

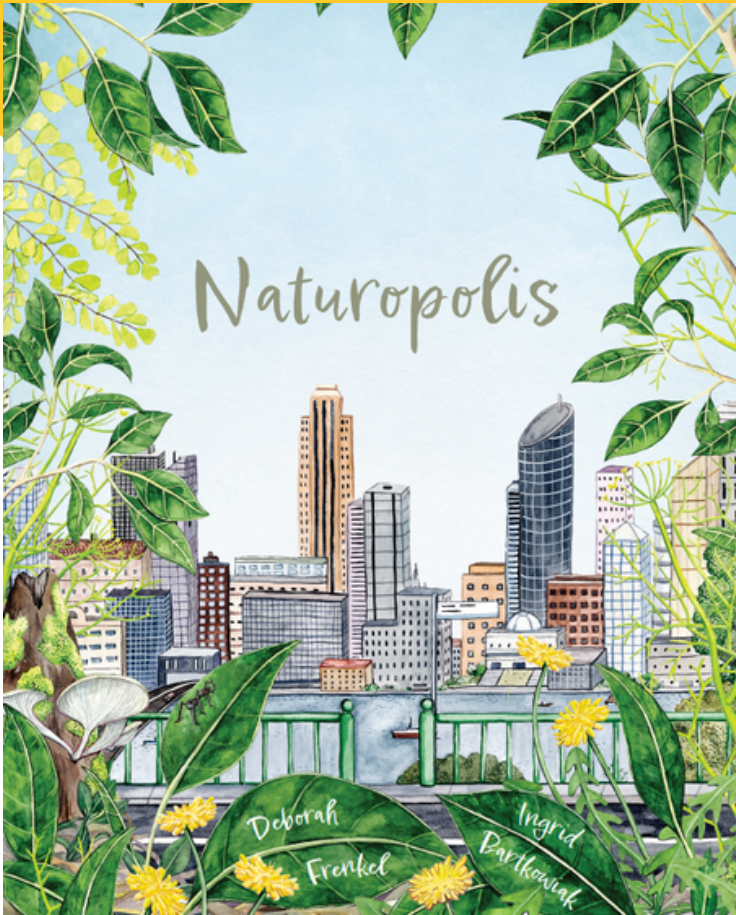


TEACHERS' NOTES

Compiled by
Norah Colvin
and Sam Rutter

This teacher resource is
suitable for years K - 6

Naturopolis is suitable
reading for years K - 6



NATUROPOLIS

***Written by Deborah
Frenkel***

***Illustrated by Ingrid
Bartkowiak***

Picture Book

***Storytorch Press
September 2022***

*Look closer, look with care
And you may find a forest...*

Among the steel and stone canyons of the city, nature flourishes in tiny, tenacious ways. Follow the ant (*Iridomyrmex purpureus*) to discover the scraps of wilderness hiding in plain sight in this lyrical celebration of urban flora and fauna.

Naturopolis is a wonderful acknowledgement of the unseen, and the world that awaits the viewer, eager to connect with nature. You don't have to go far to find what is waiting for us beneath our feet.

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ABOUT NATUROPOLIS

Naturopolis is creative non-fiction that celebrates nature that can be found in our cities. The lyrical text invites children to look closely and stunning hand-painted illustrations show them where to look. Each observation is accompanied by an information tag that provides the reader with fun facts about the fauna or flora discovered. It is a perfect balance of fiction and non-fiction, enough to excite the imagination while at the same time, fostering an interest in exploring and finding out more.

Naturopolis can be pronounced to rhyme with *Metropolis*:
NAH - TROP - OLIS or you might also focus on nature as you say it, as in NAY - TROP - OLIS. Either way is fine!

