Teaching support notes for

Shaun Tan: *The lost thing*, stories and more rap

These ideas support students with their class work in order to complete the rap activities, send comments to the blog and submissions to the Gallery.

Choose as much (or as little) as you wish. Finding some time to share other students' responses on the blog, and using an IWB for demonstrating, discussing and interacting, are valuable. Collaborating with teacher librarian, teacher, ESL or STLA colleagues makes it even easier!

See the **Outcomes** document for a full list of Stage 3 and Stage 4 English focus outcomes.

Task 1 – Introduce and explore teaching and programming ideas
Term 2, Week 7: week beginning 6 June, 2011

This rap is suitable for Stage 3 and Stage 4 students.
See Technology tips to help prepare for digital activities.

Suggested introductory activities

Provide an overview and explain the purpose of the rap.

Explain that students will:
- read Shaun Tan's *The lost thing* as a picture book and view *The lost thing* as an animated film
- read and view the texts several times to become familiar with them
- explore the narrative as a picture book text, and an animated text
- discuss *The lost thing*, with their classmates
- investigate *The lost thing* in terms of character, setting, and themes
- consider how narrative elements like character and setting can be used to contribute to a wide range of themes
- create a word cloud to visually represent the themes in *The lost thing*
- respond to activities and discuss *The lost thing* with students in other schools by posting comments to a blog
- focus closely on an abstract character in *The lost thing* and write a report on the character
- create an original abstract character and write a report on the newly created character
- work in groups to compose a brief narrative based on the students' original characters and create a storyboard for their narrative
- use appropriate technology to produce a digital representation of their original story.

Possible activities for rap Task 1 – Introduce & explore

Reading the picture book and the animated film

It is important for students to learn to use a comprehensive range of skills and strategies appropriate to the type of text being read in Stage 3 (RS3.6) or for students learn to respond to imaginative, factual and critical texts, including the required range of texts, through wide and close listening, reading and viewing in Stage 4 (1.1).

Activity 1
Read, view and respond

- Read *The lost thing* by Shaun Tan. Depending on access to copies of the book:
    - the teacher may read to the class and show the illustrations
    - students may read the picture book in small groups
    - students may read the picture book individually
    - the teacher can make use of this site *The lost thing: the mirror of the world, State Library of Victoria* to present some pages of the book, with a zoom facility for close analysis, using an IWB

- Considering some of the elements of visual literacy, re-read *The lost thing*, taking a closer look at the text.

View the animated film *The lost thing*. Have a class discussion about the book and film. Students can compare conventional structures used in print and electronic texts Stage 3 (RS3.8) or students can learn about alternative ways of expressing ideas (2.13)
- Some questions for class discussion:
    - Who is telling the story?
    - How does the narrator capture the reader's interest at the very beginning?
    - When is the story set?
    - Where is the story set?
    - What mood or moods are generated by the book or film?
    - What differences are there between the book and film versions of the story?

Investigate character and setting
- Explain or refresh the concepts and roles of **character** and **setting** in narratives.
- Ask students to jot down as many different characters and settings as they can remember from the film. Students could be given Rap worksheet 1 and Rap worksheet 2 to record their information for this task.
- Individual lists can be shared with the class to help create a more comprehensive list.

- Handout copies of Rap worksheets 1 & 2 for students to record characters and settings in *The lost thing*.
- Use the worksheets in small groups and as a class to compile comprehensive lists on character and setting.
- Discuss as a group what makes some characters or settings more memorable.

Got time for more?
- ✓ Watch **Shaun Tan: Tell us about *The lost thing*** (ask your teachers for help)
- ✓ See Shaun Tan talking about making the film in **Projects>The lost thing** and view a gallery of stills from *The lost thing.*

Activity 2
Investigate themes
- Explain or refresh the concept and role of **theme** in narratives.

