



Presenting: Static Images

LEVEL 1 2 3 4 5

Plip Plop

THE LEARNING CONTEXT

Through a variety of oral, written, and visual language activities throughout the term, the students developed their knowledge and understanding about the elements used in static images.

They did close reading and analysis of picture book covers to see the way colour may be used to convey feeling and meaning about events and characters' personalities and/or behaviour. Background and foreground were examined for clues about the story and characters.

The students considered how graphics could convey ideas about action, events, emotions and personality. They also explored the choice of font and colour for the lettering. They offered their ideas about the links between the lettering and the ideas conveyed about the story.

They looked at the use and effect of space, shape, dominant image, and layout. They also looked at verbal features such as rhyme, alliteration, onomatopoeia, imperatives, rhetorical questions, and statements.

Students sketched possible outcomes from their interpretation of the book cover. They also applied their knowledge of the features of visual language by designing their own book covers by hand and on the computer.

Pictures and wordless texts were examined next. In small groups the students formulated their ideas about the messages implicit in these static images. They drew on their knowledge of how visual features can communicate information and ideas – for example, the way colour or graphics can convey meaning about a character or mood.

The teacher shared several picture books (see References). She then modelled a response with a static image, including the features they had analysed:

- visual features – dominant image, colour, lettering, layout, graphics, borders, lines to show movement, background and foreground, space.
- verbal features that support the idea – quotations, rhyme, alliteration, onomatopoeia, imperatives, rhetorical questions, statements, idiom.

The teacher gave reasons for her choices. She recrafted her first draft, using the computer, and giving her rationale for the changes. Then she modelled a third draft, by hand and on the computer. Students then created their own responses to each story. After recrafting they observed their teacher publishing her response.

She conferenced with the students individually and in small groups throughout the process. She encouraged them to share their response, demonstrate their recrafting, and explain the visual and verbal features.

Students were expected to proofread for spelling and grammar, and have a buddy check. The buddy and student were encouraged to view the response as a whole and discuss the the features with a view to final recrafting and editing. They took responsibility for the final shape, form, and correctness. When they decided their work was complete they made a final, published copy.

With teacher direction, the students wrote an explanation of their response to the story. The students wrote about the idea they wanted to convey, the elements they had used, the rationale behind their choices, and their intended audience and purpose.



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Plip Plop

Teacher-student conversations

While working on her response to *Cricket's Storm*, Edyn expressed concern about how to use words to convey her idea.

- Edyn: I've said "plip, plop, plip, plop" but I don't know what other words to use.
- Teacher: I like those words, they make me think of the sound of rain. What idea are you trying to get across?
- Edyn: Well – Cricket said it wouldn't rain all the time. Things will get better when it stops.
- Teacher: What will happen when the rain stops?
- Edyn: The sun will shine.
- Teacher: How could you say that?
- Edyn: "When the rain stops the sun will shine"?
- Teacher: That sounds fine – what a great idea for a statement, and it links to the quote you used – "Plip Plop"!

Edyn worked some more on her draft and incorporated the statement.

- Edyn: I'm having trouble with my border. I put lightning in it for a pattern but it doesn't look right.
- Teacher: Have a look at your words – "plip, plop, plip, plop". What makes that sound?
- Edyn: Rain! I could put raindrops. But there's none on the computer.
- Teacher: How could you do it then?
- Edyn: By hand!

Before she published Edyn talked with the teacher again. They viewed the static image as a whole.

- Teacher: You've got "Splash" in the middle of the page. I can see the shape of the raindrop change as it lands! Could you show that movement in some way? Think about the ways we've learnt to show movement in static images. Let's see if there's any movement shown in the book [they consult the text].
- Edyn: I could use lines around the splash and I could put little drops breaking off and flying off.
- Teacher: How could you show the little drops are moving?
- Edyn: Put some littler lines around those drops.
- Teacher: Those are good ideas for you to work on.

Edyn made further changes to her final draft and published her response to literature.

INTEGRATING VIEWING AND PRESENTING

Students' knowledge of visual language is derived from opportunities to view and discuss commonly seen static images. Teachers can provide a selection of material for students to view and read closely, in order to develop an understanding of how visual language conveys meaning. As in this exemplar teachers can provide posters and advertisements of products significant for students of this age. Students will have the opportunity to see how a message is conveyed through visual and verbal features.

