

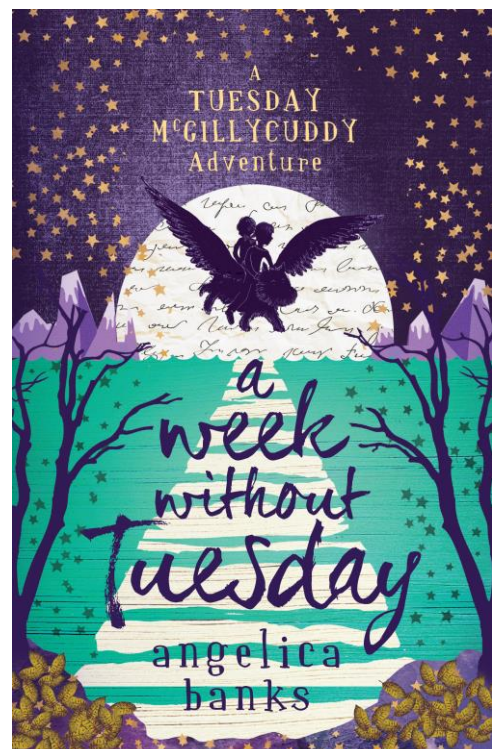
Teachers' Notes
by Esther O'Rourke-deGraaf

A Week without Tuesday
by
Angelica Banks

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Recommended for ages 8-12 yrs

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Introduction 2
 Use in the curriculum 2
 Settings 2
 Genre and themes 4
 Adventure..... 4
 Writing, stories, creativity..... 4
 Characters 5
 Activity ideas..... 11
 Further reading..... 13
 About the writers 14
 Blackline masters..... 15
 Appendix 19



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INTRODUCTION

Something is very wrong in the land of story. Writers are disappearing, and turning up all over the world with terrible injuries, and no idea what has happened to them.

When Tuesday McGillycuddy finds herself back in the mysterious world where stories are made, it soon becomes clear that it is up to her to set things to rights. To do so she will need to unravel the meaning of an undelivered letter, and the cryptic instructions of a formidable Librarian. She will confront some of her greatest fears, and face some impossible choices.

Luckily for Tuesday, she has her dog Baxterr and her friend Vivienne Small to rely on, and no small amount of creativity, courage, and strength of her own.

A week Without Tuesday is a joyful, exciting, and uplifting adventure that explores the power of imagination, and the incalculable value of stories.

USE IN THE CURRICULUM

A Week Without Tuesday can be used to teach to all three strands of the Australian English curriculum (Language, Literature, and Literacy) from years 5 through to 7. For detailed tables of the strands and sub-strands that can be addressed through the study of this novel, please refer to the [appendix](#) at the end of this document.

In addition to the section of these notes called 'Activity ideas', suggested activities and discussion topics can be found throughout the sections on 'Settings', 'Genre and themes' and 'Characters'.

SETTINGS

THE REAL WORLD

Tuesday lives in our own world. Her house is very tall, somewhat chaotic, and is full of collected objects and post-it notes with story ideas on them.

"Was this why Tuesday wanted to be a writer, because her house had all these books? Her parents were obviously readers." (p 221)

Activity

Imagine you have been invited to Tuesday's house for breakfast. You are sitting at the kitchen table. What do you see when you look around? Write a few descriptive paragraphs about the room, the people in it, the sounds, and smells you encounter.

THE WORLD OF STORY

- "A magical place that was the collective secret of every writer who ever lived." (p 18)
- Exists "on the other end of a silvery thread of imagination." (p 18)
- "When a writer returns home, they take their characters with them and never forget them. But it is not the same for characters. Writers fade quickly from their minds." (p 41)
- "Out there is every world ever created by every writer who ever lived." (p 116)

THE BEGINNING TREE

“You see, for writers, the tree was something like the landing platform, or the doorway, or the welcome mat.” (p 58)

The tree provides a starting point, and supplies for writers. It doesn't speak, but it is sentient – able to worry, and even tease. It provides writers with some of the tools they need to set out on their adventures

“The tree was delighted to see Blake hurtling towards it... It rustled its leaves in a hearty welcome.” (p 329)

Discussion

If you were just arriving in the world of story to begin a brand new adventure what supplies would you ask the tree to give you?

Think of your favourite story. Now imagine the writer of that story arriving at the Beginning Tree to begin that story. What did the tree give them?

THE LIBRARY

An “unfathomably large” (p 112) building with the word ‘Imagine’ carved above the door. It holds a copy of every story ever written, and has a flying platform that the Librarian uses to visit the many shelves.

It is “for writers only,” (p 86) and characters may not enter.

The gates open at the Librarian's gaze, as though she can command them with her mind. (p 114)

There is a secret room for books that are yet to be, “they shimmered and shivered together like holograms.” (p 113)

The Librarian has a private study where pretty much everything is purple (p 114 – 115). Here, there is a trap door that leads to the space between worlds. She can travel on her flying platform to the Conservatory through here.

