

# Genre pedagogy in Australian classrooms

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# Overview

- The educational climate in Australia  
- four snapshots
- Genre and genre pedagogy
- Selected resources on genre

# The educational climate in OZ

- Whole language and progressive education (1980's)
  - A reaction against prescriptive grammar, unrelated to student comprehension and production
  - Teacher as facilitator, not expert
  - Student 'voice' central
  - Gradual disappearance of KAL in teacher education

# Teaching English Literacy

- PNS report (Christie et al, 1991)
  - ‘Teachers’ knowledge about language and literacy and the pedagogical principles for their teaching are central to the successful transition of novice teachers to competent practitioners’ (Vol 1 p. 98).

# 'Beyond the Middle' Report

- Luke et al 2003 *Literacy in the Middle Years of Schooling*
  - 'Subject teachers have insufficient knowledge of the language and literacy demands of their discipline' (118)
  - 'Teachers use a "grab-bag" of approaches to literacy ... Schools were scrambling to put together materials from diverse resources without any principled understanding of language and literacy" (135).

# The National Curriculum

- Functional KAL and genre approaches integrated
- Year 3 Literacy strand
- “Identify the typical organisational structure of texts such as simple narratives, sequential explanations, autobiographies, personal responses to literary works, simple arguments, information reports”
- LASS Unit 4 Screen 41- Explanations

# The life cycle of a kangaroo

- A joey is born: the joey embryo is born and climbs into the pouch
- The climb: the embryo climbs into the pouch
- At three weeks: the baby joey sucks the nipple to get milk
- At 6 weeks: the baby joey doesn't have any fur
- At 7 months: the baby joey grows up. It can eat grass

# Year 9 Literacy Strand

- By the end of Year 9, students create a range of coherent written and multimodal texts for imaginative, informative and persuasive purposes.
- They experiment with different text structures and language patterns to compose literary texts for particular purposes and effects.
- They understand how vocabulary choices contribute to the abstraction, technical precision and discipline-specific nature of texts.
- LASS Unit 4 Screen 50 - explanations in Science



# Genre pedagogy

- Genres and social purpose: text recount vs email diatribe against Qantas
- Frogs exercise LASS Unit 4 Screen 3
- Genre as a staged, goal-oriented social process (Martin, Rothery and Christie)
- Examples in Unit 4 screen 2
- Making the 'invisible' explicit

#### 4. Review of the structural and language features of standard written genres

Teachers need to be aware of

- The purpose and the structure of the different text types or genres used in their subject areas, and of
- The respective language features required of the writer to achieve the goal.

A summary of the main genres required across the subject areas and across the years of schooling is available on the right hand side. With this awareness, teachers are better able to scaffold students by offering them explicit instruction into how to write these texts effectively, one important goal of school literacy education.

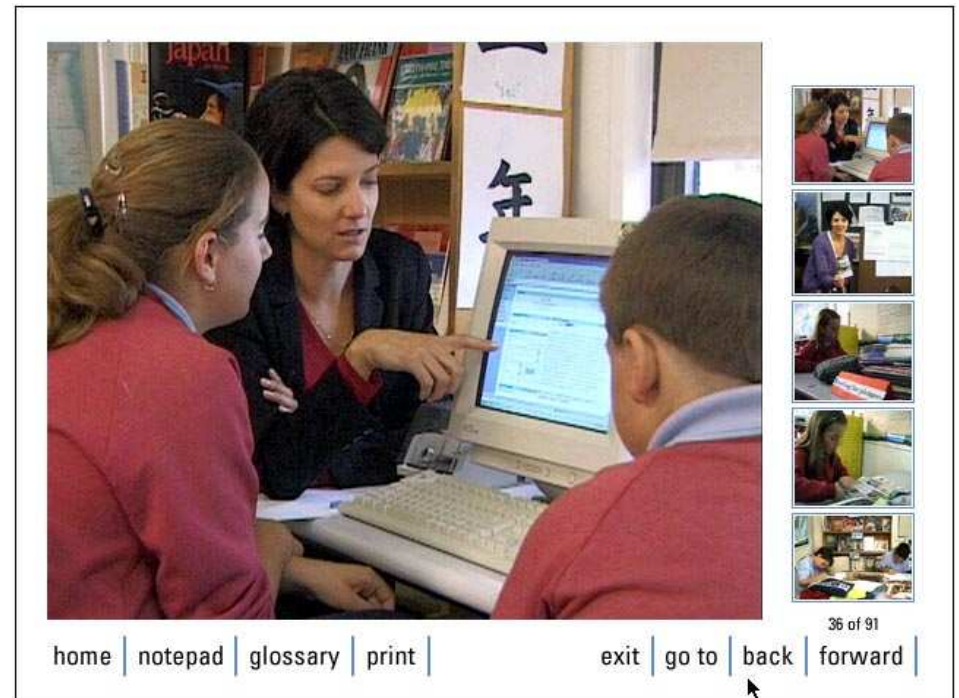


*Click on the name of the genre to see a summary of the structure and language features of each*

