduce the idea that the *nostrils* of one's nose can move and that they can also convey meaning. Discuss the expression *flared nostrils* and its meaning: anger, disdain, surprise.<br><br>• Discuss the need to check other gestures and the codes of other semiotic systems present (e.g. pitch of voice, language, focus, point of view) that might provide further information that enables a precise interpretation of meaning. |
| Kinesics | • Revise any codes and conventions about kinesics introduced in previous two phases. |
| Posture | • Revise any codes and conventions about posture introduced in previous two phases. |
| Gaze and Eye Movement | • Revise any codes and conventions about gaze and eye movement introduced in previous two phases. |

**Table 6.3 Codes and conventions of the gestural semiotic system**

## Codes and Conventions of the Spatial Semiotic System

At this stage of the students' development, teaching and learning activities around the concepts of position and distance can be explored in two-dimensional texts delivered on page and screen, as well as three-dimensional texts such as the live role-playing of a scene in a play, book or everyday life. Setting up and photographing a three-dimensional scene is also a useful way of applying concepts about position and distance. Jointly construct a page or screen layout of words and pictures using real or imaginary frames and discuss which is best and why.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| Position | • Introduce the idea that linguistic text and images are *positioned* on page and screen in ways that convey particular meaning.<br><br>• Explain that placement on the *left* of the page indicates something already *known or old*, while placement on the right indicates something *new*. Look at newspapers and show how articles are often continued on the *left* page while *new* articles are placed on the *right*.<br><br>• Examine how often full-page advertisements of something *new* are placed on the *right* page rather than the *left*.<br><br>• Examine the placement of written text and images or diagrams in texts, where they are placed and the nature of the information conveyed (*left/ known/old* and *right/new*). |

| Position continued | • Examine where advertisements or *new* items such as breaking news, specials and the latest innovation or information are placed on websites. Discuss why items like these would be placed on the *right*, and why the producer of the text wants to draw attention to them as *new*.<br><br>• Plan layouts for advertisements and other text forms for page and screen where *old* and *new* information is presented and organise the layout using the left/right, old/new pattern. Combine linguistic and visual text. |
|---|---|
| Distance | • Revise any codes and conventions about distance introduced in previous two phases. |
| Framing | • Revise any codes and conventions about framing introduced in previous two phases. |

Table 6.4 Codes and conventions of the spatial semiotic system

# Codes and Conventions of the Linguistic Semiotic System

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| Parts of Speech | In the previous two phases, the concepts of sentences and clauses have been introduced. In the Exploratory phase students will learn about phrases and in order to do this they will need to learn about the *preposition* as a part of speech. (In the previous two phases, five parts of speech have been introduced — noun, pronoun, verb, adverb and adjective.) Students will also learn about a seventh part of speech, the interjection that will be covered as part of direct and indirect speech in the Phrases, Clauses and Sentences section to follow.<br><br>In this phase students will need to understand that:<br><br>• Words combine together to make *phrases* (sometimes referred to as *word groups*).<br><br>• *Phrases* are one of the basic patterns out of which sentences are constructed.<br><br>• A *phrase* is a group of words that acts as a single unit in meaning and is not built round a verb.<br><br>• A *phrase* will always begin with a *preposition* (such as, <u>at</u> school, <u>for</u> Jim, <u>with</u> tea).<br><br>• *Phrases* end with a noun (such as, behind my blue <u>door</u>, below the green <u>sign</u>, over the <u>mountain</u>).<br><br>• Sentences can have more than one *phrase* each beginning with a *preposition* (such as, The man **in** the blue shirt is looking **for** his car.<br><br>• There are hundreds of different *prepositions* that are commonly used. |

| Parts of Speech continued | It is important to study *prepositions* in a range of texts since they occur in factual as well as fictional texts. *Prepositions* are used commonly in texts produced by live and digital technologies (such as in picture books, in advertisements, in a range of moving images on the Internet) and also commonly used in spoken English. *Prepositions*, as with the other parts of speech, need to be explored through the other semiotic systems (visual, audio, gestural and spatial) as well as the linguistic. |
|---|---|
| **Punctuation** | In this phase students will need to understand that:<br><br>• *Quotation marks* or inverted commas (sometimes referred to as quotes or speech marks) are punctuations marks used at the beginning and end of a quotation to mark those words actually spoken (such as  "Why are you on this plane?" asked the flight attendant.)<br><br>• Both single and double *quotation marks* (' ') (" ") are now in common use to mark quotations.<br><br>• *Quotations marks* are used to denote a name or *title* (such as the ocean liner 'Queen Mary').<br><br>• A conversation between two people is marked by *quotation marks* and is sometimes referred to as a *dialogue*. Such a *dialogue* can also occur in a play, film or novel or be part of a conversation in a text message sent by mobile phone or an email.<br><br>• Sometimes the actual words that a speaker uses are not used but the meaning that they intended is given. The sentence ("Why are you on this plane?" asked the flight attendant.) could be expressed as — The flight attendant asked why he was on the plane. — In the latter sentence there is a report of what the flight attendant said rather than the actual words used. This is an example of *reported speech*. Students need to be able to distinguish between these two types of sentences, or speech, in order to know when to use *quotation marks*. |
| **Phrases, Clauses and Sentences** | What students learn about the preposition in the Parts of Speech section and what they understand about the difference between quotations and reported speech in the Punctuation section will assist them in this section.<br><br>Students need to understand that:<br><br>• A sentence that contains a quotation is said to contain *direct speech* whereas a sentence that contains reported speech is said to contain *indirect speech*.<br><br>• *Said, told* and *asked* are the most common verbs used in *indirect speech* (such as Mary <u>asked</u> Tom to the dance).<br><br>• *Synonyms for said, told and asked can be used in indirect speech but students need to be aware this may modify the meaning as in the following sentences*:<br><br>    Mary invited Tom to the dance.<br>    Mary begged Tom to come to the dance.<br>    Mary ordered Tom to come to the dance.<br>    Mary advised Tom to come to the dance.<br>    Mary suggested Tom should come to the dance. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Phrases, Clauses and Sentences continued** | • An *interjection* or exclamation (such as Hey, Hi, Oh, Ouch) is a part of speech used to express an emotion on the part of a speaker. It is more often used in indirect speech and less often in writing. When it is used in writing it is often followed by an exclamation mark. It is more useful to discuss *interjections* in this section, rather than in the Parts of Speech section, because they have no grammatical value and occur commonly in *direct* and *indirect* speech.

The following six points are also to be found above in the Parts of Speech section in the discussion about prepositions. They are repeated below because they refer to phrases.

• Words combine together to make *phrases* (sometimes referred to as *word groups*).

• *Phrases* are one of the basic patterns out of which sentences are constructed.

• A *phrase* is a group of words that acts as a single unit in meaning and is not built round a verb.

• A *phrase* will always begin with a *preposition* (such as, <u>at</u> school, <u>for</u> Jim, <u>with</u> tea).

• *Phrases* end with a noun (such as, behind my blue <u>door</u>, below the green <u>sign</u>, over the <u>mountain</u>).

• Sentences can have more than one *phrase* each beginning with a *preposition* (such as, The man **in** the blue shirt is looking **for** his car.)

• Each of the *phrases* in the six points above can be termed *prepositional phrases*. *Prepositional phrases* are important because they provide information about location, descriptions of people and things, relationships, time or ideas.

• A *prepositional phrase* can function as an adverb. As an adverb, a *prepositional phrase* will answer questions such as *How? When?* or *Where?* Like all phrases, an adverbial phrase does not include a subject and a verb.

• A noun phrase or *noun group* is a group of words relating to, or building on, a noun. A *noun group* is usually made up of an article (such as the, a, an) in addition to one or more adjectives or adverbs. They form an important resource for describing things (such as the lonely, windswept, desert island). In any *noun group*, the central or core word is the noun. It is referred to as the head word or head noun.

It is important to study *phrases* in a range of texts since they occur in factual as well as fictional texts. *Phrases* are used commonly in texts produced by live and digital technologies (such as in picture books, in advertisements, in a range of moving images on the Internet) and also commonly used in spoken English. *Phrases*, as with the other parts of speech, need to be explored through the other semiotic systems (visual, audio, gestural and spatial) as well as the linguistic. |

| Cohesive Devices | In earlier phases students have been introduced to the use of repetition (of nouns and pronouns), and/but, and synonyms/antonyms as ways of achieving cohesion in a range of different texts. |
|---|---|
| | In this phase students will need to understand that: |
| | • Once something has been mentioned in a text it can be referred to again using shorter words to replace the original longer word. An example of such replacement is when a noun group is replaced by a pronoun. These pronouns are known as reference pronouns and the operation is known as *pronoun reference*. The most basic reference pronouns are <u>he, she, it</u> and <u>they</u>. An example of such an operation would be — The <u>boy</u> ran down the road and then <u>he</u> crossed to the other side. The use of reference pronouns creates an interrelatedness, or cohesion, within the text. |
| | • Problems can occur with *pronoun reference* when it is not clear which noun group is being referred to by the pronoun. An example of such confusion would be – Tom and Bill ran down the road and then he crossed to the other side – where it is not clear whether Tom or Bill crossed the road. |
| | • Cohesion can also be achieved through the use of *connectives*. A *connective* connects words, sentences, phrases or clauses together. The *connective* is being introduced in this section because it plays a central part in cohesion.) |
| | • Some *connectives* add meaning or information or show relationships (such as <u>furthermore</u> which adds information across sentences or <u>and</u> which adds information within sentences). |
| | • Other *connectives* show cause and effect (such as <u>thus</u> or <u>because</u>), some show comparison (such as <u>however</u> or <u>but</u>), while others indicate time (such as <u>then</u> or <u>after</u>). |
| | It is important to study *connectives* in a range of texts since they occur in factual as well as fictional texts. *Connectives* are used commonly in texts produced by live and digital technologies (such as in picture books, in advertisements, in a range of moving images on the Internet) and also commonly used in spoken English. *Connectives* need to be explored through the other semiotic systems (visual, audio, gestural and spatial) as well as the linguistic. |
| | • An *overview* presents a general summary of the subject through a brief statement that presents the main points in a concise form. |
| | • The *initial paragraph* includes the main idea of a text. It tells the reader what the text is about. The last sentence of the paragraph should also contain a hook that moves the reader to the next paragraph. |
| | • The *concluding paragraph* provides a restatement, or summary, of the main ideas in the text. It should not be merely a duplicate of the *initial paragraph*. |
| | • A *topic sentence* organises, or summarises, the main idea of the paragraph and should be included in each paragraph. Although a *topic sentence* may appear anywhere in a paragraph it is usually the first sentence in a paragraph. It introduces the main idea of the paragraph. |

**Table 6.5 Codes and conventions of the linguistic semiotic system**

For a full description and definitions of all the codes and conventions for each semiotic system, see *Viewing Resource Book*.
• Chapter 3: Conventions

# Involving Students

## 1 Looking at Logos

Looking at Logos is an activity that provides students with the opportunity to understand how logos and symbols are used to represent ideas and concepts. For example, a company may use a logo that they believe conveys the ideas or message they want people to have about that company. This activity helps develop the understanding that logos and symbols are visual texts that have been created for a particular purpose, e.g. to advertise a product, promote a company, raise money, promote a set of values, etc.



**Figure 6.23 Logos from the community**

Exploratory viewers need to be provided with opportunities to examine a range of different logos and symbols and to discuss how they convey a particular concept or meaning. Teachers are advised to collect logos and symbols which are significant to the particular students with whom they are working.

> **Logos and symbols may:**
> – be a combination of pictures, drawings and writing
> – be a representation of an idea or concept
> – use commonly understood meanings to promote their message or desired image, e.g. by using colour or shapes, animals, objects.

**Figure 6.24 Logos and symbols**

Teachers should support students in discussing the reason that particular elements in a logo or symbol were chosen and how they contribute to the overall meaning. Discussion questions could include the following:

- What does the logo or symbol represent?
- What elements have been used to catch the viewer's attention?
- How are the elements combined to convey the desired meaning?

Students may be encouraged to search for symbols and logos in their own community and record their observation in their viewing journals. Sports teams and retail chains often provide commonly recognised symbols and logos and can be a good starting point for analysis. The formats provided on the *Viewing CD* may help students to analyse symbols and logos.

### *Extension Activity*

Invite students to create their own symbol and logos, e.g. it could be a product logo, a personal logo, a badge or a family crest.

- After class discussion and analysis of logos, have students form small groups.
- Each group is required to design and produce a logo for a product, company or concept.
- They need to consider the use of colour, images, graphics and writing.
- Promote sharing and discussion as this will help them to consolidate students' understanding.

## 2 Personal Badges

Exploratory viewers may be supported in their understanding of logos and symbols by reading the picture book *Clubs* by Kate De Goldi and Jacqui Colley (winner of the 2005 New Zealand Picture Book of the Year). It will also be valuable for students to access the supporting website that contains notes and activities outlining how students can create their own personal badge. (Link to stepspd.com/weblinks.) This picture book is also a valuable resource to examine other elements such as image, layout, medium and intertextuality or references to other texts.



**Figure 6.25 The picture book *Clubs* by Kate De Goldi and Jacqui Colley is an excellent starting point for badge activities**

- Ask students who wears a badge when, where and why. Explain they are also called buttons and pins.
- In small groups have students discuss the features of a badge such as shape, colour, fonts, symbols, icons, size.
- Discuss the materials that badges are made of such as  plastic, metals, fabric, and how  and where they are attached
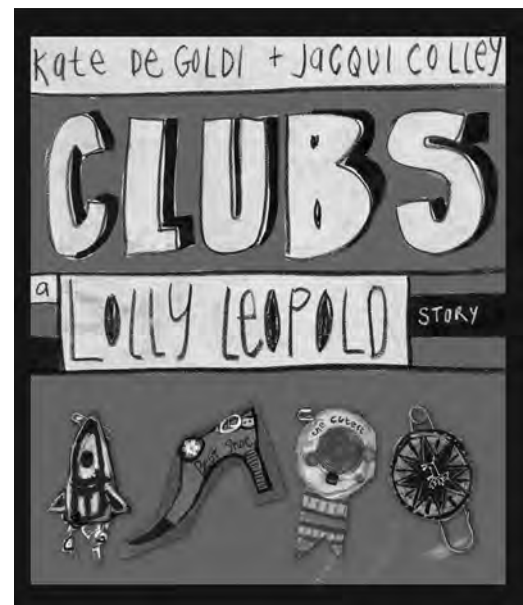
- In pairs, have students decide on a new purpose for wearing a badge and design it.
- The *Viewing CD* includes a series of shape outlines that may be enlarged and used as a template for personal badges if required.

## 3 Graphic Overlays

Graphic Overlays is an activity that enhances Exploratory students' knowledge of text forms. Texts, especially non-fiction texts, can contain a diverse number of different combinations of photographs, pictures, diagrams, tables, graphs, text and captions. In some visual texts, such as informational texts, newspapers and magazines, texts may be arranged in columns or texts may be positioned near unrelated graphics — this type of arrangement may impede students' comprehension of the information. The purpose of the Graphic Overlays activity is to help students recognise how and where information is located.

- Provide students with non-permanent markers and transparent overlays. Refer to the *Viewing CD.*
- Have them place transparencies over each page of the text in order to create a visual representation of the page layout.
- Direct students to draw outlines of text, diagrams, headings, charts, labels or photographs and to label each outline, describing what it represents, e.g. text, subheading, graph, cross-section, photograph, etc.
- Provide opportunities for them to use the graphic overlays to explain the text layout to a partner.
- Ask students to use the overlays to identify the parts of the text that may help to understand the intent of the text.
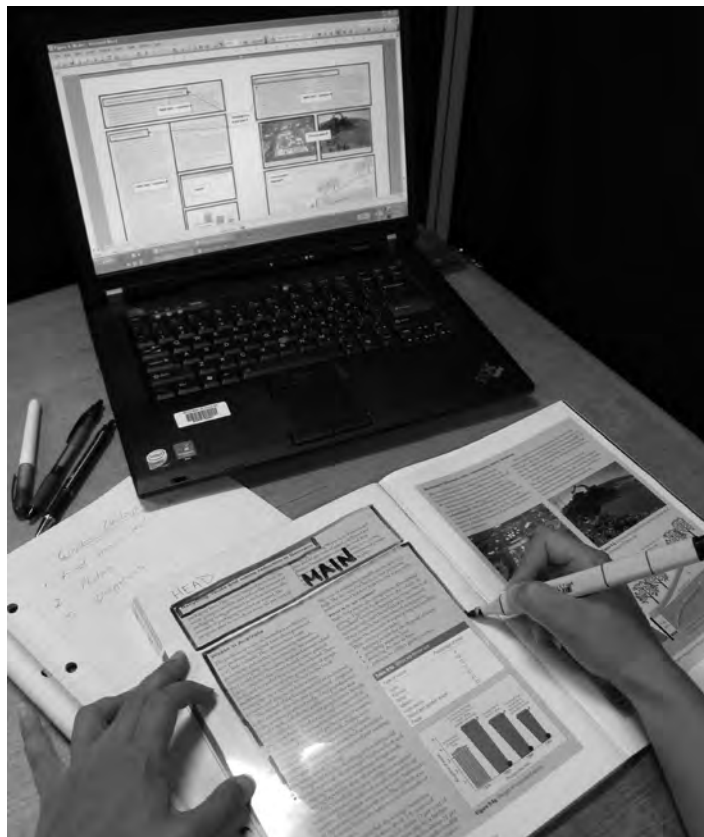


**Figure 6.26 Students create graphic overlays manually or electronically to identify their reading path.**

Graphic overlays can also be used to develop students' understanding of vectorality, which is the process of how the eye is led from one part of an image to another. Graphic overlays can also assist in understanding the reading paths or the way a reader navigates their way through the whole text.

## 4 Who Is Looking at Me?

Who Is Looking at Me? is an activity that requires students to collect examples of images showing demand and offer. This activity develops the students' understanding of how the 'gaze' of a person or character in an image contributes to its meaning. Make sure students understand the meaning of 'demand' and 'offer' — refer to the glossary if necessary.

- Invite students to collect examples of demand and offer images from sources such as picture books, magazines, newspapers and photographs.
- Have students sort the images into two categories: demand or offer.
- Facilitate discussion around some of their choices. Ask: how does the gaze contribute to the overall meaning of the text?
- Jointly create a class reference chart with examples of different gazes or suggest that students record examples in their viewing journals.

## 5 Cover-up

In Cover-up, students are required to examine the cover of a picture book using a visual grammar analysis framework that is provided on the *Viewing CD*.

- The teacher shares their favourite picture book with students. Familiarise students with visual grammar analysis framework (see the *Viewing CD*) by discussing the visual elements on the front and back covers.
- Supply students with a range of post-modern picture books (see the *Viewing CD-ROM* for some suggestions of suitable books.)
- In pairs or small groups, ask students to look at the cover and complete the visual grammar analysis. They will be required to look in depth at:
  - *What is happening?* Who, what, where is it set? What is the time and the place?
  - *How is it happening?* Offer and demand; modality, social distance, attitude.
  - *How is the image composed?* Focus on the salience (the most important element of the image), vectors, framing, value and other compositional elements.
- Have students discuss their covers (if they are working on different ones).
- Have them consider those covers that they felt had the most impact and ask them to provide reasons for their choice.

## 6 Film Techniques

Film Techniques is an activity that develops Exploratory viewers' awareness of the different codes and conventions of moving images. By considering shot distance and angles, students will become aware of the different framing techniques that are used in moving images. The *Viewing CD* contains a number of images that can be used for this activity so that students will become familiar with the different types of film shots. Following are some of the terms that students will need to become familiar with:

  - extreme long shot: usually used to set the scene in a film and signals the atmosphere and mood of the film.
  - long shot: shows main characters in the setting and provides a sense of place.

– medium shot: shows a person or character from the waist up; this angle is used to convey body language and movement

– close-up: the focus is on a character's face or an object. This camera shot is used to focus on facial expressions, feelings and moods of a character. This type of shot can create suspense and anticipation.

- Show short segments from films so students can see if they can recognise the different types of shots that are employed in films or television shows.
- Discuss how these different angles contribute to the viewers' understanding of a scene.
- In small groups, invite students to create posters showing the different types of shots. Have them write an explanation for each shot in a particular image. Images may be drawn by students, collected from magazines, downloaded from the Internet or photographed by students using a digital camera.
- Allow the groups to display their posters. Alternatively, students may scan their images into a slide presentation.

The above activity can also be adapted to examine the effect that camera angles has on understanding moving images. Camera angles contribute to the mood or atmosphere of a film and will position the viewer in particular ways when they read a scene. Discuss the following camera angles with students.

– eye level: the character is at the same level as the viewer on an equal plane.

– bottom up: the viewer looks up at the character or object, making the subject seem powerful.

– top down: the viewer looks down on the subject, giving the viewer a sense of a superior position and making the subject seem inferior.

- Provide students with a ten-frame storyboard so they can create a story using a range of different shot types and camera angles.
- Allow students the opportunity to create a digital version of their story. They should also consider other elements such as pacing, sound effects and movement.

## 7 Let's Look at Body Language

Let's Look at Body Language examines students' attention to the impact of body language and how it contributes to the meaning of a text.

- Prepare a small segment of a video, a familiar television program, an advertisement or a short animation.
- Ask students to watch the video without any sound. Students can predict what might be happening.
- Allow them time to think about the meaning and to discuss it with a partner.
- Students share their ideas with the whole class, highlighting the meanings that were taken from the actors' or characters' body language. Ask students to consider gaze, facial expressions, social distance and gestures.
- Show the visual text again but with the sound on.
- Ask students to compare it with their initial interpretation and consider:

– How close were they in their initial predictions?

– Were they able to detect emotions?

– How did the addition of sound affect their interpretation of the text?

## 8 Comic Capers

In this activity, Exploratory students will become familiar with the structure and form of comic strips. They will develop an understanding of how visual and linguistic elements work together to produce meaning. Students will also become familiar with the structures of a narrative — the orientation, complication and resolution. The advantage of examining the narrative genre in comics is that they are simple, concise representations of this text form. Knowledge gained from examining this visual text form can be transferred to other visual texts.

- Provide students with a copy of a short comic strip. The daily newspaper is an easily accessible source and there are also many free online comic strips that are suitable for students.
- As a class, discuss the comic strip, asking students to tell you what they see. What is happening? How is it being shown? How are the images composed? How are the frames linked together? How do the images and words work together to create meaning?
- Students will need to consider:
  – the use of exaggerated features, body language and facial expressions
  – the use of direct dialogue
  – narrative elements: orientation, complication and resolution
  – the number of frames required for each take
  – the use of speech and thought bubbles
  – the use of line, texture and shading to create meaning
  – the use of framing; How is the viewer positioned?
- Arrange students into small groups. Supply each group with a selection of comic strips to examine and discuss.
- Each group selects one comic strip. They can glue this to the centre of a large sheet of paper and note the features that they have observed around the cartoon.
- Provide opportunities for students to display and discuss their observations.

Encourage students to collect comic strips to display in the class. Students may also enjoy exploring the world of online comic strips.

Provide students with the opportunity to create their own comic strip. Planning is essential; encourage students to think about what story they wish to tell; who will be included; what will they say as well as considering the design elements such as gaze, angles, line and texture. Students may easily create a comic strip using a basic Word program. Refer to the *Viewing CD* for instructions on how to create a comic strip using a basic word-processing format.

## 9 Colour Considerations

Colour Considerations is an activity that provides students with an opportunity to consider how the use of colour can contribute to the meaning of a text. Students will examine a series of different magazine covers and speculate on the text designer's choice and use of the colours that appear on the cover.

- Have students collect examples of different magazine covers. They should focus on the colours of fonts, main images and backgrounds. Record these colours on a class chart, noting the main colours that have been used in the cover design.
- Once several examples have been identified and recorded, invite small groups of students to choose a particular type of magazine and to search for further examples of colour design in other magazine issues.
- Have students consider the following: How and when are certain colours used? Why do some colours dominate certain magazines? What is the target audience for the magazine? Why is a particular colour likely to appeal to the target audience?
- Students can discuss the possible reasons for the text designer's choice of colours. Add any additional information to the class chart.
- Encourage students to consider the impact of colour when they are producing a visual text.

The *Viewing CD* contains two formats that may be used to support students in this activity.

# PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES

## Major Teaching Emphases

- **Continue to teach students strategies for comprehending and producing multimodal texts, e.g.** inferring, summarising, synthesising.

- **Model how to reflect on the viewing process and encourage students to do the same.**

- **Continue to teach students a variety of ways to plan and produce multimodal texts, e.g.** create a storyboard for a slide show.

## Organisation of the Processes and Strategies Aspect

There are several differences in the organisation of the Processes and Strategies aspect. Both the Teaching Notes and the Teaching and Learning Experiences (Involving Students) are in the *Viewing Resource Book*, Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

The rationale for this difference in organisation is that the processes and strategies of viewing are not conceptually hierarchical and therefore not phase-specific. A variety of processes and strategies need to be introduced, developed and consolidated at *all* phases of development.

What varies from one phase to the next is the growth in:
- the number and integration of strategies
- the awareness and monitoring of strategies
- the efficiency in the use and selection of strategies
- the ability to articulate the use of strategies in the process of viewing
- the awareness of how the use of strategies helps with making meaning
- the ability to locate, select and evaluate visual texts.

# Supporting Parents of Exploratory Viewers

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF EXPLORATORY VIEWERS

Students at the Exploratory phase are able to use a variety of strategies to understand visual texts. They are able to identify the content and purpose of texts. Students at this phase understand how codes and conventions are used not only in the construction of visual texts but also as a way to understand the meaning of the texts. Exploratory viewers are also able to identify and interpret simple symbolic representation and stereotypes in a range of different visual texts.

## Supporting Exploratory Viewers in the Home

A parent brochure providing tips on supporting young viewers in the home is located on the *Viewing CD*. The brochure contains information about the kinds of viewing activities students will be engaged in at school and why the teaching of viewing is an important part of the school curriculum. It also gives information about age-appropriate viewing practices and ways that parents can help students develop their critical viewing habits.

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**Parent Information (see Parent Brochure 2)**

1  Why Teach Viewing?
2  The Development of Viewing
3  Supporting Your Child
4  Resources
5  Things to Do When Viewing with Your Child
6  Viewing at School.

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# Consolidating Viewing Phase



**Figure 7.1**

## Global Statement

*Students integrate a variety of strategies for interpreting more complex multimodal texts. They recognise that all texts are constructed for particular purposes, contexts and audiences. Students understand and use the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems when producing and interpreting different multimodal texts. They understand that the interpretation of a text can differ according to the socio-cultural background and experiences of the viewers.*

# Consolidating Viewing Indicators

## Use of Texts

- ◆ **Makes meaning from a range of multimodal texts by integrating a broader knowledge of the semiotic systems,** e.g. linguistic, audio, gestural, spatial and visual.
- ◆ **Produces a wide range of multimodal texts demonstrating control over most elements.**
- ◆ **Recognises and discusses the purpose of text features and how these frame meaning,** e.g. layout favours some information implying importance.
- ◆ **Selects multimodal resources appropriately to suit purpose and audience.**
- • Compares the treatment of an issue across different text forms, e.g. tabloid newspaper, television news broadcast, conservative press.
- • Uses metalanguage to describe how meaning is created in multimodal texts.
- • Uses explicit and implicit information to make inferences.

## Contextual Understanding

- ◆ **Discusses and justifies own interpretation of multimodal texts, integrating text details with own knowledge and experiences.**
- ◆ **Recognises that the interpretation of a multimodal text will vary depending on the personal experiences of all viewers.**
- ◆ **Discusses alternatives about how characters, people, events and ideas are represented.**
- ◆ **Explains how the elements of a multimodal text have been deliberately selected to produce meaning for a specific purpose.**
- ◆ **Uses devices when attempting to influence viewers,** e.g. composition, realistic style.
- • Recognises that texts are not neutral.
- • Justifies their interpretation of a text by using knowledge of the way images are constructed, e.g. image framing.
- • Attempts to use devices to influence viewers.

## Conventions

- ◆ **Uses codes and conventions of the semiotic systems when producing multimodal texts.**
- ◆ **Explains similarities and differences of identifying text features such as purpose, organisation and structure.**
- ◆ **Recognises the codes and conventions that are used to achieve specific effects.**
- • Explains how the semiotic systems work to create meaning, e.g. visual – 'white' suggests purity, audio – volume to suggest fear.
- • Identifies a variety of multimodal texts from structural and organisational features.

## Processes and Strategies

- ◆ **Selects and uses strategies appropriate to the demands of the multimodal text and purpose of viewing,** e.g. scanning, summarising, synthesising.
- ◆ **Draws upon an increasing knowledge from the semiotic systems when comprehending or producing multimodal texts.**
- ◆ **Plans and produces a multimodal text appropriate to the purpose and audience.**
- ◆ **Develops awareness of how to monitor and reflect on viewing strategies.**
- • Makes inferences about ideas implicit in multimodal texts.
- • Is able to determine importance when selecting information from multimodal texts.
- • Begins to synthesise information from a range of multimodal sources.
- • Asks questions of self and others to clarify and extend understanding.
- • Uses self-monitoring strategies when viewing.
- • Attempts to produce a multimodal text suited to purpose and audience.

# Major Teaching Emphases

## Environment and Attitude (see p. 187)

- Create a supportive classroom environment that provides access to a range of multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to select their own multimodal text materials according to interest or purpose.
- Foster students' enjoyment of purposeful viewing.
- Encourage students to explore new technologies when viewing.

## Use of Texts (see p. 192)

- Continue to expose students to a range of multimodal texts and discuss the features and structure of each.
- Teach students to analyse how text producers manipulate text features to achieve different purposes.
- Provide opportunities for students to craft a range of multimodal texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Continue to provide opportunities for students to respond to and critically analyse multimodal texts.
- Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with viewing e.g. vectorality, modulation.

## Contextual Understanding (see p. 207)

- Discuss how one's knowledge, experience, perspective and socio-cultural background influence the production and interpretation of multimodal texts.

- Provide opportunities for students to critically analyse and challenge the text producer's world view.
- Provide opportunities for students to explain their choices of codes, conventions and the devices used in the production of a multimodal text.

## Conventions (see p. 218)

- Introduce, revise and extend the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.
- Explore selection and use of particular semiotic systems, codes and conventions to convey specific information about the composition and organisation of the text.
- Explore how particular codes and conventions are used to reinforce or oppose meanings in the text.
- Explore which codes and conventions from different semiotic systems can be used to convey similar meanings.

## Processes and Strategies (see p. 238)

- Teach students to select, evaluate and modify viewing strategies according to the purpose of the viewing.
- Continue to build knowledge in the semiotic systems.
- Encourage students to reflect on the effectiveness of various ways they plan, produce and publish multimodal texts, e.g. using a visual diary.

# Teaching and Learning Experiences

## ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE

### Major Teaching Emphases

- **Create a supportive classroom environment that provides access to a range of multimodal texts.**

- **Encourage students to select their own multimodal text materials according to interest or purpose.**

- **Foster students' enjoyment of purposeful viewing.**

- **Encourage students to explore new technologies when viewing.**

## Teaching Notes

Students in the Consolidating phase need a classroom environment that is both supportive and challenging. They need to be provided with an environment that promotes problem-solving, questioning and alternative interpretations of text. Emphasis should be placed on providing students with a wide range of visual texts and multimodal texts across all learning areas. Texts of varying difficulty will provide opportunities for students to engage at a range of levels. Teachers can involve Consolidating viewers with authentic textual experiences which will assist them to see viewing as purposeful and enjoyable, e.g. analysing television advertisements.

The focus for developing an analytical approach towards viewing as well as a supportive environment for Consolidating viewers is organised under the following headings:
- Creating a supportive classroom environment
- Encouraging exploration and inquiry of a range of multimodal texts
- Fostering an enjoyment of viewing
- Viewing as a social practice.

### Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment

Creating a text-rich environment is still vitally important for Consolidating viewers. The types of texts that are available in the classroom should not only reflect those required for academic and school-based learning, but should also include those texts that are used in real-life situations. Teachers should consider the use of popular culture texts that students are engaging with and try to incorporate these in meaningful ways into their classroom practice. By using texts that are popular or have social currency, teachers are often able to engage students who may otherwise be reluctant to use or

see the value of school-based, teacher-preferred texts. Texts such as trading cards, video games, online games, websites and popular graphic novels, both online and print-based, are all examples of popular contemporary texts. Although students are using these texts in their social worlds, teachers will need to carefully scrutinise them before using the texts in the classroom.

