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| **Literacy Glossary** |
| A |
| **academic text** A specialised text from a given field using formal language. |
| accents Distinctive ways of pronouncing a language, usually associated with a particular country or region (e.g. the American accents). |
| adjective A word class that describes, identifies or quantifies a noun or a pronoun, e.g. two (number or quantity), my (possessive), ancient (descriptive), shorter (comparative), wooden (classifying). |
| adverb A word class that may modify a verb (e.g. ‘softly’ in ‘the boy sings softly’), an adjective (e.g. ‘really’ in ‘he is really strong’) or another adverb (e.g. ‘very’ in ‘the toddler walks very slowly’). |
| adverbial A word or group of words that modifies or contributes additional, but non-essential, information about a sentence or a verb (e.g. the team played surprising well). |
| aesthetic Concerned with a sense of beauty or an appreciation of artistic expression. |
| alliteration A recurrence of the same consonant sounds at the beginning of words in close succession (e.g. ‘ripe, red raspberry’). |
| allusion An indirect reference to a person or character, event, idea or work of art, which contributes to the meaning of the text (e.g. ‘chocolate was her Achilles’ heel’). |
| analogy A comparison between one thing and another, typically for the purpose of explanation or clarification. |
| antonym A word opposite in meaning to another (e.g. ‘empty’ is an antonym for ‘full’; ‘cold’ is an antonym for ‘hot’). |
| apostrophe A punctuation mark used mainly to indicate either possession (e.g. David’s phone) or omission of letters (e.g. isn’t, he’s) and numbers (e.g. ’90s). |
| article A word that indicate which, how many or how much of the noun it is associated with. The 3 English articles are: ‘the’, ‘a’, ‘an’. |
| audience An intended or assumed group of readers, listeners or viewers that a writer, designer, filmmaker or speaker is addressing. |
| author A composer of a work (e.g. a novel, film, website, speech, essay, image, autobiography). |
| B |
| base word A form of a word that conveys the essential meaning. It is not derived from or made up of other words and has no prefixes or suffixes (e.g. action, activate, react are all from the base word ‘act’). |
| bias Presentation by an author of one point of view, favouring one side in an argument or discussion, often accompanied by a refusal to consider possible merits of alternative points of view. |
| blend Running the individual sounds in a word together to make a word (e.g. sounding out /b/-/i/-/g/ to make ‘big’). |
| C |
| clause A grammatical unit referring to a happening or state (main, independent, subordinate, dependent), e.g. ‘the team won’ (happening), ‘the dog is red’ (state), usually containing a subject and a verb group/phrase. |
| cohesion Grammatical or lexical relationships that bind different parts of a text together and give it unity. It is achieved through devices such as reference, substitution, repetition and text connectives. |
| colon Punctuation mark (:) that separates a general statement from one or more statements that give extra information, explanation or illustration. Statements after a colon do not have to be full sentences. |
| complex sentence A sentence with one or more subordinate clauses. In the following example, the subordinate clause is shown in brackets: I took my umbrella [because it was raining]. |
| compound sentence A sentence with 2 or more main clauses of equal grammatical status, usually marked by a coordinating conjunction, e.g. [Ira came home this morning] [but he didn't stay long]. |
| concept An abstract idea. |
| conjunction In a sentence, a word that join other words, groups/phrases or clauses together in a logical relationship such as addition, time, cause or comparison. There are 2 types: coordinating and subordinating. |
| connectives Words linking, and logically relating ideas to one another, in paragraphs and sentences indicating relationships of time, cause and effect, comparison, addition, condition and concession or clarification. |
| consonant All letters of the alphabet that are not vowels. The 21 consonants are b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, y, z. |
| consonant blend A group of 2 or 3 consonants that are all pronounced individually (e.g. /b/ and /l/ in the word ‘black’; /s/, /p/ and /r/ in the word ‘spring’). |
| constrained skills Skills that can typically be learnt in a limited amount of time. Once they are achieved, they require no further teaching (e.g. phonological awareness and phonic knowledge). |
| context An environment or situation (social, cultural or historical) in which a text is responded to or created. Or wording surrounding an unfamiliar word, which a reader or listener uses to understand its meaning." |
| convention An accepted practice that has developed over time and is generally used and understood (e.g. use of punctuation). |