THE CONSERVATORY

This is the home of the Gardener. It is a large circular room like a planetarium, but with worlds rather than stars. Half the room is a workshop, with books, papers, and tools. The other half is set up like a home. Jetties lead out from either side of the Conservatory: one for walking out onto and entering worlds, the other for bringing worlds in for maintenance.

The Conservatory responds subtly to the needs of the Gardener. They are linked. It provides the kinds of food that the Gardener likes and needs; the lights dim when the Gardener needs to sleep.

VIVIENNE SMALL'S WORLD

Vivienne's world has been created by Serendipity Smith. It is a world in which adventures happen.

One of the main cities in Vivienne's world is the City of Clocks “glimmering with soaring, elegant golden spires.” (p 171) “Never had there been a place so congenial for cats.” (p 197) “Residents thought it good luck if a fish came out of their tap.” (p 197)

Activity

Have you noticed how many books that have adventures in them have a map in the front? Draw a map of Vivienne's world. Remember to include:

- The Peppermint Forest
- The Mountains of Margalov
- The City of Clocks
- The River Rythwyck
- The Cliffs of Cartavia
- The Oasis of Evermore (with its giant sky flowers)
- The Eldritch Forest.

GENRE AND THEMES

ADVENTURE

- “[Smells] Something sharp, like gunpowder, and sea salt.” (p 39)
- “Finding things was an essential part of an adventure.” (p 42)
- “There’s no adventure in normal.” (p 92)
- “It wouldn’t be an adventure if we knew what was going to happen.” (p 150)
- “‘Maybe things will settle down tomorrow. Maybe everything will go back to normal.’ (p 164)
- “Vivienne gave her a puzzled look. ‘You do know that’s not the way things usually happen in an adventure, don’t you?’” (p 164)
- “There was no one else...Certainly that is how most of us find our most important adventures, wouldn’t you say? (p 334)

Discussion

We all know an adventure story when we see one, whether it’s in a novel, a picture book, a comic, TV show or film. What do these stories have in common? What do we expect an adventure story to involve? Brainstorm this as a class, and use this to lead into a discussion about genre and audience expectations.

WRITING, STORIES AND CREATIVITY

- “Serendipity had once told Denis that it was hard to say which was more important, making words on a page or standing at the window having ideas. Both were essential for a writer.” (p 11)
- Serendipity’s fear for Tuesday when writers begin to go missing (ch 2) shows us that a writer is a writer no matter whether they are published and famous or not.
- “Stories don’t happen only when you have a pen in your hand or a typewriter under your fingers. They can sneak up on you in the shower or when you’re climbing the stairs. They can come to you in your dreams...” (p 46)
- “A story had come to get her and she had simply taken flight.” (p 70)
- “What is a story if not a message of sorts? A message that you deliver not only to one person, but to all people who care to open its covers and receive it? A

message to all people, for all time? What could be more wonderful than that?" (p 88)

- "Normal is not what writers need. Regularity, a set time to write, that can be very useful. But normality? No, there's no adventure in normal. There's no surprise or mystery, no villains or great love affairs, no tragedies or victories in *normal*...Eccentricity. Impulsiveness. Passion. Surprise. Joy. This is what a writer's heart requires. And that most important thing of all – curiosity," (p 92)
- "This is a key world, Ms Gardener. The first time a writer creates a whole new idea, a key world is made. And it becomes like a sun in a solar system. When writers come along and are inspired by that world, their worlds are like planets circling the sun. No less important, but related..." (p 275)
- "'It's a world being born...' Someone, somewhere had put pen to paper. Or fingertips to keyboard, or chalk to a blackboard, or sharpened stick to sandy beach. And they had done it in a way that had made magic." (p 320)

Discussion

Heather Rose (one half of Angelica Banks) describes her artistic vision as "to inspire millions of children to embrace their creativity and harness their imaginations to make the world an even more wonderful place through their facility with words."¹ Why do you think she is so passionate about this? Do you think she achieves this with A Week Without Tuesday?

Activity

Describe a 'normal' day in the life of someone your own age. Come up with 7 things that might happen between waking up in the morning and going to bed at night. Then, think of one strange, eccentric, or unexpected thing that could make that normal activity different. Share these with the class and think about the kinds of stories that could be born out of these [See [BLM 3](#) at the end of these notes for an example of how to do this activity, and a table in which to complete it.]

CHARACTERS

BAXTERR

Baxterr is Tuesday's dog. He is often referred to as 'Doggo' because he is a magical winged dog, and their true names are a powerful part of their magic. He is clever, well behaved, and deeply devoted to Tuesday.

