

Making the Most of The School Magazine: A Guide for Teachers

2009 edition

Prepared by staff in The School Magazine Unit and the English Curriculum Unit at the Curriculum Directorate, NSW Department of Education & Training

Edited by: Suzanne Eggins

Contact: school.magazine@det.nsw.edu.au

Contents of Part Three

Distinctive verbal and visual characteristics of each text type	2
Make text type your starting point	2
Poetic text types.....	3
How to approach teaching poetry.....	3
‘Rainbow Lorikeets’ by Peter Friend.....	4
Suggested sequence for working with poems.....	4
Poetic devices	5
Sample questions to ask about poetic devices	5
From poetic devices to poetic effect	6
Expose the poem’s deeper meanings.....	8
Questions to ask about the visual elements on poetry pages.....	8
Story text types	9
How to approach teaching stories in <i>The School Magazine</i>	9
Narrative devices and key questions to ask.....	10
Grammar and story elements.....	13
Key visual questions to ask of story text types.....	14
Nonfiction text types	15
Journalistic nonfiction techniques used in <i>The School Magazine</i>	15
Key questions to ask of nonfiction	16
The problem with the writer’s intention.....	17
What else would you like to know?	17

Part Three: Suggestions for Teaching Text Types in *The School Magazine*

Distinctive verbal and visual characteristics of each text type

Each monthly *Teaching Unit* gives you four sessions of work, but space means that the *Teaching Units* can't cover every text that we publish in *The School Magazine*. Here are some suggestions to help you develop teaching sessions of your own.

Keep in mind that each text type has key verbal characteristics likely to be worth exploring with students. For example:

- **With poetic text types:** Who speaks the poem? How and for what effect does the text use figurative devices like similes and metaphor? How does the poem achieve its tone as a rational/irrational, serious/humorous text?
- **With story text types:** Who narrates? Why? What is the main character's problem? What is the main character like? What does s/he do about the problem during the story? Does s/he change? What message does the plot deliver, and for whom?
- **With stand-alone cartoons:** What symbols and cultural icons does the cartoon depend on? How is humour generated by the image/caption interaction?

Each text type also offers different visual literacy opportunities. For example:

- **Poetic text types:** How does the image offer a literal or a figurative response to the text? Does the image restate or extend on the verbal text?
- **Story text types:** What moments does the illustrator choose to show? From whose viewpoint?

Make text type your starting point

Text type (also called *genre*) is the best starting point for working with texts in *The School Magazine*. Keep in mind that:

- Each text type has subtypes.
- For each main text type we can identify useful characteristics to focus on and some key questions to ask.

In the following sections we take each text type, list its subtypes and suggest some useful questions you can ask about the verbal and visual characteristics of that text type. Which questions you ask, and how you word them for your students, will of course vary according to the level of your students and the specific focus of your literacy activities.

Poetic text types

The School Magazine regularly publishes examples from the two main groups of poetic text types:

- Traditional forms: ballads, sonnets, limericks, haiku ...
- Free verse forms:
 - Narrative poems: telling a story in verse form
 - Lyrical/expressive poems: capturing an emotion, scene, reflection.

How to approach teaching poetry

Keep in mind that the point of poetry is to wake us up! Poetry aims to *defamiliarise* or *make strange* ordinary events, scenes and feelings, so that we see and feel things anew.

Poetry is the literary form that specialises in condensing experience. It uses language in unusual ways to enable it to deliver its 'punch'. For examples, poetry often uses elliptical or incomplete sentences, short lines and odd grammar—it's all part of waking us up to a new way of seeing things.

To achieve its concise and distilled effects, poetry exploits the aesthetic and sensory qualities of language. So it uses imagery or figurative devices (like simile and metaphor) and sound qualities (like alliteration, rhyme and rhythm) to make us feel, see, hear, taste and smell what it is describing.

So, in a well written poem, poetic resources are used to offer a surprising, unexpected startling fresh view of something ordinary and familiar in a tight, concise and aesthetically pleasing way.

Below we suggest a sequence for working with poems in *The School Magazine*, using as an example the poem 'Rainbow Lorikeets' by Peter Friend, published in *Orbit* #1 2009 and reproduced here with the poet's permission.

Rainbow Lorikeets

by PETER FRIEND

They screech like metal being torn
and fly like fighter planes,
but their feathers are as bright
as the fashions of summer
or the banners of a carnival.

