

BLUEBACK

CREATIVE LEARNING PACK



SPARE PARTS
puppet theatre

Learning Activities written and
illustrated by
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SYNOPSIS

In *Blueback*, Tim Winton's exquisite language is translated into an aural narrative between a mother and her son.

Juxtaposed by a visual world transforming between underwater swims with a life-size groper and the coastal town Abel Jackson calls home.

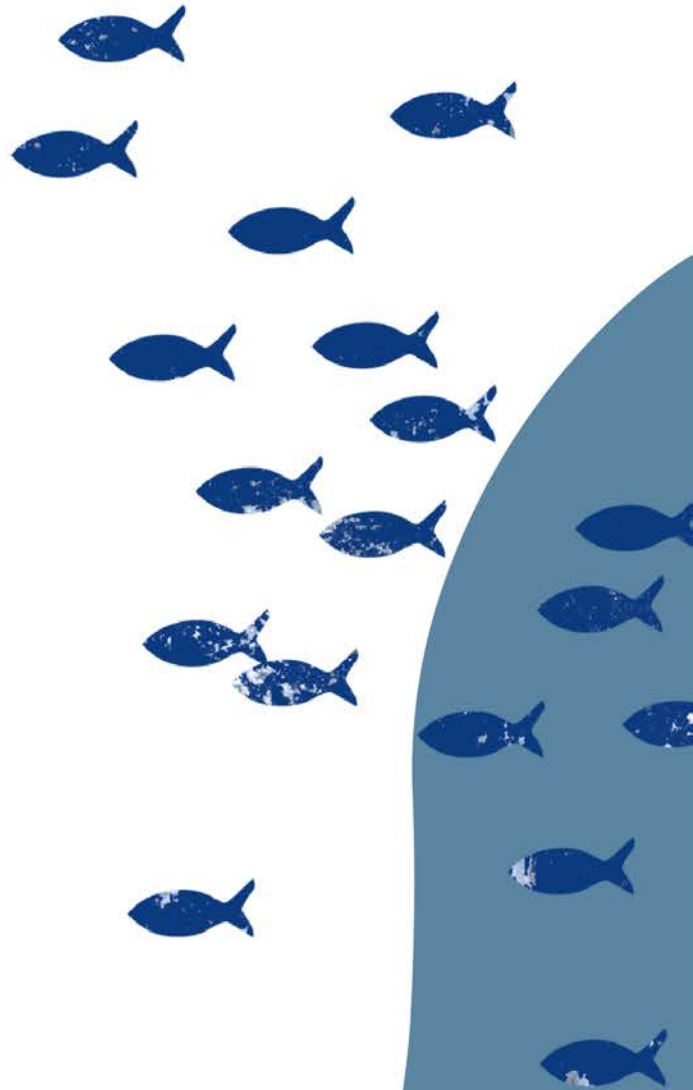
Blueback is not only a comprehensive feast of general capability skills, it spans numerous learning areas. Lists, seasons, cycles of life, the fishing industry, sustainability, ethical understanding, personal and social capability are all very present.

The fusion of aural and visual media provides experimentation and investigation in music, the drama of the story telling using puppets and people.

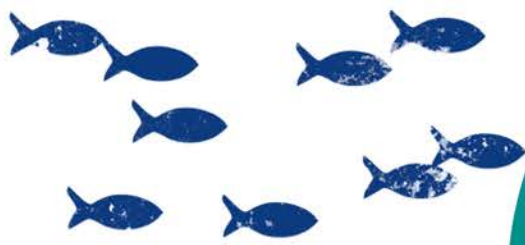


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CREDITS



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Georgia Wesley

The Puppet Designs

Rod Puppets, the Japanese Bunraku style of puppetry and Object Theatre are all featured in Blueback. These styles of puppetry effectively give the illusion of Abel travelling through time, across the land and deep into the ocean.