> **Theme:** refers to ideas or issues that are beneath the surface of the story. Themes relate to concerns, beliefs, or feelings about life in general. For instance, in *The lost thing*, although they are not stated, a couple of themes might be **loneliness** and **friendship**.

- Handout copies of Rap worksheet 3 for students to record themes in *The lost thing*.
- Ask students to think about the possible themes in *The lost thing*.
- Discuss some possibilities.
- Using Rap worksheet 3, get students to make a list of words or phrases that suggest the themes in *The lost thing.*
- Students can then work with a partner, in a group, and/or as a whole class to compile a list of themes.

In responding to the texts students are required to identify and interpret ideas, themes and issues in literary texts Stage 3 (RS 3.5) or students learn to respond to and compose texts beyond the literal level Stage 4 (1.7) and demonstrate understanding of the complexity of meaning in texts (1.9)

Activity 3
Create a word cloud

Using all the words and phrases contributed by members of the class, relating to themes of *The lost thing*, create a *Wordle* that displays the themes and uses font, colour and layout to capture the essence of Shaun Tan's creation.

The teacher could select 2-3 of these to send with an introductory comment from the class to the rap.

Inform students that they will communicate their ideas to other students by uploading to the *Comments* section of a blog (also known as a web log). Explain rap lingo or terminology to students as needed.

- In order for the class to construct an introductory comment, clarify the purpose of the introductory comment, identifying the audience and discussing the detail required to achieve the purpose. List appropriate voice, modality, greeting and blog signature, for example. The blog post would include the school's name, location, size of group and any other interesting features of the school or class. Include the students' feelings about the text, *The lost thing*. Using correct blog and rap etiquette (see FAQs for further details), send the class introductory comment to the rap blog.

You may wish to discuss with students:

✓ the purpose of the class/group introduction
✓ what you want to say about your class or group to other schools
✓ appropriate ways or styles to write your group introduction
Include in your introductory comment to the rap blog:

✓ your school's name
✓ interesting features about your class or group and school
✓ some initial responses about the texts
✓ an appropriate group name to sign off in your blog comment

- Prepare the group response for task 1 with the class. Student/s (rap representative) or teacher word process the response, edit and save Stage 3 (WS3.12) Stage 4 Outcome 3 (3.3) (3.8) (3.11).

- Teacher facilitates student use of word processor/computers and making blog comments to send the response to rap **Activity 1 – Introduce & explore** once the teacher has approved the final text.

- Explain to students that they are to use the list of words and phrases on themes to create a word cloud using *Wordle*. The instructions linked in this rap will assist.

- Suggest that they try to present it in colours, fonts, and style that capture the essence of *The lost thing*).

Full instructions for using *Wordle* are available in the rap site.

Go to the *Wordle* website.

- Copy the students' words from a *Word* document and paste them into the box. Use the menu options to change the appearance of the word cloud. See the *Create a word cloud of themes in The lost thing*

instructions. Discuss the most important words that describe *The lost thing's* themes and the way these are presented in the picture book and the animation. Stage 3 (WS3.9) Stage 4 (11.18)

- Save the screen grab in a word file (change to PDF for quicker upload) and send it to the blog to share with other rappers, or send the unique URL to the blog.
- If you *Save to the public gallery* a unique URL will be created. This is an opportunity to talk about <u>cybersafety</u> with students.

Introduce your class or group and submit your word cloud

- Send the group or class introduction comment to the blog.

- Submit the selected word clouds to the rap Gallery.

- Read other introductions on the blog and view *Wordles* in the gallery.

Task 2 – Delve deeper teaching and programming ideas
Term 2, Week 8: week beginning 14 June, 2011

Possible activities for rap Task 2 – Delve deeper

Activity 1
Report

Encourage students to:
- delve deeper into Shaun Tan's creativity and consider the different characters in *The lost thing*, including those Tan refers to as the *Miscellaneous abnormalities*. Some of these creatures are presented in the companion book with the DVD entitled *What miscellaneous abnormality is that*? There are also some characters available to present to or discuss with the class using an IWB on the *Shaun Tan* website and a more general collection of Tan's work on *Shaun Tan – a small collection*

Explain that students will:
- select one of the abstract characters from the book or film and write a brief report for a *field guide* on the character. Example and template are provided on *Rap worksheet 4 character & report directions.* Stage 3 (WS3.9) Stage 4 (2.14) (6.9).