Consolidating viewers need the opportunity to explore multimodal texts in an environment that values their existing knowledge and builds on their strengths and interests. Consolidating viewers will benefit from an environment that allows them to explore and share texts with others, express their personal opinions, present diverse interpretations of texts and begin to question text producers' messages. Such an environment should provide students with opportunities to work individually, in small groups or as part of the whole class. The classroom environment should, above all, encourage students to regard themselves as successful viewers and to see viewing as an enjoyable meaningful experience that has relevance in their social and academic lives.

## *Physical Environment*

Opportunities to develop understandings in viewing occur throughout the day in all learning areas, in routine organisation and in social interactions. The physical environment of the classroom will therefore change according to the teaching and learning demands at any particular time. It is important to create spaces for students to independently or collectively engage with a wide range of multimodal texts for a range of purposes.

The following are some considerations for an effective physical environment:
- Provide space for small-group/whole-class interactions. This may be a screening area, an interactive whiteboard or a book stand.
- Provide an area for students to display visual texts of personal significance, topic-related resources or class work samples.
- Provide areas where students can either use multimodal texts individually or share with a pair or small group. Headphones, laptops, MP3 players, listening stations and flexible seating will help to manage multiple groups in a small classroom.
- Establish and maintain consistent routines for viewing activities.

## *Classroom Culture*

As well as providing appropriate materials and a carefully managed physical environment, it is important to develop a positive classroom culture where students are supported to explore and understand the different ways of using, interpreting and producing multimodal texts. Teachers should model the following:
- Reading and viewing a variety of multimodal texts, e.g. graphs and tables in informational texts, web pages, clips from feature films, TV commercials and magazines.
- Identifying a purpose for viewing.
- Reflecting on viewing strategies used and goal-setting to improve or extend the range of strategies used.

- Problem-solving techniques when viewing, e.g. what is the best way to get my message across?
- Encouraging the application of viewing understandings across all learning areas.
- Actively listening to students in discussions about multimodal texts.

## Encouraging Exploration and Inquiry of a Range of Multimodal Texts

It is vital that students in the Consolidating phase be provided with a classroom environment that is focused on students framing and investigating their own questions about self-chosen texts, as well as the teacher asking questions from teacher-selected texts. Teachers need to ensure that there is a balance between questioning and discussions.

Consolidating viewers need to be encouraged to question and discuss the type of texts they are viewing as well as applying their knowledge to the construction of their own multimodal texts. By this phase, most students will have already been producers as well as consumers of multimodal texts. Many students will have already produced PowerPoint™ presentations, interactive slide shows or other displays as part of their learning across curriculum areas. Some students will be actively engaged in producing multimodal texts for purposes outside the classroom. For example, students may have taken and shared photographs and films, created their own websites, created virtual identities and characters in online games, produced or shared their own photos and films online. Students at this phase are starting to transform their knowledge and understandings as consumers of multimodal texts into producing their own texts.

Teachers can support students with this exploration and experimentation in the following ways:
- Support students in preparing for new viewing contexts by discussing the demands of a new context.
- Provide multiple opportunities to practise and refine new knowledge and understandings.
- Provide opportunities for students to formulate their own questions and discuss texts in a variety of group settings, e.g. viewing circles, questioning circles.
- Discuss the intent and issues found in different multimodal texts, exploring alternative perspectives and analysing the text designer's intent.
- Encourage students to explore issues and views presented in texts from the perspectives of others.
- Encourage students to produce their own multimodal texts.
- Support students to critically analyse their own multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to 'have a go' at manipulating the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems used in multimodal texts for a specific purpose. For example, encourage students to experiment with codes and conventions when producing a PowerPoint™ presentation containing a film or photo. Students might achieve a specific effect or convey a particular point of view by varying the camera angle, shot distance or the framing.
- Motivate students to experiment with technologies to create multimodal texts, e.g. adding movement and sound to images.

**Figure 7.2 Consolidating viewers benefit from access to a wide range of visual texts**

## *Fostering an Enjoyment of Viewing*

It is important that Consolidating viewers see viewing as purposeful and worthwhile. They need to be aware that the ability to access, understand and ultimately produce multimodal texts across all learning areas and social settings will contribute to their success in both their social and academic worlds.

In this phase of development, the demands of the curriculum are increasing and students are expected to process large amounts of information in order to understand the content and concepts of a subject area. However, it is important that teachers continue to promote the viewing of multimodal texts for enjoyment. Students need a balance of enjoyment and challenge in their learning if they are to be successful.

Teachers should take every opportunity to promote students' enjoyment of viewing multimodal texts in the following ways:
- Provide opportunities for independent viewing of self-selected texts.
- Provide authentic learning experiences that require students to read visual texts for a range of purposes.
- Provide opportunities for students to produce a range of multimodal texts conveyed by paper, digital electronic and live technologies, e.g. computers, hand-held mobile devices, digital cameras, tape and video recorders, scanners, photocopiers.
- Provide opportunities for students to share their existing knowledge and understandings of various technologies and encourage students to draw on these when using or producing multimodal texts.
- Share your viewing, interpretation, production and enjoyment of multimodal texts with students.

- Provide ongoing opportunities for students to be involved in conversations about multimodal texts.
- Provide time for students to share their favourite multimodal texts, e.g. books, films, television shows, websites and digital games.
- Discuss how the text producers attract and hold the attention of the viewer.
- Expose students to a range of literary and informational texts.
- Discuss the types and features of multimodal texts from across the curriculum areas.
- Involve students in setting their own viewing goals.
- Provide ongoing targeted feedback and encouragement.
- Organise visits by multimodal text producers to talk about their texts, e.g. authors, illustrators, graphic designers, web designers.
- Have a range of software packages available for students to use to create their own multimodal texts, e.g. Dreamweaver®, Adobe Photoshop®, Microsoft PowerPoint™, Kid Pix®, Microsoft® Photo Story 3.



**Figure 7.3 A student gathers images which will represent him in a personal slideshow**

## Viewing As a Social Practice

The focus when teaching viewing in the classroom is to provide authentic situations that require the interaction with and interpretation of the language of images. Today, more than ever before, students are exposed to an expanding array of images in multimodal texts. They are expected to be both informed consumers and competent producers of these multimodal texts. Students need to develop the ability to function in society as literate individuals who view and understand a range of multimodal texts, question these texts and produce texts for their own purposes.

Teachers need to continue to provide opportunities for Consolidating viewers to engage with visual texts for authentic purposes, and to help them develop the understanding that all texts have the power to influence others.

For further information about Environment and Attitude, see *Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning*:
- Chapter 5: Establishing a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment.

# USE OF TEXTS

## Major Teaching Emphases

- **Continue to expose students to a range of multimodal texts and discuss the features and structure of each.**

- **Teach students to analyse how text producers manipulate text features to achieve different purposes.**

- **Provide opportunities for students to craft a range of multimodal texts for authentic purposes and audiences.**

- **Continue to provide opportunities for students to respond to and critically analyse multimodal texts.**

- **Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with viewing e.g.** vectorality, modulation.

## Teaching Notes

Students at this phase of development still need to be provided with the opportunity to view a range of multimodal texts for a variety of purposes. Students need to become familiar with different text forms, their structures, and organisational features. Consolidating viewers need to be supported to deconstruct multimodal texts by analysing, questioning and discussing how these texts are created and how they are understood in particular contexts. Teachers should be mindful that any analysis of texts should not detract from students' enjoyment of the texts; rather students should become aware of the purpose for the analysis and its relevance to their understanding of the texts.

The focus for supporting Consolidating viewers in this aspect is organised under the following headings:
- Exposure to a variety of multimodal texts
- Crafting a range of multimodal texts
- Responding to multimodal texts
- Developing metalanguage.

## *Exposure to a Variety of Multimodal Texts*

Students in the Consolidating phase will benefit from opportunities to view texts with varying degrees of complexity. These teacher- and self-selected texts should include a variety of literary, informational and everyday multimodal texts. The texts should be selected from all areas of the curriculum, and should also reflect those texts that students read in the community. They may include multimodal, class-created or commercially published materials, presented in a range of formats such as photographs, posters, advertisements, films, television programs, websites, interactive CDs or software programs. Texts might include:

- familiar texts, for example, those texts that have been previously viewed or are very familiar to students.
- appropriate texts, for example, those texts that are used within the teaching and learning program and are easily accessible to students.
- more challenging texts, for example, texts used in Guided Viewing with teacher support. At this phase of development, teachers should include specific content-area texts such as maths and science texts. These texts often include conceptual and narrative images, and students' success in these subject areas will directly relate to their ability to comprehend and use these texts.

Familiarising, Analysing and Discussing continue to be important teaching and learning practices to support students' development in reading a range of multimodal texts.

In Modelled, Shared and Guided Viewing sessions, teachers can demonstrate how to:
- select texts to suit different purposes
- draw conclusions from implicit and explicit information
- make predictions about a text based on what is known about its organisation and/or structure
- identify the main idea or concept to gain an overall understanding
- use information from different sources to shape understanding.

During these sessions, teachers should continue to engage students in discussions, focusing on how text designers create a range of texts for different purposes. These discussions could include the following points:
- A text may have more than one purpose, e.g. to entertain and to persuade.
- Elements in the text can be manipulated in order to achieve a particular purpose, e.g. placement of images in the text.
- The codes and conventions of the semiotic systems, e.g. linguistic, audio, spatial or gestural are used to contribute to and convey meaning.
- That text form and function both play a key role in the production of texts.

## *Understanding and Analysing Multimodal Texts*

For viewers in the Consolidating phase, the ability to comprehend text successfully relies on their ability to analyse and understand what they see, hear or read. With increasing textual demands in subject areas such as mathematics, science or the arts, students have to digest larger amounts of content and are expected to interpret and understand more complex concepts and issues. Content is often delivered through

multiple representations, e.g. a teacher's diagram on the whiteboard, photographs, illustrations, graphs, charts and maps. It is also conveyed through paper, digital electronic or live technologies such as books, websites or face-to-face interactions.

Students at this phase of development need to be consolidating their understandings about multimodal texts. They need to be aware that multimodal texts:

- may be conveyed by paper, digital electronic and live technologies and this technology is chosen to suit the intended purpose and audience of the text.
- are constructed using the codes and conventions of one or more semiotic systems, e.g. linguistic, audio, gestural and spatial.
- may be constructed and viewed to meet a particular need or social purpose, e.g. to entertain, socialise, recount, inquire, describe, persuade, explain, instruct.
- may have several possible interpretations.
- may have a meaning that is actively constructed by the viewer of the text. The meaning that is made will depend on the context in which the text is being read, the purpose for the viewing, and the socio-cultural background of the viewer and their prior experiences with this type of text.
- may be interactive, linear or non-linear. Many multimodal texts today will require the reader or viewer to interact with the text rather than just consume it.

Consolidating viewers need opportunities to analyse texts in a variety of ways for different purposes. This may be by considering how a text has been constructed to deliver a particular message through its organisation, structure, design elements, theme or content and delivery technology. For example, a student may analyse a text using their knowledge of the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems to consider how the colour or line in an image contributes to its overall meaning. Students may also be encouraged to use information from texts to achieve different purposes, for example, to solve problems, locate information, follow directions, make decisions, draw conclusions, broaden their knowledge, share information, to socialise with others or to confirm a particular point of view.

Students can be supported to analyse texts in a number of ways:
- Provide opportunities to use reflective and response journals.
- Model the use of analytical frameworks, e.g. graphic organisers such as diagrams, charts, mind maps.
- Encourage students to identify and comment on the construction of multimodal texts and how this influences the meaning.
- Encourage students to identify and comment on differing points of view either in a particular text or across several texts, e.g. a newspaper report compared with a television news segment.
- Support students to question and challenge views presented in texts.
- Provide opportunities for students to access different sources of multimodal texts, e.g. newspapers, television news reports, online news sources, blogs and to synthesise information from these.

- Provide time for students to explore, analyse and discuss their reactions and responses to texts.
- Demonstrate how to extract information for different purposes.
- Provide time for students to engage in discussions about texts.

## Crafting a Range of Multimodal Texts

Students in the Consolidating viewing phase may derive enjoyment from producing familiar texts, however it is important to expand their repertoire of texts. There are many ways of doing this. Teachers might consider:

- providing different contexts for producing multimodal texts by incorporating them in all learning areas
- collecting, viewing, displaying and analysing sample multimodal texts from all learning areas
- allowing time to practise and then reflect on and evaluate students' own texts
- providing explicit feedback about specific parts of students' texts
- organising multimodal text producers to visit and explain the construction of their texts
- continuing to provide models of many different types of multimodal texts for students to analyse and discuss
- organising and encouraging students to participate in Viewers' Circles.

## Responding to Multimodal Texts

Teachers need to provide opportunities for students in the Consolidating phase to respond to texts in a variety of ways. These responses can be written, oral or visual. Opportunities for response can be structured so that students are able to participate at whole-class or small-group levels. This will allow students to co-construct, develop or extend their knowledge and understandings about a text.

The focus in this phase should be to continue to build students' understanding of the connection between implicit and explicit information. Recording information, thoughts, reactions and reflections in a response or reflective journal — before, during and after viewing — helps students to realise that the viewing and re-viewing of a text contributes to their understanding of that text by constantly re-shaping their existing knowledge. For example, opinions about a text may change when information about the author or text designer is revealed, e.g. a Japanese company may produce a documentary about whaling that presents the view that whales are not threatened species.

Answering questions is a way that students can respond to texts. The *Viewing CD* includes a number of focus questions that will provide a possible starting point for initiating these discussions.

The following table, adapted from Dr Anne Bamford's *The Visual Literacy White Paper*, provides another framework that may be used when discussing multimodal texts.

| Issues | • What issues are being shown in the image?<br>• How is the way the issue is shown in the image similar to or different from how you see this issue in the world?<br>• What might this image mean to someone who sees it?<br>• What is the message of the image? |
|---|---|
| Information | • Where has the information in the image come from?<br>• What information has been included and what has been left out?<br>• What proportion of the image could be inaccurate?<br>• What information presented is factual/manipulated/framed?<br>• What is the relationship between the image and any text?<br>• What impact does the size of the image have? |
| Who? | • Who or what are depicted in the image? Whose culture or experiences are being shown?<br>• Who created the image and for what purpose?<br>• Who is the intended audience for the image?<br>• Whose point of view does the image take? |
| Persuasion | • Why has a certain media been chosen?<br>• Why was a particular image chosen?<br>• Why was the image arranged that way?<br>• Is the information contained in the image factual?<br>• What devices have been used to get the message across to the viewer?<br>• How has the message been affected by what has been left out or is not shown? |
| Assumptions | • What attitudes are assumed?<br>• Whose voice is heard?<br>• Whose voice is not heard?<br>• What experiences or points of view are assumed? |

**Figure 7.4 Possible discussion questions (from *The Visual Literacy White Paper* by Dr Anne Bamford, 2003)**



**Figure 7.5  Students make generalisations from implicit and explicit information**

## Developing Metalanguage

It is important that students in the Consolidating phase develop and use the metalanguage that will help them to discuss, describe and critique multimodal texts, their own viewing and the viewing process. A viewing metalanguage should provide students with the necessary language to discuss compositional elements and other meaning-making elements that exist within multimodal texts. The main purpose of metalanguage is to provide an understanding about how texts are constructed to convey particular meaning within the contexts, culture and situations in which they are viewed. Developing a shared metalanguage in the classroom also helps students to understand the support and feedback provided by teachers. It is essential to use metalanguage as part of everyday teaching in all learning areas. This can be done during explicit demonstrations, one-on-one conversations with students or as part of planned Modelled, Shared or Guided viewing sessions.

Certain terms will tend to be more prominent when focusing on different multimodal text forms and different development phases. For example, students in the Consolidating phase will probably become familiar with the following terms:

- Use of Texts: *constructed meaning, multimodal, linear, non-linear, interactive*
- Contextual Understanding: *audience, purpose, stereotype, representations, consumer, fact, opinion, device, perspective, point of view*
- Conventions: *symbols, codes, setting, colour, texture, framing, camera angles, semiotic systems*
- Processes and Strategies: *reflect, interrupt, infer, compare.*

It is recommended that teachers develop a classroom glossary of the metalanguage introduced and used so that students have it as a reference. Teachers can do this as part of their regular class activities, as part of students' journal entries, as a classroom chart or as an online entry.

## Building Knowledge of a Range of Text Forms and Structures

Consolidating students will be aware that ways in which codes are combined to make meaning will depend on the conventions and structure of the particular text forms. Consolidating viewers need to be provided with opportunities to analyse a wide range and complexity of different visual text forms. Teachers will need to support students to develop an understanding of the different genres that can occur within various text forms, e.g. television —documentaries and news formats, sitcoms, advertisements, cartoons, reality shows, etc. They also need to support their students to understand that a large number of visual text forms will combine conventions from a number of genres; these texts are often referred to as hybrid text forms, for example, films, television, interactive websites, online games, online novels, etc.

An online novel that is suitable for students at this phase and provides an excellent example of a hybrid text is the online novel *Inanimate Alice.* (See stepspd.com/weblinks for the website link.) This website includes the features of traditional narrative and informational genres combined with interactive electronic games. *Inanimate Alice* is suitable for both the lower and higher developmental phases as the complexity of each chapter increases to reflect the age and technological ability of the main character.

### *Understanding Text Form*

Students in this phase of development will benefit from reading a variety of visual text forms, making comparisons with other texts and identifying the defining features of each one. These texts should be of varying degrees of complexity and be representative of those texts that students will be using from across the different learning areas. Continuing to provide opportunities for students to analyse and discuss different text forms will help to consolidate their understandings about the purpose, organisational structure and grammatical features of a wide range of visual texts. Modelled, Shared and Guided viewing sessions provide an opportunity to analyse and discuss how conventions are used in different text forms, and how they vary according to the context and purpose.

When deconstructing texts with Consolidating viewers, the following should be considered:

### *Complexity of Text*

Students need to be provided with opportunities to use and comprehend those texts that correspond to their developmental needs. Figure 7.6 (see page 199) outlines examples of the complexity of text forms that would be expected for students to be engaging with at the Consolidating phase of development.

### *Purpose*

All texts are produced and read to achieve a purpose. The purpose may be to entertain, as in the case of films, books or video games, or to present or identify a point of view, as in the case of an advertisement, a newspaper article or a television documentary. Teachers need to support Consolidating students to become aware of the intended purpose of a wide range of visual texts, and be able to analyse the effectiveness of the texts.

### *Text Organisation*

Text organisation refers to the layout of a text. Consolidating viewers need to understand the organisation of an increasing range of visual text forms across all learning areas. They need to know, for example, that a scientific text may include the following features: headings and sub-headings, picture-glossaries, conceptual diagrams, such as cross-sections, flowcharts, tables and graphs, while a feature film may include the narrative elements of setting, character, conflict and resolution, etc.

It is important that Consolidating students are given the opportunity to examine the organisational layout of different types of visual texts from across all learning areas. Teachers will also need to make explicit the link that exists between the written text and the images on the printed or screen page; this will develop the Consolidating students' ability to accurately interpret and understand all the information that is being presented.

| Complexity of Text Form | Text Examples |
|---|---|
| **Personal Texts:** short texts that convey simple messages and ideas | Personal drawings, text and video messages, photographs, personal websites, personal slide shows, e.g. Flickr™ and Slide Share, personal videos |
| **Simple Texts:** texts that have simple or basic forms, structures and features | Posters, advertisements, simple picture books, labels, captions, simple brochures, catalogues, etc. |
| **Familiar or Accessible Texts:** texts that are used within the teaching and learning program that have recognisable forms and structures and features easily accessible to students. These texts have been previously viewed or are very familiar to students. Those that have been explicitly taught to students and include multimodal texts. | Graphs, tables, charts, picture books, familiar television shows such as soap operas, short film narratives, e.g, *Lockie Leonard* (2001), *Noah and Saskia* (2004), *Around the Twist,* (1989) etc., magazines, comics, advertisements, web pages, catalogues, diagrams, documentaries, live dramas and performances, mind maps, posters, structured PowerPoint™ or movie presentations, newspaper reports and current affairs television shows |
| **Challenging Texts:** texts used in Guided Viewing with teacher support, e.g. at this phase of development, teachers should included specific content area texts such as maths and sciences. Most of these texts rely heavily on the use of both conceptual and narrative images, and students' success in these subject areas will be directly related to their ability to comprehend and use these texts. | Text containing both narrative and conceptual images from different learning area texts:<br>• films e.g. *Rabbit-Proof Fence* (2002), *Schindler's List* (1993)<br>• informational textbooks, e.g. *Heinemann's Science Links* and *Thomson Learning's Science Edge*<br>• sophisticated narrative picture books, e.g. *The Rabbits* by John Marsden & Shaun Tan<br>• hybrid texts such as *Inanimate Alice* by Brad Field Company production<br>• websites e.g. ABC and NASA websites<br>• television news documentaries, current affairs and dramas, instructional texts, advertisements and community texts, newspapers, magazines, etc. |
| **Complex Texts:** texts that have complex structural and visual grammatical complexity. They include visual and multimodal texts required for advanced academic and social competencies. | Complex films, complex websites including hypertexts, workplace texts, e-zines, complex documentaries and dramas, live performances, *The Australian* newspaper, etc.<br>• films, e.g. *The Truman Show* (1998)<br>• television shows, e.g. *Media Watch*<br>• web-based interactive documentaries, e.g. Becoming Human |

**Figure 7.6 Text complexity table, from 'Being Literate',** *Teaching and Assessment Guide,* ltag.education.tas.gov.au

## *Representational Images*

As Consolidating viewers have to use and understand an increasing range of complicated texts in all learning areas, the reading demands placed on them will be quite complex. It is important that teachers be aware of these demands and support their students. Consolidating viewers need opportunities to analyse texts that contain both narrative and conceptual image representations and develop an understanding of how these images contribute to the meaning of a text. Students need to recognise and analyse the meaning conveyed by the following representational images.

*Narrative representations* are images that show participants (human or non-human) participating in action, reaction and/or verbal events. Narrative images are those that tell a story; they can be found in picture books, photographs, informational books, newspapers, magazines, advertisements, television programs, films, web pages, video games, etc. Consolidating students should be aware that participants in narrative images will be connected by an implicit or explicit vector (e.g. direction of gaze or action line) that indicates the direction of the action.

*Conceptual representations* are images that show classifications, part or whole representations or symbolic representations. Conceptual images convey specific information and are marked by an absence of vectors. Maps, time lines, graphs, cross-sections, flowcharts, figures, symbols, diagrams, etc. are all examples of conceptual images (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Unsworth, 2006). Across all learning areas, Consolidating students will be using texts that contain conceptual images. Teachers need to support students to read these images and to analyse the information that is presented.

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Simple diagrams: e.g. labelled diagrams

Analytic diagrams: e.g. cross-sections, cut-aways, etc.

Synthetic or sequential diagrams: e.g. flow charts, time lines, web and tree and web diagrams

Quantitative diagrams: e.g. pictographs, number lines, bar and column graphs, line graphs, pie graphs

Maps: e.g. bird's-eye views, context maps, flow maps

Tables and charts: e.g. row by column matrices.

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**Figure 7.7 Some examples of conceptual images, Moline, S., 1996**

## *Text Structure*

Text structure refers to the way ideas, feelings and information are organised within a text. Knowing how a text is organised helps Consolidating students to make sense of the information they are viewing. The following list represents some possible ways in which information may be organised:

- Chronological sequence: What happened? What is the sequence of events?
- Compare and contrast: What are the similarities and differences? How do they relate to each other?
- Description: What is being described? What are its qualities and features?
- Point of view: What are the various perspectives and how are they presented?
- Problem/solution: What problem is being presented? How is it being dealt with?
- Process/cause and effect: What is the cause and effect of this event? What might happen next?

Consolidating viewers need opportunities to analyse and discuss a variety of visual text forms that use different structures. Texts will rarely have only one structure; they usually include a combination of several. Having an understanding of these patterns will assist Consolidating viewers to comprehend text. For example, at this phase, students should understand and recognise that the narrative structure of a book, film or television

program may include a setting, a problem or conflict, a resolution and a conclusion, while that of a documentary may include observation, interview, dramatisation and exposition.

## Text Features

The term 'text features' refers to the types of grammar used within a text. Each text form will make use of this grammar according to the specific structure and features of that text form.

> For further information about the Conventions aspect, see *Viewing Resource Book*:
> * Chapter 1: Use of Texts
> * Chapter 3: Conventions.

# Involving Students

## 1 Visual Journals

Maintaining a visual journal provides students with a space to record and discuss their responses, reactions, reflections and thoughts about texts that they have viewed. These responses may be recorded by students before, during or after they have viewed a visual text — after class and group discussions or outside of school. Consolidating students should be provided with a choice as to how they present and maintain their journals; many students choose to keep online journals. Teachers should ensure that students are familiar with school and class guidelines for responsible use of online spaces. Responses can be written or students can draw, include photographs, diagrams, etc. (See Chapter 3, Collecting Data to Assess Viewing Development of this book and the corresponding section of the *Viewing CD* for more information about journals.)

## 2 Digital Story-telling (S. B. Kajder 2006)

Digital Story-telling provides students with an opportunity to create their own visual stories. This activity (adapted from S.B. Kadjer's *Bringing the Outside In: Visual Ways to Engage Reluctant Readers*) enables students to consolidate their understanding of how visual texts are structured and presented to show a certain point of view, or to suit a particular audience and purpose. In this activity, students design and produce a three- to five-minute digital story. Through a series of steps, the teacher will support students to make their personal narratives into digital stories. These stories should include a combination of music, video and/or still images with the students' own creative voices. Digital stories, as with any other story, must be planned, written, refined and reviewed before the final product is presented.

* Allow students sufficient time to view a collection of different digital stories. (Refer to stepspd.com/weblinks for links to possible examples.)
* Discuss the elements that make up a digital story. Teachers should make sure that students are aware that digital stories consist of the following elements and, over a series of lessons, guide them through the following stages when constructing their own digital stories:

## Content

*Point of a story and point of view:* What is your story? What story will your pictures tell? What do you actually want to say?

*Dramatic question and emotional content:* What emotion do you want to convey? How are you going to gain and hold the attention of the audience?

*Collection of images and artefacts:* Students collect five images or objects that are personally significant to them and will support them to tell their story. They need to consider the following: What do you need to tell your story? What will create the best visual image? Consider if you need to include still images, such as photographs, scanned illustrations or objects and video footage?

## Form

*Voice:* Students can choose to use their 'own voice' to tell their story. This may be achieved through reading the story or talking, with the ultimate aim of engaging the viewer in the experience.

*Soundtrack:* Students should consider selecting appropriate music or soundtracks to accompany their images and voice and to work out the correct balance.

*Pacing:* This involves applying the correct time sequence to the frames that will be seen, estimating how long each frame will be, and what the transitions should be between shots.

*Economy:* Students need to consider applying the correct balance of elements necessary to tell their digital story and to avoid superfluous details. (Less is often more.) Students need to be aware that some of the most effective stories will be those that make strategic use of words, images, sound and special effects.

## Construction

*Storyboarding:* By using the storyboard format provided in Chapter 6 (Visual Stories—Storyboard Formats) on the *Viewing CD*, students can plan the sequence of their images as well as the other elements that they will use to tell their story. Remind students that they will need to consider both content and form.

*Creation:* Using available digital resources, students create their digital stories, e.g. PowerPoint™, Keynote®, Microsoft® Photo Story 3, MovieMaker, Dreamweaver™, Kahootz™ or any other digital program currently available.

*Review and revision:* Students should seek feedback from peers and teachers and be aware of refining and reviewing their storyboards.

## Presentation

*Showing, viewing and discussing:* It is essential that students share the finished product and celebrate their creations; they should reflect on the process and their finished

product, considering the content, presentation, production and technical elements. Teachers may use the visual response chart provided on the *Viewing CD* to help students with their reflection.

Link to stepspd.com/weblinks to connect with various Internet sites that provide examples of digital stories as well as in-depth information about the development and construction of the stories.

## 3 Visual and Written (Adapted from Saskatchewan Learning)

Visual and Written is an activity that allows students to consider the links between information presented by both the visual and written elements within an informational text. Students in this phase of development will be exposed to informational or factual texts in all learning areas. To effectively comprehend these texts, it is essential that students understand that visual information is linked to written information and carries meaning that is vital to understanding. By looking closely at the visual text and comparing it with what is written on the page, students become familiar with how to access all information within the text. In this activity, students are asked to make judgements about the suitability of a visual text and to explore the connections between a visual and a written text.

- This activity can be performed by pairs or small groups.
- Provide each pair or group with a copy of a visual image from an informational text, e.g. a photograph, drawing, diagram, chart, graph, etc.
- Students can discuss the content of the visual image.
- Ask students to list the key features or elements of their visual text.

Have students consider the following:
- Which elements are the most important? e.g. is it the colour, its size, vectors, etc.? What meaning do these elements convey?
- Provide students with the written text that accompanies the image. Ask students to compare and contrast the information they have gained from the visual and written texts.
- The teacher may support students by reading the written text aloud to the class.
- Individually, students can reflect on what they have observed by considering the following:
  – What information was provided by the visual and the written texts?
- Were the texts:
  – *complementary* — Did the visual text complement the written text?
  – *counterpoint* — Did the visual text depart from directly representing the written text?
  – *contradictory* — Did the visual and the written texts make different meanings?
(Refer to the reflection sheet provided on the *Viewing CD*.)
As a class, list students' observations onto a chart.

## 4 What Could I See? What Could I Say?

What Could I See? What Could I Say? provides students with an opportunity to further explore the links between visual and written elements within a text. Supply students with a copy of a visual text; it is best to begin with a narrative image before using conceptual images. Photographs, illustrations, or wordless comics or cartoons will work well.

- Ask students either individually or in pairs to think of the written text that may accompany an image. The image and the words may be:
  - *redundant*: the words and the image both say the same thing, with no surprises for the reader.
  - *contrasting*: the words and the image convey opposite meanings; the reader may be surprised or shocked by the meaning.
  - *complementary*: the words and image combine to express a meaning that neither completely expresses on its own.
  - *unrelated*: there is no obvious connection between the words and the image. A deeper or metaphorical meaning may exist.
- Have students share their texts with the class.
- Display finished versions under the four headings.

## 5 Brochure Analysis

Brochure Analysis provides students with the opportunity to identify and compare different text features by focusing on brochures. Students work in groups to sort a collection of brochures into categories. They then brainstorm the features of each category. Students will recognise and become familiar with the text structures, organisation and visual language features of a range of different brochures.

- Have students work together to sort the brochures into categories.
- Discuss the decisions they made and what influenced their choices when placing brochures into particular categories; e.g. were their categories based on advertising, community service, instructional and informational, etc.?
- Ask them to explore the groups of brochures more closely and to further analyse the features of each category.
- Have the students complete the analysis chart provided on the *Viewing CD*.
- Students can share their discoveries with the class.
- Create a class chart, listing the text features that are specific to each category of brochure.

## 6 Reading News Photographs

Reading News Photographs is an activity that develops students' ability in making inferences and drawing conclusions about the visual information presented in a news photograph. The quality of a news photograph is usually determined by how easily it can be interpreted for the information and emotion it represents.

The teacher will need to collect a range of photographs or newspaper photographs.
- Provide students with a copy of one of the pre-selected narrative images; alternatively use a digitally displayed version, e.g. use a scanned image and display it on an interactive whiteboard or overhead projector.

As a group, analyse or read the photograph, noting students' responses to the following questions:

– *Where?* — Where is the photograph set or can the location be inferred?

– *When?* —  When was the photograph taken? What could be the time of day or time of year?

– *Who?* — Locate the focal point or main centre of attention in the photograph. Who seems to be the main character? Who are the protagonist and/or the antagonist? Is this simply inferred or is the person's role obvious? Consider aspects such as physical appearance, clothing, moods and emotion. What other important objects can be seen in the photograph?

– *What?* — What seems to be happening?

– *How?* — How is it occurring?

– *Why?* — Why is it occurring? Why does the character seem to be doing this? Why was this photograph taken? What was the intended purpose of this photograph? What questions does the photograph raise?

• Students can refer to the inferred information to draw conclusions about the intended theme or purpose of the photograph.

• Have students suggest a possible title, headline or caption for the photograph.

