Genres and texts: living in the real world

1. Genres and texts

Genre-based literacy programs by definition involve a theory of genre. Programs such as those informing the Indonesian national English curriculum draw on the work of the Sydney School (Rose & Martin in press) - with respect to i. the genres that students learn to read and write, and ii. the genres of classroom pedagogy that teachers use to teach them. The Sydney School approach starts with a broad definition of genres as 'staged goal-oriented social processes': they are goal-oriented because a text unfolds towards its social purpose, and staged because it usually takes more than one step to reach the goal. Genres evolve in a culture to achieve common social purposes that are recognised by members of the culture, so that the stages they go through are generally predictable for members of the culture.

Some common purposes for writing in school include explaining a natural or social phenomenon, classifying things and describing them, instructing how to do an activity, recounting events, engaging readers by resolving a complication, or persuading them by arguing for a position. Sydney School research found that texts with these kinds of purposes go through consistent stages that help to distinguish each one (Rose 2008). Accordingly these genres and their stages were given names, so that teachers could explicitly share them with their students, as set out in Table 1.

Table 1: Some written genres in school

genre	purpose	stages
recount	*recounting events*	Orientation Record of events
narrative	*resolving a complication*	Orientation Complication Evaluation Resolution
report	*classifying & describing general things*	Classification Description
explanation	*explaining sequences of events*	Phenomenon Explanation
procedure	*how to do an activity*	Purpose Equipment Steps
exposition	*arguing for a point of view*	Thesis Arguments Reiteration

One of the genres of classroom pedagogy designed by the Sydney School is Joint Construction, in which students are introduced to texts which function as proto-typical models of the genres they are expected to write. Particularly in the earlier years of school, the texts used as models may be simple instances of the genre, that clearly illustrate the staging with relatively little elaboration. Text 1 for example is a narrative written by a six year old, following modelling of the genre with Joint Construction. In the child's text there is just one sentence for each stage – Orientation, Complication, Evaluation and Resolution.

Text 1: Simple narrative

[Orientation] *A fish was swimn in the worta.* [Complication] *He heerd a splash and a car falld in the worta.* [Evaluation] *"Help; help" said the man.* [Resolution] *The fish help the man swim to beech.*

Text 2 is a report written for primary students, in which the Classification consists of one sentence and the Description stage consists of two paragraphs describing the appearance and behaviour of an animal.

Text 2: Simple report

Goannas

Australia is home to 25 of the world's 30 monitor lizard species. In Australia, monitor lizards are called goannas.

Goannas have flattish bodies, long tails and strong jaws. They are the only lizards with forked tongues, like a snake. Their necks are long and may have loose folds of skin beneath them. Their legs are long and strong, with sharp claws on their feet. Many goannas have stripes, spots and other markings that help to camouflage them. The largest species can grow to more than two metres in length.

All goannas are daytime hunters. They run, climb and swim well. Goannas hunt small mammals, birds and other reptiles. They also eat dead animals. Smaller goannas eat insects, spiders and worms. Male goannas fight with each other in the breeding season. Females lay between two and twelve eggs.

from Silkstone 1994, *Australian Reptiles*

These brief texts have relatively simple purposes, but beyond the restricted contexts of children writing in the primary school, the purposes of texts become more complex, and they achieve their complex goals in various ways. Sometimes a combination of genres is assembled with texts adjusted to fit in with one another, possibly in combination with other modalities of communication such as images. Such complex texts are known as macro-genres (Martin 1995, 1996, 2002, Martin & Rose 2008); examples include textbooks, web pages, magazines or newspapers that clearly consist of series of short texts and images, as well as novels that comprise series of smaller stories assembled into a larger one. Each of these smaller texts is an element of a macro-genre.

Alternatively a single genre may be extended by repeating its stages recursively, and by including a series of smaller phases within each stage. For example, a narrative may be extended with a series of Complications and Resolutions, and tension may build within each Complication with a series of worsening problems, each intensified by characters' reactions. Or the Description stage of a report about animals may include additional phases describing their habitat, movement, reproduction, varieties and environmental status. Whereas the stages of a genre are highly predictable for each textual instance, phases within each stage tend to be more variable, depending on the particular purposes of the text (Martin & Rose 2008, Rose 2006).

