**Allie Baker:** OK, we’ll move on to reading, and we’ll look at some of the difficulties that EAL learners have with reading.

So, what we have here is a sample from one of the VCAA exams to do with business management. So, there might be some business management teachers watching today. Just pretend I’m a business management teacher, and I’ll do my best. This is from a sample exam from the VCAA’s business management course. And essentially, an EAL student is very likely to be sitting in a business management class, and they may well be faced with a question just like this on their exam. Now, an EAL student will be presented with lots of challenges, but the first one that usually comes to teachers’ minds is vocabulary. Do they have the words to be able to understand a text? Now, often it is to do with vocabulary – when a student doesn’t understand something, they don’t have the words for it. But there are often other aspects of a text that an EAL student may have difficulties with. So I’ve sort of marcated some of those for you, and I just want to very briefly go through some of the challenges that an EAL student might be faced with when they look at a text like this. So I’ll quickly read through it, and then I’ll point out some of the concerns that an EAL learner might have.

“Grocer Plus is a well-established supermarket chain with more than 5,000 stores worldwide. Its human resources training program provides all staff with opportunities to become multiskilled. This, in turn, provides Grocer Plus’ management with greater flexibility in managing the business as staff develop a greater breadth of skills. Grocer Plus’ management is also very open to suggestions from staff and listens to what they have to say, while still maintaining final decision-making power for the business. Explain one training option that would be appropriate for Grocer Plus to continue to multiskill its employees.”

So at a glance, there’s not a lot of highly confusing vocabulary in that question. There are some words, like ‘breadth’, that even my students may struggle with, but it’s not an overly challenging paragraph in terms of vocabulary, though there are some challenges there. Rather, some of the challenges that an EAL learner might have... And, particularly if you’re explaining it to a student and you’ve tried translating vocab and you’ve tried pointing out what things mean, but they still seem stuck, it’s probably not vocab.

So what it could be, if it’s not vocabulary, is it could be what is being thematised. What we mean there is, what is the chunk of meaning at the start of the paragraph that the students are clinging onto? Because EAL learners, they want to know what this is about. So what is this paragraph going to be about? And so they look at that first chunk of meaning. The first chunk of meaning that’s being thematised there is Grocer Plus, which is that name of the grocery superstore chain of supermarkets. So the EAL learners are going to follow what’s being thematised. They’re going to follow the concept of Grocer Plus. So, they follow that along, and they read, “Grocer Plus is a well-established supermarket chain with more than 5,000 stores worldwide. Its...”

When they get to ‘its’, they may not carry the meaning that ‘its’ is referring back to Grocer Plus. So, ‘its’ is what we call reference and, basically, that means we’re using a pronoun. “Mrs Baker ate the chocolate. She said it was delicious.” So, ‘she’ is Mrs Baker. So if the students are still expecting it to say “Grocer Plus’s human resources training program,” it’s not going to happen, because this is a literate text – this is a text that main...that people who speak English as their home language, they have written this text, and so it’s not going to be phrased in that more clunky EAL fashion.

So, it might be what’s being thematised is lost as a student reads. It might be that it’s lost because of reference, this idea of ‘its’. It might also be because information is being provided that is then used to refer back to that Grocer Plus. So we have ‘supermarket chain’ and ‘5,000 stores’, and these are all referring...or substitutions for the concept of Grocer Plus. Now, we see that happen again, where you can see I’ve circled in green. So it’s talking about “Its human resources training program provides all staff with opportunities to become multiskilled. This...” Now, the ‘this’ there is really confusing for an EAL learner because the ‘this’ refers back to “the human resources training program belonging to Grocer Plus”. So, if the students are missing what the ‘this’ is, then they’re actually missing the main subject that they’re supposed to be following along here, just because they didn’t understand that the word ‘this’ is a substitution for “the resources training program”.