The retrieval chart provided on the *Viewing CD* can be used by students to work individually or in pairs as they analyse other selected news photographs.



Top hat juxtaposed with ragged clothing has come to symbolise the Dickens character, The Artful Dodger.

Body language implies a defensive attitude which is emphasised by the direct, aggressive gaze.

This is clearly a modern photograph but the participants are wearing old-fashioned clothing — indicates that these children are playing characters from another era. It is essential to read the caption to understand what the photograph is about.

Medium shot emphasises the crowded nature of this era and the 'gang' theme of the play.

Background is saturated — realistic. Brickwork is evocative of the inner city setting of the play, *Oliver!*

Clothing from Victorian era — ragged, mismatched and ill-fitting denotes poverty and crime.

The only adult is shown in the centre of the boys, but on a lower plane. Note the hand placed on his head — who is really in charge here?

**Figure 7.8 A narrative news photograph**

## 7 Film Talk

Film Talk provides Consolidating students with an opportunity to focus on different film genres and their elements, while sharing their favourite types of films with other students.

- Working in pairs or small groups, students can consider the following questions: What is your favourite film? What type of film do you enjoy the most?
- Students can share their responses with the class.
- Students can group their selections into different genres, e.g. action, romance, drama, horror and comedy.
- Allocate one genre to each group and have students list as many films as they can think of that fit this classification.
- Have groups share their lists with the class.
- Choose one genre and as a whole class, list the characteristics of that genre and then identify how the different semiotic systems are used to characterise that genre. e.g. in the audio semiotic system, are distinctive styles of music, sound effects or silence used?
- Groups can select their favourite genre and note its specific characteristics.

The *Viewing CD* contains an overview of common film genres and their elements, as well as two retrieval charts that can be used to support students with this activity.

# CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING

## Major Teaching Emphases

■ Discuss how one's knowledge, experience, perspective and socio-cultural background influence the production and interpretation of multimodal texts.

■ Provide opportunities for students to critically analyse and challenge the text producer's world view.

■ Provide opportunities for students to explain their choices of codes, conventions and the devices used in the production of a multimodal text.

## Teaching Notes

Students in the Consolidating phase are becoming more aware of how texts may be structured to convey a particular interpretation. They are starting to question the intent behind the text and are increasingly aware that readers may be manipulated by visual texts. However, students at this phase of development may still believe that texts have a single interpretation, which is the same for all consumers. It is vital that students in this phase be supported to see beyond the surface features of a text and understand that a text may be responded to and understood differently, according to the viewer's prior knowledge and experience.

Teachers can encourage students to consider and provide more than one interpretation of a text. Therefore students will benefit from opportunities to discuss and challenge the view presented by the text producer. Working with others in whole-class, small-groups or pairs further supports students in their discussions about texts. Modelled, Shared, and Guided viewing sessions can include discussions that will allow students to share their opinions and justifications of text interpretations while considering the views of others.

While students in the Consolidating phase will have developed some understandings about multimodal texts, they need to be provided with opportunities that allow them to consolidate and further develop their understandings. They need to know that:
• Texts are produced using the codes and conventions of one or more semiotic systems: visual, linguistic, audio, gestural and spatial.
• Texts are produced for particular purposes, e.g. to instruct, inform, explain, entertain, socialise, recount and inquire.
• Texts are produced in a particular way to suit the intended audience.
• The interpretation of a text is actively constructed by the text producer, the viewer, the text and the context.
• Texts may be interpreted differently by different people.
• Texts may have several possible interpretations, e.g. texts may have different meanings to different consumers or to the same consumer at different times (Anstey & Bull, 2006).

- Texts may be produced by several people, e.g. a writer, illustrator, graphic designer, artist, editor.
- Text producers often use intertextuality in the construction of texts, e.g. a text may include references to other texts.
- Multimodal texts may be interactive, linear or non-linear.

The focus for supporting Consolidating viewers in this aspect is organised under the following headings:
- Discussions about multimodal texts
- Devices text producers use
- Considering possible interpretations of multimodal texts

## Discussions about Multimodal Texts

While it is important for students in the Consolidating phase to continue to make connections and comparisons between their own experiences and those presented in a text, the focus for this phase of development will be on discussing how and why viewers may react differently to the same text. This can be achieved in a range of ways.

- Encourage students to consider how their prior knowledge and experience influence their interpretation of texts, for example:
  – What do you know about this visual text?
  – Have you seen a text like this before? Where was it? How was that text similar to or different from this one?
  – What is the purpose of the text?
  – What is your reason for using the text?
  – What form of text is it? Have you seen texts of this form before?
  – From what you already know about this text form, how might that help you to understand this text?

- Encourage students to consider how their social and cultural understanding and experiences influence their interpretation of texts, for example:
  – Have you viewed or used texts like this one in similar contexts?
  – Did you view or share your viewing of the text with other people? How did this contribute to your understanding?
  – How do you think this previous experience will help you to use or understand this text?

- Encourage students to consider how their technological knowledge and experiences influence their interpretation of texts, for example:
  – Have you seen or used this technology before?
  – What knowledge or experience do you have that would be useful in this situation?
  – Are there things that you need to know more about before you can understand this text?

- Support students in identifying and justifying their points of view; for example:
  - What is your opinion of this text?
  - What are your reasons for feeling this way? How do you support this opinion?
  - Do you agree or disagree with the text producer? Why?
  - Do you agree or disagree with others' opinions of the text? Why?

- Support students in discussing possible interpretations of texts, for example:
  - Why do you think that about the text?
  - Why might others see it differently?

- Assist students in identifying the point of view of the text producer, for example:
  - What did the text producer think about?
  - How do you know that?
  - What message does the text producer give about …?
  - Do you agree or disagree with this message?

- Encourage students to discuss texts from different perspectives or points of view, for example:
  - The text producer has presented a particular perspective or view. Who do you think might agree or associate themselves with this perspective?
  - Which people or groups may disagree with this perspective?
  - What values or attitudes are being presented? Do you agree or disagree with them? Why?
  - What other information could have been included in or omitted from this text? How would this have changed the perspective from which the text is viewed?

## *Devices Text Producers Use*

Although by the Consolidating phase of development students will be aware that texts are constructed for a particular purpose and audience, they require opportunities to examine and discuss how the text producer achieves this. It is important to provide opportunities for ongoing conversations about the devices that text producers have chosen to influence the viewer's interpretation of a text. As students discuss the reasons and effectiveness of the choices that text producers make, they gain a deeper understanding of how these choices have an impact on the viewer's interpretation of a text.

Devices used by illustrators, graphic designers, web designers, animators or filmmakers may include:
- choice or inclusion of colour
- amount of detail included
- typeface and size
- size of characters, tables, charts, graphs, diagrams relative to other diagrams
- use of different codes
- composition of page or screen, e.g. layout arrangements
- artistic style: abstract or realistic.

Devices used by the authors, script writers, or web writers may include:
- choice of language, e.g. descriptive, narrative
- juxtaposition
- flashback or foreshadowing
- inclusion or omission of details
- the use of irony, wit and humour
- intertextuality
- metaphors and metonymy.

## *Considering Possible Interpretations of Multimodal Texts*

Students in this phase will need to be supported through teacher scaffolding to analyse and question why visual texts may have more than one possible interpretation. They need to understand that multiple layers of meaning are constructed in visual texts through the combination of codes and conventions from the five semiotic systems — visual, linguistic, audio, spatial and gestural. They also need to understand that, although texts have been consciously constructed to convey a particular meaning, the meaning that is made will depend on the person who is viewing and interpreting the text. Viewers of a text construct their own meaning depending on their prior knowledge and experiences, their social and cultural backgrounds and the purpose and context of the reading. A wide range of texts should be considered for discussion.

Deconstructing texts allows students to become aware that dominant readings may be challenged, resisted or rejected. The following list provides possible suggestions for discussing the choices producers use in the construction of multimodal texts:
- How do the images support the text? For example, what is the function of the image on the page or screen? Do the images support or conflict with other elements? What do the diagrams tell you that words do not?
- How do the illustrations or images detract from the understanding of the text? For example, are the images inappropriate? Is the framing and positioning of images incorrect? Is there a lack of detail in the images?
- How do the illustrations or images enhance the meaning of the text?
- How does the text producer show the importance of different aspects of the text?
- Why do you think the text producer chose to present the characters in a certain way?
- What codes and conventions have been used in the text to create meaning? For example, consider voiceovers, sound effects, music or movement.
- Why do you think that the text producer chose this way to represent the characters, people, events or facts?

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For further information about the Contextual Understanding aspect, see *Viewing Resource Book*:
- Chapter 2: Contextual Understanding.

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# Involving Students

## 1 Target Audience

Target Audience is designed to draw students' attention to the persuasive devices employed by advertisers. Students are required to analyse a pre-recorded television advertisement. This activity, adapted from Making Movies from English Online, can be performed in pairs or small groups.

- Record advertisements that are suitable for students in the class.
- As a class, watch the advertisement for the first time without any specific direction so that students have an overall impression of the text.
- Ask students to list the following:
  –the product that is being sold
  –how the characters are portrayed, e.g. are they real people or cartoons?
  –who is the intended audience?
  –what codes are used in the advertisement, e.g. sound effects, music and voiceovers?
- Watch the advertisement for a second time and ask if extra information needs to be added to the list.
- In the third viewing, direct students to notice and list the specific devices as they watch. For example, list words and images that try to persuade the viewer that the product is cool, fun or healthy.
- Compile a class list of the devices that were used to persuade. Display this list for future reference.
- Compile a class list of devices that were used, e.g. analogy, testimony, jargon, repetition.

## 2 Visual Dictionary

Creating a visual dictionary is an activity that allows students to understand how images are constructed to represent a particular meaning or concept. By creating their own representations, students can experience some of the decisions that are made in the process of conceptualising a visual illustration. They must consider design elements such as colour, composition, text, imagery, layout, framing and modality, as well as taking into account how the final product will be presented.

In this activity, students will be asked to illustrate a word or phrase.

- Assist students with a selection of words. Consider words that may be relevant to current studies.
- Support students to individually create a visual representation that shows the meaning or concept that is conveyed, e.g. draw, collect images from magazines, clip art, Google® images or online photograph-sharing collections.
- Encourage students to combine a number of images to represent the word or phrase.
- Remind them to include the word on their representations and to consider the impact that font selection and placement will have on the intended meaning.
- When the representations are completed, they may be displayed in the classroom or combined to make a class slide presentation.

Teachers may initiate a class discussion about the images that have been created; the following focus questions may be used to guide the discussion:

– What is the first thing that captures your attention about this illustration? For example, is it the layout, colour or image?

– How does the imagery enhance or detract from the message?

– What would you do differently?

– Would changing the placement of the images affect the way the image is read? In other words, does it affect the reading path and is it a positive, negative or neutral effect?

– How has the choice of font and its placement had an effect on how the image is read?

## 3 Changing Points of View

Changing Points of View provides students with the opportunity to discuss a visual text, identify the point of view from which it is presented, and consider how it would change if it was presented from a different point of view. Following discussions, students are encouraged to re-create texts or excerpts from a different point of view, e.g. presenting a news report from a different point of view.

• After students have viewed the selected visual text, discuss whose point of view it presents. Ask students to identify elements of the text that lead them to their conclusions; they need to consider elements such as framing, angle of shot, pace (the speed or timing at which a film sequence may be presented), sequencing, accompanying music soundtracks, choice of language, tone of voice, accompanying printed text — headlines, captions, titles — body language, costume, setting, modality — real or abstract, etc.

• Discuss with students if there is a point of view that is not represented.

• Arrange the students in small groups and have them discuss a particular part of the text from a different point of view, e.g. hearing or viewing the landowner's point of view as well as the developer's with regard to a controversial development.

• Have students brainstorm how to present the visual text from the different points of view. Invite groups to share their findings.

• Students may create alternative versions of these texts, e.g. they could add alternative titles and captions, change the voiceover and sound effects, rearrange the layout and framing, etc. The revised text versions may be shared with the class and students could consider the effectiveness of these versions.

## 4 Ten Little Images

Ten Little Images is an activity that encourages students to consider the point of view in visual texts and how it may be presented by the careful and deliberate selection of a series of images. It would be valuable to link this activity to a concept, theme or issue that is being explored in one of the content areas such as science or history.

• Ask students to collect ten images that focus on one issue or concept. The pictures should work together to present a strong point of view or emotion. These images may be drawings, photographs, scanned images, etc.

• Ask students to work with the images to sequence them in the order that conveys the strongest point of view.

- Have students consider a title for their work, and how they are going to present it to the class.
- Encourage the use of different media presentations, e.g. PowerPoint™, Movie Maker.
- Allow time for students to work on their presentation. They should consider elements such as audio tracks, framing and timing.
- Provide an opportunity for students to share their presentations and points of view.

## 5 Comparison

Comparison is an activity that allows students to explore how one topic or event may be presented in different ways according to the ideologies of the text designer. It allows them to consider not only the intended message but also how its mode of delivery may influence its interpretation. By inviting students to compare and contrast news reports or articles on the same topic — either print-based or digitally delivered — students are able to analyse these representations and look at the different perspectives that are presented.

- Provide students with several texts about the same topic, e.g. a national political or sporting event, a current news story, a natural disaster, etc. Students can view texts from one mode, such as newspapers, magazines, television or web-based; or they can compare several texts about the same topic in different formats.
- Invite students to read or view each text and discuss the similarities and differences in the way the information has been reported or conveyed.
- Allow time for students to explore and discuss reasons why the information may have been presented differently. Encourage them to consider the text designer's identity, country of origin and role or relationship to the topic, and how these factors may have influenced the construction of the text, e.g. choice of image, positioning, framing, sound effects, accompanying text.
- Invite students to think about how the same topic or event may be presented from another point of view.
- Provide time for students to create an alternative version. Encourage students to consider what needs to be changed to reflect the alternative perspective. Students may use storyboards, mind maps or digital-based programs such as PowerPoint™, Microsoft® Photo Story 3, Photoshop®, Flash® or any other programs they are familiar with.
- Facilitate the sharing of students' re-created texts.

## 6 Text Deconstruction

Text Deconstruction provides Consolidating viewers with an opportunity to analyse a text, section by section, to uncover the devices that have been used. Deconstructing a text in this way helps students to understand how visual texts can be constructed to present a particular ideological message.

Deconstructing activities should include:
- identifying how characters are constructed, e.g. the language that is used, facial expressions, costumes, etc.
- identifying how people and events are presented, e.g. the use of framing, juxtaposition, shot distance, sequencing, lighting, etc.

– identifying the devices used to communicate mood, emotion and atmosphere, e.g. the use of lighting, shot angle, framing, music, etc.

– identifying the text designer's viewpoint and the values being promoted or criticised, and how the text designer's viewpoint is revealed in the design choices, e.g. choice of image, positioning within text, and means of delivery, etc.

– comparing sections of different texts by the same text designer to discover the common devices used

– discussing how the text designer is positioning him/herself.

• Arrange students to work in small groups with familiar texts.

• Challenge students to analyse the texts according to either a self-selected or an allocated criterion. (Refer to the list above.)

• Provide time for analysis and sharing. Have students comment on the devices that were identified and the impact they had on influencing the viewer to take a particular view.

• Encourage students to use these devices to create their own visual texts.

## 7 Exploring Book Covers

Exploring Book Covers asks students to consider the design elements of a book cover and how covers may influence the selection and reading of texts.

• Provide examples of different book covers for students to look at. Make sure to include both narrative and informational texts.

• Discuss the purpose of the design of the cover; guide students to consider the following questions in their discussion:

– What is the text about?

– What sort of type or genre is it?

– Is it different from other types or genres?

– How does it attract readers or viewers?

– How does it attract your interest so you are tempted to read this particular text?

• Allow students to work in pairs or small groups to examine a particular cover. Have them reflect on the purpose and the effectiveness of a particular cover.

• Encourage groups to share their reflections.

### Extension Activity

Sometimes, the context in which a particular book cover is created or viewed will change and the representation of the image that is presented may be altered. For example, the book may be re-released after a film adaptation is made or when it is presented to a different international market. As a follow-up activity, students can examine a series of book covers and suggest reasons for the similarities and differences between them.

• Supply students with a number of versions of the same book cover. Changes in representation may have occurred for a number of reasons: different publishing dates, different audiences in response to commercial influences such as film and television versions.

• After looking at the covers, students should note the differences in the various representations and suggest possible reasons.

• Encourage students to consider design elements such as colour, layout, size and modality when looking at the covers.

The following questions (see Figure 7.9) may be used to reflect on the composition of the covers.

- How is the main character represented on this cover?
- Is the image a real-life or an abstract image? Why do you think this representation was chosen?
- What is the context for which this cover was designed? e.g. type of reader, age group, gender, interests.
- How does the cover convey meaning to the viewer? Consider the visual grammar of the cover, e.g. colour, texture, lighting, social distance, framing, angles, viewer positioning.
- What features of the cover appeal to you? Why?
- What features of the cover do you dislike? Why?
- Who do you think is the intended audience for this text?

**Figure 7.9 Reflecting on covers**

Teachers may choose texts that have been presented in more than one medium. Many popular books have been adapted for film and television. Diana Wynne Jones' book, *Howl's Moving Castle* (1986), is an example of a text that has become popular; the book was adapted into a film. It is an interesting text to consider with students since the film version was created by a Japanese film producer and uses an *anime* format.

Students may examine how representations of this text have changed over time and across cultures by considering the book cover and the film poster.



**Figure 7.10 The different book covers of Howl's Moving Castle use a traditional Western style of illustration that appeals to the predominantly young audience of the book**



**Figure 7.11 Film posters and related marketing materials of Howl's Moving Castle use an anime style of artwork, similar to the film**
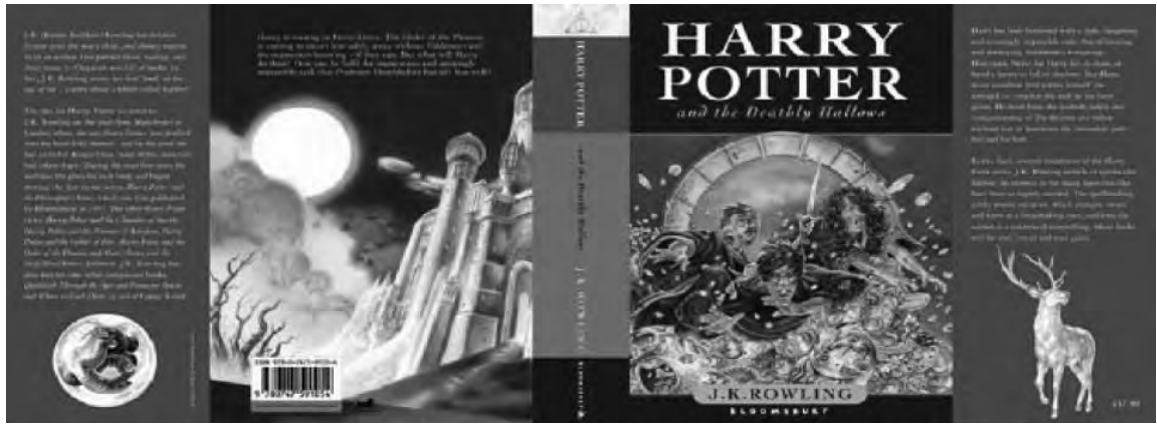
**Figure 7.12 The back and front covers of a text designed to appeal to children as exemplified by the number of illustrative images on the covers**
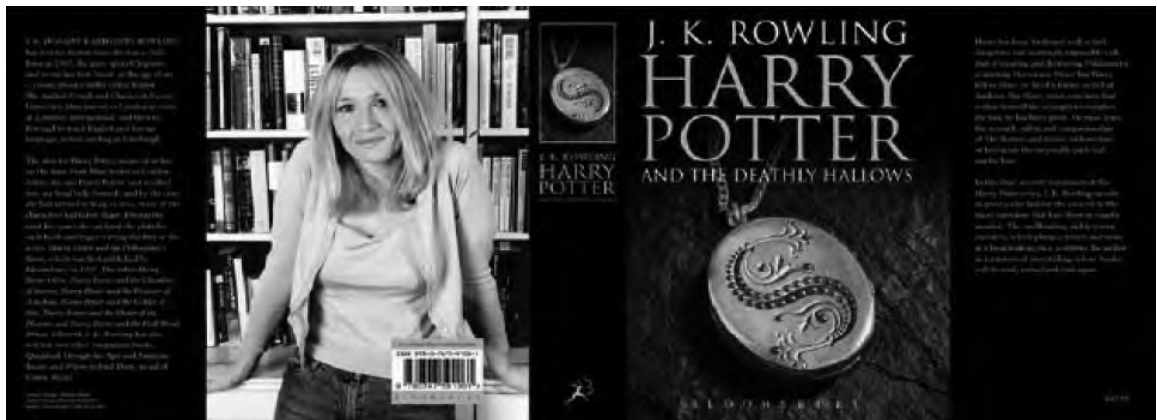


**Figure 7.13 The back and front covers of the same text but designed to appeal to adults as indicated by the sophisticated single image on the front cover, the sombre colours and the photo of the author on the back cover**

J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* books have a range of different book covers that may be examined. Above are two different covers of the same book *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (2007) — each is intended to appeal to a different age group.

## 8 CD Cover Design

CD Cover Design encourages students to think at an inferential level as they analyse and speculate on the choices that a visual text designer considers in the construction of music CD covers. This activity will help students to understand how text designers use specific devices to achieve a purpose.

- Have students bring in the cover of their favourite music CD cover. (Note: Discuss with students that CDs should be appropriate for school. Alternatively, the teacher could choose the covers they feel would be the most suitable.)
- This activity can be conducted in small groups or pairs.
- All students can share their reasons for liking their chosen cover.
- Each group then chooses one of the covers for further analysis.
- Using the following reflective questions (see Figure 7.14 or the reflective format provided in the Chapter 6 section of the *Viewing CD*), have students analyse their covers.
- Provide time for each group to share their analysis with the rest of the class.

- Who is the target audience for your cover? Consider age, gender, and musical preferences.
- What message does the cover of the CD convey? Look at both the front and reverse sides of the cover as well as the inside panels.
- Are the images lifelike or abstract? Why do you think the text designer chose this form of representation?
- Is there written text on the cover? What meaning does it convey? What type of font has been chosen? Why?
- What colours have been used? What do they suggest? Do they contribute to the main message? Are they appropriate for the intended audience?
- Has texture been used on the cover? Are there any embellishments or raised surfaces? Do they make the cover more appealing?
- What is the reading path of the cover? Where do you look first?
- How is the viewer positioned when reading the cover? Is there a person shown on the cover? If so, is the gaze a demand or offer? How does this affect the meaning? Also consider: angles (high, low and eye-level) as well as framing and shot distance (close-up, medium or distant). How do these elements contribute to the meaning conveyed by the cover?

**Figure 7.14 Reflective questions**

The *Viewing CD* contains an annotated example of a CD cover that has been analysed using the above criteria. The teacher may refer to it as a reference for this activity.

## Extension Activity

As an extension activity, students can design and produce their own CD covers. Students will:

- Choose an artist, group or musical track to design a cover for.
- Plan the design for a CD cover, keeping in mind the following:
  - target audience (age and gender)
  - artist; e.g. do they have an already established recognisable style (particular clothing, facial or body gestures)?
  - type or genre of music (popular, instrumental, hard rock)
  - mood of the cover (happy, melancholy, sombre).
- Students can create their covers. They can make a drawing or use a range of digital and graphic media. Remind students that they must consider both the outside and inside of the cover.
- When all covers have been completed, encourage students to share their CD covers with the class, and to discuss their design choices.
- Display the CD covers in the classroom.
- Students can record their reflections about this activity in their viewing journals, e.g. which cover had the most impact? What elements made it stand out from the rest? Would you buy a CD with a cover like this?

This activity can also be applicable for DVD film covers, magazine covers, book jackets, greeting cards and postcards.

# CONVENTIONS

- Introduce, revise and extend the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.

- Explore selection and use of particular semiotic systems, codes and conventions to convey specific information about the composition and organisation of the text.

- Explore how particular codes and conventions are used to reinforce or oppose meanings in the text.

- Explore which codes and conventions from different semiotic systems can be used to convey similar meanings.

## Teaching Notes

Consolidating viewers will be using a variety of multimodal texts in learning areas across the curriculum and will be encountering a wide range of new genres and text forms. Viewers in this phase of development need to understand the elements of a multimodal text and how they may be integrated within that text to make meaning. Teachers need to be able to read and view multimodal texts with students and point out how codes and conventions such as colour, salience or layout might have been used to create possible meanings in the text.

Modelled, Shared and Guided viewing sessions provide ideal procedures for teaching conventions as attention may be drawn to them as they occur.

The focus for supporting Consolidating viewers in developing further understandings about conventions are organised under the following headings:
- Understanding the codes and conventions of text delivered by different technologies
- What students need to know and be able to do with the conventions
  - Codes and conventions of the visual semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the audio semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the gestural semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the spatial semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the linguistic semiotic system.

### Understanding the Codes and Conventions of Text Delivered by Different Technologies

The construction of any visual text will follow certain codes and conventions that allow it to be understood. Consolidating viewers will be familiar with a range of multimodal text forms and be able to identify the codes and conventions used within them. They show an increasing awareness of how these codes and conventions are

used in the construction of different text forms, and are beginning to understand that multimodal texts will be governed by different codes and conventions, depending on both the purpose and audience of the text.

Students at this phase will need to be provided with opportunities to analyse visual texts to see how these codes and conventions can be deliberately used in a text to convey a particular meaning. They will also become aware that these codes and conventions are socially created and have developed over time as accepted ways of creating meaning.

Consolidating viewers need to know that:
• multimodal text forms are constructed from a system of signs that are organised according to the culturally accepted and recognised codes and conventions
• multimodal texts can be read in different ways depending on the viewer's own sets of beliefs and cultural and social understandings
• the meaning of a multimodal text may vary when read by different groups of people, depending on their understanding of the codes and conventions contained in the text
• the choice of and construction of a text will be largely influenced by its purpose and intended audience — the way a multimodal text is constructed and presented may influence the way it is interpreted.

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• *Signs, Symbols and Icons* are images that are designed to communicate a particular message. The meaning of any sign is dependent on the social and cultural context.
• The *Codes* of each semiotic system are combined to form a grammar that enables the reader/viewer to identify and describe how attention is captured, how emphasis of particular elements is created, and therefore how meaning is shaped.
• The *Conventions* are the accepted rules or grammar of a semiotic system that facilitate the use of codes to make meaning in a text.

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**Figure 7.15 Signs Codes and Conventions**

## What Students Need to Know and Be Able to Do with the Conventions

In the Consolidating viewing phase students should continue to consider and discuss how the information from each semiotic system in a multimodal text contributes to overall meaning, but these investigations should become more specific and detailed, reflecting the students' increased understandings of the codes and conventions and their application to achieve particular purposes. There are three main focuses for these investigations:

1. Students should examine what type of information is conveyed by each semiotic system and the codes within them by exploring questions such as the following and documenting their findings in tables and charts that can be compared in order to draw conclusions and offer generalisations:

- Which semiotic systems and codes and conventions provide information about what is happening?
- Which semiotic systems and codes and conventions provide information about how it is happening, who is involved and the relationships between them?
- Which semiotic systems and codes and conventions contribute to the layout and composition of the text, leading the eye and indicating importance or emphasis?

2. Students should examine how particular codes and conventions are used to reinforce or oppose meanings in the text by exploring questions such as:
   - Does anything in the linguistic part of the text reinforce the facial expression that indicates sadness in the visual part of the text?' If the answer is no, then consider the reasons for this. Does it mean that extra information is being supplied by the visual part of the text or that it is unnecessary to supply the same information twice or that there is some dissonance between the visual and linguistic text.
   - If there is dissonance between the semiotic systems and their codes and conventions what might be the reasons?

3. Students should explore which codes and conventions from different semiotic systems can be used to convey similar meanings, for example, a spotlight can draw attention in the visual, a sudden change in volume can achieve the same outcome in audio. Questions students might consider are:
   - Why might just one code and convention and semiotic system be selected to convey the meaning?
   - Why might two or more codes and conventions and semiotic system be used simultaneously to convey the same meaning?

The relationship between all these considerations and decision-making processes and the purpose, audience, context and text type should remain a focus. Thus students will apply their critical viewing skills to further understand the complex and deliberate design and production decisions that are made when producing a multimodal text and therefore how carefully they need to be consumed.

It is important that students continue to have the opportunity to both consume and produce multimodal texts in order to practise the application of their developing understandings about the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems. Students should be required to explain and justify their observations and analyses and any decision-making when producing texts.

All learning activities should engage students and teachers in using the appropriate metalanguage for each semiotic system. When introducing the codes and conventions of the Consolidating viewing phase, teachers should also revise and extend the codes and conventions of the Exploratory viewing phase. Ensure that teaching and learning activities around the semiotic system engage students with the exploration of texts delivered via all three technologies: paper, digital electronic and live and across all curriculum areas.

Tables 7.1 to 7.5 provides the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems to be introduced in the Consolidating viewing phase. The metalanguage that is introduced around these concepts in the Consolidating viewing phase has been italicised.

