

# Introduction to functional grammar and its use in the classroom

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# What do EAL/D learners need?



Explicit language teaching  
SFL (aka functional grammar)

Comprehend and compose  
complex texts in various  
subject areas.

- an  
understanding of  
the patterns and  
structure of  
different texts

- an  
understanding  
of the language  
resources used  
in texts

- an understanding of  
how language works to  
make meaning in  
different situations

- a shared language to  
talk about how language  
is used in texts

# Language is at the heart of education.

The Australian curriculum is underpinned by functional grammar.

This model includes:

- the teaching and learning cycle (I do, we do, you do)
  - modelling and deconstruction, joint construction and independent construction
- strong scaffolding to support learning
- a focus on how texts work
- a shared language to talk about language



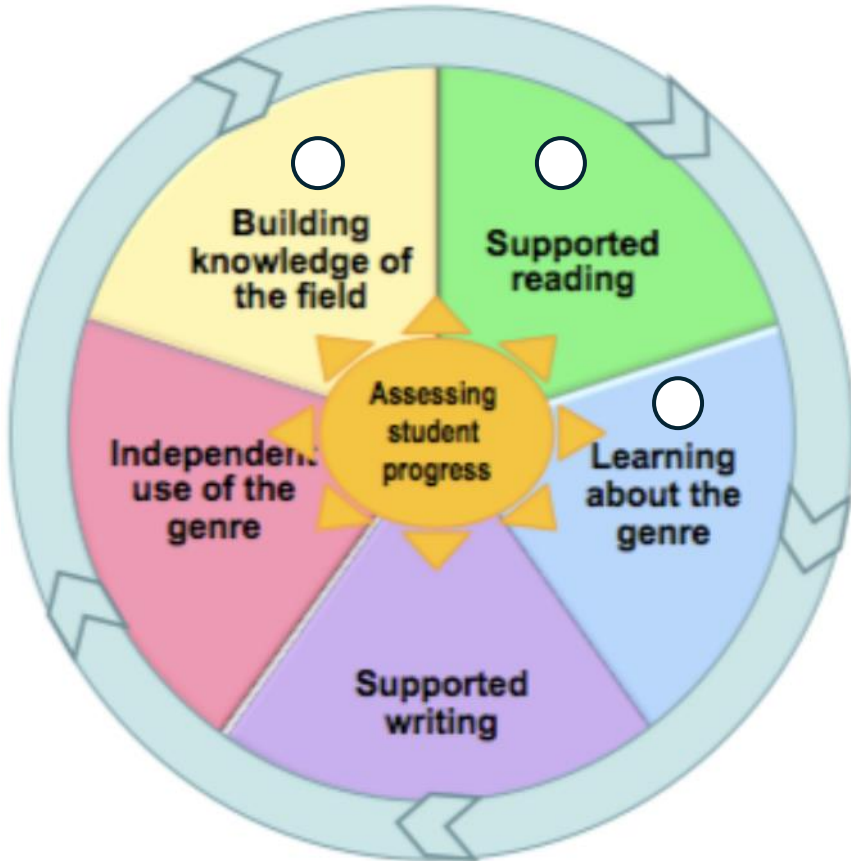
# Language is at the heart of education.

## What's functional grammar all about?

- Functional grammar is a lens we can use to look at language and how it makes meaning.
- It's about how language choices create meaning in context
- It's about having a shared language to talk about those language choices.
- It underpins the Teaching and learning cycle.



# The Teaching and Learning Cycle - an overview



## **Building knowledge of the field**

- finding out what students already know
- engaging students and establishing a purpose

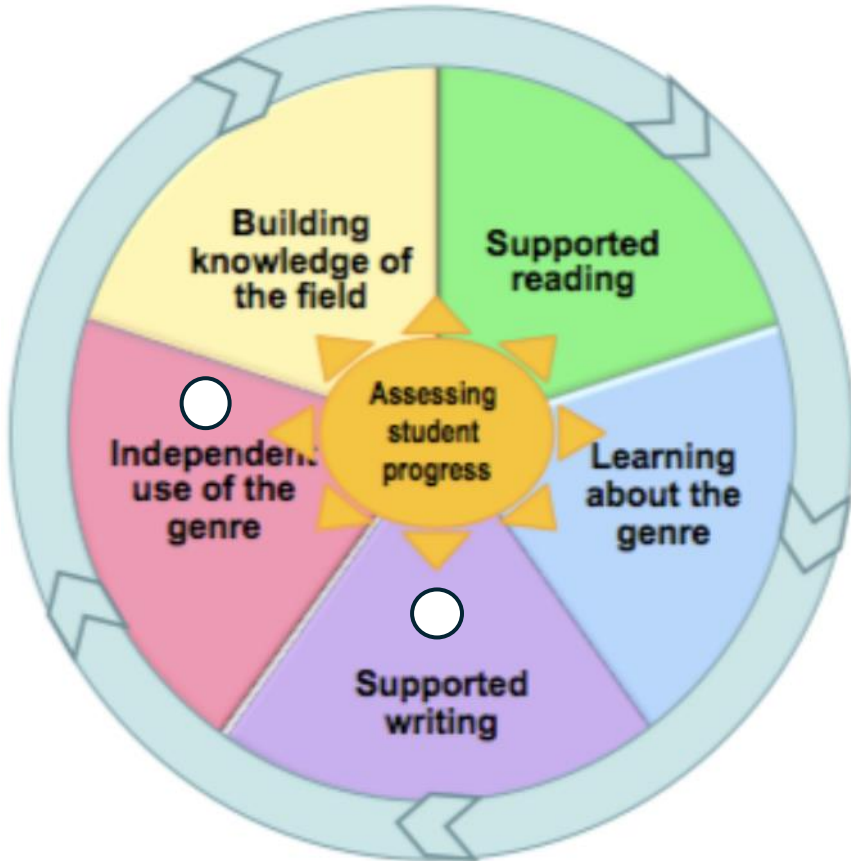
## **Supported reading**

- continues to build knowledge of the field
- The emphasis is on reading carefully selected texts in the topic area.