THEMES

Resilience

Community

Appreciation of nature

Microscopic life



ABOUT THE AUTHOR, DEBORAH FRENKEL



Deb is a human (*Homo sapiens*). She lives in Melbourne with her young family and a number of ringtail possums (*Pseudocheirus peregrinus*) who occasionally drop by. When she's not writing for kids, she's usually copywriting for TV commercials, billboards, and the labels of shampoo bottles. Kids, thankfully, are usually more appreciative.

This is her first picture book, and her second, *The Sydney Harbour Fairy* (with Affirm Press) is due out in 2023.

Find out more about the author from her website:
deborahfrenkel.com

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR, INGRID BARTKOWIAK



An artist and illustrator based in Brisbane, Australia, Ingrid works in watercolour and oils. Her practice revolves around her fascination with nature and its intricacies. Ingrid completed her Bachelor of Fine Art in 2019 at the Queensland College of Art. Engaging with native flora and fauna, her illustrations are whimsical and encourage an appreciation for nature. They often feature both realistic illustrative elements, merged with abstraction and blocks of vibrant colour. There is a focus on detailing and pattern, with one of Ingrid's earlier interests being in the visual tropes of the arts and crafts movement. A highly talented artist, this is her first children's book. Ingrid produces a stunning and popular calendar each year, which supports her art practice.

Find out more about the illustrator from her website:
ingridbartkowiakart.com

LINKS TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

Naturopolis is a useful resource for teaching in the three strands of the *English Curriculum* (language, literature and literacy) and can be used as a springboard for developing skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing and creating as children listen to and engage with texts for enjoyment and for information.

Extension suggestions provide ways of linking the story with other curriculum areas including *Science* and the *Sustainability Cross Curriculum Priority* in which children learn about the interconnectedness of life.

Key Curriculum Areas

English

Science – Biological sciences

Science as a Human Endeavour

Science Inquiry Skills

General Capabilities

Literacy, Critical and Creative Thinking

Cross-Curriculum Priorities

Sustainability



BEFORE READING

Discussion and question suggestions are meant to be a guide only. Please tailor them to children's ages and interest.

The Front Cover

Show children the front cover of the book. Read the title.

Invite children to describe what they see in the illustration.

Tell children the title of the book. Depending on the children's age, you may wish to tell them about the word 'metropolis' and explain that it means 'city', or perhaps have them tell you what they know of the word. Invite them to suggest what the word 'naturopolis' might mean. Explain that it was a word invented (as all words are) to mean nature in the city.

Invite children to suggest what the book might be about, and what the word 'nature' means to them. You may wish to introduce and explain the terms 'fauna' and 'flora'. While they are not used in the book, they will be useful in discussions and will support children's vocabulary development.

The Back Cover

Show children the back cover. Invite children to describe what they see in the illustrations. Read the blurb.

Depending on the ages of children, there are some words and phrases whose meaning you may wish to explain or discuss, for example:

- stone canyons (a metaphor)
- flourishes
- tenacious
- urban
- flora
- fauna
- hiding in plain sight (an idiom)

Ask children if the blurb and the illustrations give any more clues as to what they might find in the book.

You may wish to list on a chart any unfamiliar words from the blurb or sprinkled throughout the book along with their meanings. This can be done during the reading, as long as it isn't too disruptive, or when returning to the text.

The Endpapers

Show the children the endpapers as you prepare to read the book. Once again, the children may wish to discuss what is illustrated and what they expect to find in the book.

At this point, before reading the text, you may wish to do a quick 'nature walk' through the book asking children to tell what they observe on each page or to ask any questions they have, just as you would if you were doing a nature walk in the outdoors.

It is not necessary to spend a lot of time on each page as you will be returning to them in more detail, but it encourages an inquisitive mindset and prepares them for observations.

READING THE STORY

As you read the story, tailor the discussion to suit children's interest and attention. On each spread, you may invite them to discuss information in the text as well as the illustrations. You may also like to list the flora and fauna that is observed on each page, but this does not have to be done on the first reading. It can be done on subsequent readings when you may be studying the flora and fauna in more detail.

