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# Understanding writers' purpose through reading



Often when assessing student writing, it seems that students understand the purpose for writing to a degree, however, an in-depth understanding may not be evident. Students may also have a limited repertoire for talking about the purpose of their own writing and how it influences their planning and choices when composing their own texts.

The following strategies use the reading of a range of texts with a similar purpose to support the craft of writing descriptions of settings within a

broader narrative text. They were developed as a result of formative assessment [\(see Assessment Resource No 1\)](#). Although they are designed specifically for describing in a literary context they can be adapted for numerous contexts based on the overall purpose of the texts being composed.

## Designing reading opportunities to support understanding of text purpose

### Read! Read! Read!!!

Read to students daily, in order to expose them to a range of not only narrative texts where setting plays a crucial role, but also a range of literary genres including animal stories, fairy tales, historical fiction, fantasy, humour and science fiction. When modelling reading, think aloud to make aspects of the purpose and key features explicit to students.

### Text hunt

Provide pairs of students with [a range of picture books](#) and ask them to locate examples of descriptions of imagined settings. After locating examples, students rank them based on their effectiveness and then share with another pair.

### Book club

Ask students to locate a text from the class, school or local library or online and share in book clubs weekly. Make sure that students select texts that relate to the purpose/s being discussed in teaching and learning programs at the time. Students read chosen sections of their texts and discuss the features and effectiveness as well as why the text is a good example of, for example, a description of an imagined setting.