## **Learning about the genre**

- examining the structure of model texts – modelling and deconstructing texts
- looking at language choices

# The Teaching and Learning Cycle - an overview



## **Supported writing**

- drawing on shared understandings about the topic and the genre
- Teacher working with students to jointly produce a text
- joint construction with peers

## **Independent use of the genre**

- supporting students to produce their own texts
- providing feedback based on shared understandings

# Functional grammar is genre-based

- Functional grammar is genre-based.
- Texts that share the same purpose and language features are called genres (or text types).
- Students learn how to choose different language resources for different types of texts, or genres.
- Genres are patterned and predictable.

Some typical genres found in a school context:

- explanations
- recounts
- discussions
- arguments
- narratives
- laboratory reports
- evaluations
- historical recounts
- scripts
- persuasive texts

# Functional grammar is genre-based

Which subjects do you think these text excerpts might be from?

1

We placed the hamburger buns under the grill to brown and then...

3

On the weekend, I went to the beach with my family. We found a lovely spot to sit in the shade before our swim.

5

Reptiles are a group of cold-blooded animals that have scaly skin and lay eggs on land.

4

We really should eat more fruit and vegetables because...

2

Some people believe that rugby league is a safe sport, however many others are unconvinced of this.

1. Procedural recount
2. Discussion
3. Recount
4. Persuasive text
5. Information report

# Language choices make meaning

Field (what's happening)

- who/what (participants)
- what's happening (processes)
- where/how/when (circumstances)

Tenor (relationships and interaction)

- tone (informal/formal)
- modality (must, might, should)
- voice (active/passive)

Mode (is the text spoken or written?)

- text organisation (spontaneous or planned)
- vocabulary and sentence structures
- text cohesion (pronouns, conjunctions)

