



Teachers' notes by
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Pizza Cake and Other Funny Stories Morris Gleitzman

The Australian Curriculum Years 5 and 6

The English curriculum is built around the three interrelated strands of Language, Literature and Literacy. Teaching and learning programs should balance and integrate all three strands. Together the strands focus on developing students' knowledge, understanding and skills in listening, reading, viewing, speaking, writing and creating. Learning in English builds on concepts, skills and processes developed in earlier years, and teachers will revisit and strengthen these as needed.

Students engage with a variety of texts for enjoyment. They listen to, read, view, interpret and evaluate spoken, written and multimodal texts in which the primary purpose is aesthetic, as well as texts designed to inform and persuade. These include various types of media texts including newspapers, film and digital texts, junior and early adolescent novels, poetry, non-fiction and dramatic performances. Students develop their understanding of how texts, including media texts, are influenced by context, purpose and audience.

Literary texts that support and extend students in Years 5 and 6 as independent readers describe complex sequences, a range of non-stereotypical characters and elaborated events including flashbacks and shifts in time. These texts explore themes of interpersonal relationships and ethical dilemmas within real-world and fantasy settings. Informative texts supply technical and content information about a wide range of topics of interest as well as topics being studied in other areas of the curriculum. Text structures include chapters, headings and subheadings, tables of contents, indexes and glossaries. Language features include complex sentences, unfamiliar technical vocabulary, figurative language, and information presented in

various types of graphics. Students create a range of imaginative, informative and persuasive types of texts such as narratives, procedures, performances, reports, reviews, explanations and discussions.

English Achievement Standard

Receptive modes (listening, reading and viewing)

By the end of Year 6, students understand how the use of text structures can achieve particular effects. They analyse and explain how language features, images and vocabulary are used by different authors to represent ideas, characters and events.

Students compare and analyse information in different texts, explaining literal and implied meaning. They select and use evidence from a text to explain their response to it. They listen to discussions, clarifying content and challenging others' ideas.

Productive modes (speaking, writing and creating)

Students understand how language features and language patterns can be used for emphasis. They show how specific details can be used to support a point of view. They explain how their choices of language features and images are used.

Students create detailed texts elaborating on key ideas for a range of purposes and audiences. They make presentations and contribute actively to class and group discussions, using a variety of strategies for effect. They demonstrate understanding of grammar, make considered choices from an expanding vocabulary, use accurate spelling and punctuation for clarity and make and explain editorial choices.

More information on The Australian Curriculum can be found at <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/>.

Study Notes

In this new collection, Morris Gleitzman has again shown himself to be one of our great story writers. These stories will not only engage even the most reluctant readers, but will make them think about their world and the people in it. They are full of wit and satire, providing a window on our society and raising a wide variety of topics and issues for discussion.

Saving Ms Fosdyke

When Emmy's teacher, Ms. Fosdyke is bought by another primary school for \$50 million, Emmy sets off on a campaign to keep her. In a society in which teachers are treated as sporting heroes or megastars, Ms. Fosdyke can command an impressive salary, but wants to move to West Chirnside Primary to help the needy and unfortunate. Emmy feels responsible for this decision, as it was she who told Ms. Fosdyke about the students' plight.

Ms. Fosdyke is Emmy's idol, the one person who believes in her and her dream of one day becoming a teacher herself, an achievement that even her parents think is unrealistic, advising her to set her sights on a more achievable profession such as a doctor or lawyer.

In her attempt to keep her favourite teacher, Emmy decides to call in the press to see just how good Ms. Fosdyke really is. But, true to her worth as a mentor and teacher, Ms. Fosdyke has Emmy take the class for her, allowing others to see the potential in her student and providing Emmy with real faith in herself and her ability.

- What is the irony in Dad's reaction to Ms. Fosdyke being bought for \$50 million?
- How would you have expected the father to react?
- What sorts of people in our society usually earn this sort of money?
- Why do we pay our sports stars and corporate giants this sort of money, but not our teachers?
- What does this suggest about what we value in our society?
- Emmy's parents tell her to 'lower your sights and be a doctor or a lawyer' (p3). In what way is this statement ironic? How are these professions usually regarded in society?
- How are teachers usually regarded in comparison to these professions?
- Make a hierarchy of how society values different professions based upon how much we currently pay them. Who do we place at the top and who at the bottom?
- Now make a hierarchy based upon the importance these people play in our world. Are these diagrams the same?
- Do you think that we would have better teachers if we paid them more money?
- In the society depicted in this story, the teachers are paid big money and have lots of perks in their job, but they don't even appear to work

very hard, coming in to work late in the morning and getting the big law firms to do their marking for them (p5). What statement might this be making about the highly paid people in our society?

