

Alison Lester: Are we there Yet?

Synopsis:

Are we there yet, is a text that combines two genres (informational and narrative). Follow a family as they embark on an adventurous trip around Australia. The text provides a humorous and informative narrative which is uniquely Australian.

Teacher Notes:

This unit of work which is based on the text “Are we there yet?” by Alison Lester, has been designed to have a strong digital and multimodal focus.

Multimodality can be defined as a text which has two or more modes. The Australian Curriculum defines multimodality as a “combination of two or more communication modes (for example, print, image and spoken text, as in film or computer presentations)”.

These modes as outlined by Bull and Anstey (2006) are:

- Linguistic**: comprising aspects such as vocabulary, generic structure and the grammar of oral and written language
- Visual**: comprising aspects such as colour, vectors and viewpoint in still and moving images
- Audio**: comprising aspects such as volume, pitch and rhythm of music and sound effects
- Gestural**: comprising aspects such as movement, speed and stillness in facial expression and body language
- Spatial**: comprising aspects such as proximity, direction, position of layout and organization of objects in space

Haptic (Touch) is another mode which is emerging because of the interactivity of tablets.

When students experience and read multimodal texts, they need to combine modes together to make meaning. For example, in the paper based version of

“Are we there yet”, we have the modalities of linguistic, visual, gestural and spatial, it is only through the combination of these elements that meaning can be made. When we look at multimodal digital texts, we can see how all 5-6 modes can be used simultaneously to make meaning.

The video [here](#) created by the The Commonwealth Government (2010) for literacy and numeracy week features Jon Callow talking about Multimodality, it gives a good overview and some practical examples.

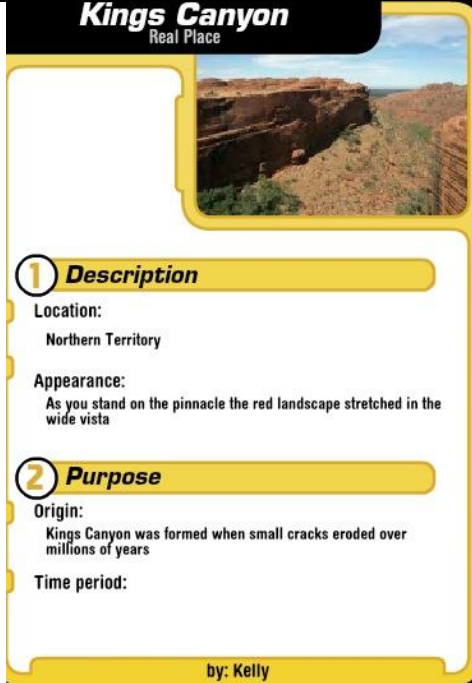
For more examples and tools you can use in classrooms visit the blog “Litology and much more” (<http://ictintheclassroom.edublogs.org/>), which focuses on how digital tools can be used in classrooms.

List of Apps and Websites Used:

Type of Tool	Websites	Apps
Collaborative Tools	Padlet - https://padlet.com/ Socrative - http://www.socrative.com/ Skype: https://education.skype.com/	
Creation of Multimodal Texts	QR creator - http://www.qrstuff.com/ Haiku Deck - https://www.haikudeck.com/ Read Write Think Trading Card Creator: http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/trading_cards_2/ Incredibox (sound scapes) http://www.incredibox.com/v4/ Wild Music (sound scapes) http://www.wildmusic.org/soundscapes/buildsoundscape	Pic Collage (free): https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/pic-collage-add-photo-video/id448639966?mt=8 imovie (free) - https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/imovie/id377298193?mt=8 30hands (free) - https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/30hands-create-show-what-you/id605013231?mt=8 Screen Chomp (free) - https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/screenchomp/id442415881?mt=8

		<p>Show Me (free) https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/showme-interactive-whiteboard/id445066279?mt=8</p> <p>Haiku Deck (free) - https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/haiku-deck-presentation-slideshow/id536328724?mt=8</p> <p>Trading Card Creator: https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/trading-cards/id555742821?mt=8</p>
Reading Multimodal Texts	<p>You Tube clip for methaphors https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uoSBVNUO2LU</p> <p>Australian Explorer Gallery of Images. http://www.australianexplorer.com/photo_album.htm</p> <p>Time for kids http://www.timeforkids.com/destination/australia/sightseeing</p>	