## Field (what's happening)

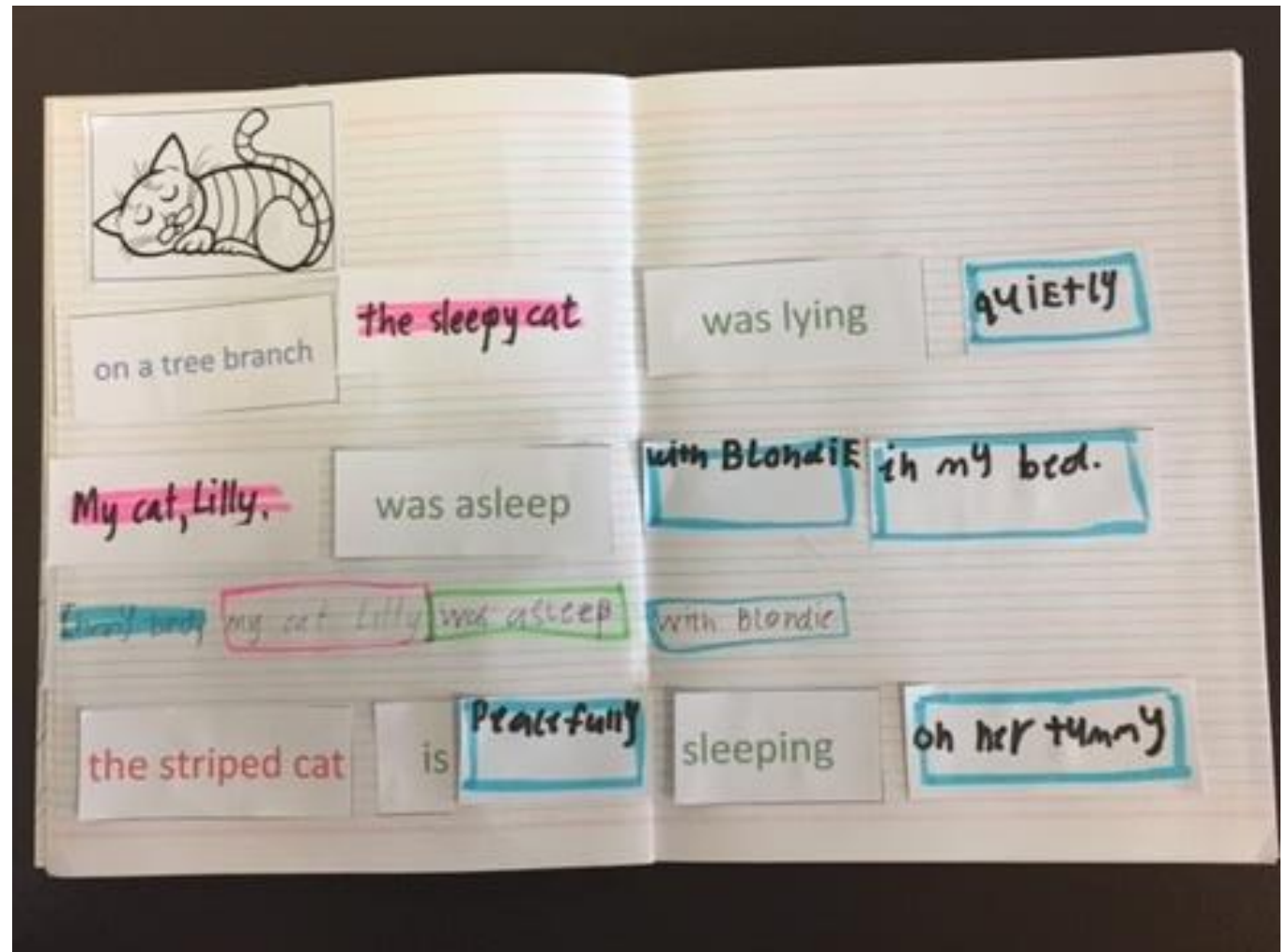
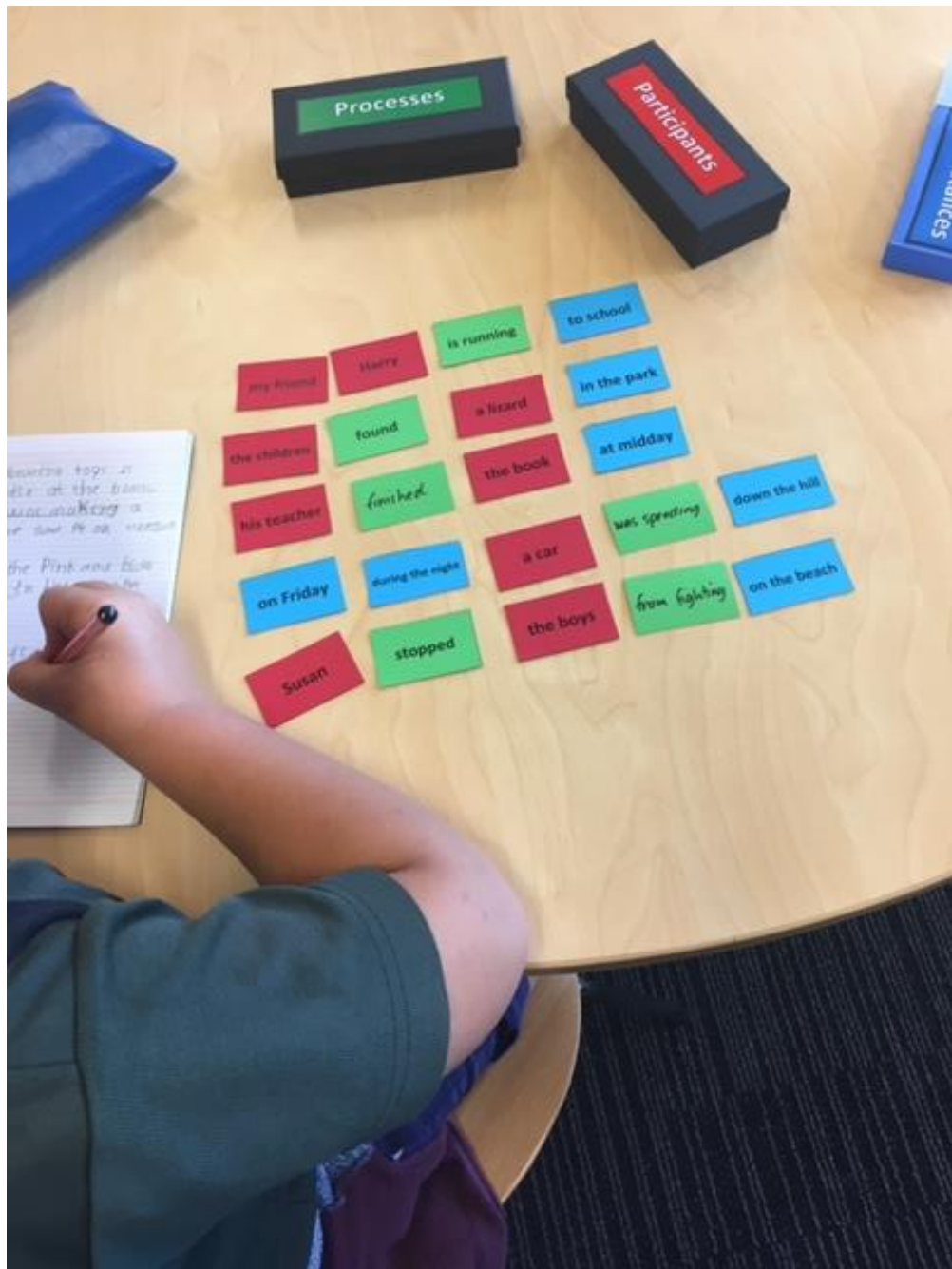
- what's happening (processes)
- who/what (participants)
- where/how/when it happened (circumstances)

**AC9E1LA07 – Language Strand Year 1** understand that words can represent **people, places and things** (nouns, including pronouns), **happenings and states** (verbs), ... and **details** such as when, where and how (adverbs)

*Example:*

*John ran along the jetty.*

- Naming the components of the clause allows us to talk about them
- Using colour makes them visible



## Draft 1

*I was watching my favourite TV show when there was an amazing discovery reported. It was my next-door neighbour Gary looking frightened. He had seen evil Martians that wanted to take over the world!*

After explicit teaching and feedback about using circumstances

*Late last night, I was watching my favourite TV show when there was an amazing discovery reported on a breaking newsflash. It was my next-door neighbour Gary, looking pale and frightened. He had seen evil Martians in his backyard, and they wanted to take over the world!*

### Informal

*Hey Jules, did you end up getting solar panels?*

### Formal

*Solar power is a form of renewable energy that utilises the heat from the sun to generate electricity.*

### Tenor (roles and relationships)

- tone (informal/formal)
- modality (must, might, should)
- voice (active/passive)

Active voice: Consumers place glass into recycling bins.

Passive voice: Glass is placed into recycling bins by consumers.

There is a possibility that women may have played a role in building Australian society in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

It is clear that the women of 19th century Australia played a significant role in building the country.

talk in pairs or groups while doing a task



guided class discussions



Mode (is the text spoken or written?)

- text organisation (spontaneous or planned)
- vocabulary and sentence structures
- text cohesion (pronouns, conjunctions)

To recap the three sets of choices – the Register variables.