## Codes and Conventions of the Visual Semiotic System

In the Consolidating viewing phase previously introduced concepts about colour, line and lighting are to be explored in more sophisticated ways with an emphasis on leading the eye of the viewer through images and creating emphasis on particular aspects of the image or scene. Students should further develop concepts about the intensity of colour by not only examining the use of different intensities of colour in texts, but also mixing colours of different intensities and considering where they would best be used to achieve particular purposes in texts they are constructing. They should also consider the application of colours of different intensities in the gestural semiotic system when selecting props and costuming. Similarly, experimentation with lighting in texts they are constructing, as well as examination of the use of lighting in existing texts, is important to full understanding of the effect of varying direction of lighting.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Colour** | • Revise the colour wheel and the idea of bright and dull colours. Explain that the brightness or dullness of a colour relates to how pure a colour is, i.e. whether it has been mixed with other colours. The term *intensity* is used to describe how pure a colour is.<br><br>• Find lots of examples of red in magazines or similar texts that can be cut out and then classfied. Find the purest red or most *intense* red (fire engine red). Then classify all the other reds as more or less intense. Identify the colour that has been added to change the intensity (e.g. white, black, blue or yellow).<br><br>• Discuss why you might use a pure red or a red that is of a different *intensity*, for example, purple reds are often used for serious topics, to create a sombre mood or make something look authoritative, while yellow reds might be used to create a bright happy feeling.<br><br>• Look for examples of colours of different *intensities* used in everyday settings, e.g. business cards, signage, brochures and advertising. Discuss the effects.<br><br>• Introduce the terms *dilutes* or *strengthens* to discuss the intensity of a colour (*dilute* being lighter, *strengthen* being darker)<br><br>• Engage in colour mixing to create different *intensities* for different colours. Select a colour and create an appropriate intensity to achieve particular effects: e.g. moods, emotions, or to appeal to particular age groups or interests. |
| **Texture** | • Revise any codes and conventions about texture introduced in previous three phases. |

| Line | • Revise concepts about line, in particular the use of thick, thin, heavy, straight, curved and jagged lines that were introduced in the Beginning viewing phase. Explain that the collective term for these descriptions of line is *quality* of the line. |
|---|---|
| | • Revise how the *quality* of a line can influence meaning and examine the use of line in still and moving images and a range of text types and contexts and how variation in the *quality* of the line influences meaning. |
| | • Discuss and explore how the selection of media (e.g. charcoal, watercolour, ink, pencil) influences the *quality* of the line. |
| | • Explore the use of line in the layout of texts and the different *qualities* of lines used. Discuss how the *quality* of the line influences meaning-making. Discuss how quality of line and colour combined influence meaning, particularly in relation to selection and placement of line and choice and *intensity* of colour. |
| | • Introduce students to the terms and concepts *vectors* and *vectorality*. Explain that they refer to the way the viewer's eye is led through a visual image by real or imaginary lines. *Vectors* or *vectorality* draw the eye to important parts of an image, show relationships or assist in the creation of a mood or emotion. For example, telegraph poles receding into the distance as an implied line can create a mood of isolation or loneliness. |
| | • Find examples of *vectors* or *vectorality* that demonstrate leading the eye, creation of mood or emotion, and showing relationships in picture books. Use plastic overlays to trace the *vectors* with felt pen. Discuss why the *vectors* have been used in these different ways and whether any other semiotic systems present (e.g. gestural, linguistic or spatial) reinforce (or otherwise) these meanings and if so, how this was achieved. |
| | • Conduct similar investigations about *vectors* and *vectorality* with other text forms and in texts delivered via digital electronic technology such as websites. Discuss the relationship between purpose, audience text type and the *vectors* used. |
| **Shape** | • Revise any codes and conventions about shape introduced in previous three phases. |
| **Form and Juxtaposition** | • Revise any codes and conventions about form or juxtaposition introduced in previous three phases. |
| **Point of View** | • Revise any codes and conventions about point of view introduced in previous three phases. |
| **Framing** | • Revise any codes and conventions about framing introduced in previous three phases. |
| **Focus** | • Revise any codes and conventions about focus introduced in previous three phases. |
| **Lighting** | • Explain that the *direction of lighting*, that is, where it comes from: *top, bottom, side, front, back, spotlight,* can highlight aspects of a scene or image, an item in the scene or image, or an aspect of a person's character. For example, a spotlight will highlight whatever it is shone on and place everything else in semi or full dark. Therefore the viewer's attention and meaning-making are limited to that item and its importance is literally highlighted. |

| Lighting continued | • Experiment with different *directions of lighting* (*top, bottom, side, front, back, spotlight*) on the body and identify what each direction highlights. Consider the meanings this might emphasise. |
|---|---|
| | • Look for examples in still images delivered by paper and digital electronic technology and in scenes from film and televsion. Discuss the effects. Talk about how the *direction of lighting* might be combined with other semiotic systems to reinforce a meaning. For example, combining a sudden sound (audio) and spotlight, combining particular facial expressions or use of parts of the face (gestural) and front, top-down or bottom-up lighting. |
| | • Examine the use of the *direction of lighting* in particular text forms. e.g. different forms of narrative movies (horror, suspense, action) animations and documentaries. |
| Editing | • Revise any codes and conventions about editing introduced in previous three phases. |

Table 7.1 Codes and conventions of the visual semiotic system

## Codes and Conventions of the Audio Semiotic System

Role-playing activities are a good live context for exploring the audio semiotic system, but students should now be encouraged to think critically about the purpose of using particular codes and conventions. The performances of plays, poetry and public speaking are real contexts in which students need to make specific decisions about the use of codes and conventions of pace in order to achieve a particular purpose. Teachers should model and discuss these concepts.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Volume and audibility** | • Revise the concept of volume and how its use might influence meaning-making. Introduce the term *modulation* as a way of describing how volume and tone varies in voice, sound effects and music. Practise using the term correctly when critically analysing the use of the audio semiotic system in a text or when planning the use of audio in a text. |
| | • Revise work in previous phases regarding the use of volume in live oral presentations. Introduce the concept of *projection*, that is, how well the speaker *projects* or *throws* their voice so that the audience can hear easily. Explain that this is not just about volume. Ask the drama or speech specialist in the school to demonstrate how this is achieved. Practise *projection* in appropriate contexts. Listen to examples of various people in, TV, radio and advertising and live contexts and discuss how well they project their voice. Discuss whether there are situations in which *projection* is more important than others. |

| Volume and Audibility | • Introduce the term *articulation* as how clearly the speaker *enunciates* words. Listen to examples of various people in TV, radio and advertising and discuss how well they articulate and how that affects meaning-making. Discuss whether there are situations in which *articulation* and *enunciation* are more important than others (e.g. examine sports celebrities such as footballers, politicians, actors, general public interviewed on the street, prominent persons being interviewed, journalists, newsreaders). Practise *articulation* and *enunciation* in appropriate contexts.<br><br>• Introduce the term *timbre* as the unique quality of a person's voice or an instrument's sound. Find examples, e.g. gravelly voices, deep throaty voices, high tremulous voices. Discuss what meanings the *timbre* of a voice or instrument might add to a text. For example, if you have a character in a play who is authoritative and important would you cast someone with a tremulous, reedy voice, or would you use a light airy instrument such as a flute to play frightening music in a scene?<br><br>• Revise work on the volume, pitch and expression in live performance such as oral presentations and plays that was completed in the Early phase. Explain that another way to increase understanding and draw attention to the important part of an oral presentation is to use *stress* and *intonation*. Listen to news reporters and journalists and sporting commentaries and identify words they *stress* and changes in *intonation*, e.g. from a normal voice to a more excited tone. Talk about how these changes in *stress* and *intonation* draw attention to particular information and convey emotion. Discuss how and where it might be used effectively: purpose, audience and context. Discuss how *stress* and *intonation* might be combined with codes and conventions from other semiotic systems such as close-up shots in the visual semiotic system to reinforce messages. Look for examples in different text forms and contexts. |
|---|---|
| Pace | • Discuss how phrases in the linguistic semiotic system divide up information into manageable parts and add meaning. They are often divided up using commas. Explain that *phrasing* is also used in oral language and music to divide up or compartmentalise information or sound to make it easier to process and make meaning. Demonstrate by talking for a long time without pause and then delivering the same information with appropriate and inappropriate *phrasing* (pauses). Look for examples of good and bad phrasing in film, everyday television, news reports, interviews, sports commentary, etc. Practise phrasing in appropriate contexts. |

Table 7.2 Codes and conventions of the audio semiotic system

## *Codes and Conventions of the Gestural Semiotic System*

As with the exploration of the audio codes and conventions, role-playing activities are a good live context for exploring the gestural semiotic system, but students need to be encouraged to think critically about the purpose of using particular codes and conventions to achieve a specific purpose. The performances of plays, poetry and public speaking are real contexts in which students need to make decisions about the use of codes and conventions of facial expression, body position and head movement. Students can then transfer this knowledge and experience to the critical analysis of the use of the codes and conventions of the gestural semiotic system in texts delivered via paper and digital electronic technologies.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Bodily Contact** | • Revise any codes and conventions about body contact introduced in previous three phases. |
| **Proximity** | • Revise the concept of distance between people as a way of indicating relationships. Introduce the term *proximity* as a general term for talking about space and distance. Apply concepts about *proximity* in a range of text forms and contexts and explore how it is combined with codes and conventions from other semiotic systems to make meaning.<br><br>• Introduce the concept of *personal space* in live texts, e.g. everyday settings such as school, shops, playgrounds and film, advertising and television. Ask questions such as How close do you like people to be to you? How does it make you feel if people are too close? |
| **Orientation or Body Position** | • No new items, revise any codes and conventions about orientation or body position introduced in previous three phases |
| **Appearance** | • Revise any codes and conventions about appearance introduced in previous three phases. |
| **Head Movement** | • Revise any codes and conventions about head movement introduced in previous three phases. |
| **Facial Expression** | • Revise any codes and conventions about facial expression introduced in previous three phases. |
| **Kinesics** | • Revise any codes and conventions about kinesics introduced in previous three phases. |
| **Posture** | • Revise any codes and conventions about posture introduced in previous three phases. |
| **Gaze and Eye Movement** | • Revise learning about *gaze* and *eye movement* from the Early viewing phase (where a person is looking and length of look). Introduce the terms *gaze* and *eye movement* as collective terms for examining the codes and conventions associated with them.<br><br>• Explain that where a person's *gaze* is *directed* can indicate importance of that person, object, action or movement.<br><br>• If the person's *gaze* is *focused* on something specific it indicates importance, but if the *gaze* is *unfocused* and *scanning* then the person's *gaze* is not indicating anything important. Find examples of *focused, unfocused* and *scanning gazes* in live situations, film and television and discuss their meaning. When looking at these examples consider how *gaze* works with the codes and conventions of other semiotic systems. Consider the contexts, purposes and audiences in which *gaze* would provide critical information, for example, a *focused gaze* at someone when giving information might indicate importance and hold the other person's attention. |

| Gaze and Eye Movement | • The *angle* of the *gaze* can position the viewer to view the person in the text in a particular way. If the *gaze* is at *eye level* with the viewer it may promote feelings of empathy and equality between the viewer and the person in the text (newsreaders are usually at *eye level*). If the *gaze* of the person is *top down* to the viewer then the person may seem more powerful or superior to the viewer (monsters and superheroes often *gaze top down* to the viewer). If the person's *gaze* is *bottom up* to the viewer the viewer may see the person as inferior, vulnerable or less powerful (injured animals and small children often *gaze bottom up* to the viewer). Draw similarities between *angle* of *gaze* and point of view and camera angle in the visual semiotic system (concepts introduced in the Early viewing phase). Conduct similar investigations and discussions as for *focused* and *unfocused gaze* above. |
|---|---|
| | • Introduce the concept of the relationship between the viewer and the subjects or people in images. Explain that by using *gaze* in particular ways the producer of a text can influence the engagement of the viewer with the person/s depicted in the text. A *direct gaze* from the person in the text to the viewer is a *demand* for a relationship or an action. For example, in advertisements by charities or action groups the person often looks (*gazes*) directly at the viewer, creating a relationship and a *demand* for action. An *indirect gaze* between the person in the image and the viewer is an *offer* of information; there is no demand for a relationship, empathy or action. |
| | • Examine images of people in different text forms (e.g. advertising, brochures, picture books) where people are depicted and identify examples of *gaze* that are a *demand* or an *offer*. Identify the purpose of the *demand/offer* in each and draw conclusions about the types of texts, audiences, contexts and purposes in which *gaze* making a *demand* or *offer* might be used effectively. |
| | • Explore the combination of *demand* and *offer gaze* types with the codes and conventions from other semiotic systems, e.g. close-up shot, or zoom in (visual semiotic system) and a *demand* (direct) *gaze*. |

**Table 7.3 Codes and conventions of the gestural semiotic system**

## *Codes and Conventions of the Spatial Semiotic System*

Students' teaching and learning activities around the concepts of position and distance should be explored in two-dimensional texts delivered on page and screen, as well as three-dimensional texts, such as the live role-playing of a scene in a play, book or everyday life. Setting up and photographing a three dimensional scene is still a useful way of applying concepts about position and distance. Jointly constructing a page or screen layout of words and pictures using real or imaginary frames and discussing which is best and why is another important teaching technique for the application of the concepts.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Position** | • Revise the concepts about the positioning of text on page and screen to convey particular meanings from the Exploratory viewing phase, particularly left (old/known) and right (new). |
| | • Introduce two new layouts and their associated meanings: top (ideal) bottom (real), and *centre* (most important) *margin* (least important*)*. |
| | • Look for examples and discuss why each layout might be used, e.g. in advertising the *ideal* image might be presented at the *top* of the page with a picture of a beautiful island, beaches, umbrellas, various water sports going on, at the *bottom* might be a photograph of the actual hotel at that setting (the *real*). Most people read *top* to *bottom* so the *ideal* image of fun at the beach is viewed first at the *top*, getting people's attention and enticing them and then the *real* image, the actual location, is presented at the *bottom* providing the opportunity to actually book a holiday. |
| | • Explain that the *centre/margin* layout is more common in Asian cultures but is also widely used in Western culture. Look for examples. |
| | • Identify the major text forms, purposes, audiences and contexts in which the two layouts are used and discuss why these layouts are more common in particular text forms. For example, *centre/margin* is more common in non-fiction than narrative. |
| **Distance** | • Revise the work done on the use of *angles* and placement of people to indicate the nature of relationships completed in the Exploratory phase. |
| | • Introduce three *angles* at which people or objects might be placed in relation to one another and their associated meanings. Look for examples of each in still and moving images and video of live performances and everyday settings and discuss why each layout might be used. Discuss the text forms, purposes, audiences and contexts in which these *angles* might be used and why. Role play to see the effect of people placement and discuss. Organise objects on screen and page and discuss the merits of different angles to achieve different meanings. |
| | • Direct *frontal angles* during engagement indicate or create a strong engagement or relationship. |
| | • An *oblique angle* can indicate detachment between people or that someone is being excluded because one person is more distant from the other and the body has to be twisted to make eye contact. |
| | • An *acute angle* is less engaged than a *frontal angle* but more engaged than an *obtuse* angle because it is possible to make eye contact with less body movement and the bodies are closer together. |
| **Framing** | • Revise the use of real and imaginary frames from the Early viewing phase and introduce the term *implied frame*. It is a synonym for imaginary frame and a more appropriate term at this stage of students' development. |

**Table 7.4 Codes and conventions of the spatial semiotic system**

## *Codes and Conventions of the Linguistic Semiotic System*

In the Consolidating Phase there is an emphasis on revising and building upon previously introduced concepts in the Parts of Speech and Cohesive Devices sections and exploring them in more sophisticated ways. Ensure that teaching and learning activities around the linguistic semiotic system engage students with the exploration of texts delivered via all three technologies: paper, digital electronic and live and across all curriculum areas.

Teachers need to consult the relevant English Curriculum Scope and Sequence for their teaching context for a comprehensive list.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Parts of Speech** | The concept of *modality* is not a part of speech but it does impact on the use of verbs adverbs and nouns and the intended meaning of sentences, whether written or oral. Sometimes the meaning of a sentence indicates that the information being provided is certain. On other occasions there is a degree of uncertainty, probability or possibility.<br><br>Students need to understand that:<br><br>• The most basic way that *modality* can be achieved is when a verb group is modified.<br><br>• In the case of *modal verbs*, increasing levels of *modality* can be expressed in sentences such as, You <u>may</u> cross the road. You <u>must</u> cross the road.<br><br>• In the case of *modal adverbs*, increasing levels of *modality* can be expressed in sentences such as, The cat is <u>probably</u> lost. The cat is <u>certainly</u> lost.<br><br>• In the case of *modal nouns*, increasing levels of *modality* can be expressed in sentences such as, There is a <u>possibility</u> that the cat is dead. There is a <u>certainty</u> that the cat is dead. |
| **Punctuation** | In this phase students need to know that:<br><br>• An *apostrophe* is used in English to indicate *possession*.<br><br>• The basic rule for use of the *apostrophe* with most singular nouns is adding <u>'s</u> (such as, the <u>man's</u> hat).<br><br>• The basic rule for use of the *apostrophe* when the noun is a normal plural with an added <u>s</u>, no extra <u>s</u> is added (such as, the <u>boys'</u> hats) where there is more than one boy.<br><br>• If the plural is not one formed by adding <u>s</u>, an <u>s</u> is added for the *possessive*, after the *apostrophe* (such as, the <u>children's</u> hats).<br><br>• Generally, a *colon* suggests that what comes next is directly related to the previous sentence (such as, There was only one possible explanation: she had never left.)<br><br>• A *colon* is often used to introduce a list of items, lists or quotations (such as, I have three brothers: Tom, Bill and Arthur.) |

| Punctuation continued | • *Colons* are only used after statements that are complete sentences or to join together two independent clauses that are closely linked (such as, Tom could not run: he was exhausted). |
|---|---|
| | • A *colon* is never used after a sentence fragment (a dependent clause). |
| | • A semicolon is used to link independent clauses not joined by a coordinating conjunction (such as, Don't go near the road; you could get hurt.). |
| | • *Hyphens* are used: to show that two words should be read as a single word (such as, one-way); to join a group of words to form an expression (such as, Have-a-Go Card); or to write numbers and fractions that consist of more than one word (such as, one-third). |
| **Phrases, Clauses and Sentences** | The noun group was introduced in the Exploratory phase along with prepositional and adverbial phrases. These terms should be revised as an introduction to the Consolidating phase. |
| | Students need to know that: |
| | • A prepositional phrase can function as an adjective or *adjective group*. A prepositional phrase (such as, Einstein was a man of great intelligence) modifies or changes the noun Einstein the way an adjective would.  As an *adjective group* of great intelligence answers the question, Which one? Like all phrases, an adjective phrase does not include a subject or a verb. |
| | • In the sentence, The man **from the butcher's shop** is impatient, the head of the prepositional phrase is the preposition from. The function of the phrase is adjectival, it does the work of an adjective by describing the noun man. It modifies the noun, answering the question: which man? |
| | • *Adjective groups* (and adverbial groups) can be expanded into clauses that give more information about things or actions. |
| | • Clauses can be *main clauses* or *subordinate clauses*. |
| | • A *main clause* (sometimes called an *independent clause*) must contain a subject and a verb as well as express a complete thought (such as, I will go to dinner). |
| | • A *main clause* is an essential part of every sentence and must make sense by itself. There must be at least one *main clause* in every sentence (such as, When I have finished gardening I will go to dinner). |
| | • A *subordinate clause* (sometimes called a dependent clause) is a group of words with a subject and a verb that does not make sense by itself (such as, when I have finished gardening). It adds more information to a sentence but is incomplete and not a sentence on its own. A *subordinate clause* functions like a noun, adverb or adjective and modifies the independent clause of a sentence. |
| | • The most common *conjunctions* are and, or, but and so. These *conjunctions* link words, phrases and clauses and are called coordinating *conjunctions*. (The *conjunction* is the eighth and final part of speech that students will learn about in the linguistic semiotic system. Most scholars of grammar agree that there are only eight parts of speech. Rather than being discussed in the Parts of Speech section, the *conjunction* is being introduced in this section because it plays a central part in joining clauses together.) |

| Phrases, Clauses and Sentences continued | • *Subordinating conjunctions* are used to begin dependent clauses that are known as adverbial clauses because they act like adverbs. Some common *subordinating conjunctions* are when, while, after, because (such as in the sentence, <u>When</u> I have finished gardening I will go to dinner). |
|---|---|
| **Cohesive Devices** | • Providing an example or quote to support a point strengthens the case being made and therefore creates a more cohesive argument. Students need to understand such *substantiation* of an argument is a necessary part of creating a cohesive text. |

**Table 7.5 Codes and conventions of the linguistic semiotic system**

> For a full description and definitions of all the codes and conventions for each semiotic system, see *Viewing Resource Book*:
> • Chapter 3: Conventions

# Involving Students

## 1 Investigating Icons and Symbols

Investigating Icons and Symbols focuses on how icons and symbols are used to convey meaning. Remind students that an icon is a sign that resembles its object whereas a symbol is a sign whose relationship to its object is arbitrary and abstract.

Consolidating students will be familiar with icons and symbols as they have experienced navigating their way around a web page, used hand-held gaming devices or sent messages on their mobile phones. Successful use of icons and symbols relies on the viewer understanding the meaning conveyed by icons and symbols.

Following are some suggestions for focusing on the use of icons and symbols:

• Examine the icons and symbols that help viewers to navigate websites.
• Investigate the use of emoticons for text messaging. Emoticons were originally designed to show an emotion in text messages. Over time, they have become an art form. In most cases, text emoticons are viewed by tilting your head to the left so the right side of the emoticon is at the bottom of the 'picture', e.g. :-) , :-o . Allow students to share the emoticons they use in their messaging and discuss the shared meaning which they convey. Link to stepspd.com/weblinks to locate a range of emoticons and icons.
• Examine the symbols of popular consumer products. Students can discuss and share the appeal of these products and how certain symbols may carry significance for a particular social or peer group significance.
• Students can work in groups to develop their own product symbols. They need to consider how the combination of elements such as image, colour, layout, etc., contributes to the meaning.

## Information Symbols

Consolidating viewers can be involved in looking at symbols that provide specific information or a series of symbols that may be combined to provide instructions. Symbols are common in our everyday life, from instructions on how to wash and iron our clothes, or how to use a new appliance, to signs in public places.

It is important that students understand that *symbols are different from pictures*. While a picture conveys a large amount of information at once, a symbol focuses on a single concept. This means that symbols can convey more precise information.

• Involve students in collecting a range of information symbols.
• Discuss the use of the common element in symbols, e.g. the use of the colour yellow or red to signify warning.
• Investigate information symbols from other countries and discuss their similarities to and differences from well-known Australian symbols.
• Create a class display of symbols and their meanings.
• Allow students opportunities to think about and create their own information symbols or series of instructional symbols.

**Figure 7.16 Information symbols**

*A Well-known Icon*

Most Consolidating students will be familiar with the Google® search engine icon. They will probably also be aware that this icon changes from time to time to represent a particular event, day, or time as shown in the two images below (Figures 7.17 and 7.18).



**Figure 7.17 Google® Earth Day image (22 April 2007)**

**Figure 7.18 Google's® 8th birthday image (September 2006)**

- Students can collect samples of these Google® icons and display them in the class. Link to stepspd.com/weblinks to locate Google® links.
- Discussions could centre on:
  - What was the purpose of the particular representation?
  - What devices or elements were used, e.g. colour, line, texture, shape, layout, font size and type?
  - How effective is the meaning of the icon?
- Students could create their own representations and display them in the class. Other classmates can try to guess the intended meaning and determine how effectively it had been delivered.

## 2 Symbolism (Fredricksen 1999)

This activity requires students to analyse a text in order to create a new cover or a front page that uses symbols to convey the meaning of the text.
- Record onto cards the titles of short stories, articles, music videos, films or any other text the class has recently read or viewed.
- Have each student select a card.
- Provide time, if necessary, for students to re-read or re-watch their selected text.
- Invite them to prepare covers for the texts by drawing or creating images that symbolise the main ideas or concepts of the text. The actual title or name of the text should not be included.
- Tell students they will need to explain their images and the symbolism behind them.
- Have students display their covers and invite other students to guess which text the covers relate to.

## 3 Clothing Considerations

In Clothing Considerations, students will be focusing on the clothes they wear that display signs, symbols or icons. These may consist of an image, text or a combination of both. People will often choose to wear these clothing items because they are popular or people believe the clothing gives them a particular identity. This activity explores the meaning behind these signs, symbols and icons and the design elements that have

been used to create them. Students will become more aware of how symbols convey particular meanings and the intentions of advertisers and others to use clothing and the people wearing them as a means of promotion.

- Invite students to bring in articles of clothing to share, e.g. T-shirts, caps, etc. Note that it is advisable to make sure students only bring along those items that are appropriate to share at school as some adolescent students' clothing may display inappropriate wording or images.
- As a class, look at the items of clothing and note the images, texts or symbols that appear on them as well as the design elements, e.g. size, placement, colour, texture.
- Create a class chart, listing common design features and messages.
- Discuss the intended messages as well as the socially constructed ones. The following questions may help students to reflect on the reasons they make particular choices, e.g. Why did you choose this brand? What does the logo, image or symbol mean? How do you know that? How do you think it makes you look to others? How do you feel when you are wearing it? Would you feel the same about this item of clothing if it didn't have this logo on it?
- Students can work in small groups to deconstruct the meaning behind some popular clothing brands.

### Extension Activity

Suggest that Consolidating viewers design their own symbol or logo for a T-shirt or jumper, e.g. to commemorate a class graduation, to symbolise a sporting interest or social group. Students may draw their own designs or make use of different graphic drawing tools, accessible online, so they can scan and manipulate images, colour and other design elements. Students may choose to produce their items of clothing as part of their art and design courses.

## 4 Cropping

Cropping enables students to understand the editing process of cropping. They will analyse and experience first-hand how strategic cropping of an image can influence the way an image is read and understood. The teacher should select an image that can be cropped. Newspapers and magazines are suitable resources.

- Show students the uncropped version of the image. Discuss the meaning of the image.
- Next, show students the cropped version of the image. Ask: How did the meaning change? Was the perspective presented in the cropped image different from that of the original?
- Discuss how image cropping may be used to present a particular perspective.
- Have students work in pairs to select their own images that can be cropped.
- Support students to use an image program such as Adobe Photoshop® to import the images and crop them.
- Have students print out their original and cropped images.
- Allow students to share their images with the class, explaining how the meaning has been changed.
- Provide time for students to record their reflections and responses about this activity in their reflective journals.

## 5 Actually Audio

This activity draws attention to audio codes and the way they contribute to the meaning of a visual text.

- Prepare a short segment of a video.
- Ask students to watch the video without any sound.
- Ask students to predict what sounds might be occurring in the video, e.g. conversations, background music and special sound effects. Allow time for them to think and discuss their predictions with a partner.
- Students can share their ideas with the class, highlighting the audio codes they predicted.
- Replay the video with the sound on and compare with students' predictions. Ask: how close were they in predicting the content? Did the audio track complement or detract from the images? Would the scenes be effective with other audio tracks?

### Extension Activity

Invite students to produce their own audio tracks for selected video clips. Their video clips can then be presented to the class and reviewed.

## 6 Colour Explorations

Colour is perhaps one of the most effective design elements used in the construction of visual texts. People will often respond to different colours in different ways, and these responses take place on a subconscious, emotional level, and are a result of shared social and cultural experiences

In Colour Explorations, students are asked to consider how the elements of colour can be used in visual texts to create meaning, and how the meaning of the colour may change according to the context in which it is being used. For example, if a person is shown with a red face, they may be embarrassed or hot or angry, but when red appears on a sign, it signifies warning or danger.

The teacher should involve students in discussions about the way in which we make meaning from colours. Students can explore how the meaning of colour is determined by the following factors:
– the context of the text
– the composition of the text
– the mode of delivery, e.g. printed, painted, digital, live
– the saturation or the hue or shade of the colour; the darkness or intensity of a colour.

Invite students to discuss the meanings that they believe certain colours convey.
- Have students individually complete the Colour Considerations table provided in the Chapter 6 of the *Viewing CD* and record what they think each colour means in one or two words.
- In pairs or small groups, students can share their completed colour reflection tables, discussing their choices and justifying their opinions.

- As a class, create a class chart that reflects the most common understandings, and display the chart for future reference.
- Focus on colour in other cultures. Some colours have the same meaning in many cultures, e.g. **the colours pink and blue represent girls and boys**; for other colours, the meaning may not be so culturally defined, e.g. **the colour orange**. Students should also be given the opportunity to discuss and research the meaning of colours in other cultures, e.g. **the colour white represents purity and is associated with weddings in Western cultures, but symbolises death and funerals in some Eastern cultures**.

There are many websites that students can access to find out more about the meaning of colour in other cultures.

## Extension Activity

Have students consider the effect of using only the colours black and white in a visual text. Ask them to consider how it would add to or detract from the meaning of the text. Movies such as *Schindler's List* (1993) and *Rumblefish* (1983) are two examples of films in which the filmmakers effectively used black-and-white images. Have students think of any other visual texts that use this technique. The teacher may use black-and-white picture books such as *The Black and White* with students to analyse the impact of this technique.

# 7 Considering Genre

Considering Genre enables students to consolidate their understanding of different film genres. The teacher should support students to understand that visual texts such as films use conventions that are typical of a particular type or genre, and will often be classified according to this genre, e.g. **action films, 'chick flicks', dramas, thrillers, etc.** Some films may use more than one genre or may deliberately manipulate or subvert the genre. The Film Talk resource sheets are provided in Chapter 7 Use of Texts section of the *Viewing CD*.

- With students, brainstorm the different genres of film.
- Organise students to work in small groups. Allocate one genre type to each group.
- Have the groups discuss the conventions that are typical of this particular type of genre.
- Provide resources so students can create a poster presentation of their genre and its conventions; encourage students to be creative in their presentations and to include real examples.
- Display the genre posters in the classroom as a reference.

## Extension Activity

- View extracts from a range of different film genres and invite students to see if they can identify both the genre and the conventions that are used.
- Have students consider a familiar narrative story (e.g. *Beauty and the Beast, Cinderella*) and invite them to transform it into one of the genres they have analysed, e.g. **action, science fiction, comedy, romance, etc.** In their groups, students can create a short five-minute film script and storyboard as well as a promotional poster of their movie.

## 8 Taking a Closer Look at Moving Images

Taking a Closer Look at Moving Images is a series of activities that provides Consolidating viewers with opportunities to examine the codes and conventions of moving images found in film, television and other electronic media.

### What Do I See?

In this activity, students are asked to consider how camera shots or the framing of an image contribute to the meaning of a visual text.

- Refer to the Film Techniques resource sheets, provided in the Chapter 6 section of the *Viewing CD*. The teacher should familiarise students with different kinds of camera shots. Alternatively, ask students to name some types of shots.
- Using the Film Techniques resource sheets, have students view a segment of film and make notes of the different types of camera shots they observe.
- Discuss the reasons these shots were used and their effectiveness.
- Collect examples of different camera shots from magazines or other sources. These can be labelled and displayed in the classroom.

### What's Included?

In this activity, students are asked to consider how the inclusion of a particular device or technique in the frame of an image contributes to the meaning of a visual text.

- Provide students with a number of short film extracts or photographs from film scenes.
- Ask students to consider everything that they see within the frame of the photograph. Ask them to consider the following:
  – the composition, use of line, colour, texture, etc.
  – the rule of thirds (the rule used for the composition of photographs or graphic images)
  – *mise-en-scène*: all the visual detail the filmmaker has used in the image: setting, actors, costume, body language, facial expressions, make-up, choice of lighting, use of space, etc.
  – accompanying sound effects.

### How Do I See It?

In this activity, students are asked to consider how camera angles position the audience to interpret an image from a particular point of view. When looking at camera angles in films, students should be familiar with angles such as extremely high angle, high angle and low angle. After viewing the film extracts, discuss with students how the camera angle can position a viewer to interpret a text in a particular way.

## 9 Exploring Websites

Exploring Websites is an activity that helps Consolidating viewers identify the structure and features of web pages. Using the framework provided on the *Viewing CD*, have students examine a number of pre-selected websites. Students should be supported to identify and understand the purpose of the following elements.

– URL address                    – side menu

– links                              – banner heading and advertisements

– headline text                  – still and moving graphics

– title page                       – navigational tools.

– site maps

The *Viewing CD* contains annotated examples of a website and may be helpful to refer to when analysing the design elements of web pages with students.

After students have become familiar with the structural elements of web pages, they can consider the following questions.

– How is the viewer introduced to the website?

– What is the purpose of this page?

– Who is the intended audience?

– What is the overall theme or feeling of this page?

– What elements have been included?

– Is there music? How have graphics been used? How effective are they?

– Who owns the website?

– Can the information on the web page be validated?

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For information on the responsible use of online websites, see:

*Viewing Resource Book*:

• Chapter 4.

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# PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES

## Major Teaching Emphases

- **Teach students to select, evaluate and modify viewing strategies according to the purpose of the viewing.**

- **Continue to build knowledge in the semiotic systems.**

- **Encourage students to reflect on the effectiveness of various ways they plan, produce and publish multimodal texts, e.g.** using a visual diary.

## Organisation of the Processes and Strategies Aspect

There are several differences in the organisation of the Processes and Strategies aspect. Both the Teaching Notes and the Teaching and Learning Experiences (Involving Students) are in the *Viewing Resource Book*, Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

The rationale for this difference in organisation is that the processes and strategies of viewing are not conceptually hierarchical and therefore not phase-specific. A variety of processes and strategies need to be introduced, developed and consolidated at all phases of development.

What varies from one phase to the next is the growth in:
• the number and integration of strategies
• the awareness and monitoring of strategies
• the efficiency in the use and selection of strategies
• the ability to articulate the use of the strategies used in the process of viewing
• the awareness of how the use of strategies helps with making meaning
• the ability to locate, select and evaluate visual texts.

# Supporting Parents of Consolidating Viewers

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF CONSOLIDATING VIEWERS

Students at the Consolidating phase can understand visual texts in a number of ways. They understand that all texts are constructed for particular purposes, contexts and audiences. They can identify how the codes and conventions of visual texts influence their meanings. Consolidating viewers also know that the background knowledge of viewers means that text may be understood differently by different people.

## Supporting Consolidating Viewers in the Home

A parent brochure providing tips on supporting viewers in the home is located on the *First Steps Viewing CD*. The brochure contains information about the kinds of viewing activities students will be engaged in at school and why the teaching of viewing is an important part of the school curriculum. It also gives information about age-appropriate viewing practices and ways that parents can help students develop their critical viewing habits.

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**Parent Brochure (see Parent Brochure 2)**

1  Why Teach Viewing?
2  The Development of Viewing
3  Supporting Your Child
4  Resources
5  Things to Do When Viewing with Your Child
6  Viewing at School.

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# Proficient Viewing Phase



**Figure 8.1**

## Global Statement

*Students have become critical viewers of more complex texts and are aware that texts are constructed for specific purposes. They are able to identify the dominant readings of texts, but can also offer alternative interpretations, which take into account different groups and ideologies. When producing multimodal texts, students are able to craft and manipulate the codes and conventions to achieve a specific purpose.*

# Proficient Viewing Indicators

## Use of Texts

◆ **Integrates knowledge of semiotic systems to make meaning from increasingly more complex multimodal texts.**

◆ **Produces increasingly more complex multimodal texts demonstrating control over most elements.**

◆ **Controls the crafting of a large repertoire of multimodal texts.**

◆ **Critically selects from a number of multimodal resources to suit purpose and audience.**

• Recognises that texts can be constructed to achieve more than one purpose, e.g. to report; to present a point of view and to provide a market for more readers and viewers.