The Music

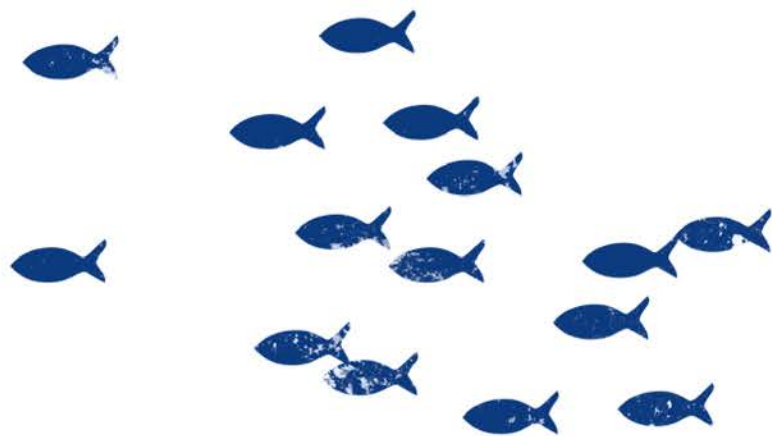
Don Hopkins is the composer for Blueback and he has used various music genres to create the soundtrack for the show. The music by Don is an original score created specially for Blueback to give definition to the sequence of events in the performance.

About the Author

One of Australia's most celebrated authors, Tim Winton was born in Perth and raised in Albany. He draws much of his inspiration from the natural coastal environments of Western Australia which make the setting for most of his books. He is a strong advocate for environmental conservation and has contributed to campaigns to protect Ningaloo Reef, Moreton Bay and other campaigns.



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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

VISUAL LITERACY

These activities relate specifically to visual and multimodal texts, with workable links that can be cut and pasted into your excursion application and programs.

Verbs at the start of each activity are in bold.

You can print out a sheet for your year group or choose an idea from a different year and tweak for your class.



There are five modes of text, and when in combination of two or more modes, they are considered multimodal.

The modes include Written/linguistic, Visual, Aural, Gestural and Spatial. (There are possibly more if we consider all the five senses).

"Texts can be written, spoken or multimodal and in print or digital/online forms."
– ACARA Glossary

"Multimodal texts combine language with other systems for communication, such as print text, visual images, soundtrack and spoken word as in film or computer presentation media."
– ACARA Glossary.

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

VISUAL LITERACY

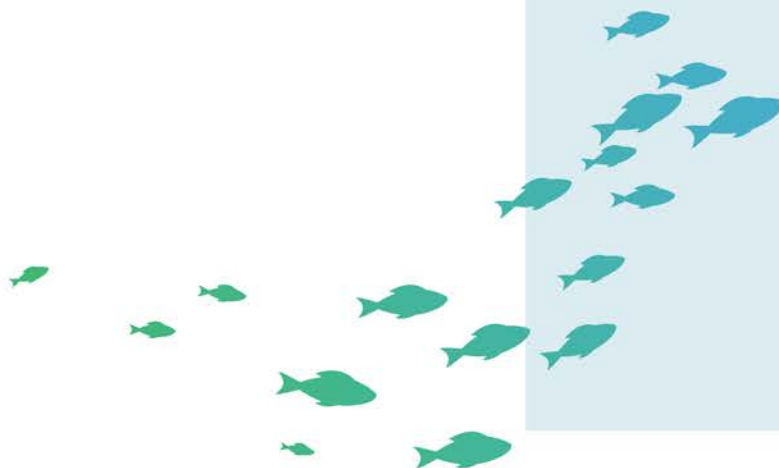
'**Scootle – [Syllabus bites – Visual Literacy](#)** is a very good resource for teachers of students from years 2 – 5. See the visual literacy slideshow which, printed, makes a great classroom display.

For all years, view [Safeguarding a Sanctuary: Nyinggulu/Ningaloo](#). (Best viewed on a web browser)

Login free to ABC iView for this series: [Ningaloo/Nyinggulu](#). You will have to sign up and create a password, so prep beforehand.

