

Figurative language and speech

Year 5



Lesson overview

This lesson consists of three activities exploring letter writing conventions and culminating in students writing a letter to their own pen pal. Schools may wish to set up a pen pal system with students at another school in Australia or encourage the students to choose their own pen pal. Register for **The Pen Pal Club** at auspost.com.au/penpalclub to assist you in arranging pen pals for your students.

The activities throughout this lesson will use the book *The Pen Pal Club* by Sally Morgan as a stimulus for writing letters to pen pals and exploring features of writing, from the very basic to the more complex. This lesson will primarily focus on the Literacy strand of the English curriculum however students will also explore aspects of the Language and Literature strands. Year 5 will be exploring figurative language features and how speech is used in narrative. They will use the book *The Pen Pal Club* to identify these features then generate their own sentences using these features appropriately to create interesting examples of writing. Students will then write a letter to their chosen pen pal, using the features they have explored.

Teachers may choose to organise an excursion to the local Post Office for students to post their letters at the end of these activities. This is a great opportunity for students to ask questions and expand their knowledge about the Australian postal system. Email penpalclub@auspost.com.au to arrange a tour of your local Post Office.

Learning intentions

Students will understand:

- How to recognise and use personification in their writing
- How to use speech effectively in their writing
- How to lay out an informal letter

Resources

- *The Pen Pal Club* by Sally Morgan
- Small whiteboards, one for each student
- Scissors
- Envelopes
- Stamps
- Student workbooks
- Supplementary interactive whiteboard (IWB) resources

For schools that do not have access to an IWB, please be aware that the resources can be downloaded or accessed on personal devices or used as a reference if teachers choose to provide their own resources.

Assessment

- Group discussions
- Group work (supervised)
- Self assessment activities
- Peer assessment activities
- Summative tasks (addressed envelope and letter)

Australian Curriculum links Year 5 - English Outcomes





- Identify and explain characteristic text structures and language features used in imaginative, informative and persuasive texts to meet the purpose of the text (**ACELY1701**).
- Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive print and multimodal texts, choosing text structures, language features, images and sound appropriate to purpose and audience (**ACELY1704**).
- Re-read and edit student's own and others' work using agreed criteria for text structures and language features (**ACELY1705**).
- Develop a handwriting style that is becoming legible, fluent and automatic (**ACELY1706**).

Differentiation

As with all our lessons teachers are encouraged to change or update the activities in order to cater to diverse student needs.

The activities in this unit have been differentiated for three ability levels (support, core and extension) with differing levels of support.

General capabilities

-  Literacy
-  Critical and Creative Thinking
-  Personal and Social Capability
-  Intercultural Understanding

Cross curriculum priorities

-  Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures (depending on school context)

Introduction

1. Gather the class as a group and read the book *The Pen Pal Club* by Sally Morgan.
2. Discuss the themes in the book; holidays, animals, hobbies, etc and relate to the students' own experiences. This will help them identify what they will write in their own letters later in the unit.
3. Ask the students, 'who would you most like to receive a letter from?' and follow this up by asking their reasons for this.
4. Now ask the students, 'who would you most like to send a letter to?' and follow this up by asking their reasons for this.
5. Explain to the students that they will be writing their own letters in this unit and ask them, 'what makes a good letter?' Collect students' ideas. This is a good opportunity to identify any gaps in learning and fill those gaps before moving on.



Activity 1

Introduction

1. Recap features of figurative language the students have explored previously, for example, similes and metaphors. Find or create some examples and discuss how they have been used to evoke emotion.
2. Introduce or recap personification - giving a non-living thing human qualities or characteristics.
3. Provide some silly examples of this, i.e. 'my unfinished homework glared at me accusingly from across the room as I watched tv.' You could also use some nouns from the *Simple Nouns* slide.
4. Discuss why authors might use personification in their writing and how the reader might react to this kind of description.

Main body

1. Challenge the students to write a sentence with personification for a variety of boring (simple) nouns. Three differentiated activities have been provided below. Teachers are encouraged to select the most appropriate activity according to student ability, or provide another, more appropriate activity.
 - **Support** - Students that need extra support sit in a small group with an adult and go through *The Pen Pal Club* to create a list of non-living nouns. They work together to give them human qualities or characteristics and create a single sentence with personification.
 - **Core** - Students work in pairs to pick a noun card from a selection (*Simple Nouns* activity sheet) and give that object human qualities and characteristics. Each student writes out the personification sentences they create.
 - **Extension** - Students work independently to select a simple noun from a selection on the board (*Simple Nouns* slide) and write a sentence about it using personification into their workbooks.