Thus while texts may vary widely in response to a range of contextual pressures, they appear to cluster around sets of canonical genres that are recognisable to initiated members of a culture,

and they vary in ways that are more or less predictable – expanding by adding more genres, or adding more stages and phases within one genre. Indeed the degree of potential variation can also be predicted from the context, from the tightly constrained staging of scientific research papers to the creative fluidity of literary fiction.

Theoretically speaking, what we are exploring here is the relations between a culture's system of genres, and the instantiation of this system in texts (i.e. in instances of language use). The process of instantiation may draw on a culture's system of genres in different ways (Martin 2010). Since genres are categorically distinct kinds of discourse there can be no such thing as a 'mixed genre', but we may need to speak or write 'mixed texts', consisting of a series of genres, in order to accomplish our social goals. And mixed texts can be a source of new genres, which emerge when required as a culture evolves (Martin 2002).

In practice a useful starting point for identifying a genre is to ask what is the text's primary purpose, and then to look for the generic staging predicted by that purpose. Closer examination may then lead us to recognise a purpose other than what we expected at first glance, that may better match the staging we identify. Of course analysis is complicated by the various ways that genre potential is expanded. In section 2 below we'll explore how texts can be expanded as macro-genres; in section 3 we'll illustrate how genres can be extended by adding more elements.

2. Multimodal texts in science

The first example we'll explore is that of mixed texts consisting of a number of elemental genres, illustrated from science textbooks. In the English speaking world these textbooks have evolved over the past few decades from books involving mainly written language (e.g. Martin 1947) with a few illustrations, graphs and diagrams, towards multimodal magazine style presentations. In such multimodal texts, images of various kinds and their captions shape the layout of pages or double page spreads, circumscribing the written language involved. The example we will focus on is reproduced as Figure 1 below; the text is explored in more detail in Martin & Rose 2008. This double-page spread is from an Australian junior secondary geography textbook (Scott & Robinson 1993: 22-23) focusing on Australian environments (physical geography) and Australian communities (urban geography). This spread is a section within a chapter entitled 'Exploring arid lands', and deals with the way in which the mulga tree survives in Australia's arid plains.

Mulga plains

The biggest shock for many arid land travellers is the dense scrub that covers much of the arid plains. This scrub can be so dense that it is difficult to walk through. Travellers begin to wonder if they really are in arid country.

It is the mulga tree that grows so densely across the desert plains. It is so well adapted to the arid climate that it covers one-third of our arid lands. The desert ranges and rocky outcrops are surrounded by gently sloping hills and plains. This is red earth country and is the country of the mulga tree.

The mulga tree

How can plant life grow so well in such dry, hot and infertile places?

Surviving the long drought

The mulga likes long droughts—if it is too wet mulga trees will not grow.

The shape of the mulga tree is a key to it surviving dry times. The branches of the mulga fan out from the bottom—like a huge half moon. The branching leaves and stems catch the rain and it trickles down to the soil. This traps more rainfall than if the tree grew straight up. The mulga catches more water than a gum tree. This water is stored in the soil to be used by the tree during the next drought.