'Tim Winton takes us on a journey to one of the last intact wild places left on Earth. Its First Peoples call this global treasure Nyinggulu. The rest of us know it as Ningaloo'.

For digital or face to face Puppetry Workshops for your school, please visit – [Interactive Puppetry Workshops](#)



Written / linguistic mode of text

Vocabulary, structure and grammar of oral and written language. Choice of words.



Visual mode of text

Colour and viewpoints in still and moving images, symbols and signs



Aural mode of text

Sound effects, noises, ambient noise and silence through use of volume, pitch and rhythm.



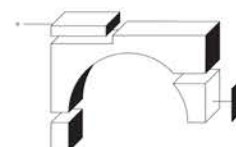
Gestural mode of text

Body movement, body language, hands, eyes and facial expression and the use of rhythm, speed, stillness and angles.



Spatial mode of text

Position with regards to the set layout and organisation of objects within the space. Think camera angles: scale, proximity and direction.



Highlight your group's mode above.

Introduction.

Today, we viewed Spare Parts Puppet Theatre's performance of _____, an adaptation of the novel by _____.

Spare Parts Puppet Theatre uses multimodal texts to entertain and communicate ideas to its audience. There are several different modes of text and my group worked on -

Description.

Use examples of your group's selected mode in the play. What did it communicate to the audience, and how did it make you feel? Write at least three examples, a paragraph for each new idea. For the second draft - each paragraph needs three sentences supporting the main idea.

