TLN Online
Using Mentor Texts to Engage Writing

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“Act like a writing thief; scrutinize, steal, and create.”
— RUTH CULHAM
Tell me a bit about who you are and where you are from....

Where are you working from today?

Can you see any writing from where you are sitting?
Today was the absolute worst day ever
And don’t try to convince me that
There’s something good in every day
Because, when you take a closer look,
This world is a pretty evil place.
Even if
Some goodness does shine through once in a while
Satisfaction and happiness don’t last.
And it’s not true that
It’s all in the mind and heart
Because
True happiness can be obtained
Only if one’s surroundings are good
It’s not true that good exists
I’m sure you can agree that
The reality
Creates
My attitude
It’s all beyond my control
And you’ll never in a million years hear me say that
Today was a good day

Now read from bottom to top.

Sharing with students the magic of words...

Would you use this with your students?
This program will cover:

✓ Mentor texts are books that provide examples of competent writing as examples for the improvement of their own writing.

✓ Explain how to use mentor texts with students

✓ How to choose mentor texts

✓ Provide examples of how students use mentor texts

✓ 5 tips for the best use of mentor texts

It’s easier to ask for forgiveness than permission…

— Ruth Culham
Mentor texts are about finding and sharing/showing great texts with your students to engage them in:

- Powerful language
- Varied Genres
- Intricate Details
- Convincing Evidence
- In depth Descriptions
- Articulate Vocabulary

It’s about deconstructing and reconstructing, tearing apart, inspecting and improving till it’s yours.

What have you read this week that you have stolen for your classroom?

— Ruth Culham
highlight  circle  underline

Sticky note

Notes in the margins

"View words through the eyes of a writing thief."
— Ruth Culham
Jeff Anderson: 10 Things Every Writer Needs to Know

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1dH3rua3MHQ
As I stepped off the bus at cave hill creek camp I was so excited as I could see everyone else was too. We got into the common witch was huge. We met the mananger Tim he told us the rules and we were all set to go and get our bags and see our cabins.
It wasn’t a human. It couldn’t be. It was our four times as tall as the tallest human. It was so tall it’s head was higher than the upstairs windows of the houses.

Sophie opened her mouth to scream, but no sound came out. Her throat, like her whole body, was frozen with fright.

This was witching hour all right. The tall black figure was coming her way. It was keeping very close to the houses across the street, hiding in the shadowy places where there was no moonlight.

On and on it came, nearer and nearer. But it was moving in spurts. It would stop, then it would move on, then it would stop again.
What do you consider to be a Mentor Text?

— Ruth Culham
What do you consider to be a Mentor Text?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4KolvjR8AM


"ANY text can be a mentor text—print or digital."

— Ruth Culham
Dear students,

When you are writing something for my class, be sure that you are using the right homophones. Eye cannot tale you enough how unintelligent you look when you use the wrong word. Their are know excuses for using the wrong words cause you have the education but you rush throw you're work and mess up.

Love, you're concerned teacher Lady, Ms. Jenkins 😊

Would you consider this a Mentor Text?
The skill of effective writing that we instil in our students is setting them up for a life of success with a pen/keyboard in their hands...

Where do you find the texts that you use and share with your students?

Idea?
Structure?
Written Craft?
Length?
Genre?
Theme?
Focus? – Vocab, Layout, Punctuation, etc
Sentence Structure?
Rhythm or Rhyme?

Do you get the chance to write for pleasure?
Where do you find your inspiration?

“Writing isn’t just for poets; it’s for life.”
— Ruth Culham
Advice on selection of literary texts

Literary texts

The Literature strand

The Literature strand in the Australian Curriculum: English Foundation to Year 10 aims to engage students in the study of literary texts of personal, cultural, social and aesthetic value. These texts include some that are recognised as having enduring social and artistic value and some that attract contemporary attention. Texts are chosen because they are judged to have potential for enriching the lives of students and expanding the scope of their experience, and because they represent effective and interesting features of form and style.

Range of literary texts

The range of literary texts for study from Foundation to Year 10 comprises Australian literature, including the oral narrative traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as well as the contemporary literature of these two cultural groups, and classic and contemporary world literature, including texts from and about Asia.

Each year level description in the Australian Curriculum: English Foundation to Year 10 provides information about the nature of texts to be studied including appropriate types of texts and typical linguistic and structural features. Across the years of schooling, students will engage with literary texts in spoken, written and multimodal form, including digital texts, such as narratives, poetry, prose, plays and films.

Illustrative text lists

Teachers and schools are best placed to make decisions about the selection of texts in their teaching and learning programs that address the content in the Australian Curriculum while also meeting the needs of the students in their classes.
This week the content of my piece is based upon interest expressed in purchase of several texts for a REI to use as resources for skill development in writing and reading. I have done some research into quality texts to support the teaching and learning across a range of areas. I am wondering if it would be worthwhile creating a space where we could share ideas and start to create a resource bank of activities for each book that teachers could easily access and add to. I would love to hear your thoughts.