TEXT TYPE GENRE	SOCIAL PURPOSE	GENERIC STRUCTURE	LANGUAGE FEATURES
Recounts	Retell	Orientation Sequence of Events Reorientation	Adverbials of time Action verbs Past tense
Procedure	Instruct	Goal Materials / Equipment Procedural Steps Suggestions	Action verbs Imperatives Adverbials of time, place and manner
Explanations	Tell how or why	Phenomenon Identification Explanation sequence	Action verbs Relating verbs Nominalisation Language of cause and effect
Information Reports	Classify and describe	Classification Description	Relating verbs Present tense Participants: generalised Technical language
Exposition: Single argument	Argue the case for or against	Thesis Argument Reiteration	Connectives Modality
Exposition: Discussion	Offer both sides of an issue	Preview Arguments for and against Recommendation	Connectives Modality
Narratives	Retell an imaginary event	Orientation Complication Resolution	Adverbials of time, place and manner Action verbs Participants: personal Everyday language Adverbials of reason Sensing verbs Saying verbs

# A powerful combination

- Genre pedagogy and scaffolding
- Scaffolding more than ‘good teaching’



# Scaffolding

- The temporary, but essential nature of parental support in the language development of young children (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976).
- 3 Key elements for school educators:
  - The task is ‘finite’
  - The learner’s ZPD and learning gap is identified
  - The ‘expert’ designs appropriate strategies to bridge that gap and support the ‘apprentice’ in becoming independent

# Scaffolding in the home

- S. Mummy, are you a girl?  
M. (busy) Yes.  
S. Are you a woman?  
M. Oh yes, I'm a woman; a woman is a big girl, a grown-up girl.
- (Clare Painter 'Into the Mother Tongue', 1989)



# Scaffolding learning through talk

- Learner encouraged to ask ‘real’ questions
- Mother (‘expert other’) responds by accounting for where the learner is at, linguistically and cognitively
- Mother accepts (‘yes’) but also elaborates on learner’s response, still within the learner’s ZPD

... six months later

- Towards independence
- S. Snakes and worms, they don't have legs ...  
M. Ah no.  
S. But lizards do.

# What the child has learnt

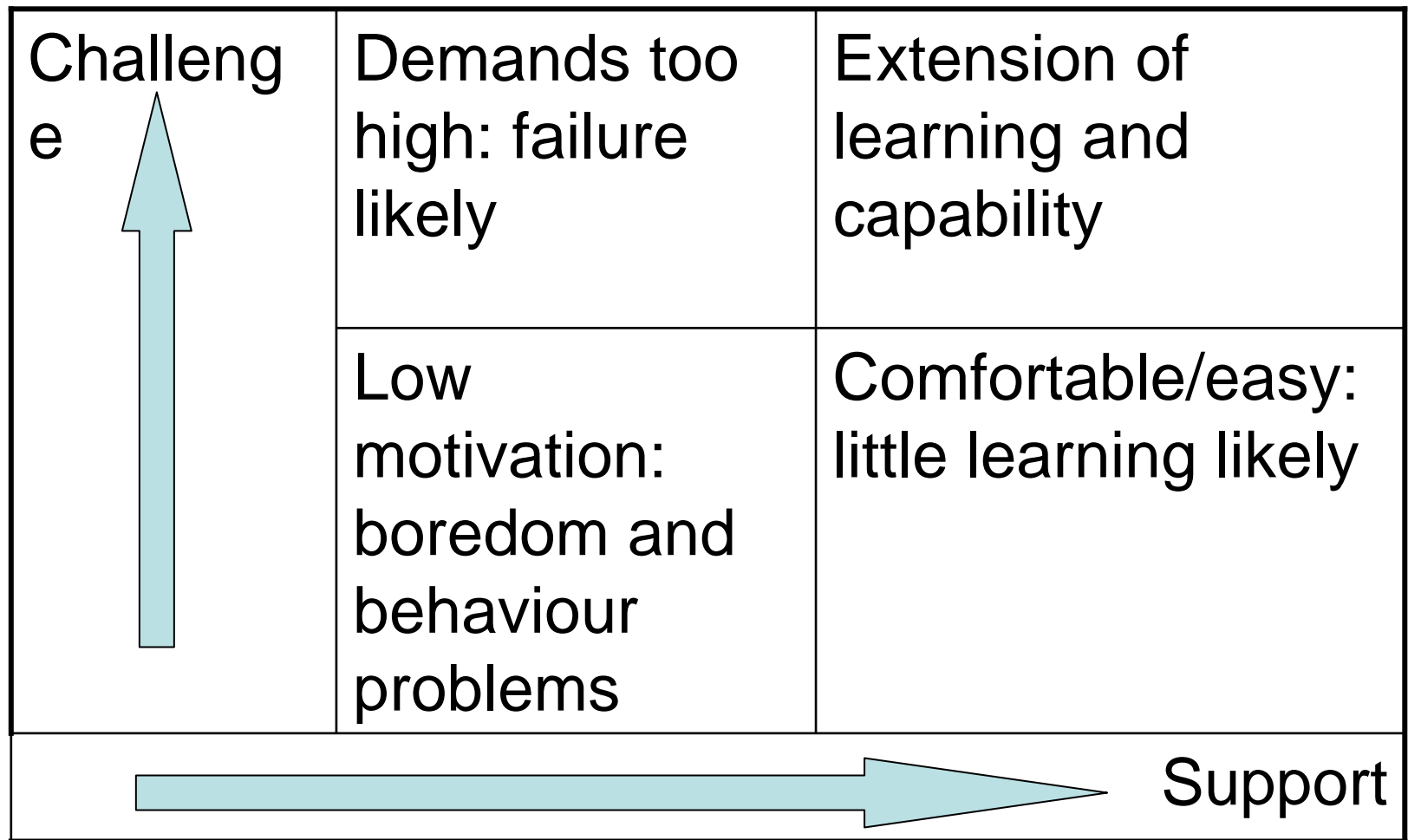
Through repeated interactions like this:

- More sophisticated ways of classifying the animal world (male/female; young/old; legged and legless)
- A strong foundation for the classificatory ways of reasoning in school science



# Into school science

- David, Year 8  
Science
- Classificatory forms  
of reasoning



Mariani, L. 1997

# Instructional scaffolds for writing

- Deconstruction
- Joint construction
- Independent construction

# Deconstruction in an ESL class

- Provide models of target text
- Identify generic stages

# Deconstruction in Grade 5

- Marie, an upper primary teacher scaffolding her students into the structures of Information Reports

# Deconstruction: Recounts

- Use of manipulatives to consolidate understanding of text structure

# Deconstruction 2: Information Reports

- Marie scaffolding students into the language of Information Reports

# Joint construction



# Independent construction: Personal Recount

10 Albion St

Brunswick 3056

11/5/00

Dear Ali,

Hi, Ali. I have bad news to tell you, It's all about me.

Yesterday, I was working in my office. It was quite, there was someone who hold a gun at my back and said: "Give me your money." I was scared, I turned my face and said: "I haven't got any money." And he took my bag, then run away. And someone saw that and called the police.

The police asked me: what does he look like. So, I told them the robber has two brown eyes and brown hair, he was about 1.8 metres tall.

That's what happened to me.

Does Have Has anything happened to you?

See you!

Jinbo.

# Genre resources development

- DSP materials: Write it Right (mid 1990s)
- BUILT (2000)
- LASS (2008)
- LASS Plus (2010)

Jenny Eather web site

# Literacy Across the School Subjects

- Genre as structured, purposeful social activity (Martin, 1992)
- The 'standard' genres of schooling: Narrative, Recount, Information Report, Argument, Explanation and Procedure
- Genres are blended and multimodal (Unsworth, Macken-Horarik)

QuickTime™ and a  
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

- **introduction: language and literacy**



- **scaffolding literacy**



- **oral language**



- **standard written genres**



- **multi-genre texts**



- **supporting reading**



- **supporting writing**



- **planning for literacy learning**



- **back to contents**
- **exit**

# Multigeneric structures

- LASS Unit 5

QuickTime™ and a  
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

# LASS Plus (Recounts)

- Review of DVD
- <http://www.eshowcase.unimelb.edu.au/packages/lass>

# A teacher designed web site

- Jenny Eather website
- <http://www.writingfun.com/>

# Grammar and context

- A professional resource for English Teachers (Humphrey, Love & Droga, forthcoming 2011)
- Focus on the three key genres of secondary English
  - Narrative
  - Exposition
  - Response
- And the grammatical patternings within these



# The last word from Gatachi

- LASS unit 1 Screen 20 (video 2)