First,

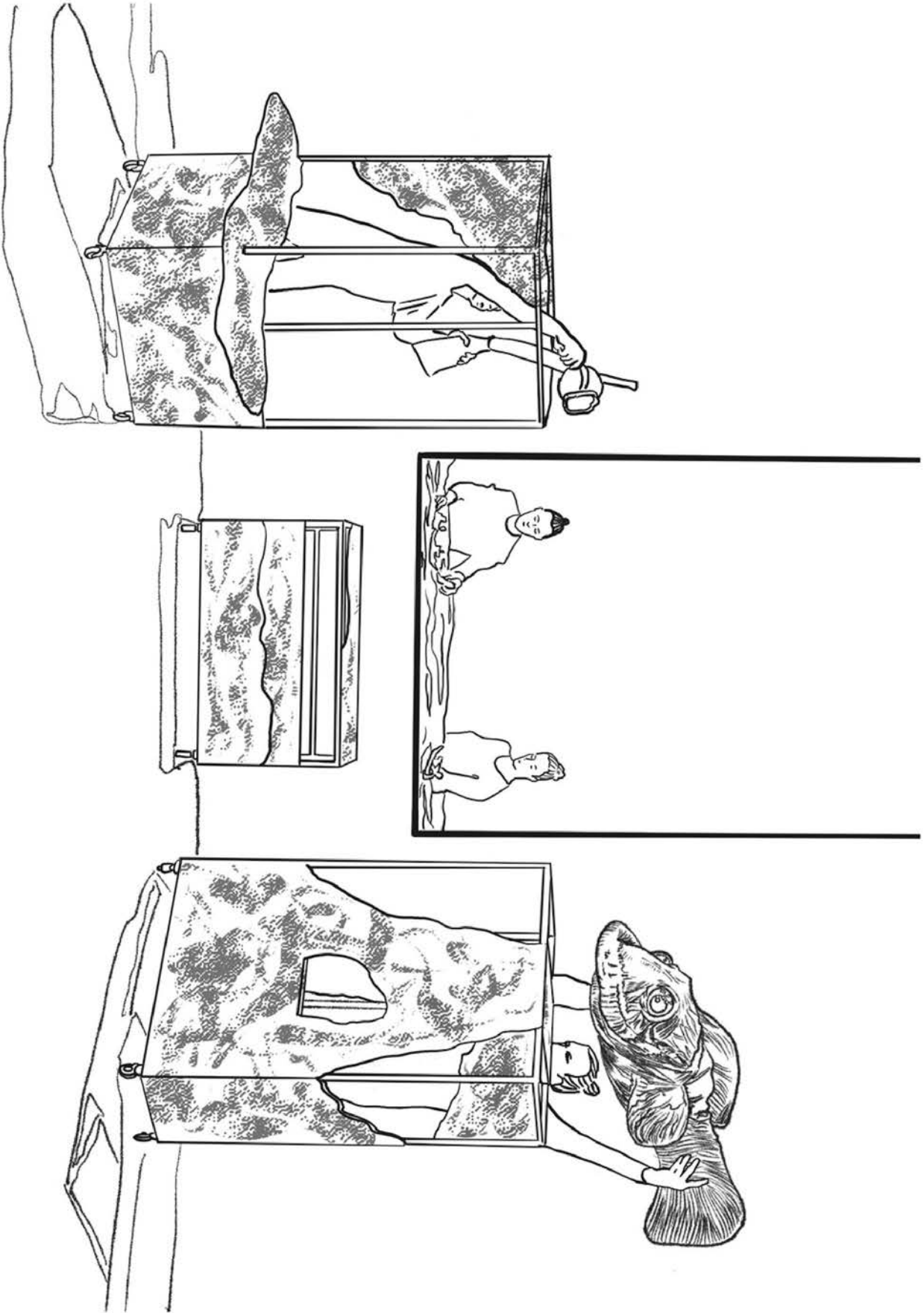
Next,

Then,

Conclusion.

Was it effective? What was the most salient part of the show? Would you recommend the show? Briefly recap your three examples. Finish with a punchy line or rhetorical question!

Label your set design with notes on the modes of text used in Blueback. Why do you think choices about colour, spatial arrangements, scale, and viewpoints were made by Spare Parts Puppet Theatre? Make notes of your answers under your labels.



ILLUSTRATED BY
REBECCA J PALMER

Abel or Mum Mask

DELIGHTED

COSY

PEACEFUL

SILLY

TIRED

CURIOUS

SHY

TEARFUL

ENERGETIC

BRAVE

GRUMPY

EAGER

LOVED

STRESSED

LONELY

CONFUSED

EXCITED

FRUSTRATED

DISAPPOINTED

AFRAID

CARING

MONSTROUS

SURPRISED

MISERABLE

GRATEFUL

CREATIVE

HOT

UNSURE

BEWILDERED

BASHFUL

COLD

AMAZED

INSPIRED

DISINTERESTED

ILLUSTRATED BY
REBECCA J PALMER



ILLUSTRATED BY
REBECCA J PALMER

SCRIPT WRITING

RESOURCE:
VIEW
[SYLLABUS BITES –
VISUAL LITERACY
POWERPOINT ON
SCOOTLE.](#)

Brainstorm and create a Word Wall for the language used in script-writing and media.

Discuss how texts can use perspective to voice and build characters. For example, Abel's mother Dora writes him letters when he goes to school. Her voice is layered with his in background.

She speaks of the life they have at Longboat Bay, while he talks about the subjects he is studying at school. As he does this, he counts, "One, two, three four...Holding my breath..."

He also says, "Sometimes when I'm away in town, I can't breathe." What does this mean?

Discuss how this makes you feel about the characters, and the empathy that you develop for their situations.

These questions might be useful:

Why did they layer the dialogue?

What was its intended effect on the audience?

How did you feel about the use of this device?

Was it effective?

What does Abel mean when he says, "I can't breathe"?

Why is he counting?

(This has two functions, to do with diving and is also a metaphor for marking time).

(Continues next page)

SCRIPT WRITING

Create scripts similarly weaving two points of view together. Students can layer conversations for example, Dora's point of view about Longboat Bay with the point of view of a developer.

Perform the script, or film on an iPad, using other modes of communication such as sound effects, music, titles and end credits, gifs or animation, shot angles, close mid and long shots, just to name a few.