Even the mulga's leaves help it survive the drought. They are a silvery grey colour. The sun's rays bounce off the leaves helping the plant to stay cool. Also the mulga tree makes its own food by dropping thousands of leaves.
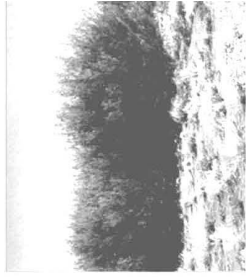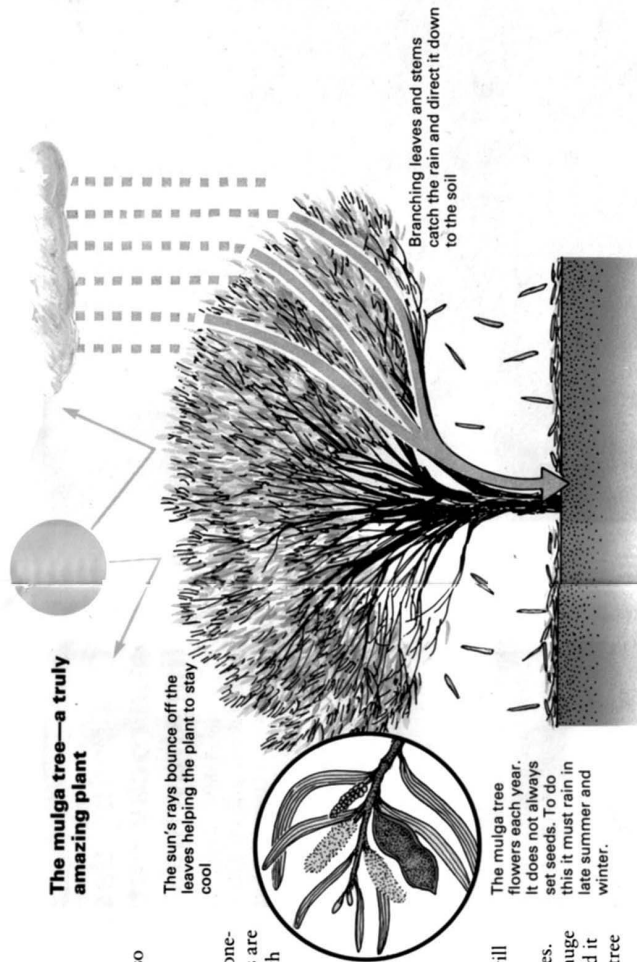
Flowering and setting seed

For many years geographers thought that our arid land shrubs and trees only flowered after rain. We now know this is not true. The long living plants flower each year. Even in a dry time mulga will flower in spring and summer. The tree simply makes less flowers. If it rains in spring the tree makes more flowers.

Even if a tree flowers it may not set seed. Setting seeds uses a lot of energy, energy that may be needed to find water during a drought. If it has rained the tree does not have to use as much energy to find water. For the mulga to set seeds there must be rain in late summer and again in winter. When the seeds drop to the ground, rain is then needed if the seeds are to start growing.
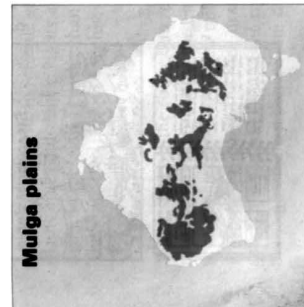

The mulga tree—a truly amazing plant

The sun's rays bounce off the leaves helping the plant to stay cool

Branching leaves and stems catch the rain and direct it down to the soil

The mulga tree flowers each year. It does not always set seeds. To do this it must rain in late summer and winter.

The soil is not very fertile in these red earth plains. This doesn't worry the mulga tree. It is its own food factory. It makes its own food through leaf fall. A mulga tree can drop thousands of leaves a year. These fall to the soil, where they rot and provide nutrients for the tree. This is called nutrient recycling. The mulga tree also has long roots to find nutrients deep down in the soil.

What are the chances of the mulga tree being lucky enough to have these showers of rain when it needs them? The answer is very rarely—about once every ten years. So even if you see a desert plant flowering it may not mean that the plant will set seeds.

Other trees and shrubs also grow on the mulga plain. These desert perennials also need rain and sunshine at certain times to set seeds. These periods are called **windows of opportunity**.

It is not easy for desert perennials to flower and set seed and for the seed to develop, drop and then grow. Only rarely are the conditions right for the plant to set seeds.

This is why our arid land plants must be protected. If an area loses its perennial plants it could be many years before conditions are just right for new plants to grow. And if it takes too many years the seeds that are on the ground waiting for the rain will die.

Fig 2.11 The mulga tree grows densely across the desert plains.

Mulga plains

The text in Figure 1 is itself part of a macro-genre – a complex of elemental genres (Martin 1995, 1996, 2002). Specifically it is a classifying macro-report which classifies Australia's desert environments into a taxonomy as i. Desert ranges and rocky outcrops, ii. Mulga plains, iii. Spinifex plains, iv. Salt bush and blue bush plains and v. Rivers and salt lakes, and devotes a section to each environment. The *Mulga plains* section in Figure 1 is itself a macro-genre – specifically a descriptive macro-report, describing and explaining one type of desert environment. Setting aside images and captions for the moment, Figure 1 consists of three main genres:

- an opening descriptive report, titled *Mulga plains,* that describes the salient features of this landscape type (descriptive reports describe one type of entity, classifying reports describe multiple types);

- an ensuing explanation, titled *The mulga tree,* which cites three factors explaining how the mulga tree manages to survive in such arid conditions (i.e. a factorial explanation);

- and a third explanation, *Flowering and setting seed,* which explores the conditions under which the mulga tree will reproduce (i.e. a conditional explanation).