### **Field (what's happening)**

- who/what (participants)
- what's happening (processes)
- where/how/when (circumstances)

### **Tenor (relationships and interaction)**

- tone (informal/formal)
- modality (must, might, should)
- voice (active/passive)

### **Mode (how texts are organised and structured)**

- genre (how texts are organised)
- sentence flow
- cohesion (pronouns, connectives)

# Why teach the terminology?



Now  
make  
the  
muffin

...

# Why teach the terminology?

## Recipe

Modelling and deconstruction of the structure and language features of the text type



**Chocolate Chip Muffins**

**Ingredients**

- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, melted
- 1/2 cup milk
- 2 large eggs

**Instructions**

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line a muffin tin with paper liners.
2. In a large bowl, whisk flour, sugars, baking powder and salt.
3. In another bowl, whisk melted butter, milk, eggs, and vanilla.
4. Combine wet and dry ingredients, then fold in chocolate chips.
5. Divide batter evenly among muffin cups. Bake 18-20 mins until golden.

A model text alone is not enough



This allows us to

- talk about the language
- support students to use the language
- give explicit and targeted feedback

## Ingredients

Explicitly teaching the names of the language features: the grammar



# Language demands → language focus

Consider the language demands of the unit and plan activities to explicitly teach the required language resource in context.

- Narratives – descriptive expanded noun groups add detailed, descriptive information about characters, settings, and events.
- Persuasive texts – expanded noun groups to create vivid imagery and influence the reader's opinion. They include evaluative describers
- Information reports – specialised noun groups to pack technical information into the text.



# The structure of the noun group

- The noun group is one of the main language resources used to express more detailed, specialised and technical meanings.
- Noun groups can be expanded from one word (e.g., *the ruins*) to many words (e.g., *the many ancient temple ruins in the jungles of Cambodia*).
- The noun group is built around a **main noun** – who or what we are talking about.
- It consists of six elements which are organised in a specific order.
- Noun groups underlined, main noun bolded:

# Text types and noun groups

In factual texts, noun groups package much of the content of the text.

*Fur **seals** have a smooth, streamlined **body** with a soft coat under a rough outer layer.*

In literary texts, noun groups play a vital role in building the story world, in characterisation, setting descriptions and imagery.

*Sheets of mist hovered above us.*



Noun  
groups  
underlined

Using an image to  
explore the  
noun  
group





Who am I looking at?

- a dark-haired **man**
- a **girl**
- a young **woman**
- a **lady**

Which  
one?

We can be much more specific so that our reader knows which person.

E.g.,

- the tall dark-haired **man** wearing a blue shirt
- the blonde **girl** blowing a bubble
- the happy young **woman** waving her hand
- the elderly **lady** standing on the right

To point to the thing:  
*Which one are you pointing to?*

To quantify the thing:  
*How many or how much?*

To describe the thing:  
*What's it like?*

To classify the thing:  
*What kind is it?*

**Who or what are we talking about?**

To qualify the thing: *Which one in particular?*

|          | Pointer | Numerative | Describer/s | Classifier/s | <b>Main noun<br/>Thing</b> | Qualifier         |
|----------|---------|------------|-------------|--------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
|          | those   | two        | lovely, old | Hilton       | <b>hotels</b>              | by the water      |
| <b>1</b> | those   | three      | large       | great white  | <b>sharks</b>              | seen last weekend |
| <b>2</b> |         |            |             |              |                            |                   |

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**Who or what are we talking about?**

To qualify the thing: *Which one in particular?*

|   | Pointer | Numerative | Describer/s | Classifier/s  | Thing         | Qualifier           |
|---|---------|------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|
|   | those   | two        | lovely, old | Hilton        | <b>hotels</b> | by the water        |
| 1 | those   | three      | large       | great white   | <b>sharks</b> | seen last weekend   |
| 2 | the     |            |             | Antarctic fur | <b>seals</b>  | on Macquarie Island |

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|   | those   | two        | lovely, old   | Hilton        | <b>hotels</b>   | by the water        |
| 1 | those   | three      | large         | great white   | <b>sharks</b>   | seen last weekend   |
| 2 | the     |            |               | Antarctic fur | <b>seals</b>    | on Macquarie Island |
| 3 |         | two        | tiny, grizzly |               | <b>toddlers</b> |                     |
| 4 | the     |            | giant         | grizzly       | <b>bears</b>    | of Canada           |

Describer or Classifier?

3. two tiny, grizzly toddlers

4. the giant grizzly bears of Canada

|   | Pointer | Numerative | Describer/s   | Classifier/s  | Thing           | Qualifier           |
|---|---------|------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|
|   | those   | two        | lovely, old   | Hilton        | <b>hotels</b>   | by the water        |
| 1 | those   | three      | large         | great white   | <b>sharks</b>   | seen last weekend   |
| 2 | the     |            |               | Antarctic fur | <b>seals</b>    | on Macquarie Island |
| 3 |         | two        | tiny, grizzly |               | <b>toddlers</b> |                     |
| 4 | the     |            | giant         | grizzly       | <b>bears</b>    | of Canada           |

Let's look at these four:

5. a pod of southern right whales swimming off the coast
6. plastic contamination of the natural environment
7. white wine
8. Chloe's white wedding dress

|   | Pointer | Numerative | Describer/s   | Classifier/s   | Thing                | Qualifier                  |
|---|---------|------------|---------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
|   | those   | two        | lovely, old   | Hilton         | <b>hotels</b>        | by the water               |
| 1 | those   | three      | large         | great white    | <b>sharks</b>        | seen last weekend          |
| 2 | the     |            |               | Antarctic fur  | <b>seals</b>         | on Macquarie Island        |
| 3 |         | two        | tiny, grizzly |                | <b>toddlers</b>      |                            |
| 4 | the     |            | giant         | grizzly        | <b>bears</b>         | of Canada                  |
| 5 |         | a pod of   |               | southern right | <b>whales</b>        | swimming off the coast     |
| 6 |         |            |               | plastic        | <b>contamination</b> | of the natural environment |
| 7 |         |            |               | white          | <b>wine</b>          |                            |
| 8 | Chloe's |            | white         | wedding        | <b>dress</b>         |                            |