Plenary

1. Invite the students to share the personification sentences they have created. Praise the creativity and diverse thinking students have displayed. Teachers may choose to create a learning tool for display from the students' contributions.

Activity 2

Introduction

1. Start with a writing warm up: Display the following story starter on the board; 'Ding dong! Your doorbell chimes loudly. You open the door. No one is there. That's odd. You look down and there is a package sitting on the doorstep...' Challenge the students to finish the story within a time limit of 2-5 minutes, depending on student needs.
2. Introduce or recap the use of speech in writing.
3. Find some examples of where speech has been used in *The Pen Pal Club*.
4. In pairs, challenge students to write down as many different ways of saying 'said' as they can think of. Encourage students to consider how they might say things with different emotions.
5. Collect students' ideas to create a class list of other words for 'said'. Teachers may choose to use this as a display tool for the classroom.
6. Display the following sentence on the board; 'Ruby said, "no, I don't want a banana."' Encourage the students to think about how it could be improved. How might Ruby be feeling? What might her voice sound like? How could we show this emotion in the text? What punctuation could we add or change? Make these changes as a joint construction and discuss how the improved sentence differs from the original.

Main body - Part 1

1. Explain to the students that they will now try to improve speech sentences independently
2. Distribute the *Improving Speech in Text* activity sheet to each student. Three differentiated activities have been provided below. Teachers are encouraged to select the most appropriate activity according to student ability, or provide another, more appropriate activity.
 - **Support** - Students that need more support work in a small group with an adult and one copy of the activity sheet between them. The adult facilitates the students' thinking to improve 2 - 3 speech sentences from the activity sheet. Each student writes out a complete improved speech sentence in their workbooks.

- **Core** - Students use the *Improving Speech in Text* activity sheet in pairs to improve each sentence. They must show an awareness of how 'said' can be used differently to convey different emotions.
 - **Extension** - Students use the *Improving Speech in Text* activity sheet to independently improve each of the sentences listed. Students must show ways of using 'said' to convey different emotions. As an extension, students could add more detail to improve each sentence further.
3. Distribute the *Other Words for 'Said'* activity sheet to each pair.
 4. Direct the students to cut out each box to create a pile of word cards and shuffle them.
 5. In pairs, students take turns to pick up the top word card and say a sentence in the way described on the card.
 6. Distribute a small whiteboard to each student.
 7. Provide each pair of students with the *Character Cards* activity sheet and instruct them to cut out the cards and place them face down on their desk.
 8. Students each pick a character card and create a freeze-frame scenario, writing each character's speech on the whiteboards.
 9. Invite students to present their freeze frame scenario to the rest of the class and challenge them to guess what the scenario is just by looking at the speech bubbles.

Plenary

1. Bring the class together as a group and review what students have learned about using speech in text.
2. Invite students to share their different ways of speaking using the word cards from Part 2.
3. Remind students that they will be writing their letters to their pen pal in the next session.
4. For homework, direct students to decide who they will send their letter to and find that person's address. If you have signed up to **The Pen Pal Club**, distribute the school address and assign each student a pen pal from the corresponding class to write to.

Activity 3 Introduction

1. Start with a writing warm up: Invite students to finish this story starter: 'Your time machine whirrs and bangs, whooshes and shakes! Eventually it stops and the doors buzz open. Where are you?' Give the students a time limit of 2 - 5 minutes depending on student needs.
2. Revisit the book *The Pen Pal Club*, by Sally Morgan and look at how the letters are displayed. Display the letter template on the board and talk about who the letters are addressed to.
3. Discuss with the students who they will be writing to and recap or introduce the difference between sending an informal letter versus sending a formal letter. Students may need to decide which sign off they will use for their letter.