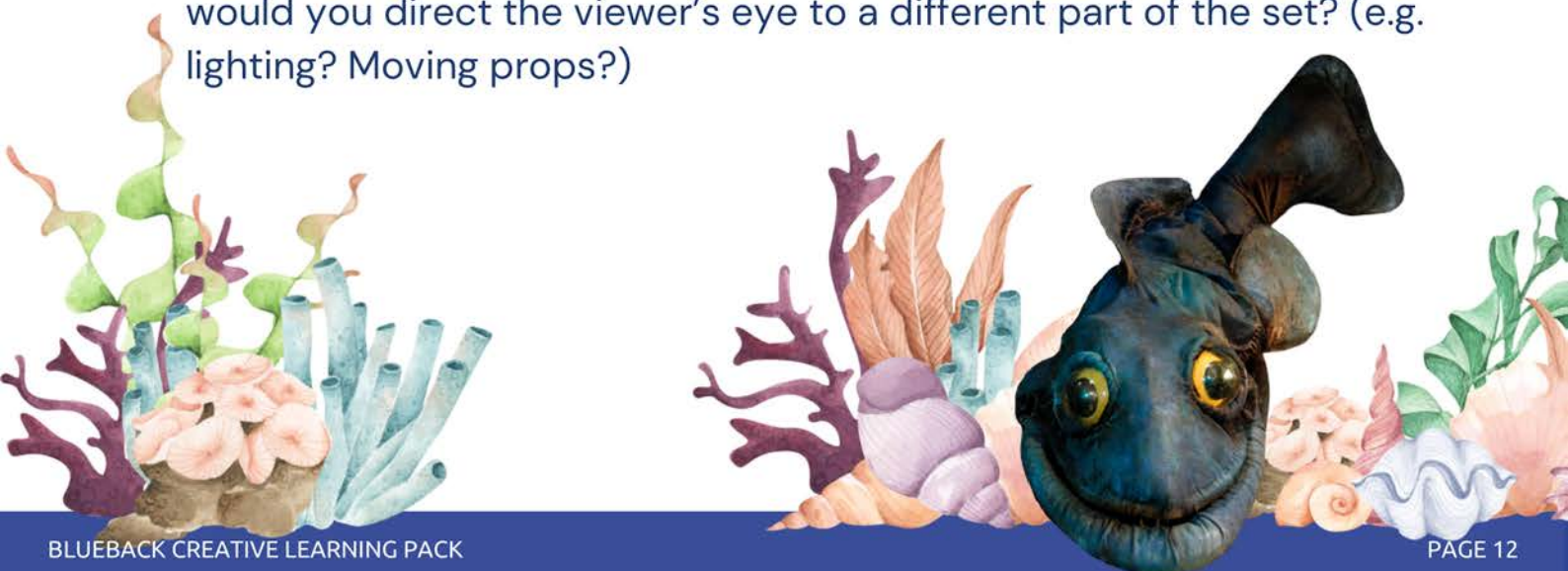


SET DESIGN

RESOURCE:
VIEW
[SYLLABUS BITES –
VISUAL LITERACY
POWERPOINT ON
SCOOTLE.](#)

RESOURCE:
VIEW THIS ABC
NEWS ITEM:
[SAFEGUARDING A
SANCTUARY:
NYINGGULU/
NINGALOO](#)

- **Create** a concept map or poster showing the different modes of text used in the performance – do this alone, together or in a class setting!
- **Colour in** the set design activity sheet and label the different modes of text you can identify. Include notes on why you think Spare Parts expressed these modes in the ways they did.
- **Select** a part of the story not included in the play and design a set... think about the props, the colour, textures and proportions. Ask – ‘Can you design props, so they have multiple uses or communicate different messages, just like the play?’
- **Create** a physical diorama or a digital representation of your set using an iPad.
- **Write** an explanation of your ideas, using the metalanguage of visual literacy. For example, what is the most salient part of your set? How would you direct the viewer’s eye to a different part of the set? (e.g. lighting? Moving props?)



SET DESIGN

Extension: Aural mode of text.