So it might be to do with reference/substitution, thematising. Could also be to do with connectives that the students may have trouble. You can see I’ve circled the word ‘while’, and that word suggests that two things are happening at the same time, or two things are equally weighted. So the students may not understand the concept of this question, which is, “They want this and they also want this.” And so that ‘while’ is actually suggesting that there’s a bit of tension, because how do have you have this and have this? That ‘while’ sets that up. And if the students are not aware of that connective language, or the importance of it, they will miss the point of this question that’s being asked of them.

Let me show you how this works using a more simple maths question as well. So, this is a worded maths question, and EAL students can become quite confused with worded maths questions.

So, “Mrs Baker is catering for a birthday party with 50 people. A platter of sandwiches serves 10. How many should she prepare for her guests?”

So, there’s a few little issues with this question. The first sentence is thematising Mrs Baker. But then, in the second sentence, Mrs Baker is gone, and the focus is on a platter of sandwiches. So we have this issue with thematising, that we don’t know what we’re supposed to be following along.

It also uses the verb ‘catering’, but then ‘catering’ is then substituted later on the third sentence with ‘prepare’. We have ‘people’, we have ‘guests’. And again, we’ve got this idea of substitution, and the idea that these guests are attending the birthday party. Students may not make that connection because of the change in language – not because they don’t understand the word ‘people’ or the word ‘guests’, but because they don’t understand that these are referring to the same thing.

Also, you can see there’s something that we call ellipses, which is extra confusing to students. You can see the middle sentence – “A platter of sandwiches serves 10.” “10...what?” is what the EAL student is saying to themselves. And so we know, as home-language English speakers, that it’s referring to 10 people. Again, an EAL student might get to that third sentence and think, “How many sandwiches should she prepare? How many platters should she prepare?” It’s a confusing maths question, not because of the vocabulary, but because of this language that we use that we assume that everybody will understand. And someone who speaks English as their home language is likely to understand, but an EAL learner will have some trouble.

How do you address this? First, you need to have an awareness of that language when you’re looking at a question. You’ve tried to deal with vocabulary being the possible block for the EAL learner. It’s not vocab. What’s the problem? It’s likely to be thematising, reference/substitution, ellipses or connective language. So, in a classroom, I would never alter this text to make it simpler for an EAL learner, because, at the end of the day, when it comes to their assessments, they will be...particularly at a VCE level, they will be assessed on examinations that are written in the language that you and I as...as home-language English speakers would use. They’re going to be literate texts. So we can’t just dumb down the text, but we can increase the student’s awareness. So we might say to them, “Mrs Baker is catering for a birthday party with 50 people. These people are guests. They’re guests of the birthday party.” “A platter of sandwiches serves 10 guests, 10 people. How many platters should she...” – ‘she’ being Mrs Baker – “...prepare for her guests?” So you can see that I’m filling those words in because I’m aware that an EAL learner might be confused by those words.

So, when we’re addressing reading, there’s several strategies that we can use, other than just being aware of those language difficulties. Pre-teaching vocabulary is really important. Using lots of images to front-load meaning. There’s a really interesting practice called supported reading that you can...I’m going to explain to you, but you can always read up on a little bit more after the presentation. And also using effective comprehension strategies, a couple of which I’ll show to you now.

So, I have to apologise for my hand-drawn images, but I suppose, on the one hand, it shows you how very simple it is to just hand-draw some images to support your teaching. But I also would usually probably just use Google Images to pull a few images off to be able to teach the students. But I sort of wanted to show you that you can just hand-draw them as well on your whiteboard.

Essentially, remembering that text that I showed you just a little bit earlier from that business management exam, and the fact that it used certain key words that EAL/D learners might...they might know them, but they might become lost in the context. So what I would do is, before presenting them with that little question from the exam, I might front-load and prepare them for that question. So I would use images, and I would use...I would use...some of the language that you can see here. I would look at the question, and I would say, “OK, supermarket, chain, 5,000... Those are the bits that I want to touch on for the students using these images.” So I might say to them, “We’re about to look at an exam question, and the exam question is about a supermarket called Grocer Plus. That supermarket is part of a big chain.” And while I’m doing this, I’m pointing at these gorgeous images that you can see I’ve prepared here. “This chain has 5,000 stores, and they have a really good training program to train their staff, so their staff become really multiskilled.” You can use gestures as well as pointing at the images - anything that will help the students to understand. And then we say, “That company, that supermarket chain with the 5,000 stores and the really good training, they really listen to their staff. They really want to listen to their staff. But, at the same time, they get to make the final decision.” So we give them a little bit of a summary before we present them with the text. And that helps them to navigate that exam question. Right. So, using images would be one really strong recommendation.