5. a pod of southern right whales swimming off the coast

6. plastic contamination of the natural environment

7. white wine

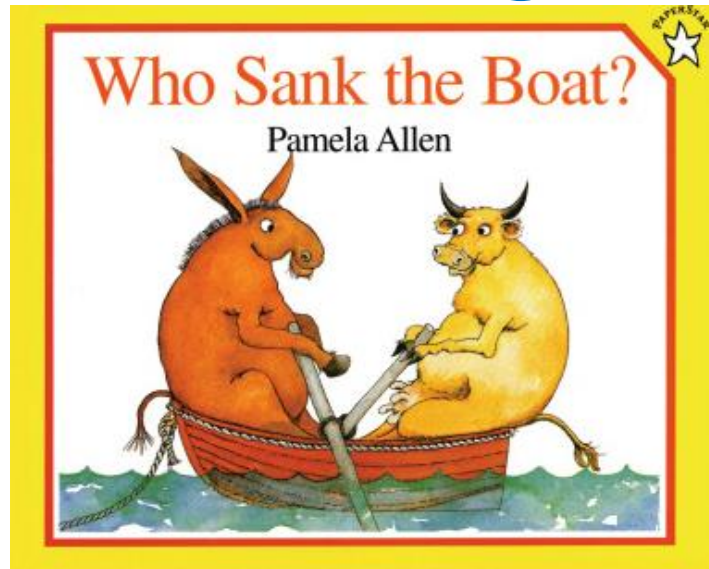
8. Chloe's white wedding dress

# To recap...

## The elements of the noun group

- The **Thing, or main noun**. The word that the noun group is being built around.
- To the left of the Thing is the **Classifier**. It functions to group or classify the Thing. E.g., the humpback whale is one type of whale, as opposed to a blue whale or a minke whale.
- Next on the left is the **Describer**. It functions to describe the Thing. It expresses qualities such as appearance (*tall, short, friendly*), size (*enormous, tiny, largest*) or age (*old, recent, youngest*), etc.
- The **Numerative** functions to quantify the Thing. E.g., *twelve geraniums; a flock of parrots; 5 out of 10*.
- To the far left of the Thing is the **Pointer**, and it functions to specify the Thing by ‘pointing’ to it. Pointers are realised by articles (*a, an, the*), demonstratives (*that, those*), pronouns (*her, his, my, their*), possessives (*Australia’s, Mum’s, Grace’s*)
- To the right of the Thing is the **Qualifier**, which functions to give extra information about the Thing or to specify which one, like where it is, when it happens, or what it’s like. E.g., *the dog with a yellow collar; the woman from London; the bridge near my house*

# Introducing noun groups




“What’s the mouse like?”

Model sentences using the adjectives they give you. *There was a tiny, little mouse.*

“What’s the donkey like?”

Compose and model sentences using the information they give you. *There was a tall, brown donkey.*

| <b>Pointer</b>  | <b>Numerative</b>   | <b>Describer</b>  | <b>Classifier</b>  | <b>The Main Noun</b>             | <b>Qualifier</b>  |
|---|---|---|--|----------------------------------|---|
| Which one?<br>Whose?  | How many, how much?   | What's it like?   | What type is it?   | Who or what we are talking about | Is there more information?  |
| a, an, the, this, that, these, those, my, your, hers, his, its, our, their, mum's | one, two, second, some, a few, many, a lot of, a cup of, a bowl of a slice of, enough, a piece of | beautiful, big, small, brown, red, square, soft, fluffy | racing, toy, sports (car); teddy, polar (bear); teenage, British (girl); mountain (bike) |                                  |  |
| a   |   | tiny, little  |  | mouse                            |   |
| a   |   | tall, brown   |  | donkey                           |   |
| a   |   | pink  |  | pig                              | with an umbrella  |
|   |   |   |  | <b>cow</b>                       |   |
|   |   |   |  | <b>sheep</b>                     |   |

## Making the patterns visible

We can use the noun group grid to teach about many aspects of language.



On Monday he ate through one apple.

But he was still hungry.



On Tuesday he ate through two pears.

But he was still hungry.



On Wednesday he ate through three plums,

but he was still hungry.



On Thursday he ate through four strawberries, but he was still hungry.



On Friday he ate through five oranges, but he was still hungry.



one piece of chocolate cake,



one ice cream cone,



one pickle,



one slice of Swiss Cheese,



one slice of salami,



one lollipop,



one piece of cherry pie,



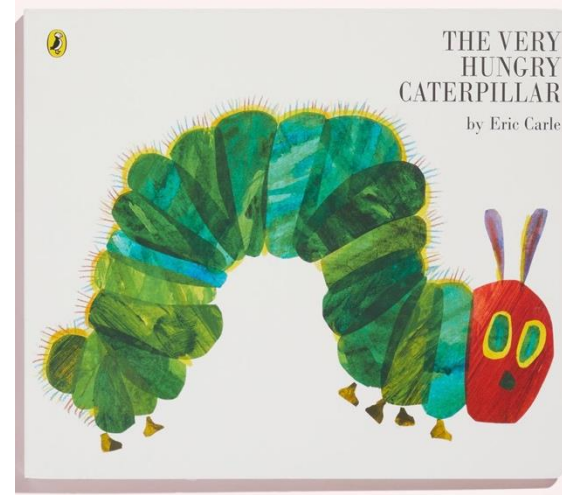
one sausage,



one cupcake,



and one slice of watermelon



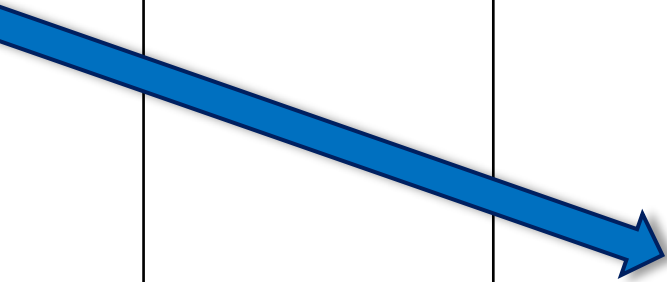
He ate one apple  
He ate one pickle  
He ate one ice-cream cone  
He ate one lollipop  
He ate one sausage  
He ate one cupcake

