



Presenting: Static Images

LEVEL	1	2	3	4	5

Sweet as Sugar

THE LEARNING CONTEXT

Sangita, whose work is featured here, and Violet, whose work is featured in the level 4 exemplar Allison, were in the same class and shared the same learning experiences, but produced work at different levels of the curriculum. Their teacher met their individual needs through carefully targeted questioning and support.

The class had spent most of the term exploring narrative text in the reading programme. The teacher incorporated elements of Bloom's taxonomy into the programme, encouraging the students to extract features from the text, using analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

She introduced static images by asking, "How do we communicate messages to our audience?" In small, mixed-ability viewing groups, the class uncovered features of persuasion. The teacher placed a variety of persuasive posters and advertisements around the classroom. Over a week, the groups viewed the images and addressed questions about the language of the images.

- What is the main purpose of this image?
- Why have these particular colours been used?
- What do you think the illustrator meant to say? Is the message clear? Does it match the visuals?
- Who is the target audience? How can you tell?

The teacher used book covers and music posters to explore particular elements of static images and demonstrate that simple ideas can provide greater impact than a busy image. The class discussed materials, medium, colour, and texture that create impact, and brainstormed a list of verbal features.

The class was sharing J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. The teacher asked the students to compose and illustrate limericks about characters from this book to help them explore layout, colour, framing, and font. They peer-assessed their work in terms of set criteria. They then transferred their main ideas into a PowerPoint presentation as a background for a class performance, using images and limited words to tell the story.

The teacher then asked them to select a book they had enjoyed and produce a static image, using features targeted at a particular audience. They had to be able to explain their choice of features.

The teacher made the following suggestions:

- It must have impact.
- Simplify your idea.
- Think about layout, font, colour, framing, and white space.
- Select a medium you know you can manage.

The students drafted their images, practising them in pencil and using scissors, glue, and a photocopier to try different layouts. They asked a buddy and the teacher for feedback

before they published their images. Sangita decided to illustrate *My Dad* by Anthony Browne.

Teacher-student conversations

During drafting:

Sangita: The way I have my plan is that the border will be the biggest part. Do you think that's OK?

Teacher: What are your reasons for wanting it like this?

Sangita: What the Dad wears says a lot about his character, and when we looked at the book in class and in our groups his clothes really stayed in my mind, so I want them to stand out.

Teacher: You can justify and explain your choice, so that's fine.

During publishing:

Teacher: As your framing is so bold and it's got great impact, maybe we need to leave some white spaces? See how you're thinking of colouring the button red – do you think that the writing will stand out so well?

Sangita: Yes. Actually, now I've finished the border I don't want to colour around Dad either. The sugar crystals won't show up very well if I do.

Teacher: I'm wondering whether your letters need a stronger outline? They're almost disappearing into the crystals!

Sangita: I think a fine-tipped black pen, but I want to keep it looking as if it's pouring in.

INTEGRATING VIEWING AND PRESENTING

Students need many opportunities to explore, view, and discuss a variety of static images and to be encouraged and guided in practising these visual techniques. Throughout their classroom programmes, teachers will find images, illustrations, wordless texts, advertisements, posters, logos, signs, and symbols that can serve as useful models for students.

Teachers can explore elements of static images with more advanced students by analysing features and providing explanations, emphasising balance, composition, perspective, atmosphere, exaggeration, and the way words can anchor illustrations. By questioning students in terms of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Bloom's taxonomy), teachers can encourage them to think more deeply about choices, and how these elements combine to create impact. Students can then develop their own criteria for success.

This teacher used sophisticated picture books to demonstrate how verbal and visual features work together to provide impact.



English: Visual Language

Presenting: Static Images

ACCESS THE ENGLISH EXEMPLARS ONLINE AT www.tki.org.nz/r/assessment/exemplars/eng/

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WHERE TO NEXT?

To move Sangita towards the next learning step, the teacher could help her to focus on:

Concept

- Provide more explicit details (for example, explaining why the border dominates).
- Critically evaluate the reasons for her decisions.
- Expand the range of terminology she uses to explain the image.
- Explain the idea or mood she wants to convey and justifying this with reference to the book.

Impact

- Further explore the mood of the book through the image. (Does the colour of the cup provide for the most impact? What about balance? Does the font stand out? Is it clear for the audience?)

REFERENCES

Bloom, B.S. (Ed.) (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals: Handbook I, Cognitive Domain*. New York; Toronto: Longmans, Green.

Browne, Anthony (2000). *My Dad*. London: Doubleday.

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

Tolkien, J.R.R. (2001). *The Lord of the Rings*. London: Harper Collins.

CURRICULUM LINKS

English in the New Zealand Curriculum

Achievement objectives

Level 3: Viewing and Presenting Functions

Viewing: Students should respond to and discuss meanings, ideas, and effect, identifying the purposes for which the verbal and visual features are used and combined.

Presenting: Students should combine verbal and visual features to communicate information, ideas, or narrative through drama, video, computer, or other technologies and media.

Levels 3 and 4: Viewing and Presenting Processes

In achieving the objectives of understanding and using visual language:

Exploring Language: Students should identify important features of verbal and visual features and use them to create particular meanings and effects.

Thinking Critically: Students should identify and discuss ways in which verbal and visual features can be combined for a particular purpose and audience.

Processing Information: Students should view and use visual texts to retrieve, interpret, organise, and present information coherently; use appropriate technology, including fluent handwriting for effective presentation.

English in the New Zealand Curriculum, pages 40–41
http://www.tki.org.nz/r/language/curriculum/p40_42_e.php



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WHAT THE WORK SHOWS: Sangita combined a dominant symbolic image with the use of colour, design, and a simile to convey an idea from a book.



Impact

Begins to combine visual with verbal features to convey an idea.

- Combines a symbolic dominant image with a simile.
- Creates a border that uses colour, design, and a symbol to represent aspects of the main character's personality.
- Uses white space effectively to focus the view on the dominant image.

Student's explanation

I chose these colours in my image, as they match the colours in the book, they make a clear link. The blue and white stripes represent the shirt that Dad wears and the tartan represents the dressing gown he puts on when he wakes up. The red is a strong colour and the pink because it's a sweet colour and that's the image I want the reader to have of Dad.

The little squares pouring into the cup are meant to be sugar crystals. I made the font large enough so that I could colour the letters pink, so it would look sweet and sugary. Dad is on the front of the cup because dads are sort of like a comfort thing, like a cup of tea, for some people. Dad is homely and caring; that's why I decided on "My Dad's As Sweet As Sugar".

I wanted a strong border around the outside to contrast and focus on the middle. As the border shows patterns of Dad's clothing, I decided to give the name of the book and author on a shirt button, so that it would all match. I think this image is effective for younger kids. I want to encourage them to read it, so they can see how lovely it is. I wanted a bit of mystery, too. I want them to think, "What are the stripes and checks for?" I just wanted it to be really bright and eye catching.

Concept

- Attempts to explain the idea to be conveyed, echoed by the use of a simile.
- Explains how the use of colour and design represent the main character.
- Uses some appropriate technology to plan for and explain the techniques used.



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