- "He was an eminently sensible dog, who never embarrassed himself by appearing overexcited at the delightful prospect of going for a walk." (p 64)
- "Baxterr is wonderful. And much fiercer than you'd think." (p 64)
- "Certainly they both had hair of almost every shade of gold and brown." (p 65)
- In the world of Story, Baxterr can fly with "a pair of golden-brown wings" that are "all covered on their outer side with short, shaggy fur." (p 71)

¹ <http://wordmothers.com/2015/02/25/interview-with-author-heather-rose/>

- According to Silver Nightly, no other writers ever manage to bring their pets to the world of Story. "So what I've been thinking is maybe your dog isn't like other dogs." (p 134)
- Baxterr can travel between worlds.
- Intuitive. "Baxterr, feeling her mood, licked her gently on the face." (p 170)
- "He did not as a rule like cats, but he was a dog of manners." (p199)
- "Anyone can tell that home, for that dog, is you." (p 357)
- "He growled at the reporters with the special, deep sound that he reserved for protecting the people he loved most." (p 365)

Discussion

Baxterr is a special dog. He has magical powers, and a special bond with Tuesday. Have you read any other stories where a character has a special bond with a pet or animal? (eg Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials series.). What role did the animal play in the life of the character/s? How did they help with the events of the story?

BLAKE LUCKHURST

Blake is a fellow writer. He was first published at the age of twelve, and his success has gone to his head a bit. He teases Tuesday, but they are friends and they are fond of each other.

- Full of bravado "getting more handsome every day" (p 67), "natural genius" (p 68).
- Brave. "Serendipity, you must remember I am not simply Blake Luckhurst, author. I am, in this instance, Blake Luckhurst, action hero." (p 326)
- "He was no stranger to chaos; all his novels relied on it." (p 330)
- Actually cares very much about Tuesday, for all his teasing, "I am here to rescue Tuesday McGillycuddy." (p 333)
- "'Do you ever think about having a disguise, Blake?' Denis asked. 'Nah,' replied Blake. 'I am always happiest being my own magnificent self.'" (p 385)

Activity

Blake's novels all seem to be about action, adventure, and chaos. What do you think his world looks like when he leaves the library and goes to live his stories? Describe the setting, or draw it, as if from Blake's perspective.

DENIS MCGILLYCUDDY

Denis is Tuesday's father, and Serendipity's husband. He is hospitable and loving. He looks after most of the home things in the McGillycuddy household, like folding laundry, sweeping, and cooking. He is particularly good at making blueberry pancakes.

- Very protective of his family. "No writing my loves. It's not safe. Please?" (p 46)
- "Denis had a highly attuned sense of what was so. And he understood how to be calm when everything about him was madness." (p 101)

Discussion

In the McGillycuddy household, traditional parental gender roles are reversed. Discuss this with the class – does it seem unusual to them? Why/ why not?

MISS DIGBY

Miss Digby is Serendipity's assistant. She is mild and polite, never flustered or in a rush, and always smells of dried flowers. She has no family, but is devoted to Serendipity.

- "Miss Digby had a way of dressing that made her almost entirely forgettable." (p 48)
- "She was both as familiar and as unknown to Tuesday as the moon." (p 48)
- "Entirely practical and pragmatic." (p 52)
- Could be a little frosty with children (p 155)
- Unflappable and efficient (p 156)
- Takes her job very seriously, and is fiercely defensive of Serendipity. "If you ever, I mean ever, give any indication that Serendipity Smith is anyone other than Serendipity Smith, or that any member of this family is anything other than exactly who the world currently believes them to be, then I will personally ensure that you die a long and painful death." (p 228)
- "You are an incredible woman, Miss Digby." (p 228)
- "You need neither explain nor apologise. I appreciate a good secret." (p 227)

Discussion

Miss Digby is the perfect assistant for a busy author with a secret identity. What qualities do you think make her so good at her job?

GARNET

- 'The Gardener'. His job is to maintain the many worlds that authors create.
- "Who dwells in that space between worlds." (p 138)
- "He is a very, very old man." (p 138)
- "He was an old man with grey hair and a weary face." (p 243)
- "He wore a primrose suit with a slightly creased white shirt and a mauve tie with purple roses upon it." (p 243)
- Doesn't seem to have a very good memory. Had to write himself a note to remember who Tuesday was. Forgets Tuesday is in the room in the time it takes him to cut a piece of cake (p 249)
- Speaks in sayings and idioms: "Well, a fine kettle of fish, a fine nest of nettles." (p 244) "Fall seven times, stand up eight." (p 245) "Hope for the best, prepare for the worst." (p 245)
- "'It has been an extraordinary life,' he said, in barely a whisper. 'We were far apart, my love and me, and yet we were together in purpose every day.'" (p 319-320)

- “How he had all manner of strange sayings that made no sense and quite a lot of sense all at once when you stopped to think about them.” (p 372)

Activity

Look up the word ‘idiom’, and discuss what it means as a class. Think of as many idioms as you can, and try to explain their meanings. [See [BLM 1](#) at the end of these notes for a sheet on which to do this activity.]