• Draws on a number of information sources including own knowledge of world events to produce multimodal texts.

• Uses their understanding of an extensive range of text forms and contexts to make meaning from multimodal texts.

• Understands multimodal texts the topic/s of which are beyond their own immediate experiences, e.g. famine, conservation.

• Uses extensive metalanguage to describe how multimodal texts work to position viewers.

## Contextual Understanding

◆ **Recognises how one's ideology impacts on the interpretation and production of multimodal texts.**

◆ **Makes critical choices about the way characters, people, events and ideas are represented to suit different purposes and influence audiences.**

◆ **Identifies the target audience of a multimodal text and discusses how the producer has tailored the codes and conventions to suit.**

◆ **Continues to use devices designed to enhance impact or influence viewers,** e.g. advertisements contain positive images.

• Identifies the values and attitudes inherent in a multimodal text and speculates on the target audience.

• Understands how personal beliefs and experiences contribute to the interpretation of multimodal texts, e.g. some groups in society may be offended by a particular political cartoon.

## Conventions

◆ **Selects appropriate codes and conventions of the semiotic systems when producing a multimodal text.**

◆ **Evaluates the effectiveness of the choice of the codes and conventions to achieve specific effects.**

◆ **Evaluates the effectiveness of text features in framing meaning.**

• Understands that texts use semiotic systems to create both literal and symbolic meanings.

• Understands that text producers deliberately select codes and conventions for a purpose.

• Recognises the ways codes and conventions of filmmaking are used to present characters in a positive/negative light, e.g. sinister music suggests the character is not to be trusted.

• Identifies how codes and conventions are manipulated by producers to appeal to particular audiences.

## Processes and Strategies

◆ **Reflects on and evaluates the effectiveness of strategies used when viewing.**

◆ **Continues to draw upon increasing knowledge of the semiotic systems when comprehending or producing multimodal texts.**

◆ **Selects appropriate publication formats to enhance understanding and impact.**

◆ **Monitors and adjusts viewing processes and strategies.**

• Summarises and synthesises information from a variety of multimodal texts.

• Selects from a variety of publishing formats to suit purpose and audience.

# Major Teaching Emphases

## Environment and Attitude (see p. 243)

- Create a supportive classroom environment that provides access to a range of multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to select their own multimodal text materials according to interest or purpose.
- Foster students' enjoyment of purposeful viewing.
- Encourage students to explore new technologies when viewing.

## Use of Texts (see p. 247)

- Continue to expose students to a range of multimodal texts and discuss the features and structure of each.
- Encourage students to manipulate some of the elements when producing a multimodal text.
- Provide opportunities for students to craft a range of multimodal texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Continue to provide opportunities to respond to and critically analyse multimodal texts of increasing complexity.
- Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with viewing e.g. saturation, kinesics.

## Contextual Understanding (see p. 256)

- Teach students that all texts can be read on multiple levels, e.g. action films contain messages about gender and heroism.
- Teach students to question ideological values presented in a text, e.g. the 'ideal' family as middle class with two parents.

- Continue to provide opportunities for students to discuss the choices they have made when crafting texts, e.g. use of devices, representations, manipulation of elements.
- Teach students to analyse the ways in which the codes and conventions can manipulate the information provided to the viewer and influence the viewer's point of view and engagement with the text.

## Conventions (see p. 265)

- Introduce, revise and extend the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.
- Provide opportunities for students to investigate literal and symbolic meanings and their representation through the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems.
- Explore dominant codes or semiotic systems in a text and the reason for their dominance.

## Processes and Strategies (see p. 275)

- Continue to teach students to select, evaluate and modify viewing strategies according to the purpose of the viewing.
- Encourage students to add to their knowledge of the semiotic systems as necessary when producing multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to be selective in their choice of planning and producing formats.

# Teaching and Learning Experiences

## ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE

### Major Teaching Emphases

- Create a supportive classroom environment that provides access to a range of multimodal texts.

- Encourage students to select their own multimodal text materials according to interest or purpose.

- Foster students' enjoyment of purposeful viewing.

- Encourage students to explore new technologies when viewing.

## Teaching Notes

Students in the Proficient viewing phase are asked to consolidate the concepts they have learned previously in strategically new ways. Viewers in this phase of development benefit from an environment in which they feel supported, challenged and engaged in meaningful viewing situations. It is important to provide a variety of contexts for viewing across all learning areas that will help extend students' knowledge of a wide range of multimodal text forms.

The focus for developing such an environment for Proficient viewers is organised under the following headings:
- Creating a supportive classroom environment
- Encouraging experimentation
- Fostering enjoyment of viewing
- Viewing as a social practice

### Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment

Proficient viewers need continued opportunities to explore multimodal texts in an environment that values their existing knowledge while building on their strengths and interests. Proficient viewers will benefit from an environment that allows them to explore and share a range of multimodal texts with others, express their personal opinions, consider diverse interpretations of texts and begin to question text producers' messages. Such an environment should provide students with opportunities to work individually, in small groups or as part of the whole class. The classroom environment should, above all, encourage students to regard themselves as successful viewers and to encourage students to see viewing as a meaningful experience that moves beyond an enjoyable social pastime.

Opportunities to develop understandings in viewing occur throughout the day in all learning areas. The physical environment of the classroom will therefore change according to the teaching and learning demands at any particular time. It is important to create spaces for students to independently or collectively engage with a wide range of multimodal texts for a range of purposes.

## Physical Environment

Proficient viewers need to understand that multimodal texts carry ideological messages, so the classroom environment should include images from many different sources including those from popular culture. Alongside movie posters, advertisements, news and magazine images, students should also become aware that such commonplace items as clothing, food wrappers, computer games and CDs all carry implicit messages which can be 'read' in systematic ways.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dance | Clothing | e-books | Graffiti | Maps |
| Labels | Posters | Art | Hairstyles | Graphs |
| Films | Postcards | Catalogues | Comics | Badges |
| Books | Greeting cards | Interior design | Websites | Textiles |
| Advertising | Fashion | Photographs | Magazines | Sculpture |
| Hairstyles | Architecture | Logos | Cartoons | Documentaries |
| Music clips | CD covers | Tattoos | Newspapers | Flyers |
| Computer games | Shopping bags | News programs | Television shows | Graphic novels |

**Figure 8.2 Examples of multimodal texts**

The following are some considerations for creating an effective physical environment:
• Provide space for small-group/whole-class interactions.
• Provide an area for students to display multimodal texts of personal significance, topic-related resources or class work samples.
• Provide areas where students can either use multimodal texts individually or share with a pair or small group. Headphones, laptops, MP3 players, listening stations and flexible seating will help to manage multiple groups in a small classroom.
• Establish and maintain consistent routines for viewing activities.

## Classroom Culture

As well as providing appropriate materials and a carefully managed physical environment, it is important to develop a positive classroom culture where students are supported to explore and understand the different ways of using, interpreting and producing multimodal texts. Teachers could consider:
• Reading and viewing a variety of multimodal texts for different purposes and audiences.
• Identifying a purpose for viewing.
• Reflecting on viewing strategies used and goal-setting to improve or extend the range of strategies used.

- Encouraging the application of viewing knowledge and understandings across all learning areas.
- Actively listening to students in discussions about multimodal texts.

## Encouraging Experimentation

It is vital that students in the Proficient phase be provided with a classroom environment that is focused on students framing and investigating their own questions about self-chosen texts as well as the teacher asking questions from teacher-selected texts. Teachers need to ensure that there is a balance between questioning and discussions.

To promote independent questioning of multimodal texts, teachers could encourage students to:

- Look for connections between texts, e.g. Can you see references to other texts in this image?
- Look for references in multimodal texts that relate to topical themes and issues, e.g. Does this text promote a particular message about the environment, about human relations, etc.?
- Compare images in texts to students' own lives, e.g. Does this program represent the typical family? Is it an idealised view?
- Make substitutions to a text to change its meaning, e.g. If you replaced the woman with a man in that same pose, would the image seem comical instead of glamorous? Why?
- Question the choices made by the text designer, e.g. Why do you think the villain in the film has a foreign accent?

## Fostering an Enjoyment of Viewing

To encourage the engagement of students in viewing, teachers could:

- Select photos from youth magazines and ask students what messages are being sent by the styles of dress, body language, etc.
- Continue to emphasise that multimodal texts are not produced by accident but represent deliberate choices made by text producers for a purpose. Encourage students to deconstruct these texts to identify the messages being sent.
- Invite students to bring in images of interest to them e.g. CD covers, posters, T-shirts, tattoo designs, etc. and analyse the construction and messages.
- Encourage students to read widely, particularly newspapers and magazines; to watch informative multimodal texts including the news and current affairs; and discuss current and controversial issues in class.
- Encourage students to keep a viewing journal. Students could collect examples of multimodal texts or images. Journals could then be created using paper or digital electronic technologies, e.g. exercise books, computer journals.

## Viewing As a Social Practice

Although students in this phase are asked to become 'critical' viewers of texts, it is important to realise that deconstructing multimodal texts is very different from criticising texts. If deconstructing popular texts in the classroom, teachers must be careful not to imply that these texts are necessarily inferior to other forms of texts. Nor

should teachers present the terms 'stereotypes', 'bias' and 'discrimination' in a purely negative light, as this may imply that the terms can only be applied to specific texts such as advertising or 'propaganda' texts and not all texts.

It is also important that students realise that the practice of analysing multimodal texts has important implications for adult life and is not just a school activity. It is essential to explain to students, through the use of real-life examples, that by becoming critical viewers they will be less susceptible to exploitation and deception as consumers, voters and individuals. Part of making the transition to becoming a critical viewer is the realisation that critical reading practices, such as interrogating the underlying messages of texts, are applicable across the board in all viewing situations. It is important, therefore, to present critical viewing as a continuing process of discovery that students will want to do outside of school.

In most settings, students are exposed to a wide range of multimodal texts across several learning areas. Typically, students will be asked to retrieve information from such texts. To assist students, teachers should model the deconstruction and analysis of texts encountered in science, mathematics and history, for example. These texts are written from a particular point of view to portray things in a certain way. Deconstructing and analysing these texts is an ideal opportunity to promote proficient and critical cross-curricular viewing.

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For further information about Environment and Attitude, see *Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning*:
- Chapter 5: Establishing a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment.

# USE OF TEXTS

## Major Teaching Emphases

- **Continue to expose students to a range of multimodal texts and discuss the features and structure of each.**

- **Encourage students to manipulate some of the elements when producing a multimodal text.**

- **Provide opportunities for students to craft a range of multimodal texts for authentic purposes and audiences.**

- **Continue to provide opportunities to respond to and critically analyse multimodal texts of increasing complexity.**

- **Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with viewing e.g.** saturation, kinesics.

## Teaching Notes

In this phase, students will be able to identify a range of text forms and describe their features using the appropriate terminology. When producing their own multimodal texts, students should be able to explain the processes involved in selecting elements for use, e.g. I put this sinister music in at the beginning of my documentary to show that the issue of global warming is a serious and frightening one. Students in the Proficient phase will be capable of reading more complex texts and will enjoy the challenge of deconstructing texts from outside their own experience, as well as those that follow their own particular interests.

Students in the Proficient viewing phase will already have a comprehensive understanding of the nature of multimodal texts and will understand that texts are constructed for particular audiences and purposes. They may already have some experience in deconstructing advertisements and documentaries so they understand how these work to present particular points of view. In this phase, they can extend their knowledge and understandings further by looking at texts in which the ideology and purpose are less obvious. In this phase students understand that concepts such as 'truth', 'facts' and 'reality' are subjective categories that can be challenged.

The focus for helping Proficient viewers in this aspect is organised under the following headings:
- Exposure to a range of multimodal texts
- Crafting a range of multimodal texts
- Responding to multimodal texts
- Developing metalanguage.

## *Exposure to a Range of Multimodal Texts*

Students at this phase of development will benefit from viewing a wide range of multimodal texts, which will include contemporary and traditional materials. Students should also be encouraged to find their own examples of multimodal texts that illustrate the points being discussed in class.

Students need to be familiar with a range of text forms and be able to make links between them. Teachers can provide students with a number of different texts and help them determine how the text form shapes its content and frames the viewer's expectations. Students should also be given opportunities to examine a number of different text forms, observing their similarities and differences. This will not only enable them to identify the characteristics of different text forms but will help them understand how the text form shapes the text and places restrictions upon it.

It is important to continue to discuss with students how multimodal texts are crafted for a range of purposes. Highlight how text producers create texts:

- that may be multi purpose, e.g. the picture book *Memorial* (2000) by Gary Crew and Shaun Tan is a story about a war memorial and the remembrance of fallen soldiers but it also carries a message about the nature of memory, both collective and individual.
- where elements have been manipulated to achieve a particular purpose, e.g. the feature film *Happy Feet* (2006) is essentially a children's comedy but it also has a strong environmental message.



**Figure 8.3 A student examines the work of Gary Crew and Shaun Tan to compare visual and print messages**

## Crafting a Range of Multimodal Texts

While students in this phase of development are able to use a variety of multimodal texts, they will benefit from continued support in consolidating their understandings and refining their ability to craft their own multimodal texts for different purposes.

To extend their knowledge of the text producers' craft, teachers can focus on how elements of a text have been manipulated to achieve specific effects.

Proficient viewers will benefit from demonstrations, discussions and opportunities to practise any of the following:
- Selecting different text forms for different purposes and audiences.
- Organising and structuring texts.
- Using and manipulating features of texts for specific effects.
- Opportunities to plan and publish multimodal texts in a variety of ways.

Proficient viewers continue to need many opportunities to produce multimodal texts for a range of purposes and audiences. These opportunities allow students to experiment with different text forms and manipulate the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems to achieve different effects.

To extend the repertoire of texts students are producing teachers can:
- Provide a variety of contexts for producing multimodal texts across all learning areas.
- Collect, view, display and analyse samples of different multimodal text forms.
- Collect, view, display and analyse samples of multimodal texts where elements have been manipulated for effect.
- Help students critique their own texts.
- Display and discuss multimodal texts that show different or unusual constructions.
- Invite multimodal text producers to visit and discuss their texts.
- Arrange for students to visit worksites to view multimodal texts in context.
- Encourage students to talk about their construction of texts and reason for choosing particular devices, codes or conventions.
- Provide time for students to imitate or innovate on different multimodal text construction techniques.
- Teach the routines for Viewers' Circles so students can openly discuss multimodal texts.
- Provide time for students to participate in Viewers' Circles.

## Responding to Multimodal Text

Teachers need to engage Proficient phase students with questions that promote higher order thinking. There are many types of questioning hierarchies that may be used by teachers, and questions in these hierarchies have been classified in numerous ways by different academic writers. (For example: Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom 1956), Question–Answer Relationships and Socratic Questioning, Inductive Thinking (Taba 1966).) As teachers, it is important to understand the range of question types and the different demands these make on students. Whichever hierarchy is used, it is wise to include questions that require different levels of thinking and begin to help students,

particularly ESL/ESD students, to recognise each one. The following table (see Figure 8.4) provides an outline of some question hierarchies that may be used with Proficient viewers:

| Question Hierarchies | Examples |
|---|---|
| **Bloom's Taxonomy** (Bloom, 1956) | **Knowledge**: factual recall responding to questions such as Who? What? Where? How many…? |
| | **Comprehension**: demonstrating understanding of an underlying process or concept, e.g. *Can you tell me? Can you show me how?* |
| | **Application**: relating current knowledge to prior knowledge or future experience, e.g. *What does this remind you of? What would happen if…? What other reasons might there be?* |
| | **Analysis**: probing beyond the surface information, e.g. *What is the function of? Why did…? What purpose was there in…? What can you conclude from…? What evidence is there?* |
| | **Synthesis**: bringing together information and using it to explore new ideas, e.g. *What ways might there be to…? Pretend that… Develop a story based on… If you were Tanya, what would you have done?* |
| | **Evaluation**: weighing up information and giving judgement, e.g. *Should…? Do you agree or disagree? Why? Why not? Justify your position. Do you think that… should…?* |
| **Socratic Questions** (Taba, 1966) | **Questions of clarification**: What do you mean by that? Can you give an example? |
| | **Questions that probe assumptions**: What is being assumed? Why would somebody say that? |
| | **Questions that probe reason and evidence**: What are your reasons for saying that? What criteria do you base that argument on? |
| | **Questions that probe implications and consequences:** What might be the consequences of behaving like that? Do you think that is the correct conclusion to make? |
| | **Questions about viewpoints and perspectives**: What would be another way of saying that? How do your ideas differ from those presented? |
| | **Questions about questions:** How is that question going to help us? Can you think of another question that might be useful? |
| **Wolf's Hierarchy** (Dennis Palmer Wolf, 1987) | **Inference questions**: questions that ask students to go beyond the immediately available information (Bruner, 1957). To push beyond the factual in this way is to ask students to find clues, examine them, and discuss what inferences are justified. |
| | **Interpretative questions**: questions that propose that students understand the consequences of information or ideas. |
| | **Transfer questions**: questions that provoke a breadth of thinking, asking students to take their knowledge to new places. |
| | **Questions about hypotheses**: questions that can be predicted and tested. Effective teachers probe for predictions as a way of making students actively aware of their expectations. Predictive thinking is important in all learning areas. |
| | **Reflective questions**: questions that demand students to ask themselves questions, e.g. *How do I know that I know? What does this leave me not knowing? What things do I assume rather than examine?* |
| **Inductive Questioning** (Taba, 1966) | Inductive reasoning is arranging information according to inherent classes or principles. Hilda Taba suggested that inductive reasoning forms the fundamental building blocks of higher thinking. Give students numerous pieces of information and ask them to organise it in a meaningful way; they should be able to infer the organisation and significance of the information they are handling. Competent students know how to organise and value information (Taba 1966). Ask questions related to the relative importance of the information, e.g. *What is most important? What is least important? Why?* |

**Figure 8.4 Questioning techniques (from Bloom, 1956; Taba, 1966 and Wolf, 1987)**

By posing questions that promote strategic thinking skills, students can be supported to make distinctions about information that is explicit or implicit in the text. Students in this phase can draw on both types to make meaning. Information that is implied requires students to access knowledge outside the text, or within another text and to make connections or associations. Students are often required to make predictions, draw inferences or conclusions and make generalisations from information that has been either directly or indirectly stated.

## Developing Metalanguage

The importance of teaching the metalanguage associated with viewing and ensuring that it is adopted by students as they analyse texts is critical. Metalanguage, or the language about language, is one of the tools of critical thinking; yet frequently this metalanguage is not specifically taught. Students need to be supported in building the vocabulary they can use to discuss and describe multimodal texts and the viewing process. Developing metalanguage also helps students to understand the support and feedback provided by teachers.

To help Proficient viewers continue to expand and use the metalanguage of viewing, it is important to use the terminology as part of everyday teaching in all learning areas.

Certain terms will tend to be more prominent when focusing on different multimodal text forms and different development phases. For example, students in the Proficient phase will probably become familiar with the following terms:
- Use of Texts: *photographic/digital manipulation, deconstruction, multipurposed*
- Contextual Understanding: *ideology, perspective, prejudice, cultural construct*
- Conventions: *kinesics, posture, modulation, articulation, saturation, hue, cropping, framing*
- Processes and Strategies: *navigating, browsing.*

It is recommended that teachers develop a classroom glossary of the metalanguage introduced and used so students have it as a reference. Teachers can do this as part of their regular class activities, as part of students' journal entries, as a classroom chart or as an online entry.

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For further information about the Use of Texts aspect, see *Viewing Resource Book*:
- Chapter 1: Use of Texts
- Chapter 3: Conventions
- Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

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# Involving Students

## 1 What Is the Truth?

This phase represents a turning point in students' learning where they are asked to re-frame their viewing practices. To emphasise this teaching point, teachers may want to involve the class in some sort of 'ceremony' early on in the teaching unit which makes way for the new concepts about to be learned such as the following activity:

- Have the class write the 'old' terms such as 'truth', 'the facts', 'reality' or phrases such as 'the camera never lies' or 'the real story' onto sheets of scrap paper.
- Discuss either as a whole class or in small groups, what they think is meant by each of these terms. If possible, find examples of these terms from texts such as newspapers and magazines, e.g. **The Truth about Princess Diana's Death, The Real Story behind Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston's Divorce.**
- Take a wastepaper bin around the class and invite students to 'throw out' these old ways of thinking. Explain that these terms will only be used in parenthesis from this point.
- The names could also be plastered onto a balloon and then 'popped'.

## 2 Spot the Fake

Spot the Fake helps students question the veracity of visual images and question their understanding of photographs as representations of reality by asking them to find images that have been deliberately manipulated. As new technology makes the doctoring of photographs increasingly easier, the use of digital enhancement is becoming increasingly common.

One famous early historical example of visual trickery is the Cottingley Fairies episode in which two young English girls tricked the world using cardboard cut-outs of fairies secured to a riverbank with hatpins. Others include the classical 'portrait' of Abraham Lincoln (which superimposes his head onto the body of another) and various 'sightings' of paranormal creatures including the Loch Ness Monster, see Figure 8.5. A slide show demonstrating these and other examples of photographic trickery can be found at stepspd.com/weblinks. This entertaining site of museum hoaxes, which also

**Figure 8.5 This image can be found on the *Viewing CD***

has a test for students to test their own gullibility, makes learning fun while making a valuable teaching point; do not trust what you see!

Teachers can also draw attention to the nature of photographic images by viewing segments of feature films such as *Newsfront* (1978), *Bobby* (2006) or the ABC's *Aunt Connie* (2006), which intersperse documentary footage with fictional footage of actors.

More recent and sophisticated examples of photographic manipulation include a recent photograph circulated by the Reuters News Agency which claimed to be a depiction of the Lebanese city of Beirut during its 2006 conflict with Israel. The photograph showed what appeared to be clouds of thick black smoke over a densely urban landscape and was the work of a freelance photographer hired by the Reuters news agency. The smoke had, in fact, been artifically enhanced using the simple tool of Photoshop cloning, as many readers were quick to point out.

Another contemporary example of a photographic hoax is what became colloquially known as the Tourist Guy, a photograph supposedly taken by a tourist, moments before the first plane hit New York's Twin Towers during the 9/11 tragedy. The camera was supposedly found in the buildings' rubble. The photograph was constructed by a Hungarian, Peter Guzli, who circulated it over the Internet to a few friends. However, it soon appeared on various Internet sites and, for a short time, it was considered to be authentic, though experts quickly dispelled its authenticity as they identified the discrepancies in the photograph (the plane was not of the same type, the weather conditions were inaccurate and the South Tower was not open to visitors at the time of the attack). Since then, a whole series of darkly humorous photographs depicting The Tourist in *Where's Wally?*-esque episodes throughout history have emerged and also serve to underline to students the importance of scepticism.

## 3 Doctoring Images

Doctoring Images enables students to experiment with photographic manipulation by placing their own images into unlikely historical events using Adobe Photoshop® or similar software. This helps them see how easy it is to alter the 'truth' and to approach photographs with the notion that they, too, could be doctored. Students can also examine online tutorials showing the capabilities of this software.

Fashion magazines are notorious for manipulating photographs to create images of the ideal face and body. Many examples of photographs of models before and after digital manipulation can be viewed on the Internet. Link to stepspd.com/weblinks to locate websites that demonstrate photographic 're-touching'. (See the fascinating images of the pop star Madonna before and after re-touching.)

## 4 Primary Sources — First-hand Accounts

This activity examines primary sources. These sources, which provide a first-hand account of events particularly in the context of history, are an important way to help students develop critical reading skills. Because primary sources can be subjective in nature, students should regard them with a certain amount of scepticism. Primary sources tend to hold more credibility when they appear in more authoritative texts such as encyclopaedias and textbooks.

Many primary sources are now digitised and are available freely through online museum sites both in Australia and overseas. Examples of primary sources include photographs, diaries, letters, maps, court extracts, gravestones, cookbooks, government forms, weapons, tools, uniforms, paintings and newspapers.

First-hand accounts can also allow students to see historical events from a personal viewpoint, thereby increasing their understanding about history, which can sometimes seem irrelevant and distant to students. The focus in the classroom will vary depending upon the type of source selected and investigations are best conducted in small groups.

The following questions will serve as a guide and have been adapted from a series of work sheets devised by the National Archives and Record Administration of Washington and available online. (See stepspd.com/weblinks to link to the website.)

## Maps

Although maps can appear to be objective measures of the world, they are, like all visual texts, constructed by text designers for specific purposes. By examining a selection of world maps from different nations and in different historical time periods, students can understand the ideologies of those times and how maps can be created to support particular visions of the world. Suggest students to consider the following:
– What type of map is it?
– When was it made? Who created it? Where was it created?
– List three things in the map that are important.
– Why do you think this map was drawn and what evidence in the map suggests this?
– How does the map link to information in your textbook?
– Does it contradict information you have read?
– Write a question to the mapmaker that is left unanswered by the map.

## Photographs

Historical photographs can provide students with important and interesting information about previous generations, the way people lived, their values and attitudes and how they wanted to be presented. Students could compare photographs from their own family albums with those of previous decades to compare how life has changed and how this has been represented visually.
• Study the photograph.
• List the people, objects and activities in the photograph.
• List three things you can infer from the photograph.
    – What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?
    – Where could you find answers to them?

## Artefacts

Artefacts, such as household items, e.g. **old irons, ornaments, etc**. are also visual images which can be analysed. Students can examine the objects and suggest the following:
• Describe the material from which the artefact is made, e.g. **pottery, glass**.
• Describe how it looks and feels.

• List any special qualities it has. What might it have been used for? Who might have used it? Where? When?

• Ask: what does the artefact tell you about the technology of the time it was used in?

• Ask: what does the artefact tell you about the life and times of the people who made and used it?

## 5 Optical Illusions

By using the key words 'optical illusions', teachers and students can locate a range of Internet sites featuring slide shows and information about the way visual perception operates. Viewing the slide shows will help students understand more about the viewing process, in particular, how to use information they already possess (schema), to classify, sort and understand anything that they view.

A number of websites that relate to optical illusions can be accessed by linking to stepspd.com/weblinks.



**Figure 8.6 An example of an optical illusion. Looking at optical illusions is a fun way of teaching students that reading images involves learned behaviours**

# Contextual Understanding

**Major Teaching Emphases**

■ **Teach students that all texts can be read on multiple levels, e.g.** action films contain messages about gender and heroism.

■ **Teach students to question ideological values presented in a text, e.g.** the 'ideal' family as middle class with two parents.

■ **Continue to provide opportunities for students to discuss the choices they have made when crafting texts, e.g.** use of devices, representations, manipulation of elements.

■ **Teach students to analyse the ways in which the codes and conventions can manipulate the information provided to the viewer and influence the viewer's point of view and engagement with the text.**

## Teaching Notes

Understanding the importance of the context of an image is considered an important component of being critically literate. Students need to be able to recognise how social values are constructed and communicated, both explicitly and implicitly, through multimodal texts and how text producers use particular devices to influence the construction of meaning.

By the Proficient phase students have the knowledge and understanding to identify elements of multimodal texts that influence the construction of meaning, e.g. devices, codes and conventions and recognise that these have been deliberately selected to achieve the purpose intended by the text producer. This then allows them to understand how belief systems are transmitted through the images viewed and interpreted.

Students in this phase are adept at deconstructing texts and are able to use the metalanguage of viewing. In this phase, they are asked to go further, to offer alternative viewpoints to those intended by the producers of multimodal texts and to connect these texts to their understandings of culture and ideology.

The focus for helping Proficient viewers in this aspect is organised under the following headings:
• Multiple interpretations of multimodal texts
• Discussions about ideological values in multimodal texts
• The decisions that shape multimodal texts

## Multiple Interpretations of Multimodal Texts

Students in the Proficient phase of viewing understand that multimodal texts do not present one message, but rather that meaning is derived as part of a dynamic relationship between the text producer and the viewer. To extend this understanding, teachers can structure classroom viewing experiences to teach students to systematically analyse multimodal texts by critically examining the way texts are constructed, the choices made by the text producers or the different ways the text may be interpreted.

When choosing texts for use in the classroom, it is important to be mindful of the diverse cultures and ideas represented in many schools. The construction of texts and the underlying messages in them have tended to favour the powerful in a community while those outside of the mainstream are marginalised. Teachers in a culturally inclusive classroom need to be aware of how they are selecting and presenting texts for discussion to ensure that instructional material does not only represent the dominant culture. They also need to ensure that their discussion of stereotypes does not simply perpetuate cultural assumptions but holds them up for scrutiny.

## Discussions about Ideological Values in Multimodal Texts

The emphasis of learning in the Proficient phase of development is on examining multimodal texts to determine how they support particular ideologies or cultural constructs. This is a complex concept to grasp and many students may regard the word 'ideology' in the same way that they view the word 'propaganda' — as having negative associations. However, a better description of 'ideology' is that it is a way of thinking and acting which serves to the benefit of some groups in society, while seeming to be neutral or 'natural' and 'true'. Critically analysing and deconstructing texts can expose these ideologies and provide an opportunity for the viewer or reader to question the 'truths' presented.

In this phase of viewing, students will encounter many common themes across a range of texts. Students could examine how concepts such as 'identity', 'beauty' and 'newsworthiness' are constructed in these texts. In the Proficient phase, they are expected to identify these values as culturally constructed.

Students can do this by:
- viewing and analysing a selection of multimodal texts on the same topic, e.g. global warming, wars, whaling, to determine how they are constructed and what values and attitudes they represent.
- examining a series of images which depict a concept over a period of time to chart how the concept has changed, e.g. examining the concept of beauty by comparing images in historical paintings with contemporary fashion images.
- examining target audiences, e.g. what do the advertisements screened during a particular television program tell about the values and attitudes of its target audience? Were there times when the kind of advertisement that would be shown next could be predicted?
- tracking the representations of selected groups in society, e.g. Aboriginal people, Muslims, the underprivileged in other nations. Link to www.stepspd.com/weblinks to locate websites containing images pertinent for textual analysis.

## *The Decisions That Shape Multimodal Texts*

Students need to be aware that when producers construct a multimodal text they do so with a purpose and audience in mind. It is that purpose and audience, consciously or subconsciously, that shapes every decision in the construction of the text. Before a photograph appears in a newspaper, for example, many decisions have to be made. Numerous people involved in newspaper production make these decisions. In the first instance, the photographer or someone who hires him or her chooses which events to cover on any given day as there are endless possible events and situations from which to choose. The photographer then decides the angle, camera distance and perspective that best suit the purpose. The photographer may even deliberately stage an event or ask a subject to pose in a particular way. From the hundreds of photographs taken, the photographer or editor



**Figure 8.7 Advertisements transmit messages about society. When students become critical viewers, they can choose to accept or reject these messages**

must decide on the one that represents their purpose and crop it in such a way that it fits the purpose. The journalist or sub-editor then decides on the size of photograph, the page on which appears and the placement on the page signalling its perceived importance. A caption is written, framing the meaning for the reader, who then brings his or her own mix of individual, social and cultural assumptions when interpreting it.

To understand how purpose shapes the elements of texts, students could:
- Examine and compare a number of texts on the same issue by different interest groups, e.g. examine the issue of 'deforestation' on a website from an environmental group and one from the timber industry.
- Track an issue across a range of text forms or over a period of time, e.g. how global warming has transformed from a radical idea into a mainstream issue.
- Create their own texts to put forward a particular point of view, e.g. taking a series of photographs or making a documentary showing the school in a positive or negative light.
- Compare the presentation of an issue across different delivery technologies, e.g. television news program, the daily newspaper and an online source.
- Examine texts to decide the point of view they are representing and the devices used to influence the viewer.
- Consider other ways the text could be constructed, e.g. what changes could be made to a text to alter its message.

> For further information about the Contextual Understanding aspect, see *Viewing Resource Book*:
> • Chapter 2: Contextual Understanding.

# Involving Students

## 1 Content Analysis

Content Analysis adopts the methodology of science and sociology for analysing visual texts. In a content analysis, students are asked to look for a pre-determined criterion and record the number of times it appears. Students can formulate their own criteria in class or they can be teacher-generated.

• The text form could be a newspaper, a selection of movie posters, a soap opera, a magazine or multiple copies of any of these texts.
• Below is a list of some possible criteria which can be used in an investigation of the representation of women in texts.
• After students have collated their findings, they can discuss the differences in the way men and women are represented in media texts and why this may be so.