“Look at us!” they scream
as they zoom between trees,
flashing their blue, yellow, orange and green
in the sunlight
amid the grey-dull eucalypts.

“It’s us,” they yell. “We’ve ARRIVED!”
And on the ground
all heads turn and smile,
like the crowds at an air show
when the squadron appears.

Suggested sequence for working with poems

1. Give a glossed meaning

Start by paraphrasing the meanings you think the poem is making, using ordinary spoken language.

For example, ‘This poem describes rainbow lorikeets as if they were fighter planes at an air show’ (‘Rainbow Lorikeets’ by Peter Friend, *Orbit* #1, 2009).

2. Now reflect: Why did the poet write the poem the way s/he did, instead of just saying it the way *you* did in your gloss?

If the answer is: ‘*the way the poet wrote it was much more interesting, more descriptive, more enjoyable*’, this raises the question: ‘*in what ways?*’ For example, exactly *why* is Peter Friend’s description of the lorikeets striking and satisfying? Why does the poem make us smile in recognition, even as we nod in surprise at the specific way he’s captured the parrots’ lively behaviour?

3. What poetic devices does the poet use?

How interesting, descriptive or powerful a poem is comes down to how the poet used poetic devices. So we need to understand what those devices are and how they get used in poems.

Poetic devices

To achieve their effects, poems make use of some, if not all, of what we call poetic devices:

1. Stanzaic/verse form
2. Rhythm
3. Rhyme
4. Other sound qualities
5. Grammar
6. Vocabulary
7. Figurative devices and imagery
8. Rhetorical function
9. Persona
10. Tone

Sample questions to ask about poetic devices

Table 1 (page 7) lists some sample questions you can ask about each poetic device. There's no need (and no time!) to ask questions about all dimensions of a poem. Instead, look for what the poem is doing that's unusual and focus on asking questions about that.

For example, 'Rainbow Lorikeets' is striking for its use of similes and colour words. The key simile is that lorikeets are *like fighter planes*; other similes used are that their feathers are *as bright / as the fashions of summer / or the banners of a carnival*; that they screech *like metal being torn*; that people react to them *like the crowds at an air show*). These similes allow the personification of the lorikeets (*they scream, they yell*). Specific colour and sound words (*bright, flashing, blue, yellow, orange, green, grey-dull; screech, zoom, scream, yell*) create a vivid image in the reader's mind. Together, these features work to capture the striking, noisy, almost violent behaviour of these familiar little parrots and the cheerful, carnival-

like response people usually feel as their attention is inevitably drawn to the birds (*like the crowds at an air show*).

On the other hand, the poem is not particularly interesting for its grammar, rhyme or rhythm. It uses standard grammatical clauses, and is a free verse form, so it's easy to read and understand but it is not striking for these aspects (although in other poems by this poet stanzaic structure, grammar, rhyme and rhythm might well do most of the work). So with this particular poem it makes sense to focus your teaching around the simile and colour/sound words, since these are the distinctive characteristics that make the poem effective, distinctive and surprising.

From poetic devices to poetic effect

As you jot some answers down for each device in the table, you'll begin to see which poetic devices a poem exploits, and therefore which are the interesting ones to focus on. Now you can ask:

How do these poetic devices make the poem's meaning in a richer, more pleasurable way than in a gloss of the poem?

The simplest way to see the effects of poetic devices is to take them out or mess them up! Leave out the metaphors, change the rhythm or the rhyme, remove any sound effects, restore conventional grammar and you'll quickly discover how they contribute to the poem's meaning.

For example, try rewriting 'Rainbow Lorikeets' without any similes (so, remove *like fighter planes, the fashions of summer, the banners of a carnival, the crowds at an air show*). You'll be forced to write something like *They screech and fly, they zoom between trees, all heads turn and smile at them*—lines which are dull because they lack the unusual, vivid imagery of the similes. Similarly, leave out the specific colour and sound words as well and you'll end up with a boring old run-of-the-mill description of lorikeets that does nothing to surprise, charm or wake us up. This poem is effective precisely because it sets up an unexpected, but strikingly appropriate, comparison between lorikeets and fighter planes, and because it contrasts the bright colours of the lorikeets with the dullness of the surrounding bush.