He ate two pears  
He ate three plums  
He ate four strawberries  
He ate five oranges

*What do you see on the end of these words?*

*Why is there a letter's' at the end?*

| Pointer   | Numerative             | Describer       | Classifier          | The Main Noun                       | Qualifier                     |
|---|------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Which one?<br>Whose?  | How many, how<br>much? | What's it like? | What type is<br>it? | Who or what we<br>are talking about | Is there more<br>information? |
| <p>If there is a number greater than one here, you must make the main noun plural, usually by adding an 's'</p> |                        |                 |                     |                                     |                               |
|   | <b>two</b>             | delicious       |                     | <b>pears</b>                        | on my plate                   |
|   | <b>three</b>           |                 |                     | <b>plums</b>                        |                               |
|   | <b>four</b>            |                 |                     | <b>strawberries</b>                 |                               |
|   | <b>five</b>            |                 |                     | <b>oranges</b>                      |                               |

| Pointer  | Numerative             | Describer       | Classifier          | The Main Noun                       | Qualifier                     |
|--|------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Which one?<br>Whose?   | How many, how<br>much? | What's it like? | What type is<br>it? | Who or what we<br>are talking about | Is there more<br>information? |
| <div data-bbox="165 396 1217 659" style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; display: inline-block;"> <p>The pointer must 'agree' with<br/>the plural or singular main<br/>noun.</p> </div>  |                        |                 |                     |                                     |                               |
| those  | four                   | delicious       |                     | pears                               | on my plate                   |
| these  |                        | lovely          |                     | plums                               |                               |
| the  |                        |                 |                     | strawberries                        |                               |
| an   |                        |                 |                     | orange                              |                               |
| a  |                        |                 |                     | raspberry                           |                               |

| Pointer  | Numerative             | Describer              | Classifier          | The Main Noun                       | Qualifier                     |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Which one?<br>Whose?   | How many, how<br>much? | What's it like?        | What type is<br>it? | Who or what we<br>are talking about | Is there more<br>information? |
| <div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 20px; border-radius: 15px; display: inline-block;"> <p>Use a noun group chart to teach about whether to use 'a' or 'an' according to the next word in the noun group.</p> </div> |                        |                        |                     |                                     |                               |
| <b>a</b>   |                        | <b>delicious</b>       |                     | grape                               |                               |
| <b>an</b>  |                        | <b>enormous, juicy</b> |                     | plum                                |                               |
| <b>a</b>   |                        |                        |                     | <b>strawberry</b>                   |                               |
| <b>an</b>  |                        |                        |                     | <b>orange</b>                       |                               |
| <b>a</b>   |                        |                        | <b>navel</b>        | orange                              |                               |

# Subject-verb agreement

Is there **one** or **more than one** of the main noun?

| ← Clause/simple sentence → |                          |         |            |            |              |           |         |               |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|---------|------------|------------|--------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
|                            | Participant (noun group) |         |            |            |              |           | Process | Participant   |
|                            | Pointer                  | Counter | Describer  | Classifier | Main Noun    | Qualifier | Verb    | Noun group    |
| 1                          | That                     |         | red        |            | grape        |           | is, are | delicious!    |
| 2                          | Those                    | two     | big, juicy |            | plums        |           | is, are | quite tart.   |
| 3                          |                          |         |            |            | strawberries |           | is, are | yummy.        |
| 4                          |                          |         | Twelve     |            | oranges      |           | is, are | on the floor. |
| 5                          | A                        |         |            | navel      | orange       |           | is, are | the best!     |

*Is there one  
or more than  
one?*

Possum crept past the snoring dog with big teeth,



around the curled-up tomcat with sharp claws,



through the squeaky pet flap in the back door



Class talk  
while doing a  
close reading:  
Find the noun  
groups and  
identify the  
main noun.

the snoring **dog** with  
big teeth

the curled-up **tomcat**  
with sharp claws

the squeaky pet **flap** in  
the back door

the shoebox of  
**shells** he had  
found long ago last  
summer

the **puppet** on  
strings which  
made everyone  
laugh

the **medal** his  
grandfather had  
given him



He looked for the shoebox of shells he had found long ago last summer, and put them gently in a basket.

He found the puppet on strings which made everyone laugh, and he placed that in the basket too.

He remembered with sadness the medal his grandfather had given him, and he laid it carefully next to the shells.

# If they can identify the main noun...

The widespread political and economic **instability** in Europe after the Treaty of Versailles **contributed to** the rise of extremist **governments**.

The growing public **opposition** to Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War during the late 1960s and early 1970s **influenced** government **policy**.



# Scaffolding and differentiation for EAL learners

## Level 1 no support

1. Identify the NGs in the text by underlining them.
2. Analyse the NGs using their initial letter in the space above the text:

P (Pointer) N (Numerative) D (Describer/s), C (Classifier/s), MN (Main Noun), Q (Qualifier).