A selection of possible questions and discussion prompts are provided below.

Note: As you look through the book, children may enjoy finding the ant that appears on every spread.



First Spread

Pgs 4 - 5

Look! The great grey city

Invite children to share what they can observe in the illustration and explain what is happening.

Read the text.

Ask the children to look at the illustration and discuss:

- What are the mother and daughter looking at?
- Who do you think is talking?
- Why is the city great and grey?
- What is made of steel?
- What is made of stone?
- Where are tiles used?
- Where is tar used?

But wait! Look closer

Read the text.

- Who do you think is talking now?
- Where is the forest?
- What living things can you see in the illustration?
- What did you have to do to see the living things? (look closely)

Second Spread

Pgs 6 - 7

Here is a creature in the garbage

Before reading, invite children to describe and name, if they can, the creature illustrated. Ask them to discuss what it is doing. Did they notice it on the previous page?

You may wish to discuss the author's use of the word 'beast', explain the word cumbersome, and ask the children to suggest why the author used the word 'treasure'.

Gravel Ant

Point out the tag and its purpose. Ask children where they may have seen similar tags.

Read and discuss the information.

Discuss how the text presenting information differs from the story text, for example, it doesn't have any literary language such as metaphors or similes. The story text is written in verse and has a rhythm, like a poem.

The information text does not.

If you wish, point out the scientific name and explain how it differs from the common name.

Third Spread **Pgs 6 - 7**

Here is a meadow in the footpath

Before reading, you may like to ask children to describe what they see on the page and to suggest what the page might be about. If you have introduced the terms 'fauna' and 'flora', you could ask them to suggest what the focus of the page might be.

- Ask the children what they know about the word 'meadow'.
- What would a 'meadow in a footpath' be? (metaphor)
- Have they ever seen a meadow in a footpath?
- Are there any meadows in the footpaths at school? Maybe they could look for some at lunch breaks.
- What does the author mean by 'bold bobbing heads in the sun'? Whose heads? Why are they bold? Why are they bobbing?
- Look at the leaves. Why does the author say they are 'like the teeth of a lion'? (simile) How else could they be described with a simile?
- Look at the way the words 'Seeds spun away with the wind' have been presented on the page. Why do you think they have been presented that way? What does it make you think is happening? Have you ever seen dandelion seeds floating on the wind?

Dandelion

Read and discuss the information.

Discuss how the text presenting information differs from the story text, for example, it doesn't have any literary language such as metaphors or similes, and it doesn't have any text that seems to move on the page. Once again, if you wish, point out the scientific name and explain how it differs from the common name.

The information explains what dandelions need to live.

Fourth Spread **Pgs 8 - 9**

Here is the wilderness in the eaves

Before reading, ask children to describe what they can see and to suggest what the focus of the page might be.

Ask children to explain what they know about the words 'wilderness' and 'eaves'.

- What does 'wilderness in the eaves' mean?
- What is a spore? What is a 'drifted spore'?
- 'Feathery fronds' – Explain the meaning of 'fronds' and discuss why they might be 'feathery' (metaphor). If you, or the children have some maidenhair fern, it could be good to observe it closely.
- What other ferns do children know?
- What other plants have fronds?

Maidenhair Fern

Read and discuss the information.

Ask children to suggest why the common name for the fern might be 'maidenhair'. Explain the meaning of the word 'maiden' if necessary. If you wish, point out the scientific name and explain how it differs from the common name.



Fifth Spread ***Pgs 10 - 11***

Here is a river in the gutter

Before reading, ask children to describe what they can see and to suggest what the focus of the page might be.

- Ask children to explain what is meant by 'a river in a gutter'?
- Where has the water come from? Where is it going?
- What are the 'swimmers'? Did they notice them? If not, point them out now.
- Why do they 'drift and roll'?
- Ask children to explain, in their own words, what the author meant in the last two lines.