Activity 2
Create a unique character

Suggest that students:
- use their Shaun Tan abstract characters and reports as models, for creating a unique character of their own and a written report on it

(individual task). Rap sheet 4 will assist. Students may be happy to draw freehand and create their characters from scratch, if not, the support instructions, The *Working with free clipart* worksheet may be helpful.

Activity 3
Create a group storyboard

Get students to work in groups. They can show their original pictures and reports and talk to members of the group about the character they have created.

Suggest they use the characters created by members of the group to create a simple narrative that involves all the characters (teachers can offer more directions).

Students can then create a group storyboard to depict important stages in their narrative. Use *Storyboard instructions* worksheet. Two templates are also available. Stage 3 (TS3.2) Stage 4 (2.2) (3.1) (11.15).

Activity 4
Finalise and submit

Finally, students send a brief class/group comment about the process involved in creating their storyboards to the rap blog, and submit two or three of the storyboards to the rap Gallery.

Task 3 – uCreate stories & Rap wrap up task
teaching and programming ideas

Term 3, Week 9: week beginning 20 June, 2011

Possible activities for Task 3 – uCreate stories

This is the final week of the rap. Don't worry if you haven't finished your digital creations yet. These activities are meant to be enjoyable learning opportunities. (Your class or group will be able to submit to the blog and gallery till 22 July 2011 if needed).

Suggested sequence of teaching strategies

Explain that for this section of the rap students are required to:
- use a digital tool to present their group narrative in a visual or audiovisual format
- investigate the possible tools they can use by accessing the tools and directions for use using the *Creating stories: digital tools What suits your Purpose?* guide as needed.

- select a tool appropriate to your story, ICT capabilities and equipment to which you have access.

Outcomes: Stage 3 (WS3.12) Stage 4 (6.1) (6.7) (11.7) 11.18)

Activity 1
Plan your story

Explain that students will use their story ideas and work in their groups to create a visual or audiovisual presentation.

They should first look at some of the **digital tools** provided in the guide. Read the instructions and view any examples. Then choose one that best suits their purpose, for example:

- slideshow
- digital picture book
- series of cartoons
- graphic novel
- film trailer
- animation.

Some digital tools

Kizoa – create slideshows with music and effects. Instructions. Technology tips for cybersafety
Laptop wrap: Composing a graphic novel
Laptop wrap: Creating a picture book
Laptop wrap: Creating cartoons
Laptop wrap: Creating digital stories
Laptop wrap: Visual humour
PhotoPeach – create captioned slideshow and spiral slideshow – instructions and model
PowerPoint help (Microsoft) Saves as *PowerPoint*
Tools4U: SMART notebook
UCreate animations
UCreate a slideshow
UCreate a video podcast
Wordle – create word clouds. Saves to Word and PDF

Activity 2
Create your story

Suggest students work as a group using their storyboard ideas and the digital tool they have selected to create a short narrative in digital format. They will need to use their own original artwork and ideas as well as the instructions provided for the selected digital tool.

Finally, they should review and edit their work until they are happy with the end product. Give their creation a title and save a final copy.

Activity 3
Evaluate and submit

Print a <mark>*Rap reflection sheet*</mark> for each group or student to complete.

Discuss with students:
- what they have enjoyed about participating in this rap
- what new skills in reading texts and using technology they have developed
- what the highlight of the rap was.

Students can then construct a joint evaluation of their involvement in the rap and the work they have done on preparing their creation, and can send their evaluation comments to the rap blog and submit their creation to the rap gallery.

Thank you for joining our rap