Poetic device	Questions you can ask
Stanzaic/verse form	Does the poem fall into stanzas? Are they of equal length? Are they of a recognizably traditional form and style (e.g. ballad, sonnet, limerick)? Or is the poem all one verse? How does the poem's structure make it easy/difficult to understand? (e.g. does each stanza tell one event or describe one aspect?)
Rhythm	Does the poem have a regular rhythmic structure, repeated in each stanza? (Try clapping the rhythm to see if it's regular: how many clap/beats per line?) Does the beat fall on particular (types of) words, such as colour or sound words? Or does the poem try to sound like ordinary spoken language?
Rhyme	Does the poem use end-line rhyme? Is it regular or variable? Does the rhyme fall on particular types of words? How does the rhyme help to tie the lines and stanzas together?
Other sound qualities	Are there examples of assonance, alliteration, onomatopoeia, sound symbolism, part-rhyme in the poem? Does the poem use sound words?
Grammar	Does the poem use clause and sentence structures that are not usual in everyday speech? Do the ends of lines match grammatical boundaries, e.g. are they clauses or phrases? Are elements of punctuation used in conventional or unconventional ways?
Figurative devices/imagery	Does the poem use devices like simile, metaphor and personification or is it literal throughout? What surprising comparisons and contrasts do these devices make? What unusual images are captured in the poem?
Vocabulary	Are the words colloquial or more formal? One-syllable or polysyllabic? How has the poem used descriptive language (e.g. adjectives, adverbs)?
Rhetorical function/position of the reader	How is the reader positioned in this poem? Is the poem presented as a private comment to us? A conversation between characters? A statement or description to a particular person or to no-one in particular?
Persona	Who is apparently speaking the poem? How do we know? How would the poem be different if someone else was speaking the poem?
Tone	Is the poem serious or humorous? Are its meanings logical or nonsensical? Melancholy or exuberant?

Table 1: Poetic devices and questions to ask

Expose the poem's deeper meanings

Finally, you can now answer the question:

What more do I appreciate about the poem's meanings, now that I understand how the poem works?

Your reflections in this stage might not necessarily be passed on to your students, as this is where you read the poem critically, in its cultural context, and you reflect on the 'cultural work' the poem is doing, what it is saying or implying about the themes it explores: life, nature, imagination, language, childhood ...

For example, with 'Rainbow Lorikeets', you might note that the similes the poet uses compare a natural phenomenon (the lorikeets) with a human-made mechanical one (fighter planes). This is an inversion of the usual Romantic poetic technique of viewing the world through nature (e.g. planes are like birds, not birds like planes!) and makes the poem modern and surprising. While the similes are at first unexpected, as you reflect on them you realise how apt they are: these parrots *do* demand our attention, they *do* make us look up at them in cheerful admiration. And so in the end, the poet suggests, nature dominates over technology. By evoking in us the awe and enjoyment we feel for mechanical achievement, these natural creatures show us that they are even more amazing than hi-tech inventions. The poem shows how productive it can be to look at nature in fresh ways, through the prism of our post-modern, hi-tech world.

Questions to ask about the visual elements on poetry pages

All the poems published in *The School Magazine* are illustrated by our team of artists or accompanied by photographs we source from photo libraries around the world. Here are some questions you can ask to develop the critical visual literacy skills of your students:

- Does the image offer a literal or a figurative response to the text? i.e. does it represent what the poem is 'about' or does it offer a more abstract accompaniment?
- Does the image restate or extend on the verbal text? Does it introduce characters, setting, actions not mentioned in the verbal text?
- How does the illustration use angle, distance and colour to evoke the emotions, viewpoint and tone of the verbal text?
- Is the illustration an effective support for the verbal text? How does it anchor, amplify, extend or distract from the meanings of the verbal text?

Have a look at the photograph we've used to illustrate 'Rainbow Lorikeets' in *Orbit* #1 2009 (we can't reproduce the photo here, for copyright reasons) and consider whether our choice of a photo (rather than an artist's illustration), and the close-up view of a lorikeet in flight (rather than a flock, at a distance) effectively supports the verbal meanings of the poem or not.

