

Nemesis

Agent Nemesis boarded the bustling train, quickly located a vacant compartment, slid the bronze door closed, then perched on the threadbare seat, feeling overwhelmed and apprehensive ... although she was well-trained, this was her first independent mission, and it involved meeting with the ultra-experienced, highly-regarded Agent Hephaestus. Nemesis's final training session as a recruit had been intense, learning unusual forms of martial arts, including aikido, and had concluded yesterday with a stern warning about the hazards of poisoned paper: if you even just skimmed it with your fingertips, your final view before slumping into oblivion would be your vibrant crimson skin ... this espionage game was terrifyingly ruthless!



Nemesis quivered and mentally revised the description of super-agent Hephaestus given by the agency—fair-haired, with a newspaper-wrapped bouquet of midnight black arum lilies. As she was pondering this, the door squealed open, revealing a blonde female carrying lilies, who murmured the predetermined cryptic statement ('Nekhbet was the goddess of vultures and oversaw the oldest oracle in Ancient Egypt') just as a second figure strode in: a slender man with a flaxen mohawk, also carrying an armful of lilies. Without delay, he too uttered the same secret sentence.

The pair glowered at each other as Nemesis's heart palpitated uncontrollably ... which one was the imposter? She battled to regain her composure and abruptly remembered something—a second phrase the master spy had given her to use during this mission if a situation like this occurred ... whichever agent responded instantaneously to it was likely to be Hephaestus. So Nemesis stammered that she felt dehydrated, and wondered if either of them had something to drink.

Without hesitation, the woman nimbly plunged her hand into her oversized leather knapsack and tossed a labelled plastic bottle containing a vivid liquid to Nemesis, who neatly caught it just as the male spectacularly leapt into impressive and decisive superspy action, frantically and energetically endeavouring to propel the bottle away with a forcible spin kick ... before he was expertly and adeptly restrained in a proficient taekwondo joint lock by the first agent.

The man shrieked, struggling ineffectually against his masterful opponent, screaming in agony and yelling that Nemesis was an absolute imbecile to have touched the bottle label. Nemesis was confounded, then realisation dawned ... with sickening fear and trepidation flooding her veins, she turned over her palms, which were horribly reminiscent of the colour of overripe cranberries.

Travel Inventions

How many times have you been caught in difficult, awkward or perhaps even downright desperate situations while travelling and have yearned for the perfect gizmo to make your adventures more comfortable, exhilarating, better organised, safer or less frustrating? Look no further than these awesome travel inventions.

The **smart suitcase** is a futuristic-looking piece of aluminium alloy luggage that has many mind-blowing features—not only is it fireproof, recyclable and lightweight, it also boasts a built-in LED light that illuminates in low lighting, a removable power bank with a USB connection for your smart devices and it can link to a smart tracking app that can alert you if the suitcase is opened by someone in your absence.

The **smartphone gimbal** is a pivoting support that allows your phone to rotate along a single axis. More simply put, it allows you to eliminate shaky or blurry footage when filming those holiday movies. The more expensive ones may also feature intelligent zooming wheels, multiple time lapse modes and comfortable ergonomic handles.

How about a **miniature travel vacuum**? Before you stop reading in disgust, we should clarify things—we're not suggesting that you do housework on your vacation! This amazing contraption actually helps you with your packing; it is a baggage compressor, equipped with a pressure detecting sensor, that is designed to make your clothes take up 50 per cent less space, allowing you to squeeze in all those souvenirs you have accumulated in your dream destinations.

If you've ever had a problem with contaminated water in remote locations while globetrotting, you will know that it can cause many serious health conditions. This ingenious **water purifier bottle**, with its replaceable cartridges, can transform any tap or natural water source into safe drinking water (protecting against viruses, bacteria and dangerous chemicals and metals in seconds), helping to avoid the need to buy bottled water.



The Sad Story of the Dodo – 1

Before Reading

1. The answer is: The illustration shows a bird standing on the seashore. We can see an anchored ship near to the shore.

Write a question that matches the answer.

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2. What does the title tell you about the text? Think about what type of information it might contain as well as the probable tone of the text.

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During Reading

3. What do the following words mean? You can use a dictionary to help you. Ensure the meaning of each word is as it is used in the text.

(a) endemic:
(b) uninhabited:
(c) predated:
(d) ungainly:
(e) agile:
(f) scant:
(g) mythical:
(h) plight:

After Reading

4. What do you think was the writer’s aim in writing this text?

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5. Do you think the writer achieved this aim? Give reasons for your answer.