- Ms. Fosdyke says, 'I'm a teacher. I'm not doing this for the money. I go where children need me.' What does this suggest about teachers? Do you think teachers in our real society do their job for the money?
- Teaching is often said to be a vocation rather than a profession. What is meant by this statement?
- Consider the character of Mr. Greely, Ms. Fosdyke's agent. In what way is he a 'stereotypical' agent?
- Whose best interests does he seem to have at heart?
- When Emmy is put in charge of the class she engages them in a brainstorming activity to consider the question, what would it be like if teachers were overworked and underpaid and didn't get much respect? (p13). What might Morris Gleitzman be suggesting here?
- In what ways do teachers help their students?
- How does Ms. Fosdyke help Emmy?
- What does the story reveal about Ms. Fosdyke's personality?

Pizza Cake

Glenn Gershwin is a typical kid facing his own fears and challenges. But, thanks to his grandfather, Glenn has a secret weapon that keeps him safe and helps him overcome any obstacle. In his pocket, he carries a slice of pizza cake, the talisman that brings him luck. This lucky charm helps Glenn find the courage to bat, even when his school is facing an embarrassing defeat at cricket, and enables him to save the day.

When Glenn's best friend Dougal tells Glenn that he has to deliver the eulogy at his Gran's funeral, a task that fills him with fear, Glenn decides to reveal his secret weapon and provide his mate with the courage he needs. He shows Dougal the photos of his grandfather, Glenn's hero, who always showed courage even in the trickiest of situations. His grandfather was a Czechoslovakian war hero who defied the Nazis, a worker on the Snowy Mountains Scheme and a courageous volunteer for the SES, of whom Glenn is immensely proud.

Glenn's mother, however, views him differently, saying that he was irresponsible and created a lot of unnecessary fear and anxiety for his family as a result of his foolhardy actions. Glenn tells his mother that he knows his grandfather would always have been safe because he always said he had a pizza cake. When Glenn's mother corrects him, telling him his grandfather always scoffed at danger saying it was 'a piece of cake', Glenn realises that if this is true, he has no protection at all, and has unwittingly put his mate in a hopeless situation.

Glenn rushes to the church to alert Dougal to the fact that he has no lucky charm, only to hear his mate deliver a successful and heartfelt tribute to his grandmother in front of the whole congregation.

- Glenn's misunderstanding or mishearing of his grandfather's words is referred to as a 'mondagreen'. Can you think of an expression that you have always heard wrongly? (e.g. 'Australia's sunset ostriches' for 'Australia's sons let us rejoice'). Collect a class list of 'mondagreens'. (These can easily be found on-line as well).
- Why does Glenn's slice of pizza cake give him courage?
- People often use a talisman or lucky charms. Make a list of any lucky charms you can think of (e.g. rabbit's feet, horseshoes etc.). Do you think these items can actually provide courage?
- Why do we use them?
- What is meant by 'the placebo effect'? Do you think this is applicable here?
- Why does Glenn admire his grandfather so much? What qualities does he admire?
- How is Glenn's mother's attitude different?
- Why do you think she reacts differently? Is it a generational thing (adult vs. child) or maybe because Glenn is more distanced from the actual events and hence from the fear.
- There is a fine line between courage and recklessness. Make a list of extreme sports or activities. Does it take courage or recklessness to participate in these activities?
- Is there a difference if the activities benefit others (e.g. firefighting) rather than just provide a personal adrenalin rush (e.g. bungee jumping).

Charles the Second

When Charles Rennie Macintosh moves from Australia to England he discovers that his parents have unwittingly named him after a famous Scottish furniture designer, a fact that draws a degree of ridicule from his classmates. To add to the humiliation, Charles' nervous reaction to their teasing causes him to pass wind, adding to their fun.

Charles feels lonely and victimized, until he is befriended by a girl in his class, Jane Austen, whose grandmother deliberately named her after the famous English novelist. Jane knows that it is only a matter of time before her classmates discover this connection and she too will be the source of ridicule. She teams up with Charles, believing that they can be allies for each other.

Realising their son's problem, his parents research the original Charles Rennie Macintosh and redecorate their house in his style. Charles comes to realize that his namesake had talent and his name is nothing to be ashamed about.