The scene with Costello, (the abalone diver who was plundering the ocean instead of responsibly fishing), used special music and sound effects that were different to the music the rest of the show, to create tension.

Describe what you heard and what you think it meant. Think of familiar soundtracks of movies that have become motifs, such as Jaws, where the music is so well-known that when it is applied to a different context, the audience knows it means something dreadful is about to happen!

Select or create your own music which communicates the overall feeling or emotion of the scene you created in Activity 1.

Create a musical motif for your scene! You could use Garage band on an iPad, or get creative with instruments and recycled materials you can find around you.

RESOURCE:
VIEW
[SYLLABUS BITES –
VISUAL LITERACY
POWERPOINT ON
SCOOTLE.](#)

RESOURCE:
VIEW THIS ABC
NEWS ITEM:
[SAFEGUARDING A
SANCTUARY:
NYINGGULU/
NINGALOO](#)



MIDDLE PRIMARY

DIORAMA

RESOURCE:
VIEW
[SYLLABUS BITES –
VISUAL LITERACY
POWERPOINT ON
SCOOTLE.](#)

RESOURCE:
VIEW THIS ABC
NEWS ITEM:
[SAFEGUARDING A
SANCTUARY:
NYINGGULU/
NINGALOO](#)

Create a physical diorama which shows perspective, distance and angle using cardboard shoe boxes and other recyclable materials in response to one of the passages below:

Passage 1

Abel and his mother are in the boat when a pod of whales comes by.

‘Look at that,’ said his mother. ‘We used to hunt them. Your father’s family, the Jackson’s, came here as whalers... ‘I used to feel bad about it,’ said his mother, ‘even though it was before our time. ‘But the sea has taken its fair share of us. I think we must be even by now.’

Passage 2

Abel and Dora have different ways to save Longboat Bay.

Abel goes away to study to be a scientist and to learn the secrets of the sea. He travels to different sanctuaries all over the world wondering, “How many kinds of fish are there in the sea? Do we know all their names?”

Dora asks, “What does it mean?” when she sees the weather changing and dead dolphins and pilchards wash up on the shore. She starts writing letters and campaigning to stop the developers.

DIORAMA

RESOURCE:
'MULTIMODAL
TEXT IN
BLUEBACK'
WORKSHEET

RESOURCE:
VIEW THIS ABC
NEWS ITEM:
[SAFEGUARDING A
SANCTUARY:
NYINGGULU/
NINGALOO](#)