Supported reading, that I just mentioned to you before, that you can read about – there’s a little link there. Griffith University did some substantial work with supported reading, but you can actually find lots of information about it online. Essentially, supported reading is a process that you can use across the curriculum, where you look at a text, a written text that you’re going to present to the class, and you look for where the gaps are going to be, you predict the gaps, and you predict for whom those gaps are going to be a problem. You be quite specific, knowing your students really well. And you then spend 10 to 15 minutes front-loading for those gaps – so, using images or explaining new vocabulary, pointing out concepts that you think students will be unfamiliar with. Then you spend time reading the text with the students up to four times in different ways. I’m going to explain that to you in just a moment. Essentially, you end up with about 15 minutes of supported reading before you say to the students. “OK, now you read it to yourselves.” Whereas normally in a classroom, we might say, “OK, let’s read this as a class. Let’s answer the questions.” Or, “Read that to yourself and then try... try answering the question,” Rather than making the actual accessing of the text really challenging for students, we actually support them through that rating process. We model the fact that reading well is really important, and we show them that we can...that there are likely to be gaps in their understanding before we even start working with the text.

And this is really important for EAL learners. It’s actually helpful for all learners, but for EAL learners who are struggling to comprehend and just read the words on the page, at the same time as understand the text. By using this supported reading model, you actually make a much more level playing field for the students and you’re much more likely to have the EAL learners attempt the questions, and do a pretty reasonable job of their answers to questions, or even participate in a class discussion, than if you don’t use this system. If you don’t use a system like this and you just have the students read a text, you’re more likely to spend time in the lesson, or after the lesson, filling all those gaps that have happened because the student couldn’t access the text in the first place.

Let me show you what I mean by those steps of reading. So, the very first step is you... You don’t have to draw a table up like this, but this is quite a handy little template to have. So you’re about to present the students with an extended piece of text. Perhaps you’re a history teacher, and you’re about to read page 31 and 32 with the students. You scan pages 31 and 32, and you look for where there’s going to be, in the text...the moments where there’s going to be a gap. And you’re looking for, like, unusual vocabulary, or something that’s a bit unfamiliar, or something that’s phrased in a strange way. Anything that jumps out to you as being, “Hm, I think that’s going to be a gap for some of my students.” You navigate the text, you find them, and then you pre-plan how you’re going to solve it. Are you going to solve it providing an image? Are you going to play them a really short YouTube clip that explains that concept? Are you going to draw a quick hand-drawn image on the board? Or are you going to show them an image from Google Images? Are you going to give them some similar vocabulary? What are you going to do that plans for that gap that you’re assuming is there?

You can also take note of which students are going to have a concern with that gap. It might not be every single student, or indeed every single EAL learner in the class, because we know that EAL learners are at all different levels. But it’s about being really conscious of, when we’re presenting a text to a class, we need to be aware that there will be these gaps, and prepare to have an action before reading the text with the students. That’s that first step.

And then the supported reading steps are, after previewing and front-loading – so, feeding all that information to the students that you think is going to fill the gaps – you then read the text aloud to the class slightly slower than a natural pace. Now, I’m a fast talker, but...and I’m a fast-speaking teacher, but I haven’t yet had students say to me, “Too fast, too fast.” And I also haven’t had students say to me, “Too slow, too slow.” So, trying to just speak a little bit slower than a natural pace. And you can always check with the class – “Is this too slow?” – just to make sure you’re not sort of dragging it on. But slightly slower than natural pace. So that’s the first...the first. And it’s really important that you do that first, because you’re modelling a fluent reading of the text.

