

Stage 2 unit starter

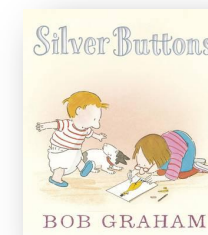
Point of view

Rationale

This unit starter focuses on studying the concept of point of view through the key text, *Silver buttons*, and a range of short films and other picture books. Point of view is a key aspect of learning in Stage 2 English, as explicitly indicated by content points in EN2-1A (*retell or perform part of a story from a character's point of view*) and EN2-11D (*identify the point of view in a text and suggest alternative points of view*). While point of view might be softly introduced as a concept in Early Stage 1 and Stage 1, Stage 2 is probably the first opportunity to make this concept the subject of an entire unit. Undoubtedly, students will return to this concept in a more sophisticated way in later stages.

According to *English textual concepts*, point of view is *the position from which the subject matter of a text is designed to be perceived*. While point of view may be expressed through a narrator or character (and this is certainly true for some of the texts studied in this unit), this is not always the case. *Silver buttons* and *Handa's surprise* both demonstrate how points of view can be constructed to influence our perception of events without necessarily suggesting a particular character or narrator.

There are ample opportunities to develop literacy skills and knowledge of language through the activities suggested in this unit, including writing paragraphs and more extended narratives, reading, literal and inferential comprehension, producing multimodal texts combining written and visual elements, speaking and listening through discussion and positioning activities, grammar such as use of pronouns to indicate person.



Outcomes

EN2-1A, EN2-2A, EN2-4A, EN2-7B, EN2-8B, EN2-9B, EN2-10C, EN2-11D, EN2-12E

Concept/s

Point of view:

Students learn that:

- points of view are represented in texts in a variety of ways
- mode and medium can affect choices about how to represent points of view
- points of view affect stories and how they are interpreted
- meanings of stories may change when viewed through the eyes of different characters

Texts

Silver buttons by Bob Graham, Walker Books, Australia, 2013

Luke's way of looking by Nadia Wheatley and illustrated by Matt Ottley, Hodder Children's, Australia, 1999

The true story of the three little pigs by Jon Scieszka and illustrated by Lane Smith, Viking Press, USA, 1989

Voices in the park by Anthony Browne, DK Children, USA, 2001

The Rabbits by John Marsden and illustrated by Shaun Tan, Lothian Books, Australia, 1998

[Handa's surprise: picture book animation, You Tube, published 15 September, 2012](#)

The lost thing by Shaun Tan, Lothian, Australia, 2000

The lost thing (videorecording) by A Ruheman and Shaun Tan, Passion Pictures, USA, 2010

Unsworth, L. (2013) 'Point of view in picture books and animated movie adaptations' [Scan](#), 32(1), 28–37.

Focus questions for responding and composing

- How are points of view represented in different ways across a range of texts?
- How does point of view influence the meaning of a text?
- Why is it sometimes valuable to tell a story from a particular point of view?
- Why are some stories written from different points of view?
- How does experimenting with point of view in composing lead to a deeper understanding of texts and how they work?

Prior knowledge


- Narratives
- Visual literacy

Assessment

Students contribute to a joint construction of a story, involving three or four characters, but not written from a particular point of view (third person). The characters should be diverse and play different roles in the story.

Students then write their own version of the story from a particular point of view, perhaps one of the three or four characters.

They explain to the teacher one-on-one how they have tried to represent this point of view and how this has changed the meaning of the story.

| Processes | Lesson Sequence | Evidence of learning |
|--|---|--|
|  <p>Engage personally Students identify particular elements of texts that are engaging and use these in their own composing. In their interpretations of texts they explore literal and inferred meanings. They distinguish aspects of their own perspective that shape their responses to and composition of texts.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before reading <i>Silver buttons</i>, ask students to identify a particular moment in time, eg 6pm last night. What were they <i>doing</i>? What were they <i>thinking</i>? What were they <i>feeling</i>? Ask them to write their responses without too much preliminary discussion. Share and read aloud responses, noting the variety of experiences, each a different point of view on a moment in time. • Next, think about the variety of things happening in the world now, this very minute. Brainstorm and share some of the possibilities, focusing on particular people, real or imagined, adding plenty of detail , eg my mother is driving her car to work singing her favourite song, an Inuit boy is helping his father to catch fish through a hole in the ice. Students could make a class collage of pictures with captions depicting the variety of events occurring at a particular moment in time. This activity will prepare students well for the study of <i>Silver buttons</i>. • Write a recount of a recent event. Notice how when we write stories about personal experiences we tend to use what is called <i>first person</i> and use pronouns such as <i>I, me, my, we, us,</i> and <i>our</i>. Now rewrite the story in <i>third person</i>, as if it is about a character who is not you, using pronouns, such as <i>he, him, his, she, her</i> (objective), <i>her</i> (possessive), <i>they, them</i> and <i>their</i>. How does the story change? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief recount of a moment in time based on personal experience • Class collage depicting events happening at a moment in time through words and images • Written recount, converted from first to third person |

Processes

Lesson Sequence

Evidence of learning





Understanding



In responding and composing students use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meanings to expand content knowledge, integrating and linking ideas.