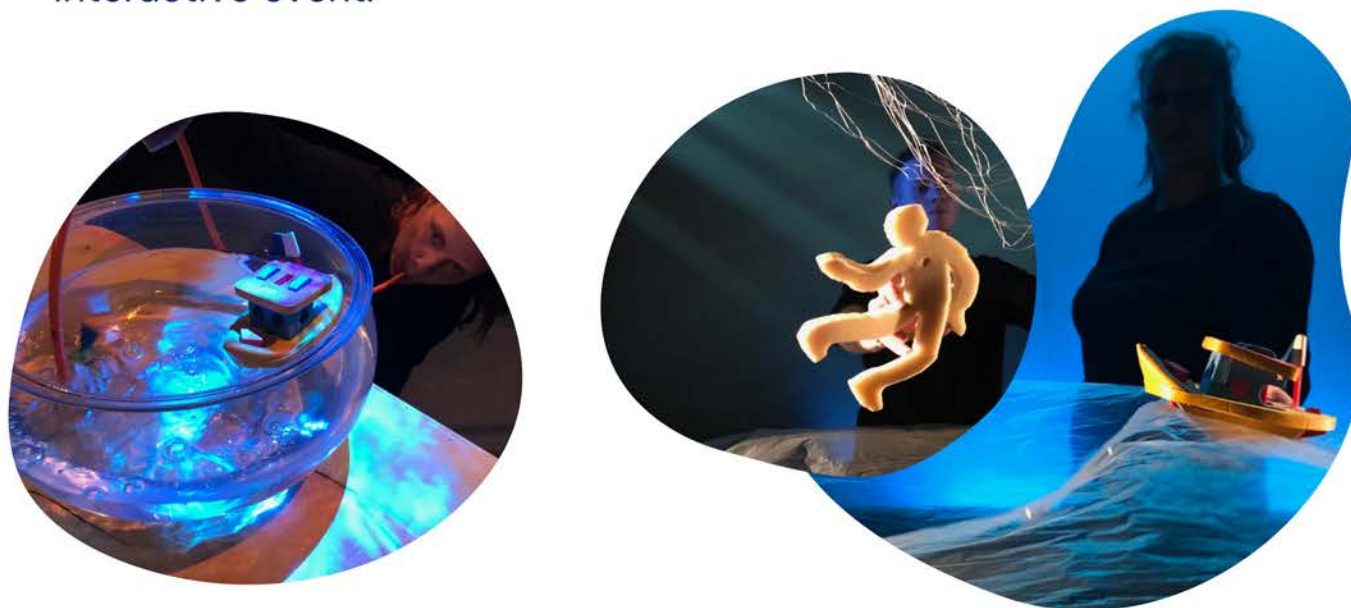
Passage 3

Dora and Abel's ancestors – the Jacksons, were whalers. After a huge storm, Dora writes to Abel about whalebones that were buried deep under the sands of Longboat Bay for over a century. Exposed, they "stand like posts, broken teeth, tombstones. We walked over that terrible history not knowing what lay beneath our feet."

Use the 'Multimodal Text in Blueback' worksheet in this Creative Learning pack and the Visual Literacy PowerPoint in the Syllabus bites link above as a basis for students' understandings of the metalanguage for a classroom display.

Extension: Explanation writing

Write an explanation of the design decisions you made for your diorama. How is your diorama a multimodal text? (Students can use lighting, voice overs and sound effects in their presentations). Present the diorama and explanation to parents and carers as an interactive event.



WRITING WITH IMAGINATION

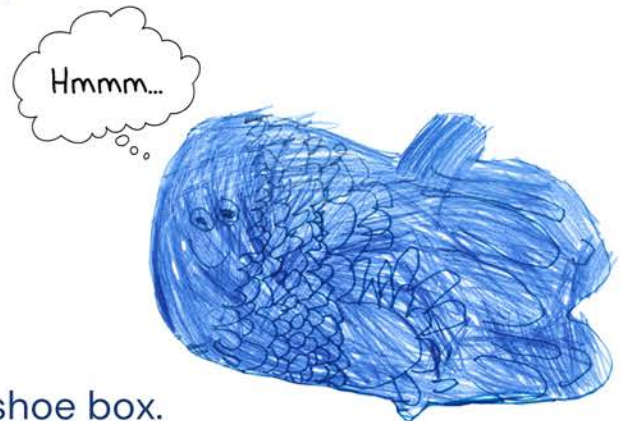
RESOURCE:
WATCH TIM
WINTON'S
NINGALOO/NYING
GULU ON ABC
iVIEW

Abel wonders what fish think.

Write a story from the point of view of a shark, a groper or a whale. Would it wonder about what humans think about? Would they be annoyed, happy, sad, vengeful or hopeful?

Create a storyboard showing your story line, using thought or speech bubbles on the cartoons.

Design an illustration or use an app on an iPad or tablet to show what different fish are thinking about humans.



DIORAMA

Create a 3D underwater scene using a shoe box.

Draw/paint an ocean bed and the blue ocean on the sides.

Create a model of Abel and Blueback or Dora and Abel having fun under the ocean. Use recyclables or play dough.

Create a background sound effect and/or voiceover for your display using apps on your iPad.

Extension:

Statement for a classroom diorama display.

Write a short explanation of what modes of text you used in your diorama and why you chose them.

GROUP DISCUSSION



Gather together to **talk** and **think** about Blueback.

We use our whole bodies to receive different messages. When we smell something, the message could be that there's a fire, or something has gone bad. When we taste something, if it tastes good, the message may be that it is food – or not food! If we look at our friends' faces, the message may be that they are sad or happy or embarrassed.