Armed with this knowledge and safe in the love of his parents, Charles advises Jane to read Austen's novels. Before long, Jane is captivated by her work and takes many of Austen's attitudes and words to heart.

When Charles invites Jane and her mother to dinner he realizes that not only should he and Jane not be embarrassed by their names, they should in fact be grateful as it is through virtue of their names that they have now established a true and valuable friendship.

- People choose their children's names in many ways. In some cultures there are very definite rules as to how children should be named, in order to honour other family members. Who in the class is named after another person (either a relative or a famous person?)
- What might be the disadvantage in having the same name as a famous person?
- Does a name carry certain expectations? E.g. if you were called Daniel Radcliffe would you be expected to be an actor?
- In what way does Jane start to emulate or imitate her namesake?
- Given Jane's Jamaican heritage, why is her name even more surprising?
- Why was she given this name?
- What makes Jane and Charles friends?
- In what way might this story suggest that friendship can come from adversity?
- Consider the bonds of mateship formed between soldiers in war. How does this support this idea?
- What do Charles' parents do to try to help him feel better about his name?
- What makes a true friend?
- In what way can Jane and Charles be seen to be true friends?

Secret Diary of a Dad

Maddy and Dylan's dad seems to be losing the plot. His poor eyesight means he can't even read his own new year's resolutions, resulting in some hilarious outcomes. His attempts to build furniture are woeful, while his children manage to assemble it in no time at all.

No matter what Dad does, he seems to be ridiculed by his own children. His attempts to introduce his children to the fragile ecosystem of the bush are ruined when he creates havoc through his own actions; and his success rate with pets (and television sets) is woeful.

His dress sense is embarrassing and he even commits the ultimate sin of condensing his children's favourite books to allow him to watch a game of football.

The children even nag Dad into becoming more environmentally aware, exercising or taking public transport rather than driving. Clearly Dad is struggling to exist in this modern world.

- What is the effect of making the father in the story so hopeless?

- How do many children feel about their fathers?
- Read Ian Mudie's poem *My Father Began as a God*. Does this reflect your own feelings about your father? How does this story reflect this sentiment?
- Fathers are often portrayed as being hopeless and the brunt of all jokes. (Consider Ed Bundy in *Married With Children*, or Homer in *The Simpsons*. Can you name any others?). Why might this be a common device?
- In what way is the father in this story a caricature?
- Why do you think Morris Gleitzman made the story so exaggerated and farcical?
- Consider the children's behavior in contrast to their father. In what ways are they shown to be superior?
- Do you think many children are more intelligent than their parents? Why?
- What comment might this story be making about older people's ability to exist in our ever changing world?
- Do you think modern technology makes people age and become 'out of date' more quickly? Why?
- Consider the children's environmental concerns. Are children today more environmentally aware than their parents?
- What is the impact of telling this story through Dad's voice? Would it have been as effective told through the voice of one of the children? Why?

Can't Complain

Petal's parents are constantly complaining, about anything and everything, to the extent that they make her life a misery. But far from modifying their behavior, they try to encourage Petal to follow suit telling her, "*You've got to stop this ridiculous everything's-OK-in-the-world attitude. Everything's not OK, and the world won't improve until more people speak up*" (p72).

Even their school holiday treat of going to a café for a cooked breakfast results in a series of complaint, ending up at the council offices. While Petal wants to disappear, her parents insist that she accompany them and learn "*to grow up to be an assertive consumer*" (p75).

While there, Petal sees a clearly distressed Arabic woman and her daughter. She received a parking infringement notice and hefty fine for parking in a loading zone for one and a half minutes during a torrential storm and flood. Petal knows that they need to fight their case and turns to her parents for help, knowing that they always stand up for their rights. But she is astounded that her parents refuse to help, claiming that, "*Helping them wouldn't really be helping them. How are they going to learn to stand up for themselves if other people do all their complaining for them?*" (p80).

When Petal decides to fight their cause herself, she encounters a bureaucratic nightmare. Despite the fact that her argument fails, her parents are proud of the fact that she stood up for herself, but not at all concerned about the lady's plight. In desperation, Petal climbs onto an ornamental fountain and stages a siege, much to her parents' shame and humiliation. It appears that Petal's parents have gone off the idea of complaining just as she is getting into it!