	Reading and Viewing	Writing	Speaking and Listening
<h2>Language</h2>	<p>Model navigation of the two websites below, drawing attention to the different features such as navigation, hyperlinks and other online features.</p> <p>Use the website http://www.australia.com/en/explore.html or http://www.timeforkids.com/destination/australia/sightseeing</p> <p>Identify the main features of the website which help you to gain information (videos, hyperlinks, visuals, text, different fonts, the use of colour). Compare this to a paper based informational text on Australia. How are they different? The same?</p> <p>Use Google Earth to identify and explore places Around Australia which are identified in the text.</p>	<p>Give the students a copy of the text, or sections from the text. Brainstorm a list of the sentences used in the books which contain interesting verbs and adjectives. For the brainstorm you can use a Collaborative software tool such as Socrative or Padlet (web).</p> <p>How does the use of this rich vocabulary help to shape the setting?</p> <p>Go to the website http://www.australianexplorer.com/photo_album.htm - Choose some images. Students could choose an image and write a sentence which contains the rich vocabulary which is found in the text.</p> <p>iPad Students could use the app pic collage to present this work, or use the app trading card creator to create a trading card.</p> <p>Web based: A word processor (such as word or publisher) could also be used to present this work. Read, Write Think also has a Trading Card creator</p>	<p>The text uses Aussie colloquialism For example: swag, rode shotgun, sook, footy, mob, cracker and bail up. What other Aussie slang do the children know? Does the use of this slang help to identify the text as Australian.</p> <p>Some other texts with Australian slang to explore:</p> <p>Special Kev by Chris McKimmie, is another great picture book to share which is uniquely Australian.</p> <p>Read the Poem Waltzing Matilda by Banjo Patterson. Identify the Aussie Slang.</p> <p>Activity Village has a Aussie Slang Printable: http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/sites/default/files/pdf/australian_slang_booklet.pdf</p>

			
	<p>Grade 3: Identify the features of online texts that enhance navigation (ACELA1790)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> becoming familiar with the typical features of online texts, for example navigation bars and buttons, hyperlinks and sitemaps 	<p>Grade 3 Understand that verbs represent different processes, for example doing, thinking, saying, and relating and that these processes are anchored in time through <i>tense</i> (ACELA1482)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> exploring doing and saying verbs in narrative texts to show how they give information about what characters do and say 	<p>Grade 3 Understand that languages have different written and visual communication systems, different oral traditions and different ways of constructing meaning (ACELA1475)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> learning that a word or sign can carry different weight in different cultural contexts, for example that particular respect is due to some people and creatures and that stories can be passed on to teach us how

			to live appropriately
	<p>Grade 4 Identify features of online texts that enhance readability including text, navigation, links, graphics and layout (ACELA1793):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> participating in online searches for information using navigation tools and discussing similarities and differences between print and digital information 	<p>Grade 4 Understand that the meaning of sentences can be enriched through the use of noun groups/phrases and verb groups/phrases and prepositional phrases (ACELA1493)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> creating richer, more specific descriptions through the use of noun groups/phrases (for example, in narrative texts, 'their very old Siamese cat'; in reports, 'its extremely high mountain ranges') 	<p>Grade 4 Understand that Standard Australian English is one of many social dialects used in Australia, and that while it originated in England it has been influenced by many other languages (ACELA1487)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifying commonly used words derived from other cultures

	Reading and Viewing	Writing	Speaking and Listening
Literacy	<p>Use a Venn Diagram to compare the similarities and differences between the text and the students own holidays.</p> <p>Take a photo of the venn diagram and insert it into screen chomp or explain everything. Record the narration comparing and making text to self connections.</p>	<p>Use Power Point or 30hands (iPads) or Haiku Desk (web and iPad) and get students to write their own version of a journey they have been on. Think about how the text, visuals and sound work together to create a setting.</p>	<p>Screen chomp (iPad) or show me (iPad) allows you to create a narration to a picture. Students could be a travel reporter who reports on one of the places in Australia which is visited in the book. Students then record the narrative. Model how tone and pace influences the narration. This could also be done in person, in front of the class. A video camera could also be used to record the report.</p> <p>Contact a school in another part of Australia and Skype them. Have the students pre prepare some questions to ask.</p>
	<p>Grade 3</p> <p>Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to evaluate texts by drawing on a growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features (ACELY1680)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> making connections between the text and students own experience and other texts making connections between the information in print and images 	<p>Grade 3</p> <p>Use software including word processing programs with growing speed and efficiency to construct and edit texts featuring visual, print and audio elements (ACELY1685)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> using features of relevant technologies to plan, sequence, compose and edit multimodal texts 	<p>Grade 3</p> <p>Use interaction skills, including active listening behaviours and communicate in a clear, coherent manner using a variety of everyday and learned vocabulary and appropriate tone, pace, pitch and volume (ACELY1792)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> experimenting with voice effects in formal presentations such as tone, volume and pace