| contraction An abbreviated version of a word or words, often formed by shortening a word or merging 2 words into one (e.g. doctor: Dr; do not: don’t). |
| create To imagine or conceive, develop or produce (in print or digital form) spoken, written or multimodal texts and edit and publish work for an audience: private or public, familiar or unfamiliar. |

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| D |
| dangling clause A clause that is placed in the sentence in such a way that it confuses the intended meaning (e.g. I have a muffin that Mum baked in my lunchbox.) |
| decodable texts Texts that contain a high percentage of words made up of learned grapheme-phoneme patterns. Decodable texts support beginning readers to practise their phonic skills. |
| decode A process of efficient word recognition in which readers use knowledge of the relationship between letters and sounds to work out how to say and read written words. |
| develop To build on, change or advance to be more complete. |
| digital texts Electronic texts accessed through a digital platform that may have multimodal elements and may be interactive. |
| digraph Two letters representing one sound. Vowel digraphs have 2 vowels (e.g. ‘oo’), consonant digraphs have 2 consonants (e.g. ‘sh’), vowel–consonant digraphs have one vowel and one consonant (e.g. ‘er’). |
| E |
| edit To prepare, alter, adapt or refine with attention to grammar, spelling, punctuation and vocabulary. |
| etymological knowledge Knowledge of the origins and development of a form and meanings of words and how meanings and forms have changed over time. |
| evaluative language Positive or negative language that judges the worth of something. It includes language to express feelings and opinions; make judgements; and assess quality of objects, ideas and features of texts. |
| evocative vocabulary Vivid language that captures attention and imagination, conveying emotions and actions. |
| expand To express in fuller form or detail. |
| experiment To try or test something which may include a text structure, language feature or literary device to shape meaning or evoke a response. |
| F |
| figurative language Word groups/phrases used in a way that differs from the expected or everyday usage. They are used in a non-literal way for particular effect (e.g. simile, metaphor, personification). |
| fluency An ability to read a text accurately using pace and phrasing appropriately. Also, an ability to write with automaticity using a functional pencil grip or grasp. |
| G |
| grammar A description of a language as a system. In describing a language, attention is paid to both structure (form) and meaning (function) at the level of a word, a sentence and a text. |
| graph A letter (graph) or group of letters (grapheme) that spell a phoneme in a word (e.g. /f/ in the word 'fog'; /ph/ in the word 'photo). |
| grapheme A letter (graph) or group of letters (grapheme) that spell a phoneme in a word (e.g. /f/ in the word 'fog'; /ph/ in the word 'photo). |
| group/phrase Recognises different usages of units intermediate between a clause and a word. The units enclosed in brackets are examples: ‘(the party) (had made) (the two girls with the red shirts) (very tired)’. |
| H |
| handwriting A production of legible, accurately formed letters by hand with a functional pencil grip or grasp, or with the help of writing tools, e.g. assistive technology. |
| high-frequency words The most common words used in written English text. Many of these words cannot be decoded using sound–letter correspondence and need to be learnt (e.g. ‘come’, ‘was’, ‘one’). |
| homonym Words that have the same spelling and pronunciation but have different meanings (e.g. wind and wind, lie and lie). |
| homophone A word identical in pronunciation with another but different in meaning (e.g. ‘bear’ and ‘bare’, ‘air’ and ‘heir’). |
| hybrid text A composite text resulting from a purposeful mixing of elements from different sources or genres (e.g. ‘infotainment’). |
| I |
| idiomatic language Wording used in a way in which the meaning is not the literal meaning of the words (e.g. ‘They went out to paint the town red’). |

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| imagery Visually descriptive or figurative language to represent things including objects, actions and ideas in ways that appeal to the senses of the reader or viewer. |
| image A picture or representation which may be moving or still and may include a photograph, a painting, or drawing, which may be real, symbolic or imagined. |
| intertextual references Associations or connections between one text and other texts that may be overt or less explicit. They can take the form of direct quotation, parody, allusion or structural borrowing. |
| interrupting clause A clause that interrupts the flow of a sentence (e.g. He kept insisting – what other option did he have – that he had taken no part in writing the comments). |
| irony The use of words to convey a meaning that is the opposite of its literal meaning. |