Zooplankton

- What is a microscope?
- Who has looked through a microscope?
- How tiny must something be to only be seen through a microscope?
- For hundreds and thousands to fit in a cup of rainwater?
- What is the tiniest thing they can think of?

Discuss the difference between the common and the scientific names if desired.

Sixth Spread ***Pgs 12 - 13***

Here is a glade in a laneway

Before reading, ask children to describe what they can see and to suggest what the focus of the page might be.

Read the text.

Explain the meaning of 'glade' and 'dew'.

- Is there anywhere at school that could be considered a 'glade'?
- What secrets do you think there might be in a glade?
- Why would you have to go gentle in the glade?
- What is meant by 'the silence is easily bruised'? (metaphor)

Silver Moss

Read and discuss the text.

- What is an expanse?
- What is meant by 'barest expanses'?
- What is meant by 'breaking down over time to form pockets of rich soil'?
- What words can we use to describe that process?
- Discuss the difference between the common and the scientific names if desired.

Seventh Spread
Pgs 14 - 15

Here is a cave on the underpass

Before reading, ask children to describe what they can see and to suggest what the focus of the page might be. Read the text.

- What is an underpass?
- Why is it called a cave? Is it really a cave?
- Why is it a 'pocket' (metaphor) of stillness and shade?
- What are the gems it is dotted with?
- Why are the gems 'as gentle as breath'? (simile)
- What is strange about a waking dream?
- Why are the gems strange?

**Ghost
Mushroom**

Read and discuss the information.

Explain the word 'fungi' if children are unaware of it.

- Why is this mushroom called the 'ghost' mushroom?
- Does that ability of the mushrooms explain why the author described them as 'gems'?
- How are they like gems?
- How could mushrooms be more closely related to animals than plants?

Eighth Spread
Pgs 16 - 17

Here is a cliff on the train line

Invite the children to inspect the illustrations and describe what they see. If they haven't, encourage them to notice that the illustration is divided into three and each third is getting closer, as if with binoculars, to observe in greater detail.

Ask them to suggest what the focus of the page might be.

- What is a cliff? Where have they seen a cliff? Why is this called a 'cliff on the train line'?
- What are the puffs of spiced green?
- How do they soften the cliff?
- What does 'a sweet-scented sway' tell you about the plant?
- What does 'Waving their stars in the air' mean?

Fennel

Read and discuss the information.

- Ask if any children have herb gardens at home and if they grow fennel. What herbs do they grow or know?
- Have any children tasted fennel?
- Explain the word 'edible' if necessary.



Ninth Spread Pgs 19 - 20

Here is a nest in the power box

Invite children to inspect the illustration and discuss what they see.

- Have they ever seen a lot of spiders at their house? Where? What kind of spiders?
- Where is the power box at their house?
- What is the power box for?
- Have they ever looked at the power box?
- What is meant by the words 'Cradle and café and den'? Can children see any smaller spiders that might be babies (cradle)?
- Why would they be a 'jumble of sociable fireworks'? (metaphor)
- What is meant by 'spoils' of their hunt?

Social Huntsman Spider

Before you read the information, you could tell children that these are huntsman spiders and ask them to share any knowledge they have of huntsman spiders.

Read the information.

Invite children to ask questions or comment about the information.

Children may have seen solitary huntsman spiders in their homes and be surprised by this information. Explain that the social huntsman is different from the solitary huntsman.

Tenth Spread Pgs 21 - 22

Here is a monster on the roundabout.

Invite children to inspect the illustration and discuss what they see.

Read the first line. Ask the children to say what they think the 'monster' is (metaphor) and explain why. Continue reading the rest of the verse. Now what do children think is the monster?

- Why would the writer call it a monster?
- Why would the writer call it a 'quick, slick trickster'? (rhyme)
- Why is it a seeker of light and heat? (Children might like to share what they already know about lizards.)
- Point out the way the text of the last line of the verse has been arranged. Discuss why the designer may have used that way of displaying the text.