Main body

1. Explain that students will be drafting a letter to their pen pal in this activity.
2. Remind students of the features they need to include in their work to make it an interesting and well-written letter, i.e. capital letters, full stops, adjectives, compound sentences, different types of sentences, including questions for their pen pal, figurative language including adverbs, similes and metaphors and some direct speech..
3. Three differentiated activities have been provided below. Teachers are encouraged to select the most appropriate activity according to student ability, or provide another, more appropriate activity.

- **Support** - Students sit in a small group with an adult. Students use the *Letter Template* activity sheet to draft a letter consisting of at least four sentences to their pen pal, one of which is a question for their pen pal and another containing some description, including an adverb, a simile, metaphor or personification. Direct speech is used to recount an experience they had.



- **Core** - Students work independently to draft a letter to their pen pal in the *Letter Template* activity sheet. The letter should consist of at least five descriptive and interesting sentences. The letter must include at least one question for their pen pal, at least one example of figurative language including a simile, metaphor or personification and at least one example of direct speech.
- **Extension** - Students work independently in their writing books or on paper to draft out their letter to their pen pal, using the template on the board as a guide. The letter should consist of at least six interesting and descriptive sentences which use correct punctuation for each type of sentence. The letter must include at least two questions for their pen pal, at least two examples of figurative language and at least two examples of direct speech.

During this activity, teachers should play the role of facilitator, assessing and filling gaps in students' learning by observing work, answering questions and providing guidance where necessary.

4. Using the *Assess my Writing* (peer assessment) or the *Self Check* (self assessment) activity sheet, students should aim to check a partner's or their own writing for capital letters, full stops, language features and different types of sentences.

Plenary

1. After gaining appropriate feedback, students should write out their letters in 'best copy'.
2. Support the students in putting their letters into envelopes and applying a stamp. Their homework will be to address the envelope and post it!

Going further

1. Encourage students to think of some questions they would like to ask a postie.
2. Brainstorm with students what they think happens to letters when we post them.
3. Discuss writing a letter to somebody you do not know; how would you sign off?
4. Discuss writing a letter to ask for something specific. How would you persuade that person to give it to you?
5. Discuss writing a letter in order to argue a point. How would you get the recipient to agree with you?
6. Explore how historical communities used to make their own paper in order to send letters and communicate with others. Make an effort to create your own handmade paper using recycled materials.



Simple Nouns

Moon	Tree	River
Laptop	Fan	Your bed
Ball	Wind	Phone
Umbrella	Sun	Paintbrush
Mud	Homework	Shoe

Improving Speech in Text

Rewrite each of the following sentences to show how the direct speech is being delivered.

1. "I will save you," said Superman.

2. "You took my sandwich," said Tom.

3. "Be quiet," said Mum.

4. "I didn't take your sandwich," said Matt.

5. "The bus is about to go," said Jane.

6. "Show me your ticket," said the guard.

7. "Do you have any questions," said the teacher.

8. "Would you like some more water," said the waiter.

Other words for 'said'

Whispered	Declared	Asked
Screeched	Joked	Complained
Argued	Lied	Begged
Grumbled	Whined	Interrupted
Demanded	Muttered	Hissed

Character Cards

Dentist	Zoo Keeper	Journalist
Mum	Clown	Waiter
Child	Racing Driver	Window cleaner
Office manager	Bank robber	Ninja
Customer	Police officer	Teacher

Assess my writing!



Partner assessment. Read your partner's writing and draw a smiley face if they have included the following.

Capital letters and full stops	
Some interesting details	
Some questions for my pen pal	
Different types of sentences	
Figurative language (simile, metaphor or personification)	
Direct speech with an interesting alternative for 'said'	

Self check!

Self assessment. Draw a smiley face if your writing has:

Capital letter at the start of every sentence and full stops at the end of every sentence	
Adjectives in my sentences	
Compound sentences Using 'for', 'and', 'nor', 'but', 'or' 'yet' 'so'	
Different types of sentences	
Figurative language (simile, metaphor or personification)	
Direct speech with an alternative word for 'said'	

Letter template

Dear

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From,

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The Pen Pal Club

Year 5



Simple Nouns

Choose a simple noun and describe it using personification

present

rope

iPad

leaves

ocean

siren

rock

sand

hot chocolate

aeroplane



Letter template

Dear

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From,
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Letter Template

- Greeting - Who are you writing to?
- Main letter - What will you write about?
- Sign off - your name