Now, after you’ve modelled a fluent reading of the text, you then move into what’s called a choral reading, which is where you and the class all chorus the text together at the same time. And if I was game, I’d get all 208 of us to give that a whirl, but I don’t think I will. So we all chorus at the same time.

And then, after that, we do what’s called an echo reading. So, you read, they read. Or you can halve the class – this half read and then this half echo. It’s sort of up to you, but the idea that just reading it again in a different way, and by doing that, they’re hearing, other people reading it, and they’ve got time to comprehend it before it’s their time to read it. Then you can pair them and have them echo or chorus together. And then they actually then move on to reading it to themselves, by themselves.

So there’s a lot of work with supported reading of the text initially, and that might seem like a really time-consuming way to deal with a text, but it’s certainly going to save you time and improve accessibility and improve comprehension at the other end. So, in my opinion, it actually ends up saving you time. So, I think it’s quite a useful strategy.

Another couple of reading strategies that I find quite useful are SWBST, which is an acronym for Somebody Wanted But So Then. And it’s a really good structure to use with narrative planning, but it’s also really useful for getting students to chunk up or divide up a text as they read it. It’s particularly relevant to this Grocer Plus little extract again.

So, ‘somebody’ – Grocer Plus – ‘wanted’ to have a training program that will...that will give them greater flexibility, ‘but’ they also want to listen to their staff, ‘so’...and so on. So you have the students chunk the question according to that pattern of Somebody Wanted But So Then. This is also really good in English classes for persuasive text. What does someone want to achieve? What’s in their way? So, what are they suggesting? And then what are they suggesting?

Facts and questions is a good process for learners, getting them to read the text, and as they read each sentence, or each couple of sentences, they write down an ‘F’, and then they write something that they know from the text. So, Grocer Plus is a supermarket chain with more than 5,000 stores. That’s a fact. And then, with that fact, we ask questions. Question – how did they get so many stores? It doesn’t really matter if the end goal isn’t that they’re going to be answering the extra questions they’ve come up with. What’s more important is that they’re interacting with the text and they’re being thoughtful about what they’re reading. If they’re being thoughtful about what they’re reading, then they’re noticing that the sentences are not just there for no reason. They all play a role and they all fit together. So they’re being a bit metacognitive about what they’re reading.

The last one, pause and chunk, which basically means you encourage the students to pause at the end of each sentence that they read and tell us the role of that sentence, tell us the role of that chunk. So, for example, “Grocer Plus is a well-established supermarket chain with more than 5,000 stores worldwide.” What is the role of that chunk? It’s telling us about how big the shop is, or about how big the store chain is. So, you might say to the student, “OK, so the chunk is, it’s a big supermarket chain. Move on.” Again, you’re just getting the students to pause and process, and they can either write it or just process it to themselves. But I do think, with EAL learners, getting them to produce and write as much as possible, so they’ve got something to go back to, is really useful.

OK. Oh, sorry, skipped by. We’re going to move on to writing. So, we’ve gone through to speaking and listening and participation, now we’ve looked at...then we’ve looked at reading, and now we’re going to look at writing and vocabulary.

So, the role of every single classroom teacher across the curriculum - I think I mentioned at the very beginning – is to teach the language of our own subjects, and for EAL learners, we need to be really conscious of the language that they don’t have for the content that we’re teaching. So they might not have the word ‘Bunsen’...the words ‘Bunsen burner’. So, of course, we need to teach them those terms. But, beyond just curriculum knowledge, we actually have other things we need to teach them, because in every single classroom we speak and write differently. And we want students to produce writing and produce verbal...verbal...produce verbally in a way that is the way that we are accustomed to hearing people speak and write about our curriculum area. So, it’s not just the curriculum content, but also the language we use to academically write and speak about that curriculum content.