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SAMPLE - NOT FOR SALE

The Sad Story of the Dodo – 2

Right There in the Text (Literal Questions)

6. (a) What did people generally think about extinction at the time of the dodo's demise?

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(b) Which introduced animals caused problems for the dodo?

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(c) What allowed the dodo to move swiftly?

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Think and Search (Inferential Questions)

7. Why do you think the Dutch destroyed the forest in Mauritius?

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What clue in the text tells you this?

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8. Why might fossilised dodo bones have been assembled into skeletons?

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What clue in the text tells you this?

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In My Head (Evaluative Questions)

9. The text says, *the story of the dodo persists as a sad symbol of human destruction and greed*. Do you agree with this statement? Explain.

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10. What other animals do you know of that are extinct or nearly extinct? What can be done to help them?

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SAMPLE - NOT FOR SALE

Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*

William Shakespeare (1564–1616) was a renowned English poet and playwright. One of his most popular plays is the comedy *Twelfth Night*. Here is a summary of the complicated plot.

A ship is wrecked off the coast of the kingdom of Illyria in Italy, causing a young woman named Viola to be stranded on the shore. Her beloved twin brother, Sebastian, was also



aboard the ship and Viola wrongly assumes that he has been drowned. Despite being in the depths of despair, Viola decides to seek work but is afraid to be alone as a woman, so she disguises herself as a man named Cesario and soon finds a position in the household of Duke Orsino, a nobleman who is in love with a woman named Lady Olivia. Orsino longs to marry Olivia but she is not interested.

Viola soon finds herself falling in love with Orsino but keeps her true female identity a secret from him. She begins to deliver messages of love to Olivia from Orsino but before long, a huge problem occurs: Olivia falls in love with Viola because she thinks Viola is a young man!

Meanwhile, other things are happening with the people that live on Olivia's estate: her uncle, Sir Toby Belch, his friend Sir Andrew, a court fool named Feste and a servant named Maria decide to play a practical joke on Olivia's steward, an unpleasant man named Malvolio. Maria fakes a letter from Olivia telling Malvolio that if he wishes to marry her, he should do certain things, such as wear yellow stockings and smile continuously. Malvolio, believing the letter, follows the instructions, making Olivia think he has gone mad. She has him locked in a dark room.

While all of these events take place, in another part of Illyria, Sebastian and his friend Antonio are looking for Viola. Antonio becomes separated from Sebastian and finds Viola but becomes very confused because he thinks she is Sebastian—and Antonio doesn't understand why Sebastian is pretending not to know him!

From here, everyone else gets confused, somewhat angry and very busy too! Among other things, Sir Andrew challenges Viola (who he thinks is Cesario) to a duel, Antonio is arrested for piracy, Olivia meets Sebastian (who she thinks is Cesario) and becomes engaged to him and Sebastian fights in a duel with Sir Andrew. Whew! Finally, Viola and Sebastian recognise each other and are joyfully reunited and things turn out well for everyone but Malvolio. Orsino proposes to Viola (who has finally revealed herself to be a woman), Olivia and Sebastian get married and Sir Toby and Maria are happily wed too. Malvolio, however, takes off amidst all the celebration in disgust.

Steps

1. Introduce and explain the strategy.

Making connections is about linking to the text things you know and things you've done. It helps you understand what the text is about and what it is saying. You can connect a text to something you know, or something that happened to you. You can think about how the text makes you feel. This is called 'text to self'. You can connect a text to another text or story you have read or heard, or to a movie you have seen. This is called 'text to text'. You can connect a text to things that happen in the real world. It may be something that is the same or different. It may be something you read about in a newspaper or watched on the news.
2. Read the title and the first paragraph to, or with, the class.

What does the title say the text is about? What do you know about Shakespeare? When did he live? What did he write? What other Shakespeare plays do you already know? Have you read them or seen them? If so, did you enjoy them? Discuss. (Text to self)
3. Children read the second and third paragraphs of the text.

What tragic event happened to Viola? Have you ever worried about what may have happened to a close family member or friend? How might you feel if you thought you were alone in the world and had to survive on your own? How difficult might it be to pretend to be someone else? (Text to self)
4. Children read the fourth paragraph of the text.