- Introduce students to the concept of *point of view*: the position from which the subject matter of a text (eg a situation, character or idea) is meant to be seen. Notice how the composer of the text constructs and controls the point of view. Point of view may be expressed through a particular narrator or character, but this is not always the case, as *Silver buttons* demonstrates. We often use the terms *point of view* and *perspective* as if they are synonyms, but in the study of English it is useful to separate the two concepts: *perspectives* are ways of thinking that exist in the world; *points of view* are ways of seeing that are constructed in texts. The simplest example of point of view is a story written in first person. In multimodal texts, such as the picture books and films that will be studied in this unit, point of view is often presented by both written and visual cues. Texts can sometimes present two or more points of view. While it will be useful to introduce students to these ideas early in the unit, it will be necessary to return to these ideas from time to time as they come up in the study of *Silver buttons* and other texts.
- After reading the picture book, *Silver buttons*, ask students to make a list of all the different things happening at the moment in time when Jodie is putting the silver buttons on her drawing of a duck. Identify happy events, sad events, big events, small events. How do we know the events shown in the book cover just one minute? Search for written and visual clues.
- Introduce students to basic camera shots and angles. Some good resources for camera shots and angles can be found at [readwritethink 3-2-1 Vocabulary: Learning Filmmaking Vocabulary by Making Films](#) resource [Types of angles](#) and [Types of shots](#) and a [slide show](#) that includes bird's eye view. Identify these types of shots and angles in the picture book, *Silver buttons* – teacher could provide groups with copies of selected illustrations and ask them to label to indicate type/angle of shot. Discuss how using different types of shots and angles helps to establish different points of view. When opportunities arise in the study of films and other picture books in this unit, discuss how the use of certain types of shots and angles helps to create particular points of view in the texts.
- Notice how a visual element is sometimes depicted on a different scale across a series of spreads, eg the baby taking its first steps is shown in close-up, from the kitchen, from an outside window, then various 'bird's eye views'. Students will have fun finding other examples of these visual elements repeated on different scales, eg the feather. Discuss reasons why the composer might have used this technique, eg different scales emphasise the differences between points of view, but using common elements also suggests the connections between the scenes and events depicted.
- Look at examples of spreads that depict happy or sad events. Teacher might ask: *How do you know the scene is happy or sad?* Encourage students to consider both words and visual cues to justify their responses. Ask students to write a paragraph about a particular event and how it is depicted as happy or sad.
- Examine several spreads from the book and identify the point of view (POV) from which the moment is viewed. What *semiotic resources* (words or visual cues) tell us about the point of view? Note that some spreads might not represent a particular point of view but rather what Unsworth (see reference list) calls 'the eternal observer', eg the scene where Mum runs into the room where the baby has taken his first steps.
- Whose point of view is not presented? What visual clues indicate the lack of this point of view? (Hint: note possible photos of father on the kitchen cupboard and framed photo of grandparents on the mantelpiece).

- Contribution to discussions about the concept of point of view and the picture book
- List of events depicted in picture book
- Identifying types/angles of shots by labelling of illustrations
- Paragraphs about particular events and how they are depicted as happy/sad

| Processes | Lesson Sequence | Evidence of learning |
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|  <p>Connecting Students discuss similarities and differences in texts from a range of cultures, considering ideas, characters and events drawn from their world and the world of texts. In their responding and composing they use and compare the language of written and spoken texts in different contexts.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> View the short video, <i>Handa's surprise – picture book animation</i>. Discuss how point of view is used to tell the story. Note that we, as viewers, can see how Handa is losing the fruit she is carrying to her friend and how she ends up with a basket of tangerines, her friend's favourite fruit. However, Handa cannot see these events, a fact emphasised by the voiceover that shows her thoughts and the images showing her staring ahead, unaware of the events around her. While Handa is surprised to see a basket full of tangerines, the viewer isn't because we have experienced a different point of view. Write a paragraph explaining the difference between what we as viewers see and what Handa sees and why this is important in the story. Compare with the presentation of point of view in the picture book, <i>Silver buttons</i>. <i>Alternative extension activity for more able students:</i> Read the picture book, <i>The lost thing</i>, then view the video version of <i>The lost thing</i>. Compare the ways in which point of view is presented in the two texts. Note how different media – in this case, a picture book and a video – lend themselves to different ways of showing point of view. Note that the picture book mostly positions the reader as an outside observer, whereas the animation positions the viewer to take on the point of view of the boy and sometimes the lost thing. Through close examination of stills, examine how these different ways of positioning readers/viewers are achieved through the two texts. Ask students to write a paragraph explaining how readers/viewers might respond to the texts in different ways because of these different approaches to how they are being positioned. Compare with the presentation of point of view in the picture book, <i>Silver buttons</i>. Teachers will want to read Len Unsworth's article from <i>Scan</i> before engaging in this activity with a more able class, or a more able group within a class. Create literature circles in which students read and analyse other picture books that use the concept of point of view in interesting ways. Some examples include <i>Voices in the park</i>, <i>Luke's way of looking</i>, <i>The rabbits</i> and <i>The true story of the three little pigs</i>, but teachers should be able to identify other appropriate examples from the school's resources. Groups might be formed on the basis of ability or students' preferences for texts. After reading the text a few times, each group identifies the point of view, or points of view, presented in the text. They consider how the point of view is, or points of view are, presented, considering both written and visual cues. They discuss how point of view affects both the meaning of the text and enjoyment of the text. Compare with the presentation of point of view in the picture book, <i>Silver buttons</i>. Each group shows/reads its book and presents its findings to the rest of the class – these presentations could take the form of PowerPoint presentations in which students refer to spreads from the picture book. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paragraph explaining the meaning and effect created by point of view in film Group presentations about point of view in picture books studied in literature circles |