	<p>Grade 4</p> <p>Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning to expand content knowledge, integrating and linking ideas and analysing and evaluating texts (ACELY1692)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● making connections between the text and students' own experience and other texts● making connections between information in print and images	<p>Grade 4</p> <p>Use a range of software including word processing programs to construct, edit and publish written text, and select, edit and place visual, print and audio elements (ACELY1697)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● identifying and selecting appropriate software programs for constructing text	<p>Grade 4</p> <p>Use interaction skills such as acknowledging another's point of view and linking students' response to the topic, using familiar and new vocabulary and a range of vocal effects such as tone, pace, pitch and volume to (ACELY1688)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● exploring the effects of changing voice tone, volume, pitch and pace in formal and informal contexts <p>speak clearly and coherently</p>
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	Reading and Viewing	Writing	Speaking and Listening
Literature	<p>Look at the Metaphors that Alison Lester uses to shape the mood of the narrative. for example: “then fell asleep like a pride of lions” “We saw the autumn leaves fluttering like flags”.” “I imagined her out there, riding her dolphin like an ocean cowgirl” “until we were as wrinkled as prunes”</p> <p>Get the students to close their eyes and visualise what the metaphors look like. Why are metaphors important? How do they help to shape the story?</p> <p>Draw what you visualise.</p> <p>How could you use metaphors in your own writing?</p> <p>To further explore the definition of metaphors: share this You Tube clip.</p>	<p>Create soundscapes which would compliment the text “Are we there yet”. Discuss how the use of sound in a multimodal text evokes a feeling and adds to the setting.</p> <p>In pairs students design a soundscape which would compliment each page. The students could then read out their page with the soundscape playing the background.</p> <p>To start a simple program such as Wild Music could be useful http://www.wildmusic.org/soundscapes/buildsoundscape</p> <p>Use Instruments from the music room and audio record the soundscape.</p> <p>Use Garage Band (iPad, Mac) to compose your own backing music.</p> <p>Use Incredibox (free web based) to create your own soundscape http://www.incredibox.com/v4/</p> <p>Here is a You Tube Clip of what the end product could look like. Show me (iPad)and Wild Music (web based) have been combined to create a soundscape for the</p>	<p>Take on the role of a book seller: Your mission is to convince other people that this book has to be read. Think about: Why is this book important? How is it different to other books? How has Alison Lester used vocabulary and visuals to make the text interesting? How has Alison Lester made the book uniquely Australian?</p> <p>Audio tape the students to creative interactive book reports about how Alison Lester personifies the Australian experience with her characters.</p> <p>These audio files can then be saved as a QR code (http://www.qrstuff.com/). These can then be placed in a display so parents can listen.</p>

		<p>scene. https://youtu.be/R1GL0Et7B3g</p>	
	<p>Grade 3 Discuss how language is used to describe the settings in texts, and explore how the settings shape the events and influence the mood of the narrative (ACELT1599)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifying and discussing the use of descriptive adjectives ('in the middle of a vast, bare plain') to establish setting and atmosphere ('the castle loomed dark and forbidding') and to draw readers into events that follow 	<p>Grade 3 Create imaginative texts based on characters, settings and events from students' own and other cultures using visual features, for example perspective, distance and angle (ACELT1601)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> drawing on literary texts read, viewed and listened to for inspiration and ideas, appropriating language to create mood and characterisation 	<p>Grade 3 Discuss texts in which characters, events and settings are portrayed in different ways, and speculate on the authors' reasons (ACELT1594)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> exploring the ways that the same story can be told in many cultures, identifying variations in the storyline and in music (for example 'The Ramayana' story which is told to children in India, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Burma, Laos, Tibet and Malaysia)
	<p>Grade 4 Use metalanguage to describe the effects of ideas, text structures and language features of literary texts (ACELT1604)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sharing views using appropriate metalanguage (for example 'The use of the adjectives in describing the character really helps to create images for the reader') 	<p>Grade 4 Create literary texts by developing storylines, characters and settings (ACELT1794)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> collaboratively plan, compose, sequence and prepare a literary text along a familiar storyline, using film, sound and images to convey setting, 	<p>Grade 4 Discuss literary experiences with others, sharing responses and expressing a point of view (ACELT1603)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sharing and discussing students' own and others' understanding of the effects of particular literary techniques on their appreciation of texts

		characters and points of drama in the plot	
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Further Reading:

Defining multiliteracies [Chapter 2]. (2006). Australian Literacy Educators Association.