Olivia's servants play a practical joke on Malvolio, which makes him look foolish and causes him to be locked up. Have you ever played a practical joke on someone or had it done to you? How did it turn out? How did it feel? (Text to self)
5. Read the remainder of the text as a class. Talk about the confusion that is created by Sebastian and Viola's physical similarities and Viola dressing up as a man. *What texts have you read about twins or people who are confused for each other? What problems did it create for the characters? How are these the same as or different from the text? Talk about the joyful reunion of Viola and Sebastian. What texts have you read that have a reunion of friends or family members who thought they had been parted forever? How are these the same as or different from the text?* (Text to text)
6. Select one or more familiar texts and discuss them in relation to the text.

How are the following books or movies like the text? How are they different from the text?

The following or other texts may be used.
Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare;
The Tempest by William Shakespeare;
Totally Twins by Aleesah Darlison; *Double Act* by Jacqueline Wilson; *The Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel* series by Michael Scott; *She's the Man* (movie)
 (Text to text)
7. Children link what they know about the real world to what the text says.

Ask questions like those below.

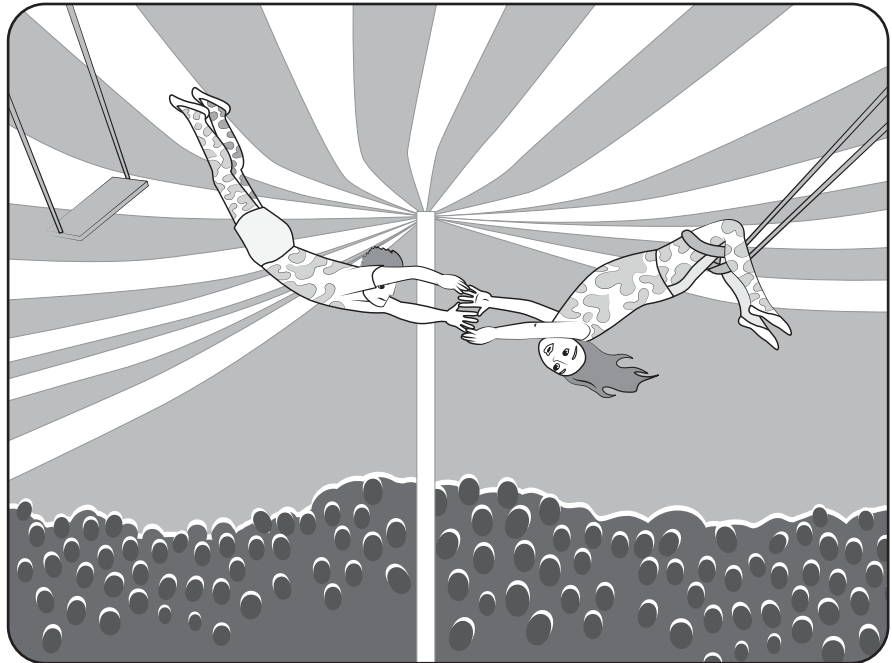
How is the plot different from what happens in the real world? How have things changed since the time this plot was written? What did this text remind you of in the real world? Encourage children to consider news items and other non-fiction texts to make connections with the real and/or modern world. (Text to world)

SAMPLE - NOT FOR SALE

Cirque du Soleil Experience

Dear Nitsa

It's almost midnight and I should be fast asleep by now, but I am absolutely buzzing from experiencing my first Cirque du Soleil show in Toronto last night, and I wanted to thank you straightaway for my birthday ticket—I had such a marvellous time! I will try to describe some of the performance to you, although I'm going to struggle to do justice to the amazing spectacle I witnessed.



We were seated, as you know, in a huge circus tent known as the Grand Chapiteau and that felt exciting in itself, although even merely looking upwards did make me feel rather dizzy ... a circus career is definitely not for me, is it? ☺

Then the lights dimmed and we were entertained by heavenly, bewitching music. The musicians included an electric cellist and a guitarist and there was also a soprano who hit the highest notes I have ever heard. I love this kind of music—a blend of classical, opera and pop, with no electronics or rap to be heard, thank goodness (you know how much I dislike those!) The instrumentalists were wearing the most spectacular and striking costumes, making the whole effect ethereal and beautiful.

Next, we were treated to awe-inspiring acrobats, trapeze artists, trampolinists and contortionists, all of whom truly took my breath away. But I think my top three favourite artists were the incredible man who performed fire dancing (although it was definitely anxiety-inducing), the amazing 'human gyroscope' who whirled inside and around two intersecting wheels, and a woman who spun countless numbers of metal hoops all over her body—truly magnificent.

Oh, and I'm almost forgetting the clown duo, which I know you would have adored. As you know, clowns aren't really my performers of choice but these two were hilarious and very entertaining with their slapstick routine and, once again, they had the most jaw-droppingly gorgeous clothes—the costume designer is awesome!