| Processes | Lesson Sequence | Evidence of learning |
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|  <p>Engaging critically Students interpret texts and justify opinions</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After several readings and discussion of <i>Silver buttons</i>, ask students to write a paragraph about what Bob Graham is saying about the world through the variety of points of view presented in his picture book. Possible ideas include the diversity of people and their experiences or our connections with one another through the moment in time, but encourage students to come up with their own ideas as much as possible. • Ask students to stand along a line to indicate how much they liked the picture book, <i>Silver buttons</i> – from ‘loved it’ at one end and ‘hated it’ at the other. Ask students to justify their opinions. Students can move up and down the line if they are persuaded by the reasons their classmates give for their opinions. Note the variety of responses. Emphasise that there is no right or wrong position. Discuss the value of sharing our opinions and considering the opinions of others. • Ask students to write a letter to Bob Graham sharing their opinion about his picture book, <i>Silver buttons</i>. Students can actually send their letters to Bob Graham via Walker books. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paragraph about how point of view contributes to meaning of text • Participation in positioning activity • Letter to composer expressing point of view |

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|  | <p>Experimenting</p> <p>Through working with textual concepts students identify aspects of texts that engage an audience and use them to experiment in their own compositions in different modes and media.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to design their own spread, a picture with a caption, for the picture book, <i>Silver buttons</i>, depicting another event at that moment in time. Consider whether the event is happy or sad, big or small – and how you might suggest this with words or visual cues. • Imagine you are one of the characters involved in Jonathon’s life: Jodie (his sister), his mum, his dad. Tell the story, orally or in writing, of Jonathon taking his first steps. Alternatively, you might like to imagine you are Jonathon retelling this story at some stage in the future. To whom might you be telling this story? Consider how both point of view and audience influence <i>what you say</i> and <i>how you say it</i>, thereby changing the meaning and effect of the story. • Working in literature circle groups (see above), provide each group with a suitable ‘chapter-book’ written in third person. Each student in the group takes on the role of a particular character; other students ask questions in a ‘press conference’ based on a key incident in the book. Notice how the story changes from one point of view to another. Students could then be asked to write news stories of the event which include quotes from these different point-of-view accounts. • Using the idea of <i>The true story of the three little pigs</i>, ask students to take a well-known story, perhaps a fairy story, and represent from an alternative point of view. Students could choose to present their ‘twisted tales’ as picture books, simple animations or any other familiar form. Discuss how the meaning and effect of the story change when a different point of view is presented. • See assessment task – students are experimenting when they write their own version of a story from a particular point of view. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design of an additional spread for picture book • Retelling of a traditional story from a different point of view and in a form of choice • Assessment task |
|  | <p>Reflecting</p> <p>Students are aware of processes of composition and can use this understanding to develop criteria for judgement of their own texts and those of their peers. They appraise their own work in order to refine its effectiveness and correct errors. They also consider their preferences in reading and learning.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many of the activities noted above include a reflection component. • As each text is studied in class, keep returning to the introductory lesson about point of view. Encourage students to reflect on their learning through the discussion. At the end of the unit ask students to write a paragraph reflecting on what they have learned about the concept of point of view. • See assessment task – students are reflecting when they explain to the teacher how they have tried to present a point of view and how this has changed the meaning of the story. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paragraph reflecting on learning about the concept of point of view • Assessment task |

The intention of this unit starter is to illustrate teaching and learning activities for each of the processes.

The processes may be taught in any order to cater for the needs of all learners and further differentiation can be included in your full version of the unit.