Alongside Figure 1, the *Mulga plains* section concludes with a descriptive report on the following page dealing with desert ephemerals (flowering plants that come alive only when there is rain). The Mulga plains report is enlarged as Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Mulga plains report

Mulga plains

The biggest shock for many arid land travellers is the dense scrub that covers much of the arid plains. This scrub can be so dense that it is difficult to walk through. Travellers begin to wonder if they really are in arid country.

It is the mulga tree that grows so densely across the desert plains. It is so well adapted to the arid climate that it covers one-third of our arid lands. The desert ranges and rocky outcrops are surrounded by gently sloping hills and plains. This is red earth country and is the country of the mulga tree.

The general structure of descriptive reports is Classification followed by Description (generally with several phases of description). However, a Classification stage is not needed in this instance, as the mulga plains have already been classified as one of Australia's desert environments earlier in this chapter of the book (the macro-report noted above). This earlier classification is explicitly referred to by the image in the upper left-hand corner. This is an icon used throughout the book to indicate that the text is a sub-type of environment. The text thus consists simply of a Description stage with two phases, presented as paragraphs. The first phase focuses on the density of the mulga scrub; the second locates the mulga tree in the desert plains.

The *Mulga plains* report thus illustrates one way in which texts instantiating a genre may not involve all of the canonical structure of the genre. The classifying macro-report (the textbook chapter) in which the mulga plains macro-report (the double-page spread) is situated has already done the work of a Classification stage. And the title *Mulga plains* and classifying icon beside it

adequately situate the report in its macro-genre and classify the mulga plains as a type of desert environment.

The font size of the titles in Figure 1 indicate the structure of the macro-report, with *Mulga plains* larger than *The mulga tree,* which is larger in turn than *Surviving the drought* and *Flowering and setting seed*. The *mulga tree* section is itself a macro-explanation, consisting of a factorial explanation *Surviving the drought* and a conditional explanation *Flowering and setting seed*. Another section overleaf, entitled *A carpet of colour – desert ephemerals* has a title in the same font size as *The mulga tree.* The overall structure of the macro-genre is outlined below.

Mulga plains (macro-report)
> **The mulga tree** (macro-explanation)
>> **Surviving the long drought** (factorial explanation)
>> **Flowering and setting seed** (conditional explanation)
> **A carpet of colour – desert ephemerals**

Reflecting this genre-within-genre nesting, the macro-explanation has its own Phenomenon stage, phrased as a question:

> **The mulga tree**
> How can plant life grow so well in such dry, hot and infertile places?

The macro-explanation then continues with a factorial explanation enlarged as Text 3, this time with a canonical structure of Title, Outcome and Explanation: factors.

Text 3: Factorial explanation

> Surviving the long drought
> The mulga like long droughts - if it is too wet mulga tree will not grow.
> The shape of the mulga tree is a key to it surviving dry times. The branches of the mulga fan out from the bottom - like a huge half moon. The branching leaves and tern catch the rain and it trickles down to the soil. This traps more rainfall than if the tree grew straight up. The mulga catches more water than a gum tree. This water is stored in the soil l to be used by the tree during the next drought.
> Even the mulga's leaves help it survive the drought. They are a silvery grey colour. The sun 's rays bounce off the leave helping the plant to stay cool. Also the mulga tree makes its own food by dropping thousands of leaves

The Title and Outcome stage introduce what has to be explained:

> Surviving the long drought
> The mulga tree likes long droughts – if it is too wet mulga trees will not grow.