I think that's about all ... I must head off to bed now as I'm extremely exhausted! But I will call you tomorrow and tell you more.

A gigantic thank you once again—you are the coolest friend in the universe.

Love Sonia xx

Steps

1. Read the title to, or with, the class.
What does the title say the text is about? What do you know about Cirque du Soleil? Have you ever attended one of their performances or something similar? Discuss. (Text to self)
2. Children read the first three paragraphs of the text.
How did Sonia feel about the experience as a whole? Have you ever felt like that about a live performance? How would you feel about being in a huge circus tent? Have you ever felt dizzy from looking up or down at something? Do you think you would enjoy the music described in the text? What kind of music do you like best? How does it make you feel? (Text to self)
3. Children read the fourth and fifth paragraphs of the text.
Can you understand why the performers took Sonia’s breath away? Which of the described acts would you most like to see? How would you respond to watching someone dancing with fire—would it make you feel anxious? Do you enjoy looking at costume designs in live performances or shows? Does it add to the experience for you? (Text to self)
4. Read the remainder of the text to the class.
Sonia is extremely grateful to Nitsa for giving her the ticket. Have you ever had a friend or family member give you a present that you absolutely loved? How did it make you feel? How did you thank them? Did it change you in any way? (Text to self)

5. Compare the text to other texts.
What stories or books have you read about circuses or circus performers? Who were the main characters and how were they associated with the circus? What stories or books have you read in which the main character is given a special gift? How did it affect him or her? How are these stories or books the same as or different from the text? (Text to text)
The following or other texts may be used:
Circus Mirandus by Cassie Beasley; *Marvellous Miss May: Queen of the Circus* by Stephanie Owen Reeder; *The Boundless* by Kenneth Oppel; *The Great and Only Barnum* by Candace Fleming; *The Greatest Showman* (movie) (Text to text)
How does the text remind me of movies I’ve watched? Discuss.
6. Children connect what they know about the real world to what the text says.
Ask questions like those below.
What kinds of live performances are available for people to see around the world? Which do you think might be the most popular with different age groups and why? How important are the visual aspects like costuming and lights? How important are the audio aspects (music and sound)? How have circuses changed from earlier times? What do producers of live shows do to make sure they remain competitive with movies and other forms of screen-based entertainment? Do you think everyone should have the opportunity to experience a live show? What might be some obstacles to this? (Text to world)

SAMPLE - NOT FOR SALE

Interview with a Props Master



If you've ever attended a theatrical performance, you might have glanced through the pamphlet and happened upon the mysterious backstage job of 'properties master' ... but what on earth does that mean? I interviewed Charlotte King, properties (props) master at Blackcross Theatre to find out.

Please tell us what your job entails and how you came to work in it—we'd love to know!

A props master maintains all of the props (anything the actors touch, move or interact with onstage) for a production; I am also responsible for locating and/or designing and creating suitable props before a production begins and having suitable substitutes ready in case of disastrous situations (props breaking or going missing)—it can be intensive work but it's also heaps of fun. I really fell into this career—when I was a teenager, I attended drama school and wanted to be an actor but because I also had a passion for art and craft, I was often asked to make props for our productions. After I finished university study in Theatre Arts, I was lucky enough to gain an apprenticeship at a local theatre as a props master and things blossomed from there.

What are some of the most difficult aspects of your job?

The hardest work I do is sourcing props before a production opens—it can take me a full month, running from one side of the city to the other, to locate the correct objects—you have to be very creative and think laterally. I've found props everywhere from food markets to funeral parlours! Some directors can also be very demanding and frustrating to work with—I might spend days finding a prop I'm really pleased with, only to have them reject it at the last minute.

What are some of the skills you need to be a perfect prop master?

This is an unusual career—there are no specific courses—so it's all on-the-job-training. You need to be mechanical, artistic, energetic, historically-minded and creative, ideally with some skills in engineering, carpentry, antiquing, painting and upholstery ... not asking much, is it?

Finally, can you tell us any prop master secrets?

If you see an actor using a gun on stage that isn't fired, it's probably made from plastic or rubber but ones that do need to fire are usually the real deal ... they have been modified to shoot blanks.

Interview with a Props Master – 1

Text to Self

1. Connect the events in this text to your own life—your personal experiences, things that happened to friends or family, or things that happened to you. Consider these ideas below, then write about how this text connects personally to you.