*Australia is the driest continent on the planet. Our population is centred mainly on the coast.  
Severe water shortages in Brisbane have necessitated widespread water restrictions.*

# Analysing noun groups with varied support

## Level 2 some support

1. The NGs in the text have been underlined.

2. Analyse the NGs using their initial letter in the space above the text:

P (Pointer) N (Numerative) D (Describer/s), C (Classifier/s)), MN (Main Noun), Q (Qualifier).

Australia is the driest continent on the planet. Our population is centred mainly on the coast.

Severe water shortages in Brisbane have necessitated widespread water restrictions.

# Analysing noun groups with varied support

## Level 3 major support

1. The NGs in the text have been underlined.
2. **The main noun has already been bolded.**
3. Analyse the NGs using their initial letter in the space above the text:

P (Pointer) N (Numerative) D (Describer/s), C (Classifier/s)), MN (Main Noun), Q (Qualifier).

*Australia is the driest **continent** on the planet. Our **population** is centred mainly on the **coast**.*

*Severe water **shortages** in Brisbane have necessitated widespread water **restrictions**.*

# Analysing noun groups with varied support

KEY: P (Pointer), N (Numerative), D (Describer/s), C (Classifier/s), MN (Main Noun), Q (Qualifier)

MN

P

D

MN

Q

P

MN

P MN

**Australia** is the driest **continent** on the planet. Our **population** is centred mainly on the **coast**.

D

C

MN

Q

D

C

MN

Severe water **shortages** in Brisbane have necessitated widespread water **restrictions**.

# Scaffolding for EAL learners

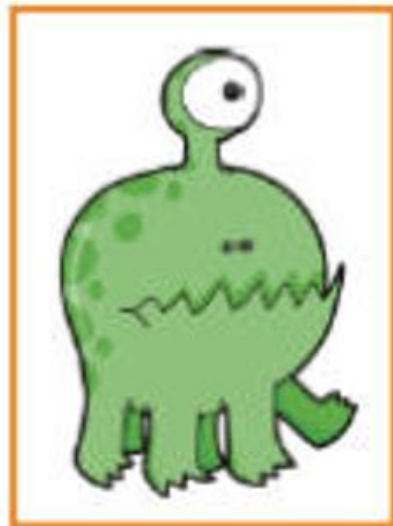
The provision of multiple opportunities for **purposeful talk** about the structure of noun groups in context will support students' understanding of the subject area content.

- joint construction and analyses of noun groups
- pairs analyse noun groups in class texts
- jigsaw activities to share their findings and analyses with students who have analysed different texts



Writing

# Monster Guess Who



Modelling

## Monster Who am I?

*I am a large red monster.*

*I have two little hands.*

*I have two small, white horns.*

*I have yellow spots on my back.*

*My name is Coochy and I am a happy monster.*



Joint  
construction  
→  
Independent  
construction



Let's write one together:

*I am a \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ monster.*

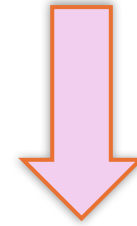
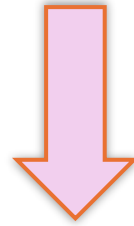
*I have \_\_\_\_\_.*