Penny Lizard

Read the information. Discuss and explain any words that may be unfamiliar to children, for example, predators.

Discuss what the children may know about the information or if they have seen lizards lose their tails. Is this ability good to have? Could it be considered a super power?

Eleventh Spread
Pgs 23 - 24

Here is a woodland in the wires

Invite children to inspect the illustration and discuss what they see. What do they think the page will be about?

- Ask children to share what they already know about possums. What sort of possums do they know about? What sort of possum is pictured?
- Have children seen poles and wires like those illustrated? Do they have poles and wires near their homes? What are the poles and wires used for?

Read the text.

- Discuss what the writer means by 'a woodland in the wires' (metaphor).
- Who are the moonlit wanderers? What are wanderers? Why are they 'moonlit' wanderers?
- What is meant by 'coiled' tails? How are they coiled? What possums have coiled tails? What other kinds of tails do possums have? What other animals have coiled tails?
- What is meant by 'tracing trails'?
- What is meant by 'leaping ever onwards'?

**Ringtail
Possum**

Read the information.

Discuss any terms that may be unfamiliar to children, for example dusk and dawn.

If you wish, explain the words that are used to describe animals that are active at night time, from dusk till dawn (nocturnal) or at dusk and dawn (crepuscular).

What does the author say are the favourite foods of ringtail possums? What other foods do ringtail possums eat?

Twelfth Spread
Pgs 25 - 26

Here is a canyon on the highway

Invite children to inspect the illustration and discuss what they see. What do they think the page will be about?

- Read and discuss the first line.
- What is a canyon? What would be a canyon on the highway? (metaphor)
- Read the second line, which gives the answer.
- What is meant by 'a track for tiny treaders' 'hidden at the edges'? Who might the tiny treaders be?
- What are the green shoots and why would they be pointing to home?

Tiny Logania

Read and discuss the information.

Ask children if they have seen any plants growing at the edge of the bitumen on a highway.

Discuss any words that may be unfamiliar, for example 'hardy' and 'rubble'.



Thirteenth Spread **Pgs 27 - 28**

And here at last

Read the text. So, we have looked closer, and we have found the forest.

- Is this the forest that children expected?
- What do children expect to see in a forest?
- What can they see in this forest?

This spread pulls us back to the first spread in which we were told to

'Look closer,

Look with care

And you may find a forest.'

You could return to the first spread and remind children of that.

Read the second line of text 'but look closer. Point out the em dash, that means the story is going to continue over the page.

Ask children to predict what will be over the page.

Children may notice there is no information on this page. You may discuss their thoughts about that if you and they wish.

Fourteenth Spread **Pgs 29 - 30**

Is a city

Read the text.

- Ask children what they think the author means by 'a city' (metaphor). Why would the author call it a city? How is it like or not like a city.
- Invite the children to explore and discuss the illustration. They may be able to identify some of the different types of ants and some of the ant's life stages.

Page 31: Back **Matter**

The final page is glossary of the fauna and flora introduced in the book, arranged in order of its introduction rather than alphabetically. The living thing is illustrated, and its common and scientific names are both given. The information provided about each is repeated alongside the illustration.

AFTER READING

After encouraging the children to look closely in the built areas in the book for signs of living things. The timing is perfect, although it doesn't have to be immediate, for going on a nature walk in the school grounds or local environment.

Provide the children with paper, pencils and cameras for recording their observations in words illustrations and photographs. Provide them with magnifying glasses, if possible, to look closely, and tweezers, brushes and gloves for observing safely but not removing. Take photos of the surrounds in which the living things are found.

Encourage them to look for the features mentioned in the text and invite them to create their own similes, metaphors and/or alliterative statements to describe them.

Make a list of fauna and flora found. Write information about each. Include the common and scientific name if possible.

Compile their observations, including photographs and drawings, into a record of living things in the school grounds or local environment.