Story text types

Stories are often the favourite text type with our young readers. *The School Magazine* regularly includes texts from the following story types:

- **Recounts:** The story has no real drama; it simply tells how some slightly unusual event unfolded in a secure and stable world.
- **Anecdotes :** These humorous short stories express how weird, funny or unpredictable life is. Anecdotes revolve around odd, unexpected or embarrassing incidents, with a twist or punch line, often at the protagonist's expense
- **Narratives:** The protagonist learns something about herself/the world as a result of facing and resolving a dramatic crisis
- **Traditional tales:** This category includes fables, creation stories, and folk tales that offer generic, moralistic and alternative evolutionary explanations of why things are and what happened "once upon a time".

How to approach teaching stories in *The School Magazine*

Stories within the above text types can be realist or fantasy, contemporary or historical. With all types of stories, there are five dimensions that may be worth focusing on, according to the interest of the particular text, the abilities of your students and your own literacy focus:

1. **Narration:** who tells the story? What information does the narrator tell us?
2. **Plot:** what happens in the story? What problem is dealt with?
3. **Characterisation:** what is the main character like? What kinds of people or animals help or obstruct him/her?
4. **Setting:** where does it happen? How does that affect the story?
5. **Message/theme:** what is the story's point?

The next section suggests some questions you can ask about each story dimension. Text Tips in *The School Magazine Teaching Units* will demonstrate how you can use questions like these in classroom sessions.

Narrative devices and key questions to ask

1. Narration

- **Who narrates?** This is one of the most important dimensions of all stories, but especially of narratives (stories with a dramatic crisis). The story writer has a choice between three types of narration:

- **First person narration:** the story is narrated by a character who is involved in the story's events. The 'I' is usually the main character. For example:

I never liked Uncle Bill much, but he was Mum's favourite brother. He got on my nerves, though.

- **Third person character-focalised:** the story is told in the third person but from the point of view of just one character (usually the main character). For example:

Sam had never liked Uncle Bill much, but he knew Bill was his mother's favourite brother. Uncle Bill got on Sam's nerves, though.

- **Third person omniscient:** the narrator is not a character in the story but an all-seeing and all-knowing presence. For example:

Sam had never liked Uncle Bill much, and Uncle Bill felt pretty much the same way about Sam. They just seemed to get on each other's nerves.

These types of narration differ in whether they give readers limited or unlimited access to story characters' thoughts. As a result, each type of narration has different effects in a story.

- First person narration is **limited**: the first person narrator generally knows and tells only *her* thoughts/feelings. This creates reader empathy and identification, and discourages the reader from seeing events from other viewpoints. A first person narrator can also have a very strong 'voice', using slang and colloquialisms as she tells the story. Always ask: why has the writer chosen first person narration? It's usually to compel us to share the narrator's opinions, attitudes and judgements. Play with changing to a different narrator—how does that change the way readers experience the events of the story?

- Third person character-focalised is also a **limited** form of narration. It tells the reader only what one character is thinking/feeling. This makes it like first person narration, but it keeps readers at a slightly greater distance. It's always worth asking *why* the writer chooses third person character-focalised rather than first person narration. Often it's because a first person narrator would say mean things about other characters, or would realise how to solve the problem much faster. One way to explore this is to rewrite a third person character-focalised story in the first person (or vice versa).
 - Third person omniscient is an **unlimited** form of narration. The omniscient narrator tells readers the thoughts and feelings of all characters. This style of narration keeps us at a distance. It is harder for readers to identify and empathise with just one character. Instead, we get greater insight into different attitudes and responses. Omniscient narration is common in traditional stories and in stories from before the 1960s. These days it can sound unrealistic, because in reality we don't ever know what other people are really thinking and feeling.
- **What information does the narrator tell us?** Whichever style of narration used, the content of the narration can be **external**, **internal** or **explicit**.
- **External narration:** we are told mostly about the characters' actions, but not about their thoughts and feelings. It is up to us to draw inferences about the characters' feelings from how the character acts.
 - **Internal narration:** we are given access to the character's thoughts and feelings; we are in his or her head, and often in this type of story the mental life of the character is more important than their actions or the events around them.
 - **Explicit narration:** we see characters doing things and at the same time we are told what the characters are thinking and feeling. There is little need for us to make inferences or interpretations, and so this is a common form of narration for younger readers although it can sometimes be heavy-handed and constraining.

2. Plot Structure

- **What is the story's 'problem'? And how soon can you tell?** All story text types (except some very simple recounts) are about a 'problem'. This can

be as simple as a child losing her school bag, or as complex as a child having to deal with parents with a gambling addiction. For younger readers, the problem is usually stated very early in the story. For older readers, the problem is usually 'foreshadowed' by things that characters say or do. Readers can see the problem coming.