A list of possible criteria; students could compare:
– The number of times women appear in the publication compared with the number of times men appear.
– The front covers of various publications. How many times do women appear on the cover? How many times do men appear? Is there a difference in the way they are represented?
– What are the women doing in the images? What are the men doing? Are the women grooming themselves? Are they engaged in domestic duties? Are they active or passive?
– Compare the body language and facial expressions of the men and women. Are the women more likely to be looking away from the camera? Can you make any statements about the body language of each gender?
– What are the men in the advertisements selling? What are the women selling?

## 2 Still Image Jigsaw

This activity involves a cooperative learning technique to support students to view an image in several ways.
• Display a common text such as an advertisement to students.
• Students form specialist groups and these groups are to be numbered one, two and three.
• Students in the number one group are the square (dominant) specialists' group; the number two group becomes the circle (alternative) specialists' group; the number three group becomes the curved shape (resistant) specialists' group.
• Each group discusses the likely 'reading' for their type. They justify the viewing interpretation by referring to the text codes.
• Specialists from each group now form new working groups (consisting of three students).

- Working groups can compare the different viewings of the common text advertisement. Each student records their findings onto a retrieval chart (see Figure 8.8).
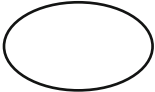- Distribute another still image to each group.

| Type of 'reading' | Who might ... | For example ... | Why? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dominant | Most people think... | | |
| Alternative | Some might think... | | |
| Resistant | Those determined to think otherwise... | | |

**Figure 8.8 Still Image Jigsaw retrieval chart. This chart can be found on the** *Viewing CD*

## 3 How Do You Persuade Me?

This is an activity designed to draw students' attention to the devices employed by advertisers to persuade consumers to purchase their products or believe their messages. This activity can be completed in pairs or small groups.

- Videotape television commercials that are aimed at the age level of students in the class.
- Allow students to view the commercials for the first time without any specific directions so that they can gain a general impression of the visual text.
- Ask students to list what they observed; they should include some of the following:
  – the product or concept being advertised
  – the types of images being used. Are they high or low modality? e.g. **real people, cartoons**
  – the intended audience
  – use of voiceover, music and other sound effects
  – use of framing, camera angle, shot distance, pacing, sequencing
  – use of colour and lighting effects.
- Students then watch the commercial a second time to add any information to the above list.
- Direct students to note the use of specific devices in the third viewing and list them as they are watching, e.g. **the use of intertextuality, juxtaposition, modality, appropriation and perspective.** What devices do they think were the most effective and why?
- Compile a class list of the devices that were used to persuade, and display the list for future reference. (See Chapter 2 of the *Viewing Resource Book*.)

## 4 Reading Society's Values from Texts

In this activity, students are asked to analyse a series of texts such as a soap opera or advertisements in a publication (magazine, book, newspaper, etc.) as though they are naive observers. They are asked to think about what assumptions could be made about our society if we used this text as our only reference. This activity could take place at the end of a unit of work such as examining soap operas or advertisements. For example, if looking at television programs such as *Home and Away* or *The Simpsons*, teachers could model criteria-based answers to the following so that students learn to view them analytically.

– If you only knew about families from looking at this program, what would you think families were like?

– What would you think about fathers, mothers and children?

– What representations of Australian/North American family life does it show? Does this reflect what you know about Australian/North American life?

## 5 Stereotypes

In earlier phases, students have been invited to explore the use of stereotypes in images. At the Proficient phase, teachers should draw students' attention to the deeper implications of stereotyping, in particular for targeted groups. Teachers should help students understand that although stereotyping itself is not necessarily a negative practice (it would be impossible to view every image as 'new' without having a frame of reference to draw from), it can have harmful consequences.

*Suggested Activities*

• Suggest that students view older films and television programs that have more obvious stereotypes, e.g. **Gone with the Wind (1939).**

• Students can view films and television programs that portray teenagers in unfavourable or limited ways. Ask students how they feel about the depictions. Do the teenagers they know have these characteristics? Are the portrayals one-dimensional?

• Encourage students to look for those visual texts which contain non-stereotypical images, e.g. **strong female characters such as** in *Alien* (1979) or *Lara Croft Tomb Raider* (2001), or those advertisements which subvert stereotypes.



**Figures 8.9 and 8.10 Work samples showing students' exploration of stereotypes**

The following selection of films can be used to examine stereotypes.

| Film | Focus |
|------|-------|
| *Clueless* (1995) | teenagers |
| *Snow White* (1937) | women as damsels |
| *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962) | African-Americans |
| *Gallipoli* (1981) and *Breaker Morant* (1980) | Aussie larrikins and British imperialists |
| *The Matrix* (1999) | archetypes of good and evil |
| *Crocodile Dundee* (1986) and *The Castle* (1997) | Australian stereotypes |
| *The Princess Bride* (1987) | Attractive people as heroes, unattractive people as villains |
| *The King and I* (1956) | Asians |
| *Not without My Daughter* (1991) | Arabs |

**Figure 8.11**

## 6 Casting the Movie

Casting the Movie helps students examine their own use of stereotypes and draws attention to the links between physical attractiveness and perception of worth in our society.

- Students are asked to assume the role of a casting agent in charge of choosing the actors for their next film.
- One way students can do this is by choosing from a list of well-known actors; another way is to have them sort through magazines, select and cut out photographs of models they think would be good for the roles and paste them onto a blank A3 sheet of paper.
- The following positions need to be filled: The Hero, The Love Interest, The Villain and The Loser (these labels are non-gender-specific).
- After making their selections, each student (or group) can explain their choices.
- Invariably patterns emerge; the hero is more often than not male and muscular and the love interest is an attractive blonde female. By contrast, the villain is usually someone dark and 'foreign' and the loser is someone who is considered unattractive (and bespectacled!).
- This activity should lead to interesting discussions about the importance of physical appearance in our society and concepts of 'otherness' as evident in visual texts.
- Students can also discuss whether these patterns are repeated in media texts, particularly feature films, and look at the changing concepts of beauty in traditional art forms and in different societies.

### Extension Activity *(Wilkins and Thomas, 1988)*

Another activity is to ask students to draw a picture of someone who is 'cool' and someone who is 'uncool' (see figures 8.8 and 8.9). As part of this activity, students could look at hairstyles, clothing, facial expressions, posture and describe what they are doing, saying and holding.

- Give one student a whiteboard marker and invite the rest of the class to make suggestions as to what to draw.
- The teacher can lead the discussion by questioning the class's choices.

## 7 Conflicting Reviews

Conflicting Reviews helps students see how visual texts can be viewed from very different perspectives. The focus of this activity is film reviews, which are openly subjective as they are written for specific publications and target audiences.

- Supply a selection of film reviews for students to read. (A useful website is provided on stepspd.com/weblinks. This website shows a selection of reviews for films, and is helpful as films are categorised as either positive or negative.)
- A selection of reviews could be read prior to the viewing of a text to determine how they frame students' own responses. For example, one extreme example of differing opinions appeared about the French documentary *To Be and To Have*, which is about a teacher in a tiny rural school. The majority of views were glowingly positive, yet one review from a teacher presents a markedly different point of view describing the film as a sentimental apology for 'back-to-basics' teaching. The review appears on the *Viewing CD*.

## 8 The Five Cs (based on Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2006)

The Five Cs enables students to benefit from developing a strategy to frame their analysis of visual texts in a methodical way. The strategy is called the Five Cs and has been adapted from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2006) Visualising Cultures website. (See stepspd.com/weblinks to link to this website.)

The strategy asks students to examine visual texts in terms of the following five reference points:

### Context

When was the visual text made? What is the subject matter? What clues are given for a time frame? Consider clothing, implements, architecture.

### Characters

Who or what is portrayed in the text? Is it a person? Animal? Symbol? What clues are given about who or what they are?

### Colour

What colours (if any) are used in the text? Do you think they were used just for visual appeal? What is the mood or tone established by these colours?

### Composition

Look at the use of space. Is one image bigger than another? Does it suggest a relationship and what kind of relationship? Is the entire space used? Why or why not? What is in the foreground? The background? Does either suggest importance?

### Construction

Someone consciously constructed this image for a purpose. Who do you think made this? Why? For what audience? Who would or would not connect with this image?

## 9 Depictions Over Time

Depictions Over Time invites students to compare images over a certain time span so they understand that values and attitudes are not fixed but are a product of the society and the time in which they are created. By comparing the ideologies of older visual texts with contemporary texts, the ideologies in both are exposed.

One common area of investigation to focus on is the image of the family that has been constructed in popular television programs, as this is a common theme in media texts.

In this activity, students are asked to compare the representations of families in media texts from the fifties, sixties and seventies with more current television programs. Situation comedies such as *Happy Days* (1974–84), *Here's Lucy* (1969–74) and *The Brady Bunch* (1969–74), which are readily and cheaply available on DVD, can be viewed alongside more current television programs such as *Two and a Half Men* (2003– ) and *The Simpsons* (1989– ). Older students could also discuss more radical views of families depicted in shows such as *Desperate Housewives* (2004– ) and *The Osbournes* (2002–04).

Magazines from the past and today also provide interesting contrasts. The premise is that early media texts depict families in idealised ways as white, middle-class and affluent. Non-nuclear families are usually the result of the death of a spouse and not divorce. In the 1970s, images of working-class families appeared and, for the first time, multicultural families and divorcees featured in programs that handled such topics as incest, homosexuality, abortion and drug addiction.

Students can consider the following aspects as they view a program.
– the family structure (Is it a nuclear, extended or single-parent family, as a result of divorce or death?)
– the gender structure (Is the wife portrayed as the traditional care-giver, the father as the breadwinner, the mother as the dominant force, etc.?)
– The relationship between the mother and father (Is it idyllic or problematic?)
– The relationship between the children and their parents (Is it perfect or dysfunctional?)

# CONVENTIONS

## Major Teaching Emphases

- **Introduce, revise and extend the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.**

- **Provide opportunities for students to investigate literal and symbolic meanings and their representation through the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems.**

- **Explore dominant codes or semiotic systems in a text and the reason for their dominance.**

## Teaching Notes

Students in the Proficient viewing phase will extend their critical viewing skills by comparing how the codes and conventions are used in a range of multimodal texts conveyed by paper, digital electronic and live technologies. These texts will be increasingly sophisticated and complex, representing a range of text forms and all curriculum areas.

Students will also expand their understandings about the deliberate design of multimodal texts. They will understand that texts are constructed not only to achieve particular purposes, such as to provide information, but that the provision of such information might be deliberately shaped and designed to represent a particular point of view or ideology.

The role of the various semiotic systems and their codes and conventions in conveying ideology and point of view will be explored. Such explorations will include examination of literal and symbolic meanings and the representation of truth, facts and reality.

Students will examine the ways in which the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems have been designed to position the viewer. They will emphasise how particular codes and conventions can emphasise, include and omit particular information.

While texts from marketing, advertising, and interest groups such as political parties and organisations are obvious sources for developing understandings about ideology, and point of view, it is important that students also examine less obvious examples, such as picture books, film, television and informative texts. For example, it is possible that an informative science text about whales may also present an ideology about whaling, but this ideology may not be immediately apparent.

The focus for Proficient viewers in developing further understandings about the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems is organised under the following headings:

- What students need to know and be able to do with the conventions
  - Codes and conventions of the visual semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the audio semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the gestural semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the spatial semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the linguistic semiotic system.

## *What Students Need to Know and Be Able to Do with the Conventions*

In the Proficient phase students need to develop an understanding that the design of multimodal texts is a conscious and deliberate process of selecting and using the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems to shape meaning in order to achieve particular purposes. Therefore there is a professional vocabulary that producers of these texts use and much of this professional vocabulary will now be added to their metalanguage (for example, colour saturation will be added as a way of talking about tone).

In addition to analysing and producing texts as a way of increasing their understanding of the construction of multimodal texts and the use of the codes and conventions of the various semiotic systems, students will explore the professions in which design of text is a core part of their work, for example, marketing, advertising, design, film production and publishing. Students will investigate websites for some of these professions in which the application of design is discussed.

As active viewers students will identify and collate the specific ways in which designers have employed the codes and conventions of the various semiotic systems to shape meaning, conveying particular ideologies and points of view. For example, their investigations might reveal that the combination of an image with audio of a particular piece of music can not only provide literal information (in the image) but symbolic information through the sound (or vice versa), thus introducing ideology to what seems to be factual information. These investigations may require students to use retrieval charts to identify the type of information that is introduced by each semiotic system and the codes and conventions employed. Such charts can map individual screens, pages or stills from film and television, or can be used over several pages or over a period of time in film or television.

Comparisons of retrieval charts for similar text forms delivered via different technologies will further enhance students' understandings about the relationships between, purpose and the design of text.

Students need to examine how codes and conventions can position the viewer in order to shape their point of view by including or omitting certain information. For example, by using angle of view or framing, a producer of text can include or exclude certain information from the viewer. This selective provision of information has the potential to shape the viewer's meaning-making. Similarly, by making one semiotic system

dominant and providing the information the designer wishes to emphasise through that semiotic system, the designer is shaping the viewer's point of view. The designer can also distance the viewer, making them less engaged or include the viewer and demand engagement, by the use of gaze and eye contact. Once again distance or engagement might shape the viewer's meaning-making or emotional response, that is, their point of view.

All learning activities need to engage students and teachers in using the appropriate metalanguage for each semiotic system.

When introducing the codes and conventions of the Proficient viewing phase teachers should also revise and extend the codes and conventions of the Consolidating viewing phase.

Tables 8.1 to 8.4 provide the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems to be introduced in the Proficient viewing phase. The metalanguage that is introduced around these concepts in the Proficient viewing phase has been italicised. In the Proficient viewing phase the focus is on revising and building upon previously introduced concepts and exploring them in more sophisticated ways, with an emphasis on the design of multimodal texts and the role of the semiotic systems within them. Ensure that teaching and learning activities around the semiotic systems engage students with the exploration of texts delivered via all three technologies: paper, digital electronic and live and across all curriculum areas. At this stage students should have opportunities to further develop understandings that codes and conventions will be selected and used in particular ways in different text forms and contexts. These understandings will come from opportunities to apply their knowledge critically across all curriculum areas, not only when consuming texts but also when they are producing them.

## Codes and Conventions of the Visual Semiotic System

When engaging in many activities students should consider the importance of the visual semiotic system in relation to the other semiotic systems present in texts and reflect upon why, in some texts types and contexts, and for some purposes and audiences, particular semiotic systems might be dominant.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Colour** | • Continue the exploration of intensity of colour from the Consolidating phase.<br><br>• Introduce the term *saturation* as the professional term used in the field by artists and designers of multimodal texts when discussing intensity of colour.<br><br>• Explore websites for information on the use of colour and colour *saturation* to shape viewers' meaning making (design, art and advertising sites are good sources). Use this information to examine the use of colour *saturation* in texts, and to design and construct texts using colour *saturation* for different purposes, audiences and contexts. Critically analyse the results. |

| Texture | • Revise and further develop concepts about texture and introduce the term *tactile memory*. Discuss how the desire to activate *tactile memory* is the purpose of using texture in still and moving images.<br><br>• Find texts in which texture is a dominant feature of the visual text and discuss why it might be important to activate the *tactile memory* and therefore make texture dominant in that text. What was the designer trying to achieve? |
|---|---|
| Line | • Revise the concepts of vectors and vectorality from the Consolidating viewing phase and in particular the idea that the lines making the vectors can be real or imaginary.<br><br>• Introduce the terms *implied* (imaginary) lines or vectors and *actual* (real) lines or vectors as the professional term used in the field by artists and designers of multimodal texts when discussing vectors and vectorality.<br><br>• Find texts in which vectors are a dominant feature of the visual text and discuss why it might be important to make vectors dominant in that text. What was the designer trying to achieve?<br><br>• Having found texts in which vectors were a dominant feature, compare those in which *implied* vectors were dominant with those in which *actual* vectors were dominant. Critically analyse the texts and consider why a designer might choose to use an *implied* rather than *actual* vector and vice versa. Draw conclusions. |
| Shape | • Revise any codes and conventions about shape introduced in the previous four phases. |
| Form and Juxtaposition | • Revise any codes and conventions about form and juxtaposition introduced in the previous four phases. |
| Point of View | • Revise concepts about *point of view* first introduced in the Beginning and Early viewing phases (bottom up, top down eye level). Explain that all these points of view go through the vertical plane, i.e. top to bottom.<br><br>• Introduce the term *point of view* as the professional term used in the field by artists and designers of multimodal texts when discussing how to position the viewer to engage with the text.<br><br>• Introduce the concept of *angle of view* as a way of describing where the viewer might be positioned to view the text through the horizontal plane. In the diagram below the square represents the image on screen or page to be viewed. The arrows show that it can be viewed from a variety of *angles of view*, that is, the left side, left corner, front, right corner or right side. Each *angle of view* will provide the viewer with a view of some of the image on screen or page, but not all. Therefore the designer will choose the *angle of view* that provides a view of the part of the image he or she wants to emphasise.<br><br>• Explore *angles of view* using digital cameras to photograph the same scene from different positions. Discuss what is included or omitted by the different *angles of view* and practise constructing images from different *angles of view* to achieve particular purposes.<br><br>• Critically analyse the use of *angles of view* across text types, different contexts and audiences and texts constructed for different purposes. Compare and draw conclusions. Justify them. |

| Framing | • Revise the use of different shots (close up, medium and long). Extend this knowledge by discussing how *framing* a scene using different camera shots can include or exclude particular information, therefore shaping meaning. Relate to the use of space when using *framing* in the spatial semiotic system. |
|---|---|
| | • Critically analyse newspaper photographs and discuss how *framing* with a close-up shot can focus the attention on a person, increasing *characterisation*, or how using a long shot more of the scene and background information about *context* can be provided. Explore the *framing* of visual images in other text forms and discuss when and why these shots provide *characterisation* or *context*. Draw conclusions and justify them. |
| | • Examine and discuss how *framing* shots in moving mages might be used in similar ways to still images. For example, ask questions such as, When would *context* be important to *framing* a shot in a film? |
| | • Using digital cameras take a range of photos of scenes and people in different settings around the school and classroom. Use computer software to introduce students to the concept of *cropping* photos to focus attention on particular parts of the image or remove information. Talk about the way in which *cropping* might be used to present a particular point of view on a topic or deliberately mislead. |
| | • Critically analyse photos in a range of settings and discuss whether they may have been *cropped* and, if so, how or why. Discuss whether the result of the *cropping* may have been appropriate or misleading. |
| Focus | • Revise any codes and conventions about focus introduced in the previous four phases. |
| Lighting | • Revise any codes and conventions about lighting introduced in the previous four phases. |
| Editing | • Introduce the concept of *transitions* as the way in which one scene moves to the next in a movie. This can be done by gradually *fading* the scene to a black or white screen or by one scene slowly *dissolving* into the next. |
| | • Sometimes there is *no transition*, and the scene just changes abruptly from one to the next. This is often used when something confusing or chaotic is happening. |
| | • Examine a range of types of film and television (e.g. advertising, documentary, action, suspense) and identify the *transitions* used. Discuss whether particular *transitions* were associated with particular film types and television shows. |
| | • Explore whether *transitions* were used in combination with other semiotic systems such as audio to augment the effect of the *transition*, e.g. slow fade to black and music getting softer and fading to silence as black fills screen. |

**Table 8.1 Codes and conventions of the visual semiotic system**

## *Codes and Conventions of the Audio Semiotic System*

There are no new codes and conventions or metalanguage of the audio semiotic system to be introduced in the Proficient viewing phase. Activities should also focus on how the audio semiotic system is combined with the codes and conventions of other semiotic systems and the effect of these combinations. Students need to engage in both the critical analysis and production of audio in texts.

## *Codes and Conventions of the Gestural Semiotic System*

There is only one new code and convention and metalanguage term for the gestural semiotic system to be introduced in the Proficient viewing phase. Activities need to focus on how the gestural semiotic system is combined with the codes and conventions of other semiotic systems and the effect of these combinations. Students should engage in both the critical analysis and production of the gestural semiotic system in texts.

| Code and Convention | Concept to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Kinesics** | • Introduce the term *kinesics* as the professional collective term for describing the deliberate movement of head, arms and legs to convey meaning. |

**Table 8.2 Code and convention of the gestural semiotic system**

## *Codes and Conventions of the Spatial Semiotic System*

Students' teaching and learning activities around the concepts of framing should be explored in two-dimensional texts delivered on page and screen as well as three-dimensional texts. Setting up and photographing a three-dimensional scene is still a useful way of applying concepts about position and distance. Jointly constructing a page or screen layout of words and pictures using real or imaginary frames and discussing which is best and why, is another important teaching technique for the application of the concepts.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Position** | • Revise any codes and conventions about position introduced in the previous four phases. |
| **Distance** | • Revise any codes and conventions about distance introduced in the previous four phases. |
| **Framing** | • Revise the idea that frames and *framing* are used to bring together or separate groups of objects or people in a still or moving image.<br><br>• Explain that when designers of text are trying to convey meaning about the social structure of the group of characters in a still or moving image they may use *framing* to assist with this. By grouping people together and *framing* them (literally or figuratively) the designer or producer of the text implies there is a *group identity* present, i.e. that these people like the same things and identify with one another. By placing individuals away from the group or outside the frame the producer of the text can indicate that person's *individuality*, i.e. that they do not necessarily belong or want to belong to that group. For example, in children's stories where the plot centres on an animal or child feeling different from the group or wanting to 'choose their own adventure' they will often be placed away from the group and the group might be framed by some of the objects in the scene. This *framing* establishes the *group identity* in juxtaposition to the *individuality* of the individual outside the frame.<br><br>• Look for examples in well-known picture books with these sorts of plots and themes. Discuss how meaning in visual texts is not only about the immediate scene or action but also about contributing to the overall theme and development of plot and how this type of *framing* contributes to that. |

**Table 8.3 Codes and conventions of the spatial semiotic system**

# Codes and Conventions of the Linguistic Semiotic System

In the Proficient viewing phase there is an emphasis on revising and building upon previously introduced concepts in the Punctuation section and exploring them in more sophisticated ways. Ensure that teaching and learning activities around the linguistic semiotic system engage students with the exploration of texts delivered via all three technologies: paper, digital electronic and live and across all curriculum areas.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Parts of Speech** | • Revise all parts of speech introduced in previous four phases. |
| **Punctuation** | • Revise all punctuation introduced in the previous four phases. |
| **Phrases, Clauses & Sentences** | The concepts of main, subordinate, dependent and independent clauses were dealt with in the previous stage and should be revised before new work is attempted.<br><br>Students need to understand that:<br><br>• An *embedded clause* occurs within the structure of another clause (such as in, The girl <u>who came to the party</u> is my girl friend). The *embedded clause* is also a dependent clause because it does not make sense by itself. The *embedded clause* adds additional meaning to the sentence.<br><br>• *Embedded clauses* in complex sentences (particularly when there is more than one dependent clause) are often marked by the use of commas to support meaning. |
| **Cohesive Devices** | Once texts become more complex there are a number of text structures that guide readers in making meaning and aid in providing cohesion throughout the text. These text structures can be introduced as students become more familiar with the use of cohesive devices from the previous phases.<br><br>Students need to understand that:<br><br>• A *site map (or index)* is a list of pages of a website useful for users of the website. It can be used as a planning tool for the design of a web page and is usually organised in hierarchical fashion. A *site index* is sometimes organised as an A–Z index similar to the index in a print text or book. A *site map* provides a general top-down view of a site, similar to a graphic outline or a structural overview in a print text. |

**Table 8.4 Codes and conventions of the linguistic semiotic system**

For a full description and definitions of all the codes and conventions for each semiotic system, see *Viewing Resource Book*.
• Chapter 3: Conventions.

# Involving Students

## 1 Caption Puzzle (Oakland Museum of California)

This activity teaches students the importance of captions that provide meaning for visual images. Visual images are usually accompanied by text and, in some respects, written text can be regarded as a visual image in its own right (font, colour, text size). In newspapers and magazines, captions and headlines clue the reader into the preferred way of reading a visual image. Even in the visual arts, the interpretation of a painting or sculpture is guided by a title usually selected by its creator. Sometimes, words can support, undermine or help to define a visual image.

To conduct this activity:
- Ask students to collect images that have ambiguous meanings.
- Instruct students to cut off the original caption and write two alternative captions that change the meaning of each photograph.
- Read aloud all three captions to the class. Ask students to guess which caption is the authentic one. Do not refer to one as the 'right' caption as all interpretations are valid.
- Refer to the Oakland Museum of California website (link to stepspd.com/weblinks) Teachers could use other photographs from the collection on the website or their own photographs for this activity.
- Invite students to discuss and ask the following questions: What did you see in the picture that makes you say that? What are the visual clues you noticed that make you think that particular caption goes with that picture?
- The story about each photograph is provided on the website. Students could discuss how they 'read' the photograph after reading the background story. Ask: do they interpret the elements differently now?
- Students could then find their own photographs from newspapers and magazines and provide their own alternative captions.

Dorothea Lange was a photographer famous for her sympathetic photographs of impoverished people in the United States during the 1930s and 1940s. Her photographs are deeply emotive and transcend time to invite response. On the Oakland Museum website (refer to stepspd.com/weblinks), photographs that depict the treatment of Japanese internees in the United States during the Second World War are available with associated questions designed to help students understand how point of view is constructed in visual images. It is suggested that after looking at these images, students scan other publications for photographs that show a clear point of view. The students could then decode the photographs to work out how meaning has been constructed.

## 2 Technical Codes

At this stage of viewing, students should be familiar with analysing visual texts in terms of their component parts rather than as a complete unit. Students should be familiar with simple terms such as camera angles, camera distance and editing and be able to describe the effect each has in creating meaning. Linked to stepspd.com/weblinks is a selection of websites that include descriptions and

examples of camera angle types that can be used in class. Students should be encouraged to compile a glossary of familiar terms and add to their glossary as they learn new concepts. The websites also provide glossaries of technical codes. (Teachers should consider focusing on one teaching point at a time before examining an image together as a class.)

Students can be invited to participate in the following procedures to develop their understanding of technical codes:

• Students can watch a segment of a television program or film. Ask students to link specific technical codes to their purpose, e.g. why do you think a close-up was used during that scene in the courtroom? What effect does the low lighting in this scene create?

• Allow students to take their own images using a digital camera to create a specific mood or point of view. Students must describe their shots and the reasons for including them.

• Examine photographs in one edition of a newspaper. Look for stories that present a clear point of view. Ask students to see how the image supports the view of the story. Students could come up with alternative ways of photographing the subject to reposition the viewer.

• Students can locate and cut and paste examples from the Internet to show different technical codes to create a guide for younger students on how to read an image.

• Reinforce one teaching point at a time before examining an image together as a class.

## 3 Dramatisation

Most students tend to think of visual images as those that are produced by other people in a tangible form, such as paintings and photographs. Yet our own bodies are a visual image in the forms of dance, performance and even hairstyles; these are all valid visual images which are open to analysis in strategic ways. Teaching body language via dramatisation can help students understand how the choices they make in their dress and movements are decisions that position audiences in particular ways. It also helps students better 'read' body language in photographs and in moving images.

In this activity, students can examine the way the codes and conventions of the gestural semiotic system, e.g. of body language can be investigated as a visual language.

• Ask students to act out selected scenarios using facial expression, gestures and body language. The rest of the class must guess what the scenario is.

• Invite a student to the front of the class and ask him or her to arrange himself or herself in a particular pose. (Consult a book about body language such as Allan Pease's *Body Language*, 1985 for suggestions.) The rest of the class must identify the mood expressed by the student. Do they agree with the accepted interpretation?

• Ask students to look at the poses of women in magazine advertisements. Ask an (outgoing) boy to adopt the same pose. Does this say anything about the differences in the way gender is represented in visual images?

• Discuss how body language is a product of culture and is viewed in different ways in other countries. (For example, the Australian OK gesture is seen as a vulgar insult in Brazil and, in France, it translates to an indication that something is zero or

worthless.) President George W. Bush bore the brunt of cultural differences during a 1992 visit to Australia when he gave what he thought was a V-for-Victory sign to protesters waiting outside his armoured limousine. Unfortunately, he gave the sign backwards, providing a very different (and insulting) meaning to the one he intended.

- Students could 'track' one character in a feature film, focusing on how body language and gesture contribute to meaning.
- Play a segment of a news program without sound. Ask students to guess whether the story is presented in a positive or negative way by the expressions on the newsreader's face. Run the story a second time with sound to see how accurate the students' guesses were.
- Ask students to examine different hairstyles, tattoos or clothing to determine how they can 'read' them.



**Figure 8.12 Bodies are also 'visual images' as hairstyles and dance movements can be analysed**

# PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Continue to teach students to select, evaluate and modify viewing strategies according to the purpose of the viewing.

- Encourage students to add to their knowledge of the semiotic systems as necessary when producing multimodal texts.

- Encourage students to be selective in their choice of planning and producing formats.

## Organisation of the Processes and Strategies Aspect

There are several differences in the organisation of the Processes and Strategies aspect. Both the Teaching Notes and the Teaching and Learning Experiences (Involving Students) are located in Chapter 4 of the *Viewing Resource Book*.

The rationale for this difference in organisation is that the processes and strategies of Viewing are not conceptually hierarchical and therefore not phase-specific. In all phases, a variety of viewing processes and strategies needs to be introduced, developed and consolidated.

What varies from one phase to the next is the growth in:
- number and integration of strategies used throughout the processes of viewing
- awareness and monitoring of viewing processes
- efficiency in the uses of the viewing processes
- ability to articulate the use of the strategies used in the process of viewing
- awareness of how the use of processes helps with composing and viewing texts.

# Supporting Parents of Proficient Viewers

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF PROFICIENT VIEWERS

Proficient viewers are developing their skills in decoding visual images. They are able to identify the purpose of visual texts and can describe the ways in which designers use the elements of a text towards achieving that purpose. In this way, they are able to challenge the information and cultural assumptions made in such texts as advertisements and documentaries.

## Supporting Proficient Viewers in the Home

A parent brochure providing tips on supporting Proficient viewers in the home is located on the *First Steps Viewing CD*. The brochure contains information about the kinds of viewing activities students will be engaged in at school and why the teaching of viewing is an important part of the school curriculum. It also gives information about appropriate viewing practices and ways parents can help students develop their critical viewing habits.

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**Parent Brochure (see Parent Brochure 3)**

1  Why Teach Viewing?
2  The Development of Viewing
3  Viewing at School
4  Supporting Your Child
5  Resources.

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# Advanced Viewing Phase



Figure 9.1

## Global Statement

*Students evaluate a wide range of complex multimodal texts in multiple ways, recognising relationships between texts, making systematic analyses and providing evidence-based justifications for their judgements. Students identify ideologies represented in multimodal texts with critical awareness of the influences of their personal and socio-cultural understandings. They use a broad repertoire of codes and conventions to produce multimodal texts for impact.*

# Advanced Viewing Indicators

## Use of Texts

- ◆ **Uses interrelationships among the semiotic systems and other texts to make meaning.**
- ◆ **Draws on knowledge of other texts and current events to comprehend and produce complex, sophisticated multimodal texts.**
- ◆ **Controls the crafting of a large repertoire of multimodal texts, using a range of technologies.**
- ◆ **Critiques own texts by evaluating the effectiveness in achieving the purpose.**
- • Uses precise metalanguage to describe how multimodal texts work to position viewers in a variety of contexts.
- • Draws on experience of multimodal texts to enhance meaning.
- • Identifies ways in which features and effects in one text influence meaning in other texts, e.g. voice of authority in documentaries also appears in advertisements.

## Contextual Understanding

- ◆ **Recognises how the ideology of the producer and the viewer combine to create a unique interpretation of a text.**
- ◆ **Recognises the impact that changing technologies have in changing multimodal texts,** e.g. Internet/blogs increase the immediacy and production of multimodal texts.
- ◆ **Provokes responses through the conscious representation of characters, people, events and ideas in certain ways.**
- ◆ **Makes critical choices about the selection of elements of a multimodal text to suit different purposes and influence audiences.**
- ◆ **Selects appropriate devices designed to enhance impact and discusses how they influence particular viewers.**
- • Identifies the dominant reading of multimodal texts and explains how it has been constructed, e.g. perfume advertisements present women as glamorous objects.
- • Identifies point of view and bias in a range of more complex multimodal texts.