**What Are Mentor Texts?**
Mentor texts, or anchor texts, are books that can be used as an example of good writing for students. Students can use the writing in these books to improve their own writing. Ralph Fletcher explains that mentor texts are “…any texts that you can learn from, and in every writer, no matter how skilled you are or how beginning you are, encounters and reads something that can lift and inform and infuse their own writing.” He says that you can learn from—without imitation—about word choice, about sentence structure, about the actual writing model, being used in a real, powerful way. When teachers work with students, they read the text and work on reading strategies while throughout the read. There are often multiple opportunities for a range of reading strategies in a quality mentor text. However, it is most effective to focus on just one strategy when reading with students. These are so many great ways to play with language and books are such a perfect way to

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Your Students Resources</em></td>
<td>Julia Cook</td>
<td>Perfect for teaching vivid verbs</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Fox and The Mouse</em></td>
<td>Rick Walton</td>
<td>To teach prepositions</td>
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<td><em>Turquoise</em></td>
<td>Michael Black &amp; Kevin Hawkes</td>
<td>To teach persuasive writing and the main idea</td>
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<td><em>Eileen Spinelli</em></td>
<td>Eileen Spinelli</td>
<td>To teach similes</td>
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**Table of Texts**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Voices in the Park</em></td>
<td>Anthony Browne</td>
<td>An amazing children’s book which teaches children all about perspective in stories by retelling the same story 4 times, through different characters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Cricklewood</em></td>
<td>Jemal Cannon</td>
<td>Descriptives Writing: Adj/Noun</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Born to Be a Treasure</em></td>
<td>Neil Steven Kiyama</td>
<td>This book is GREAT for teaching synonyms! Lots of smiles and laughter…</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>One Man Named Steve!</em></td>
<td>Alan Zweibel &amp; David Goldberg</td>
<td>To teach main idea and details</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Seriously, Cinderella Is So Annoying!</em></td>
<td>Trisha Speed Shaskan</td>
<td>A great way to teach point of view in writing… and not to mention, it’s funny!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Calm</em></td>
<td>Alan Madison &amp; Kevin Hawkes</td>
<td>Word choice, alliteration, choosing VS saying…</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Little Red Pen</em></td>
<td>Susan Stevens Crummel</td>
<td>Personification</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Woods</em></td>
<td>Paul Hoppe</td>
<td>Inferences</td>
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<td><em>Big Words For Little People</em></td>
<td>Janie Lee Curtis &amp; Laura Cornell</td>
<td>To teach inference</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Cowboy Camp</em></td>
<td>Tamani Sauer</td>
<td>To teach sentence fluency</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Joe Orton and the Seven Genie Dudes</em></td>
<td>Jenkin Hopkins</td>
<td>A great book for teaching genres</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Pictures From Our Vacation</em></td>
<td>Lynn Rae Perkins</td>
<td>Visualisation</td>
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<td><em>I Wanna Iguana</em></td>
<td>Karen Raskin</td>
<td>To teach persuasion</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Henry’s Freedom Bag</em></td>
<td>Elize Levine</td>
<td>Activating prior knowledge, asking questions, prediction</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Klamerous: Are You Cool</em></td>
<td>Martin Jenkins</td>
<td>Mentor text for how to make informational writing more engaging</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Stranger</em></td>
<td>Chris Van Allsburg</td>
<td>Synthesising, inferring, making connections</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Stalwart Lyrics</em></td>
<td>Laura Purdie Salas</td>
<td>A book with a poem for nearly every occasion in the writers research workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Punished</em></td>
<td>David Lubar</td>
<td>Figurative language, puns, palindrome, magrams</td>
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</table>
• Two Writing Teachers
  https://twowritingteachers.wordpress.com/2012/06/12/texts_childrenslitandteachingwri/

• Using Mentor Texts to Motivate and Support Student Writers
  http://www.edutopia.org/blog/using-mentor-text-motivate-and-support-student-writers-rebecca-alber

Creating Successful Writers with Mentor Texts
  http://www.stenhouse.com/assets/pdfs/mentortextsppt.pdf

• Teach Mentor Texts http://www.teachmentortexts.com

• Corbitt Harrison
  http://corbettharrison.com/documents/7Elements/7Elements_Mentor_Texts_WritingFix.pdf

• Teaching with Mentor Texts http://pinterest.com/nwilli/teaching-with-mentor-text/

• Conversations in Literacy

• Making the Most of Mentor Texts
  http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/apr14/vol71/num07/Making-the-Most-of-
  Mentor-Texts.aspx

• Writing with Mentor Texts
  http://elacss.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/file/view/ELA_Webinar_-_Writing_with_Mentor_Texts_April_18_2013.pdf
What are your three from today?

We all love takeaway!