Discussion

What role do you think idioms play in a language? In a culture? Discuss this as a class.

Different languages have their own idioms. Many of them don’t make sense when translated into other languages. Do you have any students who speak languages other than English in your class? Can they share an idiom from their other language? Does it translate?

THE LIBRARIAN

The Librarian is the keeper of all the stories ever written. She lives in The Library, a huge and somewhat magical building in the world of story. She is brusque and strict, has a piercing gaze, and always wears purple

- “The Librarian, although short, somehow managed to appear very tall.” (p 87)
- “Oh, thank the letters of the alphabet!” (p 136)
- “The Librarian’s face was both fierce and gentle at once.” (p 141)
- Her real name is Lucille, “she never did like her name.” (p 251)
- “Did you ever notice that the Librarian and the Library are connected?” (p 265)
- “Mr Luckhurst! Language please. We are a writer and we have vocabulary.” (p 332)
- “We mustn’t interfere. Only assist.” (p 342)
- “Is no one up to the hard decisions any more? Whatever happened to sacrifice?” (p 349)

Discussion

What do you think the Librarian values most in the world? How does she demonstrate this by her actions and choices?

MIRANDA TEMPLETON

Miranda Templeton is the Mayor of the City of Clocks. She is sensible and strong, and knows what to do in a crisis.

- “Wearing a magenta-feathered hat of surpassing elevation.” (p 204)
- “Compelling yet mellifluous voice.” (p 204)
- “Who would have been tall even without her very tall hat.” (p 205)
- When faced with fear, she becomes very focussed. (p 233)
- “*Let not your courage fail you,
Be valiant and bold
And it will soon avail you
My loyal hearts of gold
Huzzah, my valiant citizens, again I say huzzah!
Tis nobly done – the day’s our own – huzzah, huzzah!*” (p 294)

Discussion

Miranda Templeton is the mayor of the city of clocks because she got more votes than Nigel Finkwatter. What qualities does she possess that make her a good choice of leader?

NIGEL FINKWATTER

Nigel Finkwatter wanted to be the mayor of the City of Clocks, but didn't get the votes. Out of spite, he obstructs Miranda Templeton at every opportunity. He is very greedy, and cares for nobody but himself.

- "As a sign of dissent, he stopped wearing hats and instead went about with his mane of long white hair curled and coiffed into towering arrangements." (p 234)
- "Nigel Finkwatter was very rich, and had become so by being very persuasive." (p 235)
- "He had a handsome face with a rather large nose and his voice was smooth and slippery." (p 235)
- "Like the vercaka, he knew exactly how to play on each person's worst fears." (p 235)
- "In the City of Clocks there were no fights nastier than those that involved Nigel Finkwatter." (p 238)
- "Nigel Finkwatter was stingy. He wouldn't lend you enough money to buy a toothpick... His family lived on fish soup, dry cheese and biscuits." (p 238-239)
- "'You will fail,' said Finkwatter. 'And you sound more like a vercaka every day.'" (p 240)
- Gathers coins for himself while the city battles the vercaka.
- "Don't you know who I am? I am Nigel Finkwatter! I am..." (p 298)

Discussion

Finkwatter is compared to a vercaka on several occasions. How does this shape the reader's perception of his character?

Activity

Can you identify any points in the story where Finkwatter might have made different choices and changed his fate? When and how?

SERENDIPITY SMITH/SARAH MCGILLYCUDDY

Sarah McGillycuddy is Tuesday's mother, and Denis' wife. Her alter ego is Serendipity Smith, the most famous writer in the world. Sarah has short hair, and likes to wear plain black clothes. Serendipity lives in the top floor of the most famous hotel in the city, has long red curly hair (a wig), wears fabulous glasses, flamboyant clothes, and knee high boots.

SILVER NIGHTLY

Silver Nightly is a writer of Westerns. Since his wife died, he spends as much time as he can in the world of story. He is kind, courteous, and wise.

- "His face was like a mountainside that had been beaten for years by wind and rain. Every part of it was wrinkled except his warm blue eyes." (p 124)
- Wears a white cowboy hat. "A man without his hat is like a snake without his slither." (p 126)
- "I've written one hundred and four westerns and am right in the middle of my one hundred and fifth." (p 129)
- "I like horse-country. I like canyons. I like wide blue skies and red rocks. I like sage-brush, and eagles, and smoke on the horizon." (p 129)

Activity

Silver Nightly says "A man without his hat is like a snake without his slither." This is an example of a simile. He uses this simile to highlight how important his hat is to him. On the worksheet provided come up with your own interesting similes. [See [BLM 2](#) at the end of these notes]

TUESDAY MCGILLYCUDDY

Tuesday lives in a tall house on Brown Street with her parents, and her beloved dog Baxterr. She has strawberry blonde hair, an extraordinary imagination, and spends every spare moment she has writing stories on her baby-blue typewriter.