But also, we need to help EAL learners to participate and to engage in a trusted classroom environment, and we do that by teaching them the phrases and words to be able to participate more fully in a classroom. So for some students, that will be something like, “Pass the scissors, please,” or, “What did the teacher just say?” or, “I agree with Sarah.” But, for other students, they might have a handle on those sort of...that sort of language, but they may not understand how to ask for help from their teacher, such as, “Excuse me, could you please clarify this?” or, “Excuse me, please help.” Depending on the student’s level, they will have...some will have quite a lot of classroom verbal language and some will really struggle. Some will know how to write for a history essay, but they won’t know how to then write for a science prac report. The language is always different, and so we need to be quite aware of it.

I would ask that you’re aware of these four different types of language – so, the language of academic writing and speaking, the language of interaction in the classroom, the language of getting it when the teacher talks or asking for help, and the language of your curriculum, which I think we’re much...we’re much more attuned to than the other areas of language.

So, how do we get students to use language well in their writing? Well, initially, we need to make sure we’re very explicit when we teach vocabulary. So, if we preview a unit or a text and we consider some of the challenges that are in that unit or in that text, we’re quite aware of it, then we would pre-teach or provide students with a list of all the vocabulary that we want them...or we believe they need for that unit of work.

We also, though, need to teach them the skills ,and model the skills, of learning vocabulary and of acquiring vocabulary. So, we have to be quite intentional when we do this – providing students with glossaries, having posters on the wall of our classroom that are interactive glossaries, modelling on our whiteboard, “Here’s a glossary. Let’s fill in our glossaries. Everyone open your glossary.” But teaching students that you don’t just magically acquire new vocabulary – you have to be thoughtful about vocabulary in order to acquire it in a useful way.

So, glossaries, which I’ll talk about more in a moment, mind maps or graphic organisers, which I’ll talk about.

Having students set goals – so I might provide them with a list of 100 words at the start of the year, but I might say to them, “OK, let’s pick 10 that you’re going to put up on your toilet wall, and we’re going to master these 10 over the next three months.” But having students be quite active and involved in acquiring that vocabulary as well.

Encouraging students to use dictionaries. There’s lots of lovely visual dictionaries online. There’s also some really nice academic word lists. You can also look at Marzano’s word lists – M-A-R-Z-A-N-O. There’s also a great website called Flocabulary, where there’s sort of much cooler people than me doing quite trendy vocabulary hip-hop videos and so on. But there are lots and lots of really brilliant vocabulary resources. If you are interested in any of those links, you can always contact me or VCAA afterwards, and we can get in touch and I can provide you with some more of those resources.

When we’re teaching vocabulary, we need to model...model glossing, which I’ll speak to you about in a moment. But we also need to model being thoughtful about language. So, when we’re on the board, writing a sentence for students and saying, you know, “This is the model sentence,” I will often also model possible synonyms for a word. So, “Mrs Baker likes chocolate cake,” and then I put some dashes over ‘likes’ and I’ll just write ‘prefers’, ‘favours’, and try to make the students be quite thoughtful about “Oh, there’s other possibilities instead of ‘liked’.” And I’ll verbalise that. I’ll say to them, “I thought maybe this word.” So, showing an interest and curiosity in language will also get these students’ attention.

I’ve mentioned those vocab lists. It’s really important, the bottom bullet point there, is revisiting vocabulary regularly, which means, if you have told the students, “Here’s a list of 100 words that you need to know in order to understand this particular unit of chemistry,” you do need to revisit that vocabulary regularly. You cannot simply hand the students a list and think they’re going to learn it. We need to engage and use vocabulary in order for it to be ours. In fact, studies showed that students only use vocabulary that they have encountered 17 times, roughly. There’s been a lot of studies, but it’s about 17 times that you encounter a word before it’s your own word that you can actually make use of.

So, I’ve mentioned glossaries a couple of times. This is just one possible way of modelling a glossary. I guess the most important thing that I’ll point out are that you’d want the students to produce their own definition. You really want to avoid dictionary definitions, and favour students using their own language to define or to use it in an example sentence or sample sentence. You could always get them to do this in pairs or small groups. It’s very important that the students generate their own definitions and their own sample sentences, so that they’re actually really getting to grips with what the word means. And I also encourage the students to have a translation or have an image that might help them to remember that word.