- • Analyses how stereotypes work to favour some sectors of society while marginalising others.
- • Is aware of gaps and silences in multimodal texts and how different readers contribute their own understandings to fill these gaps.
- • Makes informed decisions about reliability of the producer of a multimodal text, e.g. questions credibility of websites produced by commercial interests.

## Conventions

- ◆ **Consciously selects codes and conventions of the semiotic systems to achieve impact.**
- ◆ **Continues to evaluate the choice of codes and conventions to achieve specific effects.**
- ◆ **Manipulates text features to achieve specific effects.**
- • Understands that the interpretation of codes and conventions is based upon shared cultural assumptions.
- • Uses understanding of the codes and conventions to change one text into a different form, e.g. a graphic novel into a movie.
- • Understands how codes and conventions are manipulated by producers to appeal to particular audiences.
- • Uses text form knowledge to help understand more complex text forms.

## Processes and Strategies

- ◆ **Continues to reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies used when viewing.**
- ◆ **Consciously adds to the knowledge of the semiotic systems as required to achieve different purposes when comprehending or producing multimodal texts.**
- ◆ **Makes critical choices about the publishing formats of multimodal texts to create impact.**
- ◆ **Articulates how viewing strategies help the viewing and production of multimodal texts.**

# Major Teaching Emphases

## Environment and Attitude (see p. 280)

- Create a supportive classroom environment that provides access to a range of multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to select their own multimodal text materials according to interest or purpose.
- Foster students' enjoyment of purposeful viewing.
- Encourage students to explore new technologies when viewing.

## Use of Texts (see p. 284)

- Expose students to a range of complex multimodal texts and discuss the features and structure of each.
- Continue to provide opportunities for students to manipulate and craft a range of increasingly sophisticated multimodal texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Teach students to respond to and critically analyse increasingly sophisticated multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to independently use precise metalanguage associated with viewing. e.g. parallel cutting, lexical cohesion.

## Contextual Understanding (see p. 291)

- Teach students that multimodal texts can be interpreted from dominant, alternative or resistant perspectives.
- Continue to investigate the use of literal and symbolic meanings and the deliberate design of multimodal texts to present ideology or point of view.

- Encourage students to produce multimodal texts to influence change about social issues that concern them.
- Continue to teach students to analyse the ways in which the codes and conventions can manipulate the information provided to the viewer and influence the viewer's point of view and engagement with the text.

## Conventions (see p. 298)

- Continue to teach and revise the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.
- Teach students to investigate texts that are unconventional in their form and their use of the semiotic systems and codes and conventions.
- Encourage students to experiment with the unconventional use of text structures, semiotic systems and codes and conventions as they plan and produce multimodal texts.

## Processes and Strategies (see p. 307)

- Encourage students to select, evaluate and modify viewing strategies according to the purpose of the viewing.
- Encourage students to consciously add to their knowledge of the semiotic systems as necessary when producing multimodal texts.
- Encourage students to evaluate the effectiveness of their planning and producing choices.

# Teaching and Learning Experiences

## ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE

| **Major Teaching Emphases** |
| --- |

- Create a supportive classroom environment that provides access to a range of multimodal texts.

- Encourage students to select their own multimodal text materials according to interest or purpose.

- Foster students' enjoyment of purposeful viewing.

- Encourage students to explore new technologies when viewing.

## Teaching Notes

In the Advanced phase of viewing, students have become competent users of complex multimodal texts. They are able to systematically identify the elements of images using the metalanguage of viewing to explain how images and text forms are connected and interconnected. They are also capable of making statements about the ideologies represented in images, locating where these sit in the world and providing alternative readings which take into account competing ideologies.

To promote further learning in this phase, teachers need to create an intellectually stimulating environment that nurtures discussion and debate. Students in the Advanced phase will have well-developed interests which need to be accommodated when choosing texts for analysis. A survey finding out students' interests and viewing habits may help towards this end.

This is also a period when students are forming their own opinions on many issues. It is important that teachers recognise this and demonstrate to students that these opinions are valued in the classroom.

Students in the Advanced phase will most likely be sophisticated and regular users of multimodal texts. Some may even be engaged in creating their own multimodal texts on public networking sites, on their own websites or blogs. Teachers may invite students to adopt the role of 'expert' when working on such texts. Yet it is important that teachers do not mistake technical expertise with analytical competency. Because a student can use a complex multimodal text does not necessarily mean that the student understands how multimodal texts position the viewer to read texts in certain ways.

It is important, therefore, that teachers continue to expose students to a wide range of multimodal texts in the classroom, that time be provided for their analysis, and that frameworks be created to include a constantly evolving range of text forms.

The focus for helping students in the Advanced phase is organised under the following headings:

- Creating a supportive classroom environment
- Fostering enjoyment of viewing of a wide range of texts
- Viewing as social practice.

## Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment

Today's students live in an age increasingly dominated by images. New technology has made the production and retrieval of images simpler and cheaper than ever before and is changing the way people in the developed world view and read, what they view and read and how they spend their time. Young people, in particular, are heavy users of both old and new digital electronic technologies, spending increasing amounts of time watching television, playing computer and video games and engaging in other web-based activities.

Even the organisation and structure of traditional paper technologies such as books is altering, with a greater reliance on images in almost all publications, including student texts. This increase in the number and frequency of images is forcing teachers to rethink their previous print-based focus. It is vital that teachers prepare students for the vast range and volume of images they will encounter, both at school and into adulthood, and make them aware of the importance of critically analysing and questioning these.

Teachers can provide an environment that encourages students to:

- analyse and interpret the content of images
- examine the social impact of images
- discuss the purpose, audience and ownership of images
- communicate visually and read and interpret images
- understand that images can be manipulated
- understand that images represent a cultural construct or ideology
- make judgements about the accuracy, validity and worth of images
- create images for their own purposes and audiences
- comprehend and appreciate the images created by others.

## Fostering Enjoyment of Viewing of a Wide Range of Texts

Students in the Advanced phase will increasingly be expected to make connections within and between texts in order to substantiate their critical statements about texts.

To foster students' critical analysis and questioning of multimodal texts, teachers should devote some classroom discussion time to examining students' own viewing habits and resources. Students could be invited to bring in their own images and an area could be provided in the classroom to display items of interest.

There is no doubt students will benefit from an up-to-date knowledge of world events. Students who are active readers of newspapers and magazines delivered by various technologies or who watch television news and current affairs programs will find it easier to draw parallels between multimodal texts and ideologies. To some extent this is dictated by the students' own socio-cultural backgrounds they bring to the classroom. If students in the Advanced phase are to continue to develop as viewers, teachers need to extend the range of multimodal texts with which their students engage as well as help them to understand the unique cultural perspective they each bring to a viewing task.

Teachers can encourage students to view a wide range of texts by:

- Modelling rigorous investigative viewing of complex multimodal texts.
- Encouraging students to keep a viewing journal and analysing the types of multimodal texts with which they are interacting.
- Conducting discussions (informal and formal) about current issues.
- Collecting, viewing, displaying and analysing samples of different multimodal text forms on topics that interest the students.
- Encouraging the students to collect, and bring in for display, samples of different multimodal text forms that can be analysed.
- Collecting a range of multimodal texts that represent a diverse range of views to share with the class, e.g. environmental magazines, Greenpeace website articles, conservative press articles.
- Appealing to students by using satirical publications, including online sources.



**Figure 9.2 Newspapers provide Advanced viewers with challenging texts**

## *Viewing As Social Practice*

The focus for teaching viewing in the classroom is to provide many real-life situations that require the use and analysis of multimodal texts. The ultimate goal is for students to function in society as efficient and effective viewers who use multimodal texts to communicate their ideas, share information, stimulate questions and influence policy and action.

Many students by this phase of development will have engaged with producing multimodal texts delivered by paper, digital electronic and even live technologies. The digital electronic technologies may include mobile phones, computers, MP3 players and photo and video sharing websites. Students by this phase of development may be well aware of their rights as users of this technology. It is important, however, for students to understand their responsibilities as Advanced viewers in today's society. Students need to be made aware of their responsibilities as far as they concern privacy, cyber bullying, criminal activity and accessibility of information. Students don't necessarily understand the reach and lasting nature of some of today's technology. Teachers may be well placed to raise these issues with students so they can be discussed in an analytical and questioning way.

For further information about Environment and Attitude, see *Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning*:
• Chapter 5: Establishing a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment.

# USE OF TEXTS

| **Major Teaching Emphases** |
| --- |

- **Expose students to a range of complex multimodal texts and discuss the features and structure of each.**

- **Continue to provide opportunities for students to manipulate and craft a range of increasingly sophisticated multimodal texts for authentic purposes and audiences.**

- **Teach students to respond to and critically analyse increasingly sophisticated multimodal texts.**

- **Encourage students to independently use precise metalanguage associated with viewing, e.g.** parallel cutting, lexical cohesion.

## Teaching Notes

Advanced viewers are capable of reading a variety of multimodal texts and many will be regular users of paper and digital electronic technologies with their own viewing preferences. While students' own interests are important and should be included, if students are to develop as critical viewers of multimodal texts they will need to broaden their range of viewing material and take a wider world view of issues including those that do not directly concern them.

The focus for helping Advanced viewers in this aspect is organised under the following headings:
- Exposure to a range of multimodal texts
- Crafting a range of multimodal texts
- Developing metalanguage.

### *Exposure to a Range of Multimodal Texts*

Students in the Advanced phase will continue to benefit from ongoing opportunities to view, interact with and discuss a variety of increasingly complex multimodal texts. These texts may come from all learning areas, popular culture, the Internet or the community. In Modelled, Shared and Guided viewing sessions continue to discuss the way texts are crafted and elements within them manipulated by the producers of texts to influence audiences for a particular purpose.

### *Crafting a Range of Multimodal Texts*

Advanced viewers are able to produce, reflect on and critically analyse a range of multimodal text forms, however, they still benefit from continued support in consolidating their understandings and refining their knowledge to get the most impact from the texts they produce.

To extend the repertoire of texts students are producing teachers can:
- Provide a variety of contexts for producing multimodal texts across all learning areas.
- Collect, view, display and analyse samples of different multimodal text forms.
- Collect, view, display and analyse samples of multimodal texts where elements have been manipulated for effect.
- Help students critique their own texts.
- Display and discuss multimodal texts that show different or unusual constructions.
- Invite multimodal text producers to visit and discuss their texts.
- Arrange for students to visit worksites to view multimodal texts in context.
- Encourage students to talk about their construction of texts and reason for choosing particular devices, codes or conventions.
- Provide time for students to imitate or innovate on different multimodal text construction techniques.
- Provide time for students to participate in Viewers' Circles.

## *Developing Metalanguage*

The ability to succinctly describe aspects of a multimodal text is beneficial to students at all phases but is crucial at this phase as Advanced viewers should have a well-developed knowledge of the language of viewing.

Teachers can help students develop and use their metalanguage by:
- Using appropriate metalanguage frequently during class discussions, e.g. How does the composition of the image position the viewer to see this product as appealing to a youthful target audience?
- Collecting, displaying and annotating examples of multimodal texts for display in the classroom.
- Providing students with scaffolds, such as retrieval charts, to help them systematically approach multimodal texts.
- Encouraging students to bring in examples of multimodal texts that demonstrate the techniques, devices or codes and conventions being discussed in class, e.g. Find an image in a magazine that shows traditional gender roles and one that challenges them.
- Jointly construct and frequently refer to class charts listing the metalanguage used to discuss multimodal texts.

Students in this phase will be revising and extending the metalanguage introduced at previous phases.

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For further information about the Use of Texts aspect, see *Viewing Resource Book*:
- Chapter 1: Use of Texts
- Chapter 3: Conventions
- Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

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# Involving Students

## 1 Retrieval Charts

Retrieval charts provide helpful ways for students to organise their thinking and planning. The charts contain sets of questions, which can be either generic or linked to a specific text. They enable students to investigate texts in systematic ways. Charts can be printed out by the teacher, copied by the student or created electronically using commercial software programs such as Inspiration. Examples of retrieval charts can be found on the *Viewing CD*.

## 2 Asking Questions of Text (based on MediaLit)

To become a critical reader of texts, students must be taught to ask questions of texts. The following sets of questions are examples of the kinds of questions students should ask when viewing texts.

- Who created the message in the text?
- What techniques are used to attract my attention?
- What lifestyles, values and points of view are presented in or omitted from the message?
- Why was this message sent?
- How might different people understand the message differently from me?

Anstey and Bull (from *The Literacy Labyrinth*, 2004) suggest the following four considerations should be used as a framework for the analysis of still images:

1. What is the purpose of the image in the context of the whole text and the context in which the image is being read and viewed?
2. What codes are used to describe the balance and layout and how it is used to create meaning?
3. How does one's reader or literacy identity influence the meaning-making?
4. How does the genre in which the image is situated influence the meaning-making?

## 3 Viewing Controversial Images

Controversial images, while they may at times be confronting in a classroom environment, can interrupt reading practices and act as a catalyst for stimulating discussion. Students at this phase need to understand that images are not just decorative additions to texts but, in some cases, can have a powerful effect on public thinking. Some images have changed the course of political events. Advertisements such as those by the clothing company Benetton®, blur the lines between traditional advertising and comment (and are known by the name of 'controversials') and have raised public awareness of many politically unpopular issues. Other controversial advertising or promotional campaigns include advertisements by the clothing designer Calvin Klein® that featured pre-pubescent teens in provocative poses; Australian Tourism's campaign *'Where the Bloody Hell Are You?'* which made headlines for its use of profanity; and Sony's PlayStation Portable® advertisements 'White Is Coming' which shocked the public with its connotations of racism. In an industry that exists to be noticed, controversial advertising campaigns are not difficult to find.
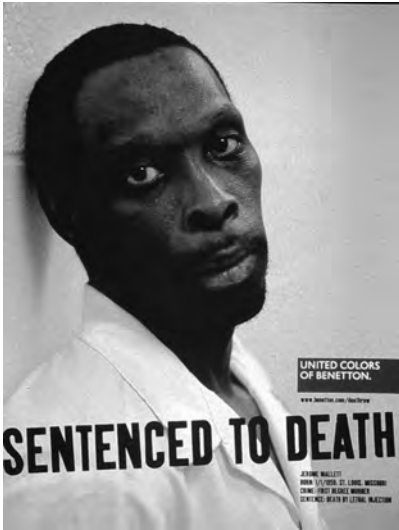
Figure 9.3 The clothing company Benetton® is famous for its controversial advertisements. An example is the Benetton Death Row advertisement depicting a prisoner on death row



Figure 9.4 This image of a young Vietnamese girl fleeing a napalm attack during the Vietnam War is known as 'the photograph that stopped the war'

Other controversies suitable for in-depth analysis include the 'children overboard' scandal and the 'faked' concentration camp photos taken by a British television team in Bosnia. Students need to recognise the opposing interests in each controversy, working out what techniques have been used to frame particular points of view. A good resource to help students understand the political effect of images is the Time Life book *100 Photographs That Changed the World* (2003).

## 4 Explore Competing Discourses

Another way to reveal how texts work to position viewers is to examine images from different sources on an issue. For example, students could examine the issue of logging. They can compare the visual texts from an environmental group's website with the visual texts from the timber industry's website. Students could also locate a newspaper article and image that explore the issue.

The teacher could direct students by asking questions such as:
• How are these texts the same or different?
• What do you think each text designer wanted us to think and feel about the topic?
• What devices did he or she use to position you towards a particular viewpoint? (Ask students to compare fonts, colour, setting, camera angles, camera distance.)
• How does the newspaper article attempt to present a balanced point of view? Is it successful? How does the image influence the reader to think in particular ways?

Students could also compare texts that are about the same issue or topic but aimed at different audiences. For example, students could examine a television cereal advertisement that is aimed at a children's market (e.g. Coco Pops®); one that is aimed at women (e.g. Special K®); and one that is aimed at men (e.g. Nutrigrain®).

Students could also select a current news issue and check the coverage of this issue for a week. They could check and compare the treatment of the issue in different news sources, such as the mainstream press and more youth-orientated organisations such as the ABC's radio station Triple J or Internet blog sites.

## 5 Examine Hidden Advertising Practices

Advanced students will no longer regard visual images as having an inherent truth and should appreciate the intellectual exercise of identifying alternative readings for texts.

During this phase, students are expected to make greater links between texts and text forms. One area of investigation worth examining is 'hidden' messages in visual texts such as product placement in films and television programs. For example, the US television program *The Apprentice* (from 2004 on) reportedly received more than two million US dollars per episode from companies such as Burger King®, Dove® Body Wash, Sony PlayStation®, Verizon® Wireless and Visa® for the strategic placement of their products in the television program.

The James Bond film *Casino Royale* (2006) also included lucrative placement of branded products including cars, clothing, sunglasses, watches, shoes, computers, mobile phones and suitcases. As Internet usage among young people increases, advertisers are placing subtle promotions for their products in online websites and games as a way of circumventing advertising regulations and reaching those children whose viewing habits are moving away from traditional viewing patterns. Teaching students to identify how they are being manipulated subtly by advertisements is important.

Students should look at a range of websites specifically aimed at them and consider the following:
• Which sites are educational, commercial or recreational? Students must provide reasons for their answers. How are these genres blurred?
• Why have the companies created these sites?
• Why do some sites have surveys for young people to fill in? What might they do with that information?
• Why would advertisers want to reach young people on the Internet? Ask students to think about their own television viewing habits. Do they watch much television? Do they spend more time on the Internet and how do their television viewing habits differ from those of the adults in their family?
• What different approaches would advertisers employ when advertising on the Internet?

A list of websites can be found on stepspd.com/weblinks.

**Figure 9.5 Students can annotate visual texts to demonstrate their understanding of hidden advertising practices**

## 6 You Be the Editor (adapted from Media Awareness Network)

This activity invites students to adopt the role of news editor to decide whether to publish a number of hypothetical yet controversial news scenarios. It has been adapted by the Media Awareness Network (link to stepspd.com/weblinks for the Media Awareness website) from a similar media campaign, which was published by an English newspaper in 1995.

- Download the twelve scenarios from the Media Awareness Network website.
- In groups of four or five, give each group a copy of a scenario from the above website.
- Ask students to decide whether to publish or not to publish.
- After students have made their decisions, they can compare them with those of the real-life editors on the website.
- Ask: did they often agree with the editors? What does this tell you about concepts of newsworthiness?

### Extension Activity

Ask students to examine some controversial photographs. (A good resource to use for controversial photographs is available at the Time Life website *100 Photographs That Changed the World* — link to stepspd.com/weblinks.

## 7 Verifying Websites

The Internet has not only greatly expanded the quantity of accessible information; it has changed the way people look at information. Google®, the largest search engine on the net, has an estimated eight billion websites indexed. However, the number of available websites and the ease of placing information on the Internet mean that there is a proliferation of information and not all of it is reliable or credible. Literally anyone with access to a computer can place information on the Internet and often it can be difficult to determine those websites that are current, reputable and accurate and those that are counterfeit or malicious (see below for a description of these two terms).

Teachers should encourage students to consider the following questions when accessing Internet information:

- Source: What organisation or individual created this information?
- Authority: What knowledge do they have?
- Bias: Is the information slanted towards a particular viewpoint (probably as a result of the above two questions)?
- Currency: How old is the website? How often is it updated?
- When was the website last updated?

The article 'Better Read That Again: Web Hoaxes and Misinformation' (Piper, 2000) divides dubious websites into the following categories and lists examples of each:

- Counterfeit: those websites that disguise themselves as legitimate sites.
- Parodies and spoofs: these websites are often political and usually employ humour to make a statement. Though these websites do not attempt to deliberately fool viewers, they may be mistaken as authentic by naive viewers.

- Fictitious sites: several of these websites have been designed by educators to trap unwitting students. One of the most famous of these is a website which contains obviously misleading photographs (including photographs of the lost city of Atlantis), to make a teaching point.
- Malicious: including racist hate sites.
- Product websites: which claim to offer unbiased information, particularly on health matters, but are usually promoting particular products.
- Subject-specific information: offering unauthorised and often one-sided views on various topics. Examples of these can be found by using an Internet search engine such as Google® and entering: 'cure for cancer'.

Students should also consider the addresses of websites and choose those from authoritative sources.

- .com indicates a site has been established by a commercial interest.
- .org indicates a not-for-profit agency.
- .gov indicates the site is an authorised government site.
- .net indicates the site is involved in an Internet infrastructure
- .edu indicates an affiliation to an educational institution (though note this does not mean the organisation has necessarily endorsed the information).
- .museum indicates the site is a museum or an association affiliated to a museum.
- country codes indicate the origin of the site, e.g. **.au** (Australia), **.uk** (United Kingdom), **.fr** (France); note the US does not have a country-of-origin code.

## 8 Helping Students Perform Better Internet Searches

While the majority of students use the Internet to search for information, many do not know how to use the Internet efficiently, accessing the first site on their search list rather than filtering their information for relevance. To help students become more efficient at searching, teachers could run the following activity:

- Provide students with a research question related to a subject the class is currently examining, e.g. how many people on the first convict ship brought out to Australia were convicted for stealing items of food?
- Ask students to write down the key words they would use to conduct the search.
- Give students five minutes to perform each search.
- Ask students how successful they were. Ask students who were most successful to share their strategies. Use this as an opportunity to teach students about the use of quotation marks to confine terms to the exact phrase you are looking for, the importance of spelling and capitalisation, the importance of using key words which are highly specific, using synonyms which can also describe your keyword and ranking the most important information first. Show students a range of search engines and describe their specialist uses.

# CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING

## *Major Teaching Emphases*

- Teach students that multimodal texts can be interpreted from dominant, alternative or resistant perspectives.

- Continue to investigate the use of literal and symbolic meanings and the deliberate design of multimodal texts to present ideology or point of view.

- Encourage students to produce multimodal texts to influence change about social issues that concern them.

- Continue to teach students to analyse the ways in which the codes and conventions can manipulate the information provided to the viewer and influence the viewer's point of view and engagement with the text.

## Teaching Notes

A strong focus on Contextual Understanding enables students to understand how texts are shaped by the time and place of their creation and the socio-political climate. They also need to understand that ways in which a reader responds to a viewed text will depend upon their own sets of beliefs, attitudes and values and assumptions.

The focus for helping Advanced viewers in this aspect is organised under the following headings:
- Interpreting multimodal texts
- Questioning the producers of multimodal texts
- Devices used by producers of multimodal texts.

### *Interpreting Multimodal Texts*

Students in the Advanced phase need many opportunities to discuss and produce multimodal texts for different purposes and audiences. One of the important areas for discussion is that of different interpretations of texts.

Texts may be interpreted or 'read' in one of the following ways:
(i)   A dominant reading: this is the preferred meaning the text producer would like the viewer to adopt. The reading represents the values of the dominant culture. It is an acceptance of the assumptions and beliefs constructed by the text producer.
(ii)  An alternative reading: this reading differs from the preferred intention of the text producer but not in markedly different ways. The viewer may question some aspects of the reading.
(iii) A resistant reading: the reader understands the dominant reading but because of the viewer's own markedly different beliefs, attitudes or background does not accept it. The viewer will challenge and reject the text producer's intended meaning.

Following is an example of the three readings: an advertisement for a four-wheel drive.

- A dominant reading would interpret this image as a representation of a vehicle with sufficient power to tow a heavily laden trailer in off-road conditions under extreme conditions.

  The image implies masculinity by both the depiction of the 'god' Neptune and the arm gesturing out of the window of the vehicle.

- An alternative reading may interpret this image as a representation of the concepts of off-road driving, fishing, hunting, 4WD vehicles and battle as exclusively masculine pursuits.

- A resistant reading may be made by an environmentalist, who could choose to interpret the image as an endorsement of irresponsible behaviour. The image of Neptune in an aggressive pose with thunderclouds in the background emphasises the emotional response of anger.



**Figure 9.6 Advertisements transmit messages about society. When students become critical viewers, they can choose to accept or reject these messages.**

## *Questioning the Producers of Multimodal Texts*

To further understand how viewers of multimodal texts are being positioned by the text producers to interpret texts in a particular way, students need opportunities to question the motives, background and credentials of the text producers.

Students could consider the following questions about multimodal texts:

- What do you know about the text producer? e.g. gender, age, socio-cultural background
- What do they know about the text producer's purpose? Is he/she trying to sell something? Is he/she a member of a political party or a lobby group? What ideology does he/she represent? Is the purpose stated explicitly?
- What date was the text published? How current is the information? For example, the publication date can give clues about the influences of the particular society at that time. An advertisement in a women's magazine in the 1950s can be read in a different way from one featured in a current women's magazine.
- What do they know about the publication in which the text appears? Is it reputable? Who is the intended audience? What are the implied values of the publication?
- What delivery technologies have been used? Is it paper based, digital electronic or live?
- Does this image remind them of any other images or anything else they have known or experienced?
- What cultural/political assumptions are inherent in this text?
- Who might respond to this text in a different way? How might they respond? Why might they respond in that way?

Asking questions about the producers of multimodal texts could also lead to a discussion about the reported credibility of a multimodal text. Text producers position the viewer through codes and conventions, which are culturally bound, and which have evolved over time. For example, a television news program creates a sense of credibility through the delivery and setting; the news is read by newsreaders with authoritative voices; the newsreaders sit behind a desk and their clothes are sombre and business-like. Advertising campaigns promoting news programs frequently emphasise the trustworthiness of the program by implying it is 'of the people' and the newsreaders have an authority the viewers can trust.

Teachers can assist Advanced viewers to deconstruct multimodal texts to examine how values, beliefs and attitudes have changed over time.

- Continue to emphasise how texts are a product of the time in which they were produced. For example, what was happening in the world when the film *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962) was produced? Have values and attitudes changed? How?
- Encourage students to collect images of a celebrity or other well-known person over a period of time. Ask students to select a photograph of this person to accompany an article which is critical of the person and then select a photograph to accompany an article which presents the person in a favourable light. Ask: What elements of the photograph led students to make their choice?

**Figures 9.7 and 9.8: Viewers bring their own values and attitudes to the interpretation of images. For example, does Figure 9.7 invite criticism of the individual or society? Figure 9.8: Is this a representation of economic progress or destruction of the landscape?**

- Encourage students to discuss multimodal texts from different perspectives. For example, what might be the reaction of viewers to a photograph of homeless men? Some viewers are sympathetic while others believe the homeless men are in that situation through their own actions.
- Promote discussion that helps students identify their own attitudes towards particular issues.
- Draw attention to other points of view in society, e.g. how might different people view this image differently?
- Take a familiar multimodal text and alter it to change its meaning.

## *Devices Used by Producers of Multimodal Texts*

During the Advanced phase, students are expected to 'read between the lines'; to make inferences not only from what is contained within a multimodal text but also from what is inferred and/or omitted. This is often referred to as the 'gaps and silences' in a text.

### *Intertextuality*

An important part of the critical interpretation of multimodal texts is the understanding that texts can never be unique entities, but are, as a prerequisite for understanding, linked to other texts. This is called intertextuality.

Intertextuality can be seen as a two-tier process that recognises both the links formed between texts and the connections viewers make from their own experiences when reading a text. Teachers can help students to recognise the intertextual nature of texts by helping them identify the links between a text being studied and other texts familiar to the students and the effect the connection creates in the viewer, e.g. to amuse, shock, legitimise.

Advanced viewers will become familiar with the following examples of intertextuality:

- pastiche: where elements of other texts are combined in writing a new text
- parody: where an established text is 'sent up'
- explicit reference to another text
- quotations from other texts
- allusion to other texts and themes
- versions of earlier texts with or without a twist
- versions of one text adapted into different media
- incorporating themes which confirm or disrupt established themes.

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For further information about the Contextual Understanding aspect, see *Viewing Resource Book*:

- Chapter 2: Contextual Understanding.

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# Involving Students

## 1 Step in Someone Else's Shoes

Step in Someone Else's Shoes provides students with the opportunity to recognise how visual images can be read in multiple ways and from different points of view. In this activity, students are provided with a visual text and a list of different groups in society. They are asked how the different groups might see or react to a particular issue. The groups that are selected will depend on the visual text and the issue.

Some suggested people or groups are:

- a mother
- an elderly man
- a teenager
- a teacher
- a drummer in a punk rock band
- an environmentalist
- the head of a large corporation.

Students could be asked to respond to an issue by writing a letter to the editor, a journal entry or a recount.

The types of people that students select will depend on the visual text they are analysing. It is useful to focus on issues that have obvious competing interests. For example, students could examine a proposal to develop an area of land in a fictional coastal area from the point of view of the owner of the land, the long-term residents, a group representing the unemployed youth of the town and a conservation group representing a threatened animal species whose habitat is threatened by the project. Alternatively, present an issue and invite students to identify the interested parties who might be involved.

## 2 Substitutions

Each time a text designer makes a choice about a visual text, he or she is eliminating other choices that could have led to an alternative message. This activity emphasises this understanding by inviting students to make their own 'substitutions' within texts. For example, when looking at colour in an image, students could ask themselves what if that colour was red instead of pink, would it change the meaning significantly?

Likewise they could ask what the effect would be on a viewer if a photographer selected a photograph of a convicted criminal smiling during the court proceedings. Often changing the gender of a subject in an image can change its meaning dramatically. For example, Sturken and Cartwright (2001) ask why it is that an image of a man in his underwear appears slightly comical whereas a photograph of a woman in her underwear is considered alluring. Students who examine these photographs can look at the stance of the man, his clothing and his gaze and compare this image with advertisements of similar products for women. Refer to the *Viewing CD* for the activity framework.

The following two images demonstrate how changing one word in a caption ('looting' or 'finding') dramatically alter the reading of a visual image. The two photographs generated an outcry from the public, who accused the news agencies of racial bias.



**Figure 9.9 Two residents wade through chest deep water after <u>finding</u> bread and soft drink in a local grocery store after Hurricane Katrina.**



**Figure 9.10 A young man walks through deep floodwater after <u>looting</u> a grocery store in New Orleans on Tuesday 30 August, 2005.**

## 3 Values and Attitudes

Helping students identify their own values and attitudes is an important way of enabling them to understand how their values and beliefs affect the way they read texts. There are many situational 'games' in which students question their set of beliefs and compare their beliefs with those of other class members. Many of these games put students in 'life or death' situations. For example, students could play the part of a surgeon trying to decide which person should receive the donor organ, or they are the government authority in charge of deciding who will inhabit a nuclear fallout shelter after a holocaust.

Students can identify and examine their own attitudes by participating in whole-class and small-group discussions.

The questions below can help stimulate discussion.

- Is it right to kill?
- Is terrorism justified?
- What is violence?
- Is it all right to disobey the law?
- Is it all right to disobey your parents?
- What is more important: the economy or the environment?

## 4 Maps and Statistics

The analysis of maps, charts and statistics also provides scope for examining the cultural and sociological basis of visual texts. In the earlier half of the last century, Australian schoolchildren often saw the world through the map of the world showing British colonies, coloured in red, spread widely throughout the map so it appeared as if the British Empire 'owned' large parts of the world.

Bar graphs and charts can also be used to influence opinion and can misrepresent relationships by virtue of scale. Statistics, too, can mislead, although because they appear factual, there is a tendency to accept them without question. Joel Best, author of *Damned Lies and Statistics* (2001), presents a comprehensive guide to examining those statistics that are intended to persuade. He suggests that viewers ask themselves the following questions when viewing statistics:

- What might be the sources for the number?
- How could one go about producing the figure?
- Who produced the number and what interests might they have?
- What are the different ways key terms might have been defined, and which definitions have been chosen?
- What sort of sample was gathered, and how might that sample affect the result? Is the statistic being properly interpreted? Are comparisons being made, and if so, are the comparisons appropriate? Are there competing statistics? If so, what stakes do the opponents have in the issue, and how are those stakes likely to affect their use of statistics?

(Adapted from the Chronicle of Higher Education, *The Chronicle Review*.)

# Conventions

| **Major Teaching Emphases** |
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- **Continue to teach and revise the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems.**

- **Teach students to investigate texts that are unconventional in their form and their use of the semiotic systems and codes and conventions.**

- **Encourage students to experiment with the unconventional use of text structures, semiotic systems and codes and conventions as they plan and produce multimodal texts.**

## Teaching Notes

Students in the Advanced Phase will continue to extend their critical viewing skills by comparing how the codes and conventions are used in a range of multimodal texts conveyed by paper, digital electronic and live technologies. These texts will be increasingly sophisticated and complex, representing a range of text forms and all curriculum areas. Particular attention will be paid to texts that are unconventional in their form, use of semiotic systems and codes and conventions.