- Have you ever been around people who constantly complain about things? How does it make you feel?
- Do you agree with Petal's parents that we need to complain in order to make things right with the world?
- Does their type of complaining help to make the world a better place?
- What sort of things do Petal's parents complain about?
- How do people react to them?
- Why won't Petal's mum help the woman with the parking fine?
- Do you think this is her real reason?
- What does the story suggest about bureaucracy and rules when they can't show any flexibility even in extreme circumstances?
- Do you think that laws should be able to be bent?
- Complete a Graphic Organiser listing the PMI (pluses, minuses and interesting aspects) of making laws more flexible.
- How do Petal's parents react to her style of complaining?
- Why do they react in this way?
- What does this story suggest about their real desires to help improve the world?
- What comment might this story be making about people's levels of altruism (desire to help other people).
- Do you think that this story is a true reflection of our society?

Draclia

Five-year-old Will wakes his older brother Corey in the middle of the night, scared that their sister Shelley has been attacked by a vampire on the front lawn. Closer inspection reveals the 'attacker' to not be 'Draclia', but Jarrod Bennet, Shelley's boyfriend who can only reach as far as Shelley's neck when they kiss.

Yet, in a world gone vampire mad, Will remains unconvinced that Jarrod is just a boy. Corey is determined to prove to Will that his fears are unjustified, but the evidence begins to suggest otherwise.

In their efforts to find out the truth, Will and Corey break in to Jarrod's house, only to be invited to lunch by Mrs Bennet. Their fears are relieved, until they are served almost raw steaks and wonder just how much of a liking for blood the Bennet's actually have.

- Why have vampire stories become so popular?
- What is the appeal of a story such as *Twilight*?

- What ‘evidence’ is there that Jarrod is a vampire? What is the real situation? Make a graphic organiser to present the information.

EVIDENCE	REALITY

- How can movies or books influence the way we view the world? Can you think of other books that have had this effect? (e.g. Harry Potter)
- Why do you think novels and films tend to follow trends – e.g. a succession of vampire films and stories one year; then witch’s another year etc?
- If you were an author or film director would you follow the trend? Why or why not?
- What does the story suggest about the way we view people? Do we see the truth or do we see what we expect or want to see?
- In what way is the barbeque meat a metaphor for this story? “*It looked revolting but tasted fantastic*” (p99).
- What do you think is the moral of this story?

Tickled Onions

Every morning when Clyde Craddock gets to school he goes through the same routine, checking the bins for any leftover food that he can eat before dumping the repulsive breakfast his parents provided for him. Clyde’s parents are aspiring chefs but, unfortunately, their unusual food combinations mean that they are not good at cooking. Their favourite treat is Tickled Onions – pickled onions with rose petals, chili powder and fermented fish paste. Clyde doesn’t seem to be able to get them to listen to his pleas for ordinary food.

But Hamish Hodge has it worse. Every morning the school bullies and creators of the Overweight Watchers Club drag him to the bin and force him to eat Clyde’s discarded food.

Then one day, Clyde decides to stand up for Hamish and fight off the bullies, telling them that he and Hamish are good friends and that if they leave Hamish alone, he will help them with their Personal Development project on empathy – four hundred words on Other People’s Feelings.

Clyde learns that Hamish used to be thin until his mother died. His father is a restaurant reviewer who writes seven reviews a week and has to sample all the food he critiques. When Mr. Hodge invites him to eat with them, Clyde thinks he has died and gone to heaven, while Hamish’s greatest wish is to have a small, simple meal at home like normal families.

When Hamish asks to eat at Clyde’s house, he is horrified, until he puts himself in Hamish’s shoes and considers what it must be like for him to have no mother, no normal life, a whole weightwatchers club formed to tease him and only one friend in the world.

Clyde makes his parents promise to cook a normal meal for the Hodges and everything seems to be going well, until Mr. Hodge spots the Tickled Onions. When he samples their real food, Mr. Hodge is overwhelmed by it and persuades the Craddock's to open a restaurant with him. The restaurant is a huge success and, to make life even better, the two families employ a housekeeper who presents the boys with really tasty home cooked meals each night.