- **Who or what caused the problem?** The character him/herself? Family? Other people? Natural phenomena? Fate?
- **How is the problem dealt with?** Which character(s) act? Alone? How do they act? Do they argue, fight, run away, make friends, visit people?
- **What changes** in the outcome of the story? Has the problem been removed? Lessened? Postponed? Made worse? In children's stories, the closure of a story usually offers very clear outcomes. Usually things have changed for the better, at least temporarily.

3. Characterisation

- **Whose problem is it?** This indicates who the main character is. A first person narrator is usually the character who has the problem; a third person character-focalised narration is usually focalised from the viewpoint of the main character.
- **What is the character like** at the start of the story? And at the end? Key actions (verbal and physical) and adjectives will describe the character at different stages of the story. Usually the character will change as the story progresses, perhaps moving from unhappy through determined to happy; or from anxious through tentative to assertive. Characters who don't change (such as animals in fables) are generally punished by the plot for not learning from their experiences.

4. Setting

- **Where do the events take place, in time and place?** The very first sentences of a story usually locate it in time and place. Setting creates a credible (or fantastic) context for the plot and evokes the mood of the story. In stories for younger readers, stories often take place at home (which is usually a safe but boring place); for older readers, stories are

often set away from home (often in dangerous but exciting places). Some stories deal with everyday events, while others are set at special times, such as during holidays or when moving house. Stories set at home are often about coming to terms with siblings or finding ways to make the everyday less boring (e.g. through imaginative activities, making friends or getting a new pet). Stories set in special times and places often deal with action adventures and show the protagonist discovering resources and strengths not called on at home.

5. Message/theme

- **What, if anything, has the protagonist learned** as a result of the story events? This reveals the point or message of the story. A character may learn she has special talents, or is stronger and more independent than she thought, or that she needs to find ways to live with certain problems. In writing for children, usually the narrator positions us to accept that what the character has learned is good and valid. In fables, the message often involves an explicit moral, while in creation tales the narrator usually ends up saying 'and that's why things are as they are', which we're assumed to agree with.

Grammar and story elements

As well as asking questions about the 'big picture' dimensions of stories, you may also want to focus on how grammatical choices are used to achieve the story's elements. Here are some suggestions:

- **Narration:** If it's a first person narrator, look at the way she speaks. Does she use slang? Colloquial expressions? Does she use a lot of words that express attitude and emotion (such as adjectives and adverbs), or is the language more objective? What kind of person do we feel the narrator is, judging from the way she speaks? Compare how the narrator speaks at the start of the story to how she speaks at the end. Can we see changes in the narrator?
- **Plot structure:** Identify the stages the story works through from setting and problem to action and outcome. Then look at what kinds of actions the main character is associated with in the early stages versus the late

stages. To do this, focus on the verbs that occur in clauses that mention the main character. What kind of verbs are they? Physical actions? Thinking verbs? Feeling verbs? Then look at whether the main character is doing the actions or is being acted upon. Do these patterns change by the end of the story?

- **Characterisation:** Look at the adjectives and descriptive phrases used to describe the main character at different stages in the story. Differentiate between physical description and personality/character description. Look also at the words used to describe how the main character speaks: slowly, anxiously, quickly, etc. Do these words change as the story progresses? How then does the main character change?
- **Setting:** Identify the adverbial expressions, prepositional phrases and other indicators of time and place throughout the story. Notice if some are generic ('every day', 'at home') and others are specific ('on that last day of the holidays', 'in the new house'). Explore how the setting of the story leads us to expect certain things to happen. Are we right? Or does the story surprise us?

Key visual questions to ask of story text types

All the stories in *The School Magazine* are supported by at least one but often several illustrations. Here are some questions to help you focus on the visual literacy of these images:

- Do the illustrations show interpersonal moments (how the characters feel) or experiential moments (what the characters are doing)? Or both?
- Which experiential moments does the illustrator choose to show (and not show), and what's the effect of that? For example, can we read the story from the visuals alone? What would we miss?
- Are the illustrations realistic or abstract or cartoonish? What's the effect of that? Does the style match the tone of the story?
- What is the effect of the way the illustrations are sequenced? For example, do they show the contrast between starting point and end point? What if

the illustrations were re-ordered? How would this affect their contribution to the story's meaning?