I also try to point out where students...sorry – what part of speech a word might be. The reason being, a lot of the time when an EAL learner’s sentences don’t make sense, it’s because they’re using the wrong version of a word, they’re using the wrong part of speech. So a student might have a sentence – “The men were accused of corruptly behaviour.” And it doesn’t sound right, because, instead of saying ‘corrupt’ – adjective – they’ve used ‘corruptly’ – adverb. It’s often a simple fix...that EAL students will produce an error that has a simple fix. But teaching them that, you know, there are other words that are similar, that can really help alleviate, and it can also help them to self-edit their work when they notice, “Oh, yeah, I do always use adverbs incorrectly,” and the glossing really helps them to be quite thoughtful about that process.

This is another way that you can help students to unpack vocabulary. So, I would use this when there’s a list of vocab that you’re just... You’re about to go into a unit of work and you want the students to really use that vocabulary in the writing that they produce. So, the word in the centre box is the word that the students are attempting to gloss, or remember, and above the line, they write an example of it...of it being, or an actual example of that word, and then below, an example of when it doesn’t...when that isn’t the word ‘persist’. And then, on one side, a synonym of ‘persist’, and another, an antonym of ‘persist’. And then, that way, they’re really grappling with the word ‘persist’. What is not persistence? What is persistence?

There’s another similar graphic organiser to this, called a concept attainment table, which I’m not going to talk about today, but it’s another really useful one, where students have to unpack what is something and what isn’t something. So, if you’re sort of interested in that concept, ‘concept attainment table’ is what you should be researching.

The last little bit that I want to talk to you about today is writing, and how to improve student writing, or how to make the students write the way we want it to sound. There’s lots of ways that we can scaffold student writing. So, one of those is sentence frames, which is kind of what we call a close exercise. So, we write the sentence out, but we leave lots of gaps for the student to fill. It means the EAL learner feels a lot more confident, and they can also perhaps see... We can also perhaps see that the spaces there aren’t the only thing that the student needs to be able to learn. They might also notice, “Oh, once I fill in the gaps, I’ve actually got a really nice sentence framed that I can then use again in another piece of writing.” So we can use sentence frames as one option.

Another is sentence stems, where we just provide them with the first part of the sentence and then they finish that off. I often use that with my toddler. “How was your day? My day was...” and try to really get something out of him. So, a sentence stem can also be quite useful. I think you can see that the sentence frame is much more heavy-handed scaffolding than the sentence stem. And so, you might find that you can begin with a frame and then as a student becomes more confident, you might move into using stems.

You can also use formulaic phrases. This is perhaps easier with students that are higher up in their schooling or even higher-level EAL learners. So, a sentence formula might be, “‘Something’ contends that ‘something’ is ‘something’.” So, for example, “Mrs Baker contends that chocolate cake is essential.” So, you might have students learn these formulaic phrases, and you might teach them the parts of speech – so, the noun, the noun, the adjective pattern - so that they then call on, “Ugh. What’s another noun? Oh. School contends that uniform is important.” And they then practice that formula, interchanging parts of speech if they’re confident enough to do so.

We also can use lots of verbal frames or verbal structures, and visuals as well, which I’m going to go into... I’m going to give you some examples of that in just a moment in action. And I do... I’ve talked about vocab and phrases, but if you just draw your attention to that second-last bullet point. It says ‘explicit modelling’. Word level, sentence level, paragraph level, whole text level. What we’re talking about there is that EAL students need help at a word level to begin with. They really need you to help teach them explicitly the words they should be using then the sentences they should be using, then the paragraphs they should be using, and then the whole text. But what we tend to do is provide EAL learners with a whole text, with, you know, paragraph one – topic, sentence. Paragraph two – topic sentence. And we don’t really provide them with sentence-level or word-level assistance enough of the time. So that’s something to certainly try, focusing on words and sentences before you focus on paragraphs and whole texts.