| irregular verb Verbs that do not follow the simple system of adding '-d' or ‘-ed’ to the end of the word to form the past tense (e.g. buy – bought, sing – sang). |
| J |
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| K |
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| L |
| language features Features that support meaning (e.g. clause- and word-level grammar, vocabulary, figurative language, punctuation, images). Choices vary for the purpose, subject matter, audience and mode or medium. |
| layout A spatial arrangement of print and graphics on a page or screen including size of font, positioning of illustrations, captions, labels, headings, dot points, borders and text boxes. |
| listen To use the sense of hearing as well as a range of active behaviours to comprehend information received through gesture, body language and other sensory systems. |
| literary device A structural or language technique used to shape meaning, and for aesthetic or stylistic purposes (e.g. narrative structure, characterisation and setting, rhetorical devices, and figurative language). |
| long vowel A vowel that is pronounced the same as the name of the letter (e.g. be, go). |
| M |
| metalanguage Vocabulary including technical terms, concepts, ideas or codes used to describe or discuss a language. The language of grammar and the language of literary criticism are examples. |
| metaphor A type of figurative language used to describe a person or object through an implicit comparison to something with similar characteristics. |
| modal verb A verb that expresses a degree of probability attached by a speaker or writer to a statement (e.g. ‘I might come home’) or a degree of obligation (e.g. ‘You must give it to me’). |
| mode Various processes of communication – listening, speaking, reading or viewing and writing or creating. |
| morpheme The smallest meaningful or grammatical unit in a language. Morphemes are not necessarily the same as words (e.g. the word ‘cats’ has 2 morphemes: ‘cat’ for the animal and ‘s’ to show more than one). |
| multimodal A combination of 2 or more communication modes (e.g. print, image and spoken text, as in film or computer presentations). |
| multisyllabic Words consisting of more than one syllable. |
| N |
| narrative The selection and sequencing of events or experiences, real or imagined, to tell a story to entertain, engage, inform and extend imagination, typically using an orientation, complication and resolution. |
| nominalisation A process for forming nouns from verbs (e.g. ‘action’ from ‘act’ and 'his destruction of the city’ from ‘he destroyed the city’) to include abstract ideas and to make texts compact. |
| non-finite clause A clause with a verb which does not define tense (e.g. [You need to increase the size of the font] in order to be able to read it.) |
| noun A word class that includes all words denoting person, place, object or thing, idea or emotion. Nouns may be common, proper, collective, abstract and compound. |
| noun group/phrases A group of words relating to or building on a main noun or pronoun. It usually consists of a noun as a major element accompanied by one or more modifiers (e.g. determiners, adjectives). |
| O |
| onomatopoeia A word that imitates a sound. Onomatopoeic words are used as a literary device to enhance description (e.g. moan, thump, meow). |
| orthographic knowledge Information stored in the memory that supports students to represent spoken language in written form. |
| P |
| pace The rate of speech used or varied for purpose and audience. |
| passive voice A style of writing where the object of a sentence becomes the subject of the sentence. |
| perspective A lens through which the author perceives the world and creates a text, or the lens through which the reader or viewer perceives the world and understands a text. |
| personification A type of metaphor where qualities of a person or living thing are attributed or transferred to something non-living or inanimate (e.g. ‘the last chance he had just walked out the door’). |
| phoneme The smallest unit of sound in a word (e.g. the word ‘is’ has 2 phonemes: /i/ and /s/; the word ‘ship’ has 3 phonemes: /sh/, /i/, /p/). |
| phoneme deletion Formation of a different word by removing a phoneme (e.g. take the /t/ away from the word ‘train’ to make a new word ‘rain’). |
| phoneme substitution Substituting phonemes for others (e.g. changing the /r/ in ‘rat’ to /b/ to make ‘bat’). It can occur with middle and final phonemes (e.g. changing /a/ in ‘cat’ to /o/ to make ‘cot’). |
| phonemic awareness An ability to hear, identify and manipulate separate, individual phonemes in words. |
| phrase A group of words often beginning with a preposition but without a subject and verb combination (e.g. ‘on the river’; ‘with brown eyes’). |
| pitch The frequency (the highness or lowness of tone) of sound used or varied for purpose and audience. |
| plural More than one, e.g. ‘dog’ is singular (one dog), ‘dogs’ is plural (more than one dog) and ‘loaves’ is the plural of ‘loaf’. |