- "[Not] at all the kind of girl to squeal at a spider or a scorpion, or even a normal leech." (p 159)
- "You have said yes, and yes, and yes." (p 359-360)

VIVIENNE SMALL

Vivienne is the heroine of Serendipity Smith's novels. She is a resourceful, clever and determined girl, who fights pirates and goes on adventures. She carries a bow and arrows, and a blowpipe with poison darts; travels in a little red sailing ship called 'Vivacious'; and has no fewer than seven different homes and hideouts.

- "She could sail a boat, tie a knot, sharpen a knife, whistle a tune, solve a riddle, read a map, light a fire, hit a target with a speeding arrow, scale a cliff, swim through a wild sea, make an ice-cave, tap a cactus and survive a sandstorm. She could run fast, and walk quietly. And with the help of her blue, leathery wings, she could leap small, dangerous distances." (p 20)
- Speaks several languages (p 20)
- "She didn't have much time for things to do with love." (p 37)
- "I see that you have great power and determination within you." (p 38)
- "Adventure to Vivienne Small was like a mosquito to a frog, or an egg to a snake – the most delicious thing imaginable." (p 39)
- "Usually she told herself that small wings were better than no wings at all. Sometimes, though, she got frustrated that her wings were too small to keep her airborne for more than a few moments at a time. And, deep down, she wished that she could truly fly." (p 55)

ACTIVITY IDEAS

BEFORE / DURING / AFTER READING

Before reading

- Have you read the first book in the Tuesday McGillycuddy series? Based on that story, what do you expect this book will be about?
- What can you predict about the story based on the title and the cover?

During reading

- Pause at the end of the following chapters, and make some predictions about what you think will happen:
 - Chapter 1
 - Chapter 5
 - Chapter 8
 - Chapter 11
 - Chapter 14
 - Chapter 19
 - Chapter 25
- Ensure that you can justify your predictions using your understanding of character, genre, and other literary conventions.

After reading

- Reflect on your predictions. Were many of them realized? Why do you think this was the case?

MEMORY PORTRAIT

Have you ever noticed how smells can remind you of things? Even of things you thought you'd forgotten? (p 39)

The smell of adventure reminds Vivienne of Tuesday and Baxterr.

Think of a person you love or know well. What smells, sounds, or objects remind you of this person? Draw a portrait of this person, and annotate it with these memory triggers.

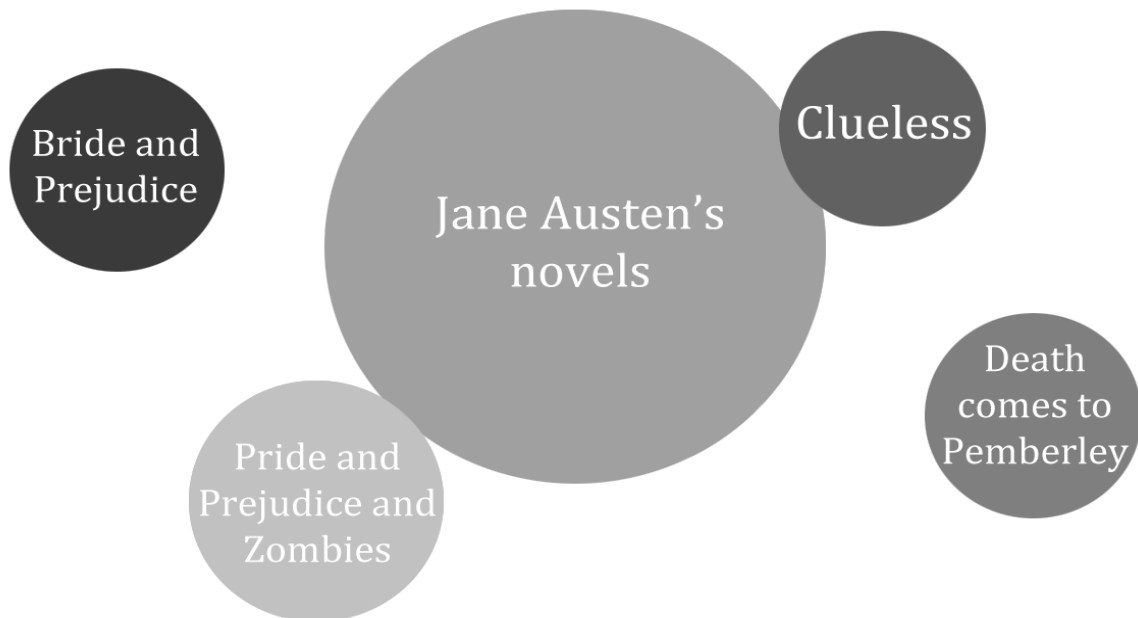
KEY WORLDS

The Gardener describes the idea of "key worlds" to Tuesday.