So, I mentioned before this idea of using images or visuals. So, what you can do is you can actually teach students using an image and not getting them to do any writing to begin with. And you train them verbally and visually in a sentence structure. So, for those who aren’t familiar, this is Jonty Jenkins, and he appeared on an English exam a couple of years ago – 2018, I think he was on the VCAA English exam. And Jonty Jenkins was a writer and a local neighbourhood...neighbourhood personality who was a food reviewer for local restaurants. So, what I would say to the students is, “Here’s Jonty Jenkins. Every time you see Jonty Jenkins, I want you to say, ‘Jonty Jenkins’.” So, I might also add a little gesture to that, if I’m...if I feel like it. So, Jonty Jenkins. I get the students to repeat “Jonty Jenkins.” I make sure they’re really sure that they can remember Jonty Jenkins. At no point have they been given any written text yet. They’ve just been given this image of Jonty Jenkins.

I then build on it. And I know that the writing is there, but let’s imagine that it’s not there, and just the images are there. And I say to my students, “OK, what do we say when we see that image?” We say, “Jonty Jenkins.” And I get the students to repeat that – “Jonty Jenkins.” And then I say to them, “That second image, that’s showing the word ‘promotes’. ‘Promotes’.” So I get them to echo ‘promotes’. Then we see Jonty Jenkins again. So I say to them, “Does the sentence make sense if we say “‘Jonty Jenkins promotes Jonty Jenkins”? OK, at this point it does. But then let’s see what happens with the rest of the sentence. “Jonty Jenkins promotes Jonty Jenkins,” and the next one is about knowledge. So, knowledgeable. And then the last one is reliable. Reliable. So, again, I’m getting students to echo. I’m getting them to be a bit playful with gesture and action. This might seem more accessible for primary level students, and I know there are primary teachers in the audience, but I have used this very successfully with Year 12 students in mainstream English classes for many years, and I’ve come out unscathed. So I really encourage you to give this a go.

So, what I’ve done is, again, imagining the words are not there on the screen and were just initially in a classroom dealing with images. So, “Jonty Jenkins promotes himself.” And I talk about this idea of reference. So we don’t say, “Jonty Jenkins promotes Jonty Jenkins as knowledgeable and reliable.” I encourage them to think about the possible pronouns or possible...possible references or substitutions that might be logical in this context.

Once I’ve done the images and I’ve got them to sort of practice that structure, I then talk to them about what’s the function of each of those words in the sentence. So, Jonty Jenkins is the ‘who’ or the ‘what’ of what we’re talking about. And then the ‘does what?’ And then I can move... Once I’ve looked at the function by doing this act of questioning, I can then say to the students, “Well, a ‘who’ or ‘what’ is a noun, and a ‘do’ is a verb.” And then I can help the students to understand that a really nice sentence structure goes noun, verb, noun or pronoun, adjective, adjective. And so I teach them that structure. But I started with images as a way in, so they feel a lot more confident.

And then, back to chocolate and chocolate cake again – because I never stray far from it – we can begin with this pattern of, “Mrs Baker claims chocolate cake is essential and delicious,” and you’ll find that your students can actually reproduce this sentence using their own nouns, their own verbs, their own nouns or pronouns, and their own adjectives. And they’ll remember that structure, because it was...initially, it was planted, implanted, into their heads verbally, and through gestures and through images, which, when you think about it, is very similar to the way that young children acquire words through picture books, through songs, and the fabulous actions that their primary school or kindergarten teachers show them.

I’m going to just show you how...a couple of cases that I’ve also used with students quite successfully to help them build language, and then that will be it from me today.