Students will also expand their understandings about the deliberate design of multimodal texts and the variety of ways in which semiotic systems and their codes and conventions can convey ideology and point of view. Such explorations will include examination of literal and symbolic meanings and the representation of truth, facts and reality.

Students will further investigate the ways in which the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems have been designed to position the viewer, emphasising, including and omitting particular information.

The focus for Advanced viewers in developing further understandings about the codes and conventions of the five semiotic  systems is organised under the following headings:
- Understanding the structures of text forms are not rigid
- What students need to know and be able to do with the conventions
  - Codes and conventions of the visual semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the audio semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the gestural semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the spatial semiotic system
  - Codes and conventions of the linguistic semiotic system.

## Understanding the Structures of Text Forms Conventions Are Not Rigid

Advanced viewers will be familiar with a wide range of text forms and will be able to identify their common features. They will understand that the structures of texts emerge from cultural practices, which have been repeated over time until they become common practice. Students should be capable of reading the codes and conventions used in these text forms and describing the ways in which text designers use them to create expectations of the viewer and manipulate the viewer's understandings. Several charts that show the common genres and text forms can be found on the *Viewing CD*. A list of film genres follows in Figure 9.11.

**Common Film Genres**

| action | comedy | crime/gangster |
| animations | cult films | 'chick' flicks |
| film noir | road films | fantasy films |
| romance | science fiction | musicals |
| martial arts | war | drama |
| horror | westerns | epics/historical |

**Films Which Blend Genres**

| Films | Genres |
|---|---|
| *Star Wars* | action/science fiction |
| *Tomb Raider* | video game/action |
| *Shrek* | fairy tale/comedy |
| Jackie Chan films | martial arts/comedy |
| *Scary Movie* | horror/comedy |

**Figure 9.11**

Students should also recognise the ways in which texts are continually changing as text designers adapt to new audiences. Some movies are adaptations of well-known comics and vice versa, websites create audiences for television programs, and television game shows can create instant celebrities.

## What Students Need to Know and Be Able to Do with the Conventions

Students in the Advanced viewing phase will continue to extend their critical viewing skills by comparing how the codes and conventions are used in a range of multimodal texts conveyed by paper, digital electronic and live technologies. These texts will be increasingly sophisticated and complex, representing a range of text forms and all curriculum areas.

In addition to engaging in critical reflection regarding how and why particular codes and conventions and semiotic systems are used in a text, students will continue to explore the professions in which design of text is a core part of their work, for example, marketing, advertising, design, film production and publishing. Students could investigate websites for some of these professions in which the application of design is discussed. They could also seek out commentary by professionals on particularly successful use of design. Websites such as http://www.bestadsontv exhibit awards from within the professions for excellence in still and moving images in advertising, together with commentary. Selective analysis of the work on these sites together with the commentary would provide students with expert opinion.

As students are increasingly using social media to consume and produce multimodal texts it would be appropriate to include some critical analysis of postings of moving images on sites such as YouTube in terms of the effective use of the codes and conventions of the semiotic systems. Such analysis would need to be selective and supervised.

Investigation about the combinations, weighting and dominance of different semiotic systems and/or codes and conventions and the degree of agreement or dissonance between them in a text should build on the explorations commenced in the Consolidating and Proficient phases.

It is important that students have the opportunity to both consume and produce multimodal texts in order to practise the application of their developing understandings about the codes and conventions of the five semiotic systems. All learning activities should engage students and teachers in using the appropriate metalanguage for each semiotic system.

When introducing the codes and conventions of the Advanced viewing phase teachers should also revise and extend the codes and conventions of the Proficient viewing phase.

Tables 9.1 to 9.3 provide the three codes and conventions of the semiotic systems to be introduced in the Advanced viewing phase. The metalanguage that is introduced around these concepts in the Advanced viewing phase has been italicised. When introducing the codes and conventions of the visual semiotic system in the Advanced viewing phase teachers should particularly revise and extend the codes and conventions of the Proficient viewing phase.

## Codes and Conventions of the Visual Semiotic System

Teaching and learning activities around the Visual Semiotic System should focus on revising and extending the codes and conventions related to colour, line, texture, shape, form or juxtaposition, point of view, framing, focus and lighting that were introduced in the previous five viewing phases. Activities should also focus on how the visual semiotic system is combined with the codes and conventions of other semiotic systems, their relative weight, and the dominance of any semiotic systems in a text. Students should critically analyse the effect of these combinations, weightings and dominance.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Editing** | • Introduce the concept of *parallel cutting*, a technique that cuts from one scene to another to depict simultaneous events and create or increase tension.<br><br>• Explain that changes in technology mean that a *split screen* is often used to show simultaneous action instead of *parallel cutting*.<br><br>• Investigate how *parallel cutting* and *split screens* are used in different film and television genres and why.<br><br>• Introduce the concept of *inserts* where something seemingly out of place is suddenly shown, but later in the film or program it is revealed that it was significant, for example, it might have been an important clue.<br><br>• Find examples and discuss.<br><br>• Discuss the *pacing* of film, that is, how *fast* or *slow* information is introduced or the plot develops. Examine different genres and consider the *pacing* and the reason for it. Often *fast pacing* focuses on action and *slow pacing* focuses on characterisation. |

**Table 9.1 Codes and conventions of the visual semiotic system**

## *Codes and Conventions of the Audio Semiotic System*

Teaching and learning activities around the audio semiotic system needs to focus on revising and extending the codes and conventions related to volume, audibility and pace introduced in the previous five viewing phases. Activities should also focus on how the audio semiotic system is combined with the codes and conventions of other semiotic systems, their relative weight, and the dominance of any semiotic systems in a text. They should critically analyse the effect of these combinations, weightings and dominance.

## *Codes and Conventions of the Gestural Semiotic System*

Teaching and learning activities around the gestural semiotic system needs to focus on revising and extending the codes and conventions related to bodily contact, proximity, orientation and body position, appearance, head movement, facial expression, kinesics, posture, gaze and eye movement introduced in the previous five viewing phases. Activities should also focus on how the gestural semiotic system is combined with other semiotic systems ensuring students have a complete understanding of each and are able to apply this understanding in both the critical analysis and consumption of multimodal texts and the production of multimodal texts. Activities need to focus on how the gestural semiotic system is combined with the codes and conventions of other semiotic systems, their relative weight, and the dominance of any semiotic systems in a text. They should critically analyse the effect of these combinations, weightings and dominance.

## *Codes and Conventions of the Spatial Semiotic System*

There is only one new code and convention and metalanguage term for the spatial semiotic system to be introduced in the Advanced viewing phase. Teaching and learning activities around the spatial semiotic system should focus on revising and extending the codes and conventions related to position, distance and framing that were introduced in the previous five viewing phases.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Position** | • Revise the concept of *position* in the layout of page and screen or organisation of three-dimensional space to indicate the importance of something, draw attention to it, or show relationships. Revise the concepts of top/bottom, left/right, centre/margin and foreground/background and what they mean.<br><br>• Introduce the term *salience* as a term for indicating the importance of something in a text.  Examine a variety of text forms with different purpose, audiences and contexts and look for the ways in which *salience* is indicated not only by position but also by other semiotic systems. Ask students to describe their discoveries using correct terminology and draw conclusions about the effect of different combinations of semiotic systems when indicating *salience*. For example, students might summarise their analyses in this way:  'The *salience* of the main character is indicated through the spatial semiotic system by his placement in the foreground and is reinforced through the visual semiotic system by the use of a spotlight on him. The use of the audio semiotic system is unusual but very effective. Although the character speaks in a low volume whisper, this also draws attention to him as it is unexpected and in contrast to his previous speaking voice and volume.' |

**Table 9.2 Codes and conventions of the spatial semiotic system**

## *Codes and Conventions of the Linguistic Semiotic System*

In the Advanced viewing phase there is an emphasis on revising and building upon previously introduced concepts in the Phrases, Clauses and Sentences section and exploring them in more sophisticated ways. Ensure that teaching and learning activities around the linguistic semiotic system engage students with the exploration of texts delivered via all three technologies: paper, digital electronic and live and across all curriculum areas.

Teachers need to consult the relevant English Curriculum Scope and Sequence for their teaching context for a comprehensive list.

| Codes and Conventions | Concepts to be introduced and suggested focus for teacher talk |
|---|---|
| **Parts of Speech** | *Nominalisation* has been placed in the Parts of Speech section because it is centrally concerned with a number of parts of speech.<br><br>Students need to understand that: -<br><br>• The process of *nominalisation* turns verbs into nouns (such as, analyse into analysis).<br><br>• Adjectives can be turned into nouns (such as honest into honesty).<br><br>• When a text is *nominalised* it is no longer concerned with actions but is focused on objects or concepts (such as in, We <u>analysed</u> the data from the accident and it revealed that driver <u>reacted</u> slowly as he <u>approached</u> the other vehicle. The <u>analysis</u> of the data from the accident revealed the driver's <u>reaction</u> was slow in his <u>approach</u> to the other vehicle).<br><br>• When *nominalisation* occurs, the tone of text becomes more abstract, academic and formal and sometimes more concise.<br><br>• When *nominalisation* occurs, the voice of the text has more authority due to the increased density of the text and change from informal to more formal language.<br><br>• During the process of *nominalisation* a sense of action is still retained while concepts are identified, physical qualities described and classified. Taxonomies of technical terms can then be constructed across different disciplines (such as, <u>to erode</u> becomes <u>erosion</u> and <u>to weather</u> becomes <u>weathering</u> in geography).<br><br>*Nominalisation* can be a very useful resource but it can also be used to excess. Because *nominalisation* produces texts that are more concise and dense they can be rendered inaccessible to certain audiences. *Nominalisation* can produce texts that intimidate or exclude. This may be particularly so for students whose first language is not English or students who are struggling. The two examples below indicate how *nominalisation* can potentially cause problems of intimidation, exclusion and in some cases misunderstanding by certain audiences.<br><br>Failure to attend classes on two successive occasions without informing the lecturer will cause you to become ineligible to pass this subject.<br><br>By changing the nouns back to verbs and using simpler language, this notice could be rewritten as:<br><br>If you miss two classes in a row without telling the lecturer you will fail this subject. |
| **Punctuation** | Students need to understand that:<br><br>• There are two types of *dashes*, an 'em' (m) *dash* and an 'en' (n) *dash* that are distinguished by their length. In modern usage the difference between the two *dashes* is disappearing and commas, colons or semicolons are used in their place.<br><br>• An em *dash* can be used to indicate a change in thought (such as, I'd better have passed the exam—it's the majority of the marks—or I'll have to repeat the subject). |

| Punctuation continued | • The en *dash* is used between two dates (such as the 1914–1918 war) or between compound words (such as, the English–Scottish border). |
|---|---|
| | • *Brackets* are used to mark off dates, such as, John Smith (1919–1989). |
| | • *Brackets* can be used to mark an aside, such as – The former Prime Minister of Australia (Malcolm Fraser) spoke at length. |
| | • *Brackets* can be used to enumerate a list, such as, (1), (2), (3). |
| | • *Square brackets* are primarily used in quoted material to signify editorial interpolations or insertions made by someone other than the author. |
| | • *Angle brackets* are used as a device for enclosing email or web addresses. |
| | • *Ellipses* are used: to show incomplete lines of text, e.g. To be or not to be ...; or to show words that have been omitted from quotations. |
| | • The *forward slash* is used in a number of ways: when showing alternatives; in some shortened forms; in mathematical expressions; as a substitute for per, an or a when units of measurement are abbreviated; and in web addresses. |
| **Phrases, Clauses and Sentences** | • Revise all punctuation introduced in the previous five phases. |
| **Cohesive Devices** | Students need to understand that: - |
| | • *Lexical cohesion*, or getting the text to hang together as a whole, can be achieved by using antonyms, synonyms and repetition of words (as discussed in earlier phases). Revision of these earlier cohesive devices, including theme (or topic) and conjunctions, is necessary for students to understand the part that lexical cohesion plays in the construction of texts. Students will need repeated exposure to the use of *lexical cohesion* in complex texts. |
| | • Rather than using substitution (as in lexical cohesion) unnecessary repetition in a text can be achieved through *ellipsis* where something is left out altogether (such as, Mary can read this, but I don't know how. This can be understood to mean, Mary can read this, but I don't know how Mary can read this.). *Ellipsis* is used commonly in both written and spoken language and creates clearer and more cohesive expression with an economy of expression. |

**Table 9.3 Codes and conventions of the linguistic semiotic system**

> For a full description and definitions of all the codes and conventions for each semiotic system, see *Viewing Resource Book*:
> • Chapter 3: Conventions

# Involving Students

## 1 Nail the Character

Nail the Character (van der Hoeven 2003) has many variations. This version has been adapted to viewing. In this activity, students examine how characters are constructed in visual texts. They explore how different people can 'read' characters in different ways by

comparing their own interpretations with others in the class. They also learn to justify their interpretations by citing examples from the visual text.

- Students watch a feature film; ask students to focus on the construction of the main characters.
- Divide the class into groups of four or five.
- Provide each group with two identical grids that list the names of the main characters in a film. An example of a completed grid can be found on the *Viewing CD*.
- Ask students to brainstorm ten adjectives that best describe each character and, using one of the grids, write each adjective under the appropriate character's name. Encourage students to make the adjectives as accurate but as complex as possible so the meaning is not obvious and provides a challenge for the other groups. Provide dictionaries and thesauruses to help students extend their word knowledge. For example, when describing Prince Farquaad from the film *Shrek* (2001), students could describe him as 'conceited' instead of 'stuck-up'.
- Ask students to cut up the words in each grid so they are cards, shuffle them and pass them to another group.
- Students use the empty grid to place these vocabulary cards in the correct space. Each member of the group must agree with the positioning of the card.
- If there are any remaining cards, students can challenge the other groups by asking them to explain their reasoning for thinking of these adjectives. Ask students to justify their interpretations by using examples from the film.

As a follow-up activity, students could choose one character to write about in detail. Students could use the vocabulary from the charts and provide examples from the text to explain their reasoning for viewing a character in a particular way.

## 2 Pre-screening Activities

Pre-reading activities are conducted regularly, prior to the studies of literature in most classrooms and their application can be equally as important before the screening of films in a classroom. Each film will have different pre-screening topics to investigate. For example, before watching the film *Chronicles of Narnia* (2005), students should be given some overview of the London Blitz and evacuees as well as biblical references. When screening *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962), some discussion of racism in the early 1960s in the southern states of the United States would provide students with a greater understanding of the context of the film.

For less well-known films, teachers can present the students with the title and ask them to predict what they think the film will be about. The DVD or video cover can also provide students with vital clues about the film's genre and plot. Viewing the trailer of a film is also helpful. The first few minutes of a film are usually important for establishing character, setting and plot development and students should be taught to examine these elements closely. Depending on time constraints, it is also recommended that teachers allow students to view the film once without interruption for enjoyment and to understand the plot.

## 3 Predicting the Ending

Examining the resolution of narrative films and television programs enables students to detect the narrative conventions of the film or program and identify how their prior knowledge of conventions helps them to construct meaning. In some films, often a character that lives outside of society's norms will end up dying or facing some other form of retributive end. For example, in the 1989 film *Dead Poets Society,* the main character, Mr Keating, is an idealistic teacher who inspires his students to follow their dreams even if it involves stepping outside of society's norms. Ultimately, one of the boys he teaches, Neil Perry, commits suicide and John Keating is blamed.

In the 2002 film *Bend It Like Beckham*, the female protagonist, Jess, who lives in England with her traditional Sikh family opposes her family's wishes in order to follow her dreams. In this film, there is a much happier resolution but not before Jess endures considerable personal difficulty. There are many other such examples: television crime programs almost always end in an arrest and rarely do soap opera weddings occur without a hitch.

The steps for conducting this activity are as follows:

- Watch a film and stop it at a pre-selected point: this should be at a significant turning point in the film.
- Invite students to think about what they have seen and make a prediction of what actions or events might come next. Offer a variety of options. Expect students to justify their decisions.

- Compare students' responses within the class.
- Continue viewing the text. Compare the class predictions with the outcome.
- Encourage discussion. Why would the text designer write this ending? How does the ending reflect society's attitudes? Does it follow a predictable narrative structure? Can they think of any text examples where traditional endings are subverted?
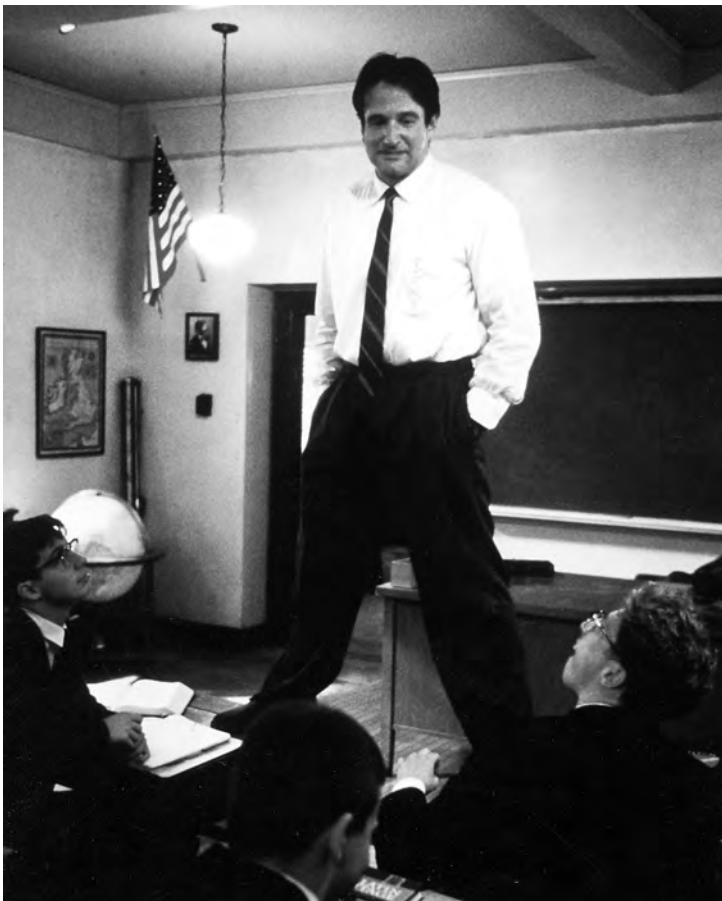


**Figure 9.12** *Dead Poets Society* **(1989) is an example of a narrative film with a predictable resolution.**

# PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES

## Major Teaching Emphases

- ■ Encourage students to select, evaluate and modify viewing strategies according to the purpose of the viewing.

- ■ Encourage students to consciously add to their knowledge of the semiotic systems as necessary when producing multimodal texts.

- ■ Encourage students to evaluate the effectiveness of their planning and producing choices.

## Organisation of the Processes and Strategies Aspect

There are several differences in the organisation of the Processes and Strategies aspect. Both the Teaching Notes and the Teaching and Learning Experiences (Involving Students) are located in Chapter 4 of the *Viewing Resource Book*.

The rationale for this difference in organisation is that the processes and strategies of viewing are not conceptually hierarchical and therefore not phase-specific. In all phases, a variety of viewing processes and strategies need to be introduced, developed and consolidated.

What varies from one phase to the next is the growth in:
- the number and integration of strategies used throughout the processes of viewing
- the awareness and monitoring of viewing processes
- the efficiency in the uses of the viewing processes
- the ability to articulate the use of the strategies used in the process of viewing
- the awareness of how the use of processes helps with composing and viewing texts.

# Supporting Parents of Advanced Viewers

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF ADVANCED VIEWERS

Students at the Advanced phase are able to interpret a range of complex visual texts. They are able to identify the purpose of texts, even when this is not explicit, and describe the techniques used to achieve this purpose. Students at this phase understand texts are not neutral but can provide information about the ideology and beliefs of the culture they are created in. They also recognise that visual texts will be viewed differently by different people dependent upon their own beliefs and experiences.

## Supporting Advanced Viewers in the Home

A parent brochure providing tips on supporting viewers in the home is located on the *First Steps Viewing CD*. The brochure contains information about the kinds of viewing activities students will be engaged in at school and why the teaching of viewing is an important part of the school curriculum. It also gives information about appropriate viewing practices and ways parents can help students develop their critical viewing habits.

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**Parent Brochure (see Parent Brochure 3)**

1 Why Teach Viewing?
2 The Development of Viewing
3 Supporting Your Child
4 Resources
5 Things to Do When Viewing with Your Child
6 Viewing at School.

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# Glossary

| | |
|---|---|
| **action qualities** | An image in which the participants are involved in some action or process. Callow (1999: 121). |
| **analysing** | A teaching and learning practice involving the dividing and examining of the parts to understand the whole. |
| **aspects** | Specific facets of viewing that are categorised as Use of Texts, Contextual Understanding, Conventions, and Processes and Strategies. |
| **audience** | Groups of people to whom visual texts, images, commercials, films or television programs are targeted. |
| **audio semiotic system** | The audio semiotic system refers to sound, how it is produced, heard and interpreted. It uses codes such as dialogue, sound effects and silence, pace, pitch and volume that are combined using culturally and socially specific conventions that assist in making meaning. |
| **auditory codes** | Auditory codes shape meaning-making by drawing attention to or adding further meaning to the images on the screen through the use of such things as music tracks, voiceovers and sound effects. |
| **bird's-eye view** | (Or top-down view) is achieved when the camera or the viewer is positioned directly above the subject. |
| **blogs** | On-line diaries. |
| **close-up shot** | A photographic term meaning a camera shot taken from a very close distance from a person or object; close-up shots usually emphasise the head of the person/actor or a particular detail of an object. |
| **codes** | The codes of each semiotic system are combined to form a grammar that enables the reader/viewer to identify and describe how attention is captured, how emphasis of particular elements is created, and therefore how meaning is shaped. |
| **codes and conventions** | The codes and conventions of a semiotic system are the tools that enable the reader/viewer to work out the meanings of the text. |
| **connotation** | A thought and/or feeling associated with a word or object. |
| **content analysis** | A methodology used in the social sciences in which a researcher isolates a particular characteristic and tallies the number of times it appears, e.g. counts the number of advertisements that appear during a news program. |
| **context** | Everything or all the circumstances that surround a text's production, e.g. the aspects of its publication as well as the cultural, political, historical factors, etc. and the text's reception by the reader. |
| **contextual understanding** | An aspect of viewing that involves an understanding of how the content of a text affects the choices made by the illustrator, text designer or author and their awareness of the viewer's interpretation of their text. |
| **conventions** | Conventions are the socially and culturally accepted rules or grammar of a semiotic system that facilitate the use of codes to make meaning in a text. |
| **cues** | Signals or prompts. |
| **culturally inclusive** | An approach which recognises and places equal value on all cultures and viewpoints, not just those of the dominant culture. |

**deconstruction**  The act of deconstructing; a philosophical and analytical reading of a text which involves taking apart its elements in order to understand the meaning of the text and how it has been constructed.

**demand**  When the represented participant of an image (person/animal, etc.) looks directly at the viewer.

**denotation**  The literal meaning of a word or object.

**design**  The layout of a page such as a printed page or a web page.

**device**  A technique used by authors and illustrators to influence the construction of meaning, e.g. colour, symbolism, etc.

**digital electronic texts**  Texts that are delivered by digital electronic technology.

**dominant reading**  The reading of a text that is designed by the author to present the values and beliefs of the dominant or mainstream culture to the reader or viewer.

**e-cards**  Interactive postcards available on the Internet; they may include sound and music.

**e-literature**  Electronic versions of traditional print books, magazines, etc.

**e-stories**  Interactive books available on the Internet; they have an audio component and can include hyperlinks.

**ethnocentricity**  A focus on one's own culture or race; a belief that one's own race is superior.

**foregrounding**  According more importance to a concept idea or object by drawing attention to it.

**framing**  Framing can be actual or it can be implied by using elements in the image to create a frame. Framing indicates whether elements in the image are connected or disconnected by placing them within the frame or outside it. The use of particular camera shots (close, medium or long) can frame particular elements of an overall image to draw attention, create emotion or mood or create a connection with the viewer.

**gaps and silences**  A place in a text where something is deliberately omitted but the reader fills in the missing text with their own assumptions and knowledge. The deliberate omission of information can also be a technique for foregrounding a particular point of view.

**gaze**  The directed look of either a viewer or a represented figure in an image. It can indicate relationships or the relative importance of something.

**genre**  Is a category of text with a particular form, structure and content which shapes and limits the meaning readers can derive from a text. The term genre can be used to distinguish between texts in terms of their subject matter (e.g. horror or science fiction) and form and structure (e.g. novel, poetry).

**gestural semiotic system**  The gestural semiotic system refers to actions or movements of the body that are observable and intended. Their codes include facial expression, posture, gaze and eye movement. The reader/viewer of the gesture has to determine whether the gesture is deliberate, conscious and voluntary and is therefore intended to convey meaning. The meaning of gestures is determined by cultural and social conventions.

**given/new**  The left/right axis of an image; elements on the left-hand side often represent already known information (given), while elements on the right represent new information.

**global statement**  A written snapshot of a particular learner in a particular phase of development, which encapsulates the typical characteristics of that phase.

| | |
|---|---|
| **guided viewing** | A procedure that enables teachers to provide scaffolded support to a group of students with the aim of teaching and practising viewing strategies. |
| **hybrid text** | A text consisting of a combination of different text forms. |
| **hyperlink** | A link from one hypertext file to another location or file, usually activated by an underlined word or icon. |
| **hypertext** | Machine-readable text that is not sequential, but is organised so that related items of information are connected. This can also be referred to as hybridity. |
| **ideal/real** | Refers to the top/bottom axis of an image, elements on the top represent what is being aspired to (ideal), those on the bottom half represent the practical or more specific information (real). |
| **ideology** | The beliefs, values, symbols and devices that form the body of a doctrine, social movement, class or large group, e.g. socialism. |
| **interactive texts** | Texts in which the reader is able to respond to and change the course of a particular electronic text. |
| **interactive whiteboard** | An electronic whiteboard that is connected to a computer and a data projector. |
| **intertextuality** | Occurs when texts draw upon one another, in terms of their content, shape or form. A paper text may resemble a screen, a movie may imitate an iconic scene from another film, or a children's book may borrow characters or part of a plot. Intertextuality requires the viewer to consciously access and bring knowledge from previous literacy experiences to the current viewing situation. |
| **juxtaposition** | Refers to how objects or people are positioned in relation to one another. It can indicate relationships or mood. |
| **layout** | The arrangement of print or graphics on a page or screen. |
| **lighting** | Techniques used for illumination in an image/film segment; lighting can contribute to mood and meaning. |
| **linear texts** | Texts that follow a linear pattern such as paper-based texts which are read in a prescribed manner according to word, page and chapter sequence. |
| **linguistic semiotic system** | The linguistic semiotic system consists of the semantics and syntax of language that assist in making meaning and includes codes such as verbs, adjectives and pronouns; and conventions, such as phrases, clauses and sentences. |
| **long shot** | A photographic term that means a camera shot that is taken a long distance from the person or object. |
| **medium** | Refers to the vehicle through which a text is transmitted; can be categorised in many ways including television, radio, etc. or in broader terms such as speech or writing. |
| **medium shot** | A photographic term for a filmed view that is between a close-up and long-distance shot. |
| **metalanguage** | A specialised vocabulary that can be used to describe how the linguistic, visual, audio, gestural and spatial semiotic systems have been brought together in a multimodal text. |
| **metaphor** | A figure of speech in which a term or phrase is used to compare something to which it is not literally connected, e.g. 'The road was a ribbon of moonlight'. |
| **metonymy** | The use of the name of one thing for that of another to which it has some relation, e.g. the crown represents the monarchy. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **mise-en-scène** | A French term meaning all the visual details that a filmmaker may use in an image, e.g. the setting, actors, costume, body language, facial expressions, make-up, choice of lighting, use of space, etc. |
| **modes** | Modes refer to how a message is conveyed, that is, through speech or writing. |
| **montage** | Occurs in art and filmmaking and in both cases involves using a composite of elements to make an artwork or film. A montage in art is where smaller pictures have been combined to create a larger work, while in filmmaking it may consist of combining rapid editing, special effects and music to present a narrative in a condensed form. |
| **multimodal texts** | Draw on two or more semiotic systems. |
| **non-linear texts** | Refers to electronic texts which are not read in a prescribed pattern but invite the viewer's access in a non-sequential manner. |
| **offer** | When the participants in an image do not look directly at the viewer. |
| **point of view** | Is about how the reader is positioned to engage with the text. In terms of the linguistic text the narrator may position the reader to view a character in a particular way through the use of various literary techniques. The creator of a visual text might position the viewer so that they view a scene from above (bird's-eye view). |
| **primary sources** | Documentary evidence that is directly from the source and is produced at the time, e.g. letters, photographs. |
| **processes and strategies** | An aspect of viewing involving the application of knowledge and understandings to comprehend and compose visual texts. |
| **reader positioning** | Refers to the way texts are constructed to influence the reader's frame of mind. |
| **reading paths** | Reading paths refer to the way a reader/viewer is guided through the whole text by the structure of the text. The reader/viewer is led through the text by the way in which images, words, headings and the layout and organisation are combined. The text can be structured in a way that leads the reader in a linear or non-linear path. The choice of reading path is influenced by both the structure of the text and the purpose for which it is being read. |
| **resistant reading** | A reading of a text which challenges the prevailing views of the dominant culture. |
| **scaffolded learning** | A teaching strategy whereby teachers model a skill or concept and gradually release the level of instructional intervention as students work their way towards independent knowledge. |
| **search engines** | A retrieval system used to find information on the worldwide web, e.g. Google. |
| **semiotic systems** | A semiotic system is a system of shared signs and symbols through which a group makes or conveys meaning. Each semiotic system has a set of codes and conventions that are the tools that enable a reader/viewer to work out the meaning of the text. There are five semiotic systems: linguistic, audio, visual, gestural and spatial. |
| **semiotics** | The study of making meaning in signs and symbols. |
| **shared viewing** | A teacher-managed process in which students see a good model of a text, share ideas with the teacher and then are invited to construct or analyse a text independently. |
| **socio-cultural** | A combination of social and cultural factors such as economic status, geographical location, beliefs and values. |

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|---|---|
| **spatial semiotic system** | The spatial semiotic system describes how elements are distributed within the two-dimensional space of page or screen. The codes in two-dimensional space include position, distance and framing. The codes can also be used to place elements in three-dimensional space, such as a room or set. The meanings derived from use of the conventions of organisations and layout are socially and culturally specific. |
| **stereotype** | A perception conforming to a set image or type based on a culturally dominant idea or ideas, e.g. girls like pink. |
| **technical codes** | The ways a text designer uses equipment to create an image; includes camera angle, lens choice, framing, shutter speeds. |
| **testimony** | The use of information from experts or people positively associated with a situation or product, used to state opinions designed as facts; can also include statistics, graphs, charts, etc. |
| **text designer** | The person who constructs a multimodal text; also referred to as a text producer. |
| **texts** | Any communication which is conveyed by live, paper or digital electronic technology from which meaning is gained, e.g. books, films, conversation, e-stories, posters, birthday cards, advertisements. |
| **texture** | The tactile quality of an image; can create a sense of empathy with the viewer. |
| **triptych** | A visual image that is linked and divided into three sections. |
| **values and attitudes** | The beliefs that guide our behaviour; they are the ways in which these are manifest in our actions and thoughts to others. |
| **vectors/vectorality** | Refer to the way the viewer's eye is led through a visual image by actual or implied lines. Lines can be implied through repetition of colour or objects across a page or screen. Vectors or vectorality can draw the eye to significant elements in the image, show relationships or assist in the creation of a mood or emotion. For example, telegraph poles receding into the distance as an implied line can create a mood of isolation or loneliness. |
| **visual semiotic systems** | The visual semiotic system describes the way in which the codes such as colour, line and texture, are combined using culturally and socially specific conventions that assist in making meaning. |
| **visual texts** | Any texts that include images (still/moving or multimodal) or which have a combination of images and another medium such as written texts and audio; examples include film, photographs, gestures, body language, architecture, etc. |
| **voiceover** | The voice of an unseen narrator speaking (as in TV commercials, films, etc.). |

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