This is a key world, Ms Gardener. The first time a writer creates a whole new idea, a key world is made. And it becomes like a sun in a solar system. When writers come along and are inspired by that world, their worlds are like planets circling the sun. No less important, but related...(p 278)

Can you think of a book that could be a key world in *A Week Without Tuesday*? Or perhaps a writer whose oeuvre would constitute a key world?

Represent this world in the centre of a page like a sun, then draw the other worlds inspired by it orbiting it like planets. For example:



FURTHER READING

***Finding Serendipity*, by Angelica Banks**

The first 'Tuesday McGillycuddy' story.

***The Chronicles of Narnia*, by C. S. Lewis**

C. S. Lewis' fantasy world features in A Week Without Tuesday as a "key world", and one of its characters makes an appearance in the story. This series is also complimentary in that one of its central premises is about travelling between worlds.

***Charlotte's Web*, by E. B. White**

This novel is also referenced in the series as a "key world" in A Week Without Tuesday. Tuesday and the Gardener visit the farmyard that will be familiar to readers of this classic.

***The Dream Snatcher*, by Abi Elphinstone**

This novel features another brave, resourceful heroine on an exciting adventure. Her bond with her wildcat companion is also central to the tale.

***The 'His Dark Materials' trilogy*, by Philip Pullman**

These novels could be offered to confident students as extension reading. They also feature characters who travel between realities. Additionally, each person in the world Pullman creates has a 'daemon' - an animal companion that functions as an embodiment of their soul.

***I Capture the Castle*, by Dodie Smith**

A classic novel about a young girl who writes. This is another story that empowers young people to identify as writers.

***Matilda*, by Roald Dahl**

A classic children's tale that celebrates the value of reading and stories. Children who are able to read A Week Without Tuesday independently will also be able to read this one with confidence.

***Little Fur*, by Isobelle Carmody**

The world of Little Fur has many similarities to that of Vivienne Small. Little Fur must also embark on a quest in this tale, and has to be brave and strong. Young readers will be able to read this book independently.

***Song for a Scarlet Runner* by Julie Hunt**

For independent readers in this age group, another novel that celebrates storytelling, featuring a young runaway girl who travels between worlds with a strange animal companion. Julie Hunt's tale takes readers into a world of story that is strange and yet familiar.

ABOUT THE WRITERS

ANGELICA BANKS

Angelica Banks is not one writer but two. Heather Rose and Danielle Wood are both Tasmanians. They met on a beach near Hobart a long time ago and have been friends ever since. When they decided to write a children's book together they chose a pen name, just to make things easy. As both Heather and Danielle have family names that live at the far end of the alphabet, they decided to have a name that was right at the start.

Heather and Danielle have both written award-winning novels for adults. Danielle won the Vogel prize for her first novel - *The Alphabet of Light and Dark* - in 2002. She is also the author of *Rosie Little's Cautionary Tale for Girls*, *Housewife Superstar* - *The Very Best of Marjorie Bligh* and *Mothers Grimm*. Heather is the author of three novels - *White Heart*, *the Butterfly Man* and *The River Wife*. *The Butterfly Man* won the Davitt Award in 2006. Heather and Danielle are two of Tasmania's most well-known authors.

Danielle has a PhD in Creative Writing and lectures at the University of Tasmania. She has a background in journalism. Heather has been an advertising copywriter and a businesswoman. She has won more than twenty international creative awards and was the Telstra Tasmanian Business Woman of the Year in 2004.

Danielle and Heather began *Finding Serendipity*, the first Tuesday McGillyguddy story, at Danielle's cottage on Mt Wellington. They had never written a children's story before, but as they have six children between them (including a set of twins), they have read and enjoyed thousands of children's stories. Their children range in age from 23 to 3.

The children's books Danielle has loved include *Carbonel* by Barbara Sleigh, *The Borrowers* by Mary Norton, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis and *Jacob Have I Loved* by Katherine Patterson.

And Heather loved *They Found a Cave* by Nan Chauncy, *Danny The Champion of the World* and *The Witches* by Roald Dahl, *The Hobbit and the Lord of The Rings* by J.R.R.Tolkein, *The Earthsea Trilogy* by Ursula Le Guin, *The Narnia series* by C.S. Lewis and *The Famous Five* books by Enid Blyton.

When they set about writing a children's book together they wanted to write a book that would take children on a wonderful adventure of the imagination. And they also wanted to write a book that would give children who wanted to be writers themselves lots of ideas about how to write their first novel. They created the characters together, sometimes enlisting the help of their children for names and ideas.

When they're not writing, Danielle is an amazing knitter and Heather loves to cook cakes.

ESTHER O'ROURKE-DEGRAAF

Esther O'Rourke-deGraaf has been a fully qualified secondary teacher for ten years but at present is a part-time blogger and freelancer, and a full-time mother. Her work for the Distance Education Centre of Victoria prepared her well for writing teachers' notes: the DECV teaches students with a staggering range of backgrounds and abilities, and all coursework is prepared in advance for dissemination via printed course books, and online. Esther likes to approach texts in a thorough and holistic fashion, looking not only at plot, character, and style, but also embedding them in their cultural context. Her aim is always to encourage students to be critical and inquisitive. Children's and YA fiction has always been a special interest and was why she became an English teacher, and why she still reads children's and YA books for pleasure, as much as for professional reasons.