Students should also be given opportunities for close reading and discussion of selected picture books and texts that show how these features of static images convey, support, and reinforce ideas and themes. Sophisticated picture books may also be used.

Students need opportunities to apply and practise these features. They will then develop an appreciation of how to convey their own ideas about literature.

WHERE TO NEXT?

To move Edyn towards the next learning step, the teacher might encourage her to focus on:

Concept

- Explain the meaning of visual features used in her static image in more detail, e.g., how she portrayed the sense of movement through the pink swirl and movement of "splash" inside the dominant image.
- Use more terminology to explain the techniques.
- Explain how she has used the visual and verbal features to convey her idea.

Impact

- Use visual features to increase the impact, e.g., simplify the border and colours.
- Develop verbal features, e.g., attempt to use a simile, imperative, or rhetorical question to convey the idea.

To do this, the teacher could:

- Identify the criteria for features which need to be developed.
- Model these features and discuss the process.
- Explore models of static images and responses to literature that exemplify the features that need to be developed.
- Conference regularly with Edyn while she is planning and developing her response to literature, to help her focus on these features.



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CURRICULUM LINKS

English in the New Zealand Curriculum

Achievement objectives

Level 2: Viewing and Presenting Functions

Viewing: Students should respond to meanings and ideas, identifying and describing the verbal and visual features.

Presenting: Students should use verbal and visual features to communicate ideas or stories using layout, drama, video, or still photography.

Levels 1 and 2: Viewing and Presenting Processes

In achieving the objectives of understanding and using visual language:

Exploring Language: Students should understand that communication involves verbal and visual features which have conventionally accepted meanings.

Thinking Critically: Students should show awareness of how words and images can be combined to make meaning.

Processing Information: Students should view and use visual texts to gain and present information, become familiar with and use appropriate terminologies, and write letter and number forms legibly to present ideas.

English in the New Zealand Curriculum, pages 40–41

REFERENCES

Cowley, Joy (2000). *Cricket's Storm*. Auckland: Ashton Scholastic.

Cowley, Joy (2001). *Pudding*. Auckland: Scholastic.

Hopkins, Perrin (2001). *Desert Dessert*. Auckland: Scholastic.

Ministry of Education (1994). *English in the New Zealand Curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media.

Wild, Margaret (1998). *Bim, Bam, Boom*. Sydney: ABC Books.



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Plip Plop

WHAT THE WORK SHOWS: A sense of movement gives Edyn's work impact. The eye travels through a bright curving droplet from the top to the bottom corner. We encounter the characters in Joy Cowley's *Cricket's Storm*. They are drawn in various attitudes to reflect their feelings and actions in the story, and the text is crafted to reinforce the sense of movement. The image speaks of better things to come.



Impact

Uses visual features to convey an idea.

- Border with a repeating pattern connects to the idea of the image.
- Lettering placed for impact and links to the idea of rain.
- Graphics indicate characters' feelings and the idea of sunshine following rain and thunder clouds.

Colour attracts attention and conveys the idea of rain and sunshine.

- Movement is communicated through the swirling shape of the dominant image, the placement of the droplets and the lines radiating from the "splash".

Uses verbal features to convey an idea.

- Words quoted from book title indicate rain drops falling.
- Statement conveys the optimistic message.

Student's explanation

The animals are trying to hide from the rain. The snail is hiding in his shell because he is afraid of the rain that fell from the sky, the ant hides under a leaf, but Cricket said, "Never let the weather get you down." This means that sometimes bad things will happen but good things will come again.

The quote I used was "Plip, plop, plip, plop, plip, plop splash." I used this quote because it went with the picture I drew of *Cricket's Storm*. I said, "When the rain stops, the sun will shine" so people know it will get better.

I went to gallery word art and chose the style for lettering and I used that to suit the rain. I set it out like this because it looks like raindrops coming from the sky. I made them go up and down like raindrops. I did that border because they had raindrops and splashes in the story. I chose a blue, rainbow, rain colour because it suits the story.

I want to tell people who are my age and older about a good book to read from the local library.

Concept

- Begins to explain an idea to be conveyed (what and why).
- Uses some terminology to plan for and/or explain the techniques used.
- Explains reasons for choice of font for lettering.
- Explains the design of the border.
- Explains the conventionally accepted meanings of the verbal features used.
- Gives reasons for the choice of the quotation and her statement.



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Plip Plop

Student's original work