- From whose point of view are the visuals presented? Are we sharing the experiences *with* the character? Or looking on as outsiders? Are we kept distant? Or are we brought close up to the action?

Nonfiction text types

The School Magazine regularly publishes texts that combine two or more of the standard nonfiction genres, usually in separate sections:

- **Reports:** what (types of) things are
- **Explanations:** how things work
- **Procedures:** how and why you might consider trying an activity/hobby/interest
- **Biography, Profile or Interview:** abridged life story of famous/interesting person, told either in the third person (biography, profile) or the first person (interview).

The nonfiction texts we publish often use journalistic techniques to blend two or more of these genres into a **feature article**. For example, a feature on worms in *Blast Off #1 2009* contains a report section (what type of animals worms are, their life cycle etc), an explanation section (how worms recycle organic material) and a procedure (how to set up your own worm farm). Often a feature article will also include an interview with a 'source' (i.e. a relevant authority).

Journalistic nonfiction techniques used in *The School Magazine*

Because our young readers need to be excited and engaged by our texts, we make use of journalistic techniques to make our nonfiction lively and interesting:

- Colloquial language: contractions, ellipsis, exclamations, humour
- Reader often addressed directly as *you*
- Use of questions to link stages
- Subheadings, often involving alliteration or puns
- Short paragraphs
- Sources are often people: experts, scientists, ordinary people

- Use of direct quotes as well as paraphrases from sources
- Photos used as visual support

Key questions to ask of nonfiction

- What seems to be the main purpose of the nonfiction text? Is it trying to inform us, or explain something, or show us how to do something, or put forward an argument? Or a mixture?
- How does the writer try to get us interested in the topic? Look at the title and the standfirst (the first paragraph directly under the title), the lead (first paragraph of the main text), and any subheadings. Does the writer ask questions? Or say something unexpected? Does the writer use humour? Does the writer succeed in making us want to read the rest of the text?
- Where does the information seem to come from? Books? The internet? Or people? Or all of these? Or can't we tell?
- If people are used as sources, are they experts? Ordinary people? Both? Is the writer a source too (i.e. refers to her own experience)?
- Does the text quote people directly, or just tell us what they said (paraphrase)?
- If it quotes people, does it use a Q&A format or does it incorporate the quotations into the article? Look at how each type works (e.g. what is left out or fixed up in the speaker's responses in a Q&A; how we are told who is saying something in the incorporated quotation style).
- Does the text use formal or colloquial journalistic language? What are some examples?
- Does the text use elements that help us predict what it will be about? Look at the title, standfirst (first paragraph directly below the title), lead (first paragraph of the main text), subheadings and images.
- How do the illustrations/photos add to our understanding of the text? Would we have liked to see other images? Why? Why might they not be there?

The problem with the writer's intention

Just as there are questions that it's useful to ask about a poem, short story or nonfiction text, so there are some questions it's generally *not* worth asking. The most over-used but not useful question is:

What was the writer's intention ...?

Here are the reasons why this question is not a useful starting point for exploring texts with young readers:

- The writer's intention cannot be known—even if you had the chance to ask the writer, his or her answer might not be accurate or useful.
- Knowing the writer's intention is not relevant to an evaluation of the text and can be a distraction from noticing what's interesting about a text.

For example, asking Peter Friend what he *intended* to do in 'Rainbow Lorikeets', or what effects he *hoped* the poem would achieve is of little or no relevance to how we read the poem and how you teach the poem. The poem can and should be evaluated on its literary merits, not in terms of its creator's intentions.

So instead, ask: *How does this text achieve what it does?* For example:

- How does this story create suspense?
- How does this poem emphasise sadness?
- Why does this cartoon make us laugh?

For example, with 'Rainbow Lorikeets', we've seen that asking *why is the poem an effective and surprising description of the parrots?* leads us to a very profitable exploration of its poetic devices and cultural meanings.

What else would you like to know?

Space does not allow us to cover all the text types published in *The School Magazine*. But we're always ready to provide more support, suggestions and advice to help you make the most of our publications. So, please, email feedback and questions about this guide, or about *The School Magazine* in general, to the Editor, Suzanne Eggins, at school.magazine@det.nsw.edu.au. Let us know what *you'd* like to know about the magazine, or about text types, grammar and visual literacy, and we'll do our best to provide it.