| point of view The position from which the text is designed to be perceived (e.g. a narrator might take a role of first or third person, omniscient or restricted in knowledge of events or the opinion presented in a text). |
| possessive apostrophe A punctuation showing the relationship of belonging between one thing and another. To form it, add apostrophe + s to the noun. If the noun is plural, or already ends in ‘-s’, add an apostrophe after the ‘s’. |
| prefix A meaningful element (morphemes) added to the beginning of a word to change its meaning (e.g. ‘un’ to ‘happy’ to make ‘unhappy’). |
| predicting An informed presumption about something that might happen. Predicting at the text level can include working out what a text might contain based on previous knowledge of the type of text. |
| preposition A word class that usually describes the relationship between words in a sentence. Prepositions can indicate: space (e.g. 'on'), time (e.g. 'after') and other relationships (e.g. 'of', 'except'). |
| prepositional phrase A group of words that typically consists of a preposition followed by a noun group/phrase (e.g. ‘on the train’ in ‘we met on the train’; ‘on golf’ in ‘keen on golf’). |
| presentation An address or report on a particular topic that can be adapted for different audiences and purposes and may be supported by multimodal features. |
| pronoun A word that takes the place of a noun (e.g. I, me, he, she, herself, you, it, that, they, few, many, who, whoever, someone, everybody, and many others). |
| pronoun referencing Using a pronoun to refer to a specific noun or noun group, e.g. Guang (noun referred to) lost his (pronoun) phone. Coherent texts use reference that is consistent and unambiguous. |
| proper noun A noun which serves as the name of a particular place, person or thing such as a day or month or festival (e.g. ‘Australia’, ‘October’). It usually occurs without a determiner, such as ‘the’. |
| purpose An intended or assumed reason for a type of text. |
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| R |
| read To decode and process words, symbols or actions to derive or construct meaning. It includes interpreting, critically analysing and reflecting on the meaning of written and visual, print and non-print texts. |
| register The level of formality of language used for a particular purpose and audience. Generally variation in register moves from formal (Good morning) to informal (Hi). |
| repetition A word, a phrase or a full sentence or a poetical line repeated to emphasise its significance. Repetition is a language feature and cohesive device. |
| return sweep The way English print travels from left to right and then returns to the left of a page for the next and each subsequent line. |
| rhetorical device Use of language that is intended to have an effect on an audience such as evoking an emotion or persuading an audience by appealing to logos, ethos, pathos and kairos. |
| S |
| satire Exposing and criticising the shortcomings or behaviour of an individual or a society in a text, using techniques such as exaggeration, humour, ridicule and irony. |
| scan To read, moving quickly down a page, seeking specific words and phrases. It is also used when a reader first finds information to determine whether it will answer their questions. |
| segment To recognise and separate phonemes in a word. Speakers may say each sound as they tap it out. Stretch (e.g. mmmaaannn) and pausing between each phoneme (e.g. /m/-/a/-/n/) are examples. |
| semicolon Punctuation (;) used to join closely related clauses that could stand alone as sentences and can be used to separate long items in a list. |
| sentence The largest grammatical construction; a complete expression of a statement, question, command or exclamation. A simple sentence has a form of a single clause (e.g. ‘Ariel walked to the shops.’). |
| silent letter A letter that is in the written form of a word but is not pronounced in the spoken form (e.g. ‘t’ in the word ‘listen’, ‘k’ in the word ‘knew’). |
| simile A device comparing 2 things that are not alike. Similes use ‘like’, ‘as’ or 'than' to make the comparison (e.g. The cake was as light as air). |
| simple sentence A complete expression of a statement, question, command or exclamation that has the form of a single clause (e.g. ‘David walked to the shops.’ or ‘Take a seat.’) |
| skim To read quickly, selecting key words and details through a text to determine the general meaning or main messages or ideas. |
| **sound effect** Any sound, other than speech or music, used to create an effect in a text (e.g. to create an aural landscape, to represent a sound associated with a particular event, to evoke an emotional response). |
| speak Convey meaning and communicate with purpose. Some students participate in speaking activities using communication systems and assistive technologies to communicate wants and needs, and to make comments. |