IDIOMS

Definition:

Idiom	Meaning
<i>"Fall down seven times, stand up eight."</i>	<i>It doesn't matter how many times you fail, as long as you keep trying.</i>

SIMILIES

Definition:

A simile is a figure of speech that compares two unlike things, in order to highlight the similarities between them.

Activity:

Come up with some of your own Nightly-style similes in the space provided below. Numbers 1 to 4 have been started for you. Do those ones to get started, then come up with three more of your own.

1. A man without his hat is like a _____ without his _____.

2. A _____ without a _____ is like a library without a librarian.

3. A cup without coffee is like a _____ without _____.

4. A _____ without _____ is like a day without rain.

5. A _____
_____.

6. A _____
_____.

7. A _____
_____.

Changing the normal – part 1

Normal is not what writers need. Regularity, a set time to write, that can be very useful. But normality? No, there's no adventure in normal. There's no surprise or mystery, no villains or great love affairs, no tragedies or victories in normal...

— The Librarian

In the table overleaf, list 7 normal activities that are part of your everyday life. Then, think of something unexpected that could happen to make them extraordinary.

Here are some examples to jog your imagination...

TIME	EVENTS
8:00am	Normal: Wake up, stretch, and get out of bed.
	Unusual: <i>As I stretch, I feel something between my fingers – it is cold, and slightly damp. I look up and find that my bedroom no longer has a ceiling. Instead, there is a rainforest canopy, and my outstretched hands have found leaves and vines.</i>
8:10am	Normal: Sit down at the table to have some breakfast.
	Unusual: <i>I pour the milk, and hear a high pitched shriek. Or do I? I stare into my bowl, and then pour again. Yep. That was definitely a shout. I peer again, and scan the cereal for what could be making the noise. A tiny, perfectly formed boy is sitting on a cornflake as though it's a raft. He scowls up at me and squeakily asks, "Why are you trying to drown me, you big brute?!"</i>
3:12pm	Normal: Go to my locker and get my stuff before walking home.
	Unusual: <i>As I open my locker, I see something unexpected amongst the dried up bits of mandarin peel, out-of-date newsletters, and odd socks. A crisp white envelope, with my name typed on the front, and the word 'CONFIDENTIAL' stamped below it...</i>

When you've completed the table, choose the one you think is most interesting, and use it as a prompt for a short story. What happens next?

Changing the normal – part 2

TIME	EVENTS
	Normal:
	Unusual:
	Normal:
	Unusual:
	Normal:
	Unusual:
	Normal:
	Unusual:
	Normal:
	Unusual:
	Normal:
	Unusual:
	Normal:
	Unusual:

Appendix: Relevant strands and sub-strands of the Australian English Curriculum

Year level	Language	Literature	Literacy
5	<p>Language for interaction</p> <p>Understand that patterns of language interaction vary across social contexts and types of texts and that they help to signal social roles and relationships.</p> <p>Understand how to move beyond making bare assertions and take account of differing perspectives and points of view.</p> <p>Text structure and organization</p> <p>Understand how texts vary in purpose, structure and topic as well as the degree of formality.</p> <p>Investigate how the organisation of texts into chapters [...] can be used to predict content and assist navigation.</p> <p>Understand how noun groups/phrases and adjective groups/phrases can be expanded in a variety of ways to provide a fuller description of the person, place, thing or idea.</p>	<p>Literature and Context</p> <p>Identify aspects of literary texts that convey details or information about particular social, cultural and historical contexts.</p> <p>Responding to Literature</p> <p>Present a point of view about particular literary texts using appropriate metalanguage, and reflecting on the viewpoints of others.</p> <p>Examining Literature</p> <p>Recognise that ideas in literary texts can be conveyed from different viewpoints, which can lead to different kinds of interpretations and responses.</p> <p>Understand, interpret and experiment with sound devices and imagery, including simile, metaphor [etc.]</p> <p>Creating Literature</p> <p>Create literary texts using realistic and fantasy settings and characters that draw on the worlds represented in texts students have experienced.</p> <p>Create literary texts that experiment with structures, ideas and stylistic features of selected authors</p>	<p>Interacting with others</p> <p>Clarify understanding of content as it unfolds in formal and informal situations, connecting ideas to students' own experiences and present and justify a point of view.</p> <p>Interpreting, analysing, evaluating</p> <p>Identify and explain characteristic text structures and language features used in imaginative, informative and persuasive texts to meet the purpose of the text.</p> <p>Navigate and read texts for specific purposes applying appropriate text processing strategies, for example predicting and confirming, monitoring meaning, skimming and scanning</p> <p>Use comprehension strategies to analyse information [...].</p> <p>Creating texts</p> <p>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.</p>
Year level	Language	Literature	Literacy
6	<p>Expressing and developing ideas</p> <p>Investigate how complex sentences can be used in a variety of ways to elaborate, extend and explain ideas.</p> <p>Investigate how vocabulary choices [...] can express shades of meaning, feeling and opinion.</p>	<p>Literature and context</p> <p>Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different [...] contexts.</p> <p>Responding to literature</p> <p>Analyse and evaluate similarities and differences in texts on similar topics, themes or plots.</p> <p>Identify and explain how choices in language, for example [...] metaphor, influence personal response to different texts.</p> <p>Examining literature</p> <p>Identify, describe, and discuss similarities and differences between texts, including those by the same author or illustrator, and evaluate characteristics that define an author's individual style.</p>	<p>Interacting with others</p> <p>Participate in and contribute to discussions, clarifying and interrogating ideas, developing and supporting arguments, sharing and evaluating information, experiences and opinions.</p> <p>Interpreting, analyzing, evaluating</p> <p>Analyse how text structures and language features work together to meet the purpose of a text</p> <p>Use comprehension strategies to interpret and analyse information and ideas, comparing content from a variety of textual sources including media and digital texts.</p> <p>Creating texts</p> <p>Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts [...]</p>