- Why do the bullies pick on Hamish?
- How does Clyde manage to survive at school?
- Is this a good idea? What does it suggest about his character?
- Why do you think Clyde stands up for Hamish?
- What is empathy?
- What is ironic about Clyde doing the bullies' projects on empathy for them?
- Why do you think the teacher might have set this project?
- How does Clyde learn to be empathetic?
- What does he mean when he describes Hamish as being "*like a lottery winner who wishes he hadn't bought the ticket*" (p113).
- Why do Clyde and Hamish make such a great pair?
- Would they have become friends without the bullies' intervention?
- What might this suggest about friendship?
- How is this reflective of the ideas in ***Charles the Second?***
- How does this story reflect the proverb 'the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence'?
- How does the story reflect the saying 'one man's meat is another man's poison'?
- What does the story suggest about the power of teamwork?
- How does everyone benefit from this friendship?

Stationery is never Stationary

Jack and his parents have to attend a large extended family get together, an event that Jack dreads as he knows that his father will be made to feel like a loser, simply because he works in a stationery shop while the rest of the family all have important, high paying jobs.

At the party the family members inevitably talk themselves up, boasting about their achievements and their high status. When they finally ask Jack's dad about his work, Jack leaps to his defence, trying desperately to point out to everyone just how important his dad's job is. Unfortunately, the rest of the family all fail to be impressed.

They are far more impressed by Uncle Pete's new expensive media room, complete with its state-of-the-art security system, built underneath the house. Only Jack notices the water gushing down the walls through the ventilation grilles until it is too late and the water is rising all around them, shutting off the electrics and trapping the family in a flooding room.

Fortunately Dad is able to save the day, unlocking the security doors with a paper clip and proving himself to be the hero Jack always knew him to be.

- Why do big family get together's often end in disaster?
- Why do families often become so competitive?
- Make a list of all the professions and achievements of the family members.
- How would Dad feel at these family gatherings?
- Do you think the rest of the family intentionally makes him feel like that?
- Do better jobs or higher salaries make us better people?
- What evidence is there that the more 'successful' people in this story are not better people?
- Why does Uncle Pete ignore Jack when he tries to tell him about the water?
- The title of this story is a pun or a play on words. Stationery and stationary are homophones – words that sound the same but have different meanings. What are the meanings of stationery and stationary?
- What does the title mean?
- Collect a list of homophones.
- What do you think is the moral of this story?
- What statement might it be making about the increasing levels of materialism in today's society?
- What statement might it be making about the types of people we admire in our society?

Big Mistake

Imelda and Donald are twins, and hugely competitive twins at that. Even as new babies they competed over who got Mum's larger bosom. Since then everything has been a competition to ensure that neither of them got anything bigger, longer, wider or better than the other.

On a family holiday, Donald finally decides enough is enough and the competitiveness has gone on for too long. Looking around him he sees lots of happy families enjoying their time together, unlike his family who are driven mad by the twins' competitiveness.

In a gesture of friendship and surrender, Donald offers Imelda the larger of the two remaining bananas, only to have her reject it, claiming that she has the biggest banana and running off to stand in front of famous icon at *the Big Banana* tourist attraction. So started another level of competition, with the twins spending their holidays locating and fighting over all the 'big' icons they see on their travels.

Remembering how all the competitiveness started, Donald decides to find out for himself which of Mum's bosoms is larger, only to discover that it was in fact the left, the one Imelda claimed to be hers. But Mum corrects him, telling

him that she could never feed on the right, so fed both babies on the left side. When Donald asks her if she minds having one breast saggier than the other, Mum tells him that she has always loved them the same amount. Donald realises she is not just talking about her breasts.

- Why are siblings competitive?
- Why do you think twins would be even more competitive?
- Is it possible for twins to live completely independent lives?
- Make a list and find pictures of all the 'big' tourist attractions throughout Australia. Mark them on a map.
- Why do we have such a fascination with big icons?
- How does the hyperbole or exaggeration in this story help to reinforce how ridiculous the twins' competitiveness really is?
- What does this story suggest about memories?
- What might this suggest about some of the grudges we hold against other people?
- Why do you think Mum is not unhappy that her breast is saggy from having fed the twins?
- Do parents really love all their children equally?
- What rivalry do you think exists in your family?

Harriet's Story

Harriet wakes in the middle of the night desperate for a drink, thirstier than she has ever been. She makes her way to the kitchen, along the pitch black hallway and past the many obstacles. She seems to be hallucinating as everything is bigger, louder and more intense than usual. Her mind keeps forming sentences packed with similes, metaphors and imagery.

When she finally reaches the kitchen, Harriet discovers an intruder. Fear grips her, until she realises it is Mum's ski suit put out ready for the dry cleaners. Then she discovers that the fridge has been ransacked by her younger brother, and both the cold and hot taps have run dry.