| spelling generalisationsPrinciples that can be applied when trying to spell an unfamiliar word (e.g. words ending in ‘-f’ or ‘-fe’ form a plural using ‘ves’: calf – calves, knife – knives. There are exceptions: chief – chiefs). |
| stage The stable pattern of the organisation of a genre such as the orientation, complication and resolution of a story or the introduction, body and conclusion of an argument.  |
| Standard Australian English Recognised as the ‘common language’ of Australians, it is the dynamic and evolving spoken and written English used for official or public purposes, and recorded in dictionaries, style guides and grammars. |
| story The telling and relating of characters and events real or imagined. |
| style The distinctive language features, text structures and/or subject matter in a text which may shape meaning, be enjoyed for its aesthetic qualities or distinguish the work of an author, period etc. |
| subject A word or group of words (usually a noun group/phrase) in a sentence or clause representing the person, thing or idea doing the action that follows (e.g. ‘The dog [subject] was barking’). |
| subject matter The topic or theme under consideration. |
| subordinating conjunctions Words that introduce clauses that add or extend information. They include conjunctions such as ‘after’, ‘when’, ‘because’, ‘if’ and ‘that’. |
| suffix An element added to the end of a word to change its meaning (e.g. to form past tense: ‘-ed’; to show a smaller amount or degree: -less; to form an adverb: -ly). |
| syllable A word, or part of a word, pronounced as a unit usually consisting of a vowel alone or a vowel with one or more consonants (e.g. ‘bat’ has one syllable; ‘bat-ting’ has 2 syllables). |
| symbolism The use of one object, person or situation to signify or represent another, by giving them meanings that are different from their literal sense (e.g. a dove is a symbol of peace). |
| synonym A word having nearly the same meaning as others (e.g. synonyms for ‘old’ include ‘aged’, ‘venerable’, ‘antiquated’). |
| T |
| tense The form a verb takes to signal the location of a clause in time (e.g. present tense ‘has’ in 'Jo has a cat’ locates the situation in the present; past tense ‘had’ in ‘Jo had a cat’ locates it in the past). |
| text Expressions of meaning in written, spoken, visual and multimodal forms that incorporate language, including sound, print, film, electronic and multimodal representations. |
| text structure The internal organisation of ideas and/or the overarching framework, made cohesive and coherent by connecting parts of a text or parts and the whole text. Choices vary according to purpose and mode. |
| theme The main idea, concept or message of a text. |
| tone The mood created by the language features used by an author and the way the text makes the reader feel. |
| types of text Classifications according to the particular purposes they are designed to achieve. These purposes influence the characteristic features the texts typically employ. |
| U |
| unconstrained skillsSkills that continue to be developed throughout each year and from year to year (e.g. vocabulary and comprehension). |
| V |
| verb A word class that expresses processes that include doing, feeling, thinking, saying and relating. |
| verb group Consists of a main verb, alone or preceded by one or more auxiliary or modal verbs as modifiers. |
| view Observe multimodal and visual texts with purpose, understanding and critical awareness. Some students view by listening to a description of the visual features of text, diagrams, pictures and multimedia. |
| visual features Visual components of a text which may include placement, salience, framing, representation of action or reaction, shot size, social distance and camera angle. |
| voice The distinct personality of a piece of writing; the individual writing style of the composer, created through the way they use and mix various language features (e.g. a narrative using a child’s voice). |
| vowel A letter of the alphabet (a, e, i, o, u, and sometimes y) that represents a speech sound created by the relatively free passage of breath through the larynx and oral cavity. |
| vowel digraph Two successive vowels that represent a single phoneme (e.g. /ai/ in the word ‘rain’; /ea/ in the word ‘beach’; /ee/ in the word ‘free’). |
| W |
| word origins The historical development of words from their earliest known use. Word origin (etymology) tracks the transfer of words from one language to another. |
| wordplay A literary technique based on the meanings and ambiguities of words where the words are used mainly for the purpose of intended effect or amusement. It is often based on homophones, puns and idioms. |
| write Producing text using pencils, pens, digital tools and/or technologies, and/or using a scribe. Writers plan, compose, edit and publish in print or digital forms. |
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| Z |
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