But in today's puppet show, the puppets didn't have any facial expressions. How could we tell what they were thinking and feeling? Does the voiceover tell us? Does the music tell us? Do the positions of their bodies tell us? Do fast or slow movements tell us? Does the lighting tell us?

We could say we used our whole body listening, with many of our five senses to experience a puppet performance.

COMMUNICATING WITH OUR BODIES

Make a puppet mask like the ones from Blueback using the Mask template. When we put on these masks, how will others be able to see how we feel?

Act out a feeling for the class while wearing the mask. You can use your whole body to show the feeling, and make sounds. If you want a challenge, don't use any words!

Your teacher can name a feeling for each student to act, using the feelings on the mask template.

RESOURCE:
MASK
ACTIVITY
Page 8

ACARA LINKS

YEAR 1

[ACELY1660](#)

Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning about key events, ideas and information in texts that they listen to, view and read by drawing on growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features.

Elaboration: retelling the events or key information in the text orally, in writing and/or through digital or arts media.

YEAR 2

[ACELY1671](#)

Create short imaginative, informative and persuasive texts using growing knowledge of text structures and language features for familiar and some less familiar audiences, selecting print and multimodal elements appropriate to the audience and purpose.

YEAR 3

[ACELT1601](#)

Create imaginative texts based on characters, settings and events from students' own and other cultures using visual features, for example perspective, distance and angle.

Elaboration: creating multimodal texts that combine visual images, sound effects, music and voice overs to convey settings and events in a fantasy world.

YEAR 4

[ACELA1496](#)

Explore the effect of choices when framing an image, placement of elements in the image, and salience on composition of still and moving images in a range of types of texts.

Elaboration: examining visual and multimodal texts, building a vocabulary to describe visual elements and techniques such as framing, composition and visual point of view and beginning to understand how these choices impact on viewer response.

ACARA LINKS

YEAR 5

ACELT1795

Use metalanguage to describe the effects of ideas, text structures and language features on particular audiences.

Elaboration: orally, in writing or using digital media, giving a considered interpretation and opinion about a literary text, recognising that a student's view may not be shared by others and that others have equal claims to divergent views.

ACELY1704

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.

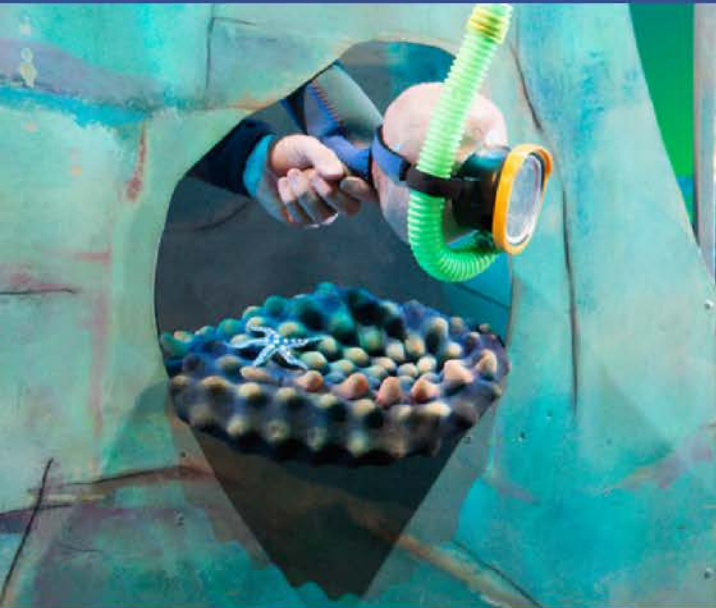
Elaboration: using vocabulary, including technical vocabulary, appropriate to purpose and context.



SPARE PARTS

puppet theatre

To enquire about future productions, incursions and excursions email learning@sppt.asn.au



Find more resources via our website, visit:

SPPT.COM.AU