RETURNING TO THE TEXT

You may not wish to re-read the text immediately, but you may return to it over successive days to explore different aspects of the written and visual texts as well as to re-read it.

The non-fiction aspects of the book can be accessed without reading the story text in its entirety. Similarly, similes, metaphors and other language features can be discussed without reading the entire book again.

Language and vocabulary development

Naturopolis is a word made from 'metropolis' meaning city and 'nature' meaning 'nature'.

What other words ending in 'opolis' do children know? What other opolis words can they invent? (for example: wormopolis or antopolis)

Discuss the meaning of any words which were previously unfamiliar to children. To help them remember the words, you may like to list them on a chart with their meanings. Showing children how to break the longer words into syllables will assist their reading of these and other words in the future.

Each double page spread provides an opportunity to compare the language of fiction and non-fiction texts, and the difference between common names and scientific names for fauna and flora.



Similes and Metaphors

Similes and metaphors have been used throughout the text. These have been noted on the suggestions for reading each page. Encourage children to look at the leaves and other parts of plants in the school grounds and to suggest ways they can be described using similes and metaphors.

Alliteration

Examples of alliteration occur throughout the book, for example:

- steel and stone; tile and tar; closer with care (first spread)
- cumbersome crumb; taking his treasure (second spread)
- bold bobbing; seeds spun (third spread)
- sweet-scented sway (eighth spread)
- branches and bark, blossoms and buds (thirteenth spread)

Rhythm

While the text is written in verse and has a regular rhythm, it is not written in rhyming verse. However, there is an example of rhyme: quick, slick trickster (tenth spread) and other of near rhymes: edges, treaders, threaded (assonance - twelfth spread), tracing, trails, tails (assonance - eleventh spread)

Adjectives

The word pictures are painted more clearly by the use of adjectives to make more interesting noun groups, for example:

- great, grey city (first spread)
- tiny, shiny beast, cumbersome crumb (second spread)
- drifted spore, feathery fronds (fourth spread)
- moonlit wanderers, coiled tails (eleventh spread)

The literary features included in the book, such as the use of metaphors, similes, alliteration and rhyme lend themselves well to an exploration of poetry writing including haiku as well as other forms of verse.

CROSS CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

ART

Scientific drawings

Use the flora and fauna illustrated in the book as a stimulus for children to create their own drawings.

Ask them to draw an image first, without reference to the book. An image is a great way of finding out what children know about the tiny creatures or plants. After they have drawn their image, have them compare it to a scientific illustration or photograph. Have them assess their images for accuracy and to identify any 'errors' they may have made. They can then redraw to ensure their image is accurate. Making the close observations required for accuracy helps to identify distinguishing features. Armed with that knowledge, they can then check whether the images created by Ingrid Bartkowiak for *Naturopolis* are accurate.

After that, provide them with other fiction books featuring the same creatures. Have them assess whether the creatures are portrayed accurately. Note, while they are accurate in *Naturopolis*, they are not always accurate in other fiction picture books. It is a great exercise in critical thinking to analyse images and to discuss whether inaccuracies in picture books make any difference to enjoyment.

Leaf print or collage

Collect fallen leaves. Consider ways of sorting them e.g. shape, colour, size.

Use the leaves for printing or, in conjunction with other found materials, for collage.

Wall display

Use the book, its text and illustrations as inspiration to create a large classroom wall display of the built features and the inhabitants (plant and animal) of the school grounds or local environment. Incorporate collage, including recycled materials and found natural materials, with paint and crayons and other media. Add text to describe the features displayed. This may include information about the flora and fauna as well as descriptive noun groups, similes or metaphors.



CROSS CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

SCIENCE

Discuss the difference between scientific and common names and explain the need for scientific names.

List the animals and plants that were introduced in the book under the headings of 'Fauna' and 'Flora'.

Beside each listing, write notes about what was found out and further questions children wish to find answers to. Guide children to ask questions that lead to the science content you are covering.