- a time when you felt lucky to be offered a new opportunity

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- an activity you have done that was hard work but also lots of fun

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- a time when you had to think very creatively to achieve a goal

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2. Would you like to be a props master? Do you feel that you have some or any of the skills that Charlotte described? Explain.

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3. What did you learn from reading this text? How did you feel when you read it?

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4. What do you think would be the best and worst aspects of Charlotte’s job? Explain why.

Best

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Worst

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SAMPLE - NOT FOR SALE

Using the Cards

The teacher first uses the **modelling text and teaching notes** to introduce and demonstrate a particular comprehension strategy. This is predominantly an oral activity.



The teacher uses the **sharing text** and works through this with the class using the teaching notes provided. This will be very similar to the way in which the modelling text was used to ensure the correct steps are used to learn the strategy. Children may work with each other to practise this strategy together.



The teacher selects a particular **card** (1, 2 or 3) depending on the reading level of the child (and after using the placement tests), and the child uses the corresponding resource sheets in the **activity book** to practise using the strategy to comprehend a text. There are two texts on each card, so children can practise the strategy using more than one text, if the teacher desires. It is best to check the activity book before assigning cards, as certain texts require questions to be answered before reading.



The teacher uses the **assessment text** in the **teacher guide** and the corresponding activity sheets to assess how well each child has learned the comprehension strategy.

- Note 1: The suggested Lexile levels for the modelling, sharing and assessment texts are levelled at the middle range for each box level. This is because the teacher and/or a peer will be working with children when using both the modelling and sharing texts to learn and practise the strategy.
- Note 2: If the teacher feels children have grasped the strategy easily and do not need any extra practice, the texts on the cards and corresponding activity pages may be used as a form of assessment.

Scope and Sequence

Strategy	Card Number	Title	Genre	Suggested Lexile Level	Word Count
Predicting	Card 1A	The Carriage Clock	Poem	1010L–1200L	233
Predicting	Card 1B	Time Traveller Party	Email	1010L–1200L	354
Predicting	Card 2A	Go Back In Time ... Make Your Own Archimedes' Screw	Procedure	1210L–1400L	393
Predicting	Card 2B	<i>Doctor Who</i> —TV Time Lord	Information	1210L–1400L	367
Predicting	Card 3A	<i>Tick Tock</i> —Medieval Movie Dazzles and Delights	Review	1410L–1600L	398
Predicting	Card 3B	The Dark Rainbow	Horror	1410L–1600L	453
Predicting	Modelling Text	Urashima Taro, the Fisherman	Folk tale	1210L–1400L	431
Predicting	Sharing Text	The Strange Tale of Rudolph Fentz	Explanation	1210L–1400L	422
Predicting	Assessment	Charlie and the Time Machine	Science fiction	1210L–1400L	354
Visualising	Card 1A	<i>Titanic</i> Survivor Account	Recount	1010L–1200L	462
Visualising	Card 1B	The Ballad of Anne Bonny	Ballad	1010L–1200L	275
Visualising	Card 2A	Delphine the Mermaid	Fantasy	1210L–1400L	386
Visualising	Card 2B	Robert Ballard	Biography	1210L–1400L	407
Visualising	Card 3A	Sea Reptiles of the Cretaceous	Information	1410L–1600L	300
Visualising	Card 3B	The Kraken	Narrative	1410L–1600L	449
Visualising	Modelling Text	The Attack of the Golden Swan	Humour	1210L–1400L	455
Visualising	Sharing Text	The Bermuda Triangle	Description	1210L–1400L	445
Visualising	Assessment	Why the Sea is Salty – A Korean Folk Tale	Folk tale	1210L–1400L	484
Making Connections	Card 1A	The Theatre Ghost	Narrative	1010L–1200L	494
Making Connections	Card 1B	Jayden Jones	Mystery	1010L–1200L	387
Making Connections	Card 2A	May Wirth, Circus Star	Biography	1210L–1400L	464
Making Connections	Card 2B	The Magic of Musical Theatre	Information	1210L–1400L	439
Making Connections	Card 3A	A Day in the Life of a Dancer	Schedule	1410L–1600L	326
Making Connections	Card 3B	Freda the Fabulous	Mystery	1410L–1600L	382
Making Connections	Modelling Text	Shakespeare's <i>Twelfth Night</i>	Plot summary	1210L–1400L	446
Making Connections	Sharing Text	Cirque du Soleil Experience	Email	1210L–1400L	360
Making Connections	Assessment	Interview with a Props Master	Interview	1210L–1400L	390