So, let me just show you these tables. So I call this a 1-2 table. I ask students to pick a phrase from 1 and a phrase from 2. Or I can call it a blue/red table. Doesn’t really matter. Essentially, I’m trying to get students to chop up sentences into phrase blocks that they can then use with other phrase blocks. So, for example, if you look at the very...if you look at the first, the blue column, you can say that there’s in bold ‘abandoning the past’. So I say to the students, “OK, so the first phrase that you’ve chosen is ‘abandoning the past’. “We might team that phrase, the blue phrase, with a red phrase. So blue phrase, ‘Abandoning the past results in...’” And then they finish that off. So, by doing that, they’re building their own sentence stems. “Leading successfully demands...” Finish that sentence. So, this is creating your own sentence stems, and also providing them with lots of useful phrases that they can use in other...in other contexts.

This is another table. Here I’ve tried to use as a familiar text of Goldilocks. So, I say to the students, “OK, what happened in the text that we were reading?” So, the thing I noticed in the text... And you can see that all these actions are in green in the first column. Goldilocks ate some porridge, sat on other people’s chairs. Some bears came along and chased her. She ran away. These are all actions that occurred in the text. And then, in the second column, I say the students, “Well, based on these actions, what behaviours did we see?” So, the idea of a student... Sorry. The idea that the students come up with might be, “Well, it’s quite arrogant to wander into a stranger’s home and eat their porridge. It’s quite arrogant to just sleep in somebody else’s bed. But it also takes a lot of courage, and she seems quite curious.” And so I encourage the students to use nouns to summarise this, because it does elevate their writing and they’re able to say, “OK, well, it shows arrogance. It shows curiosity. It shows cheekiness or misbehaviour.” I then provide the students with the purple list there, which is lots of verbs, for what the writer might be trying to do, and then I will always model for the students how you put the green and the blue and the purple together. And so you can see... I’m not sure why it’s changed from blue to red, but hopefully you can understand. It says, “Goldilocks’ curiosity is shown when she walks into a stranger’s home uninvited.”

**Kellie Heintz:** Allie, we’re running out of...we’ve run out of time.

**Allie Baker:** OK.

**Kellie Heintz:** Could you just skip through the last couple of slides there, just to show people what’s there?

**Allie Baker:** Yep. This is a... That previous one just there is pretty much the same pattern as the earlier one, and this one’s for those science teachers out there.

**Kellie Heintz:** That’s fantastic. Thank you. Allie, we’re really grateful. That was extremely comprehensive and really helpful for everyone. Our questions really just pertain to... The only question we really had was, “Would you use the advanced questioning card in a primary setting?” And I think the answer is yes?

**Allie Baker:** Yeah, I would use it in a primary setting. You might decide, if you think the student is better on an auditory...better at sort of spoken language, you might use that question card and stick with them and rehearse the exchange before they go into the classroom, just so they’ve had a chance that you might have them receive the information verbally and then respond to you, and you might write it down for them, and then they take it home and learn it. But I would certainly use it in primary and secondary settings. Absolutely.

**Kellie Heintz:** Thank you, Allie. And we have...

**Allie Baker:** It’s a pleasure.

**Kellie Heintz:** And we also have a question about if you use functional grammar.

**Allie Baker:** Ooh, sorry. That’s quite a curly question. I’m not sure exactly.

**Kellie Heintz:** Not necessarily.

**Allie Baker:** Yeah, I’m...I’m not sure. I might...

**Kellie Heintz:** It means teaching...it means teaching specific verbs in parts. So, yeah. So, the answer is I’d say you’d probably blend it as you’re going, you embed it. So...

**Allie Baker:** Yeah, not specifically, and not discretely. No.

**Kellie Heintz.** Yeah. Not in isolation. Yeah, that’s the question, I think.

**Allie Baker:** Yep.

**Kellie Heintz:** So, I’d like to thank you on behalf of everyone out there. Everyone’s really...really grateful, and we’re really happy that you were able to join us.

As I said, this will be put up for you to listen to, for all of you out there, and you can access it with the other recordings. So, thank you very much, Allie. Good luck to everyone out there. Thank you to Alicia and Craig. And I wish you all a good afternoon. Thank you. See you, Allie.

**Allie Baker:** Thanks so much. See you.

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