Make a chart to compare the features and behaviours of solitary and social huntsman spiders.

Compare similarities and differences between brushtail and ringtail possums.

Set up an ant farm in the classroom. Study the life stages of ants.

How do we know if something is living, not living or was once living? What examples of each can they find in the book?

LINKS TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

Key Curriculum Areas

ENGLISH / Language

Text structure and organisation

- ACELA 1430 Understand that texts can take many forms, can be very short (for example an exit sign) or quite long (for example an information book or a film) and that stories and informative texts have different purposes
- ACELA1431 Understand that some language in written texts is unlike everyday spoken language
- ACELA1447 Understand that the purposes texts serve shape their structure in predictable ways
- ACELA1463 Understand that different types of texts have identifiable text structures and language features that help the text serve its purpose

Expressing and developing ideas

- ACELA 1786 Explore the different contribution of words and images to meaning in stories
- ACELA 1453 Compare different kinds of images in narrative and informative texts and discuss how they contribute to meaning
- ACELA 1437 Understand the use of vocabulary in familiar contexts related to everyday experiences, personal interests and topics taught at school

Phonics and Word Knowledge

- ACELA1439 Recognise and generate rhyming words, alliteration patterns, syllables and sounds (phonemes) in spoken words

ENGLISH / Literature

Literature and Context

- ACELT 1575 Recognise that texts are created by authors who tell stories and share experiences that may be similar or different to students' own experiences

Responding to literature

- ACELT 1783 Share feelings and thoughts about the events and characters in texts
- ACELT 1582 Discuss characters and events in a range of literary texts and share personal responses to these texts, making connections with students' own experiences



LINKS TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

ENGLISH / Literacy

Interacting with others

- ACELY 1646 Listen to and respond orally to texts and to the communication of others in informal and structured classroom situations

Interpreting, analysing, evaluating

- ACELY1648 Identify some differences between imaginative and informative texts
- ACELY 1650 Use comprehension strategies to understand and discuss texts listened to, viewed or read independently
- ACELY1658 Describe some differences between imaginative informative and persuasive texts
- 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
- ACELY1670 Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to analyse texts by drawing on growing knowledge of context, language and visual features and print and multimodal text structures

Creating texts

- ACELY1651 Create short texts to explore, record and report ideas and events using familiar words and beginning writing knowledge

LINKS TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

SCIENCE/ Science Understanding

Biological sciences

- ACSSU002 Living things have basic needs, including food and water
- ACSSU017 Living things have a variety of external features
- ACSSU211 Living things live in different places where their needs are met
- ACSSU030 Living things grow, change and have offspring similar to themselves

SCIENCE/ Science As A Human Endeavour

Nature and development of science

- ACSHE013 ACSHE021 ACSHE034 Science involves observing, asking questions about, and describing changes in, objects and events

SCIENCE/ Science Enquiry Skills

Questioning and predicting

- ACSIS014 Pose and respond to questions about familiar objects and events
- ACSIS024 ACSIS037 Pose and respond to questions, and make predictions about familiar objects and events

Processing and analysing data and information

- ACSIS233 Engage in discussions about observations and represent ideas
- ACSIS027 ACSIS040 Use a range of methods to sort information, including drawings and provided tables and through discussion, compare observations with predictions

Evaluating

- ACSIS213 ACSIS041 Compare observations with those of others

Communicating

- ACSIS012 Share observations and ideas
- ACSIS029 ACSIS042 Represent and communicate observations and ideas in a variety of ways



LINKS TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

GENERAL CAPABILITIES

Literacy

- Comprehending texts through listening, reading and viewing
- Composing texts through speaking, writing and creating
- Text knowledge
- Grammar knowledge
- Word knowledge
- Visual knowledge

Critical and Creative Thinking

- Inquiring – identifying, exploring and organising information and ideas
- Critical and Creative Thinking in the learning areas

CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITIES

Sustainability