Harriet thinks back to her teacher's lesson on story writing and the idea that every story needs a complication to make it more interesting. She comes to suspect that she is in fact in a story.

Remembering Ms. Lovett's other advice that a protagonist needs to be courageous, Harriet breaks into her neighbours' house in search of a drink.

Then she remembers that often one action in a story leads to a further complication. Harriet realizes that the neighbours have just had a new security system installed that has damaged the water pipes. She takes her father's axe to the pipes and finally manages to quench her thirst.

With her thirst finally satiated, Harriet falls into a deep sleep and is oblivious to the water cascading through the neighbourhood.

A few doors down, Ms. Lovett hears the disturbance and wonders if her class is ready to learn about irony – the idea that a character can solve one problem by inadvertently causing another that is the exact opposite.

- Make a list of all the writing techniques in the story and provide an example of each – e.g. similes, metaphors, alliteration, hyperbole, personification etc.
- Is the use of these techniques effective in this story, or is it a case of over-writing?
- What are the orientation; complication and resolution in this story?
- What other features of a short story can you identify?
- What is the irony in this story?
- Morris Gleitzman has chosen to end this collection with a story that makes it clear it is in fact a story (just as he did with the story **So Unjust** in **Give Peas a Chance**). Why might he use this technique in his final story? Does it help you come back down to reality – a little like the credits in a film?

Points for Discussion

Showing not telling

A good writer is able to show information rather than tell the reader a set of facts. This makes the writing far more interesting. For example, rather than writing *'The teacher was angry'* the author might write, *'Mrs. Jones slammed the book down onto her desk and, through gritted teeth, yelled at Josh to sit down and get to work!'*

- Which of these pieces of writing is more effective and interesting? What makes it better?
- Choose one of the stories in this collection and consider whether the writer shows or tells us the information. How much of it is spelt out and how much of it is created through word pictures?

Writing characters

The characters in a short story need to be drawn very effectively, as the author has few words in which to describe them.

- What techniques can an author use to create an effective character?
 - Language – formal or informal; use of idioms; adult vs. childish
 - Relationships – how does the character interact with others
 - Reactions – how does a character cope with the situation?
- Choose one of the stories in the collection and focus on the central character.
- What can you tell about this character from reading this story? Make a list of anything you know about the character.
- How much of this is actually 'told' to you in the story?
- How else do you know all of this information?

- Which of the characters in this collection would you regard as caricatures or exaggerated characters? Why do authors often use caricatures in short stories?

Social commentary

One role that stories can play in our world is to make comments about things that are happening in our societies. In this way, stories can raise our awareness of issues and, often, influence change.

- What does each of these stories teach us about our own society or culture?
- Can you name any other authors, poets, or singers who are well known for their social commentary?
- Why can authors often get away with making these types of comments about the world where others (e.g. journalists) could not? (Consider the section before about real vs. imagined).

Real vs. unreal

One thing that each of these stories has in common is that they all have elements of both the real and the unreal.

Each of them has enough elements of our own real and ordinary lives, yet each takes us from the ordinary to the imagined. Each story takes us beyond the 'normal' to something more interesting and unusual.

- In each story, consider what aspects are real and which are unreal. Many writers say that a good starting point for writing a story is to ask the question 'What if...?' Using this technique you take a known or familiar situation and ask yourself 'what if it was different in this way?' and jump from the known into the hypothetical.

- How has this idea been utilised in these stories?

Writing humour

Morris Gleitzman always manages to convey humour in his stories, even when the subject matter or message is quite serious.

- Why is humour such a powerful device in writing?
- Do you prefer humorous stories? Why?
- Why might a piece of social commentary utilise humour as a technique?
- Choose a passage from a story that you find particularly amusing. Read it to the class and explain why you found it funny.

Evaluation

- Which of these pieces did you find the most effective?
- What made it a good story? Consider the features of a story in your response
 - Characters
 - Language

- Imagery / word pictures
- Relevance to real life
- Message

Activities

- Try writing your own short story adopting Morris Gleitzman's style of taking everyday characters or occurrences and twisting them. (Remember to use the tips given in *Harriet's Story*). Try to convey aspects of your own society or culture in your story.

Source for curriculum

ACARA: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2011). *The Australian Curriculum v1.2: English Foundation to Year 10 Curriculum*. Retrieved December 2011, from <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/English/Curriculum/F-10>