Appendix: Relevant strands and sub-strands of the Australian English Curriculum

6 (cont)		<p>Creating literature</p> <p>Create literary texts that adapt or combine aspects of texts students have experienced in innovative ways.</p> <p>Experiment with text structures and language features and their effects in creating literary texts, for example, using imagery, sentence variation, metaphor and word choice.</p>	
Year level	Language	Literature	Literacy
7	<p>Language for interaction</p> <p>Understand how accents, styles of speech and idioms express and create personal and social identities.</p> <p>Understand how language is used to evaluate texts and how evaluations about a text can be substantiated by reference to the text and other sources.</p>	<p>Responding to literature</p> <p>Reflect on ideas and opinions about characters, settings and events in literary texts, identifying areas of agreement and difference with others and justifying a point of view.</p> <p>Discuss aspects of texts, for example their aesthetic and social value, using relevant and appropriate metalanguage.</p> <p>Examining literature</p> <p>Recognise and analyse the ways that characterisation, events and settings are combined in narratives [...].</p> <p>Creating literature</p> <p>Create literary texts that adapt stylistic features encountered in other texts [...].</p> <p>Experiment with text structures and language features and their effects in creating literary texts, for example, using rhythm, sound effects, monologue, layout, navigation and colour.</p>	<p>Interpreting, analysing, evaluating</p> <p>Analyse and explain the ways text structures and language features shape meaning and vary according to audience and purpose.</p> <p>Use prior knowledge and text processing strategies to interpret a range of types of texts.</p> <p>Use comprehension strategies to interpret, analyse and synthesise ideas and information, critiquing ideas and issues [...]</p> <p>Creating texts</p> <p>Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, selecting aspects of subject matter and particular language, visual, and audio features to convey information and ideas.</p>
Year level	Language	Literature	Literacy
8	<p>Language for interaction</p> <p>Understand how conventions of speech adopted by communities influence the identities of people in those communities.</p> <p>Understand [...] how different layers of meaning are developed through the use of metaphor, [etc.]</p> <p>Expressing and developing ideas</p> <p>Recognise that vocabulary choices contribute to the specificity, abstraction and style of texts.</p>	<p>Responding to literature</p> <p>Share, reflect on, clarify and evaluate opinions and arguments about aspects of literary texts.</p> <p>Recognise and explain differing viewpoints about the world, cultures, individual people and concerns represented in texts.</p> <p>Examining literature</p> <p>Recognise, explain and analyse the ways literary texts draw on readers' knowledge of other texts and enable new understanding and appreciation of aesthetic qualities.</p> <p>Identify and evaluate devices that create tone, for example humour, wordplay, innuendo and parody in poetry, humorous prose, drama or visual texts.</p>	<p>Interpreting, analyzing, evaluation</p> <p>Analyse and evaluate the ways that text structures and language features vary according to the purpose of the text [...]</p> <p>Apply increasing knowledge of vocabulary, text structures and language features to understand the content of texts.</p> <p>Creating texts</p> <p>Create imaginative, informative and persuasive texts that raise issues, report events and advance opinions, using deliberate language and textual choices [...].</p> <p>Experiment with text structures and language features to refine and clarify ideas to improve the effectiveness of students' own texts.</p>

Appendix: Relevant strands and sub-strands of the Australian English Curriculum

		<p>Creating literature</p> <p>Create literary texts that draw upon text structures and language features of other texts for particular purposes and effects.</p> <p>Experiment with particular language features drawn from different types of texts, including combinations of language and visual choices to create new texts.</p>	
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