*I have \_\_\_\_\_.*

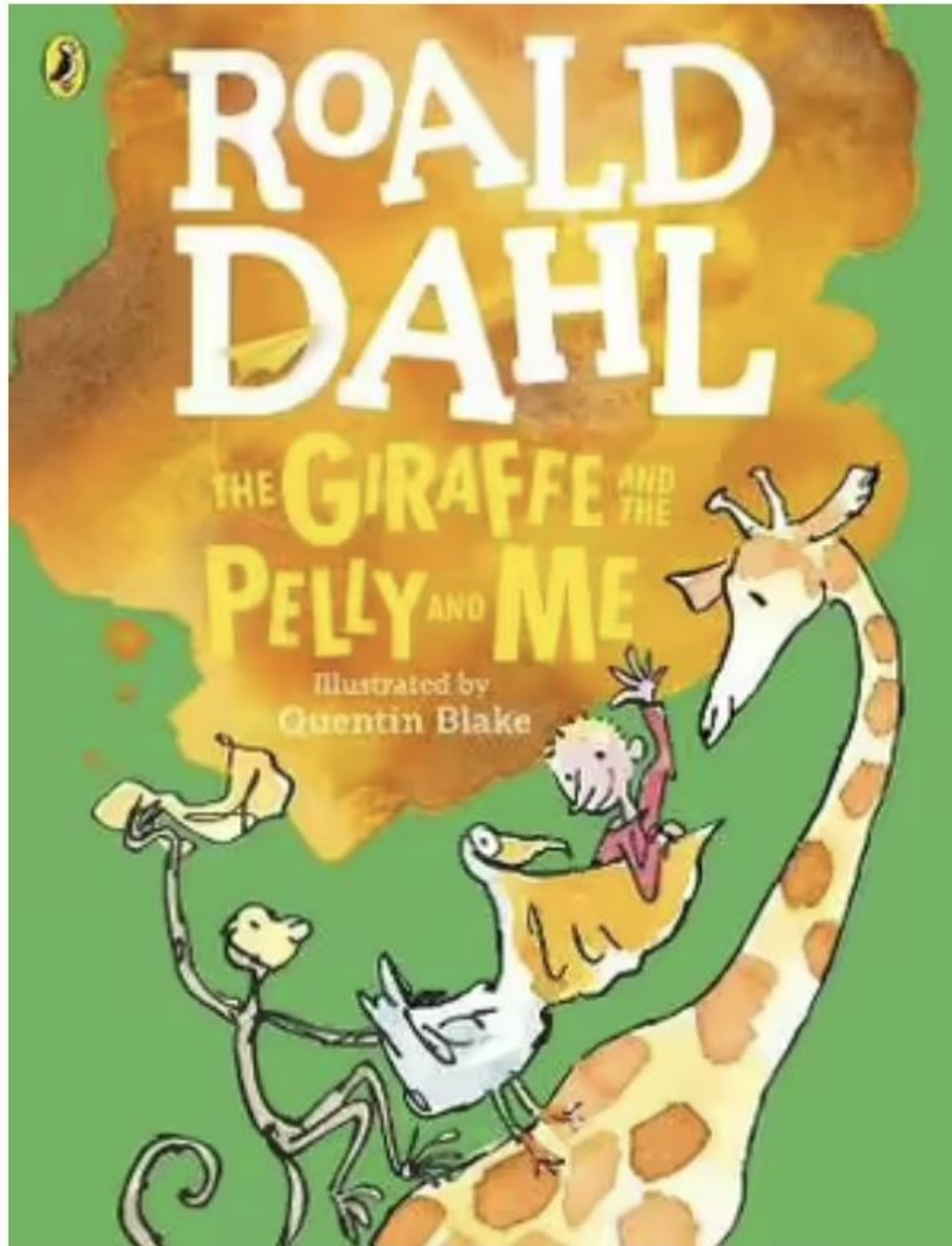
*I have \_\_\_\_\_.*

*My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a \_\_\_\_\_ monster.*

# Adding complexity



| Noun group |            |                 |            |                     |  |
|------------|------------|-----------------|------------|---------------------|--|
| Pointer    | Numerative | Describer       | Classifier | The Main Noun       | Qualifier                              |
| that       |            | red             |            | <b>grape</b>        | <b>that Mum gave me</b>                |
| those      | two        | enormous, juicy |            | <b>plums</b>        | <b>from the deli</b>                   |
|            |            |                 |            | <b>strawberries</b> |  |
|            |            | Twelve          |            | <b>oranges</b>      |  |
| a          |            |                 | navel      | <b>orange</b>       | <b>from the fridge</b>                 |
| the        |            | huge            | Persian    | <b>cat</b>          | <b>with the white tips on her paws</b> |
| a          |            | bald            | American   | <b>man</b>          | <b>with a black hat</b>                |
|            | four       | rowdy           | pre-school | <b>children</b>     |  |



Looking at noun groups in context to prepare for writing

# How do authors add more detail?

## Expanded noun groups in the original text

We peered around the bushes and saw an oldish man with an immense white moustache standing under a cherry tree and pointing his crooked walking stick in the air.

“Get me those great big black juicy ones right at the very top!” the old man was shouting.

- an oldish **man** with an immense white moustache
- a cherry **tree**
- his crooked walking **stick**
- those great big black juicy **ones** right at the top

## Minimal noun groups

We peered around the bushes and saw a man standing under a tree and pointing his stick in the air.

“Get me those ones!” the old man was shouting.

- a **man**
- a **tree**
- his **stick**
- those **ones**

Preparing to write –  
deconstructing model  
texts

Shared language for  
feedback on drafts

# From notes to sentences...

- Lachlan is a boy in year 5.
- He is friendly and energetic
- He hangs out with Harry.
- They play AFL at a local AFL oval.
- The oval is huge and surrounded by trees.
- It is near Lachlan's house.

|   | Which one are we pointing to? | How many are there? | What is it like? | What kind is it? | What are we talking about? | Which one/ones in particular? |
|---|-------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
|   | Pointer                       | Num.                | Describer        | Classifier       | Main noun                  | Qualifier                     |
| 1 |                               |                     |                  |                  |                            |                               |
| 2 |                               |                     |                  |                  |                            |                               |



- Lachlan is a friendly, energetic year 5 **boy** who hangs out with Harry.
- They play AFL at the huge tree-lined local AFL **oval** near Lachlan's house.

# Using a noun group table to compose texts

| <i>Noun group analysis of a student text about drought in Australia</i> |             |                  |                   |                 |                                |
|---|-------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>P</b>  | <b>Num.</b> | <b>Describer</b> | <b>Classifier</b> | <b>Key Noun</b> | <b>Qualifier/Post modifier</b> |
| the   |             | driest           | inhabited         | continent       | on the planet                  |
| our   |             |                  |                   | population      |                                |
| many  |             | enormous         |                   | homes           | on large blocks of land        |
| the   |             |                  | water             | shortage        | in Brisbane                    |
| the   | biggest     |                  | coal export       | industry        | in the world                   |
| a   |             | very precious    |                   | resource        |                                |
|   | Too much    |                  |                   | water           |                                |

During the editing and feedback stage, students and teachers could *deconstruct drafts* to determine whether there are enough describers, classifiers and/or qualifiers to provide the appropriate details.

# Noun groups in academic writing

Main nouns are bolded

Classifiers are integral to academic language, particularly in secondary contexts:

- *African **elephants***
- *waterproof **fur***
- *rechargeable **batteries***
- *solar **eclipses***
- *mountain **habitats***

Qualifiers add crucial details *after* the main noun to specify, identify, or describe it further:

- ***offspring** which are produced through sexual reproduction*
- ***urbanization** of the Western countries*

Generalised noun groups:

- *The great white **shark***

# Building expanded noun groups - modelling

Less complex:

**Instability** in Europe helped **extremist governments** come to **power**.

**Opposition** to Australia's role in the Vietnam War influenced **government policy**.

More complex:

The widespread political and economic **instability** in Europe after the Treaty of Versailles contributed to the rise of **extremist governments**.

The growing public **opposition** to Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War during the late 1960s and early 1970s influenced **government policy**.

Describers

Classifiers

Qualifiers

# Some final thoughts...

Understanding the noun group supports students to understand the whole sentence, and by extension, the whole text.

The inclusion of explicit language learning activities ensures that students are given access to this valuable language resource.



# Question Time



# Contact

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