The Explanation stage then includes three phases, i.e. the factors that lead to the outcome – i. the shape of the tree, ii. leaf colour and iii. nutrient recycling. The shape of the tree is the most important factor and is explored in a paragraph. The other two factors, of diminishing importance, share a paragraph. The layout illustrates the way in which graphology (font size and paragraphing) often reflects the structure of a genre, but is not determined by it. Here the size of the contribution made by different survival factors influences paragraphing as well.

This factorial explanation is followed by a longer conditional explanation, shown as Text 4.

Text 4: Conditional explanation

Flowering and setting seed

For many years geographers thought that our arid land shrubs and trees only flowered after rain. We now know this is not true. The long living plants flower each year. Even in a dry time mulga will flower in spring and summer. The tree simply makes less flowers. If it rains in spring the tree makes more flowers. Even if a tree flowers it may not set seed. Setting seed uses a lot of energy, energy that may be needed to find water during a drought. If it has rained the tree does not have to use as much energy to find water. For the mulga to set seeds there must be rain in late summer and again in winter. When the seeds drop to the ground, rain is then needed if the seeds are to start growing.

What are the chance of the mulga tree being lucky enough to have these showers of rain when it needs them? The answer is very rarely – about once every ten years. So even if you see a desert plant flowering it may not mean that the plant will set seeds.

Other trees and shrubs also grow on the mulga plain. These desert perennials also need rain and sunshine at certain times to set seeds. These periods are called windows of opportunity.

It is not easy for desert perennials to flower and set seeds and for the seeds to develop, drop and then grow. Only rarely are the conditions right for the plant to set seeds.

This is why our arid land plants must be protected. If an area loses its perennial plants it could be many years before conditions are just right for new plants to grow. And if it takes too many years the seeds that are on the ground waiting for the rain will die.
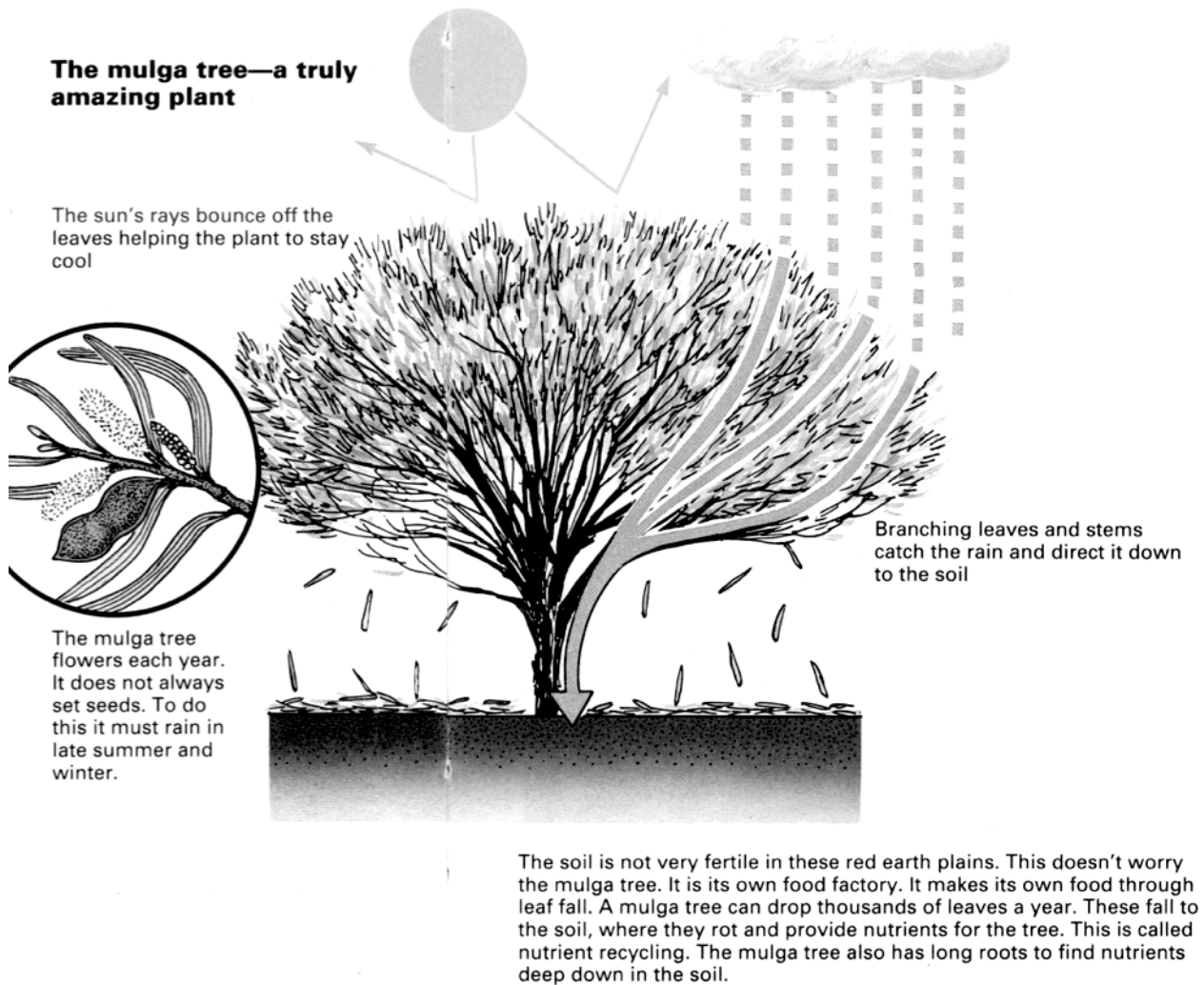
The Title, *Flowering and setting seed*, introduces the Phenomenon to be explained. There is no separate Phenomenon stage here. Where the Title succinctly introduces a genre, texts can sometimes make do without an opening stage (or conversely they may just have an opening stage without a Title). In this instance, the macro-explanation in which this conditional explanation is situated had its own Phenomenon stage *How can plant life grow so well in such dry, hot and infertile places?* so what is being explained has already been established. The first two paragraphs of the Explanation stage explore various conditions affecting flowering and setting seed, as follows:

conditions	effects
even in a dry time	makes less flowers
if it rains in spring	makes more flowers
even if a tree flowers	may not set seed
during a drought	energy may be needed to find water
if it has rained	does not have to use as much energy to find water
must be rain in late summer and again in winter	for mulga to set seeds
rain is then needed	if the seeds are to start growing
even if you see a desert plant flowering	may not mean that the plant will set seeds

The third and fourth paragraphs then extend the explanation to desert perennial plants in general. The last paragraph is an ecological exhortation, reflecting the tendency of Australian textbooks to introduce a 'green' sensibility across a range of genres (Martin 2002, Veel 1998).

Let's now turn our attention to the captions accompanying the images in Figure 1, enlarged here as Figure 3.

Figure 3: Mulga plains central image

The mulga tree—a truly amazing plant

The sun's rays bounce off the leaves helping the plant to stay cool

The mulga tree flowers each year. It does not always set seeds. To do this it must rain in late summer and winter.

Branching leaves and stems catch the rain and direct it down to the soil

The soil is not very fertile in these red earth plains. This doesn't worry the mulga tree. It is its own food factory. It makes its own food through leaf fall. A mulga tree can drop thousands of leaves a year. These fall to the soil, where they rot and provide nutrients for the tree. This is called nutrient recycling. The mulga tree also has long roots to find nutrients deep down in the soil.

The captions relating to the central image in Figure 5 are connected in various ways to the report and explanations just considered (further explored in Martin & Rose 2008). The bold caption, ***The mulga tree – a truly amazing plant***, evaluates the significance of the tree's adaptations for survival (Martin & White 2005). The long conditional explanation in the main text (Text 4) is succinctly re-expressed as *The mulga tree flowers each year. It does not always set seeds. To do this it must rain in late summer and winter.* The leaves factor in the factorial explanation (Text 3) is restated as *The sun's rays bounce off the leaves helping the plant stay cool*.

Conversely, the other two factors in the factorial explanation (Text 3) are extended in the captions. The shape factor is supplemented with the information that rain is *directed* down to the soil, a point further clarified in the image, where vectors show the tree catching the rain and moving it towards the trunk, along which it trickles into the soil. The food factor is considerably extended in a sequential explanation (Text 5 below).

Text 5: Caption extension of the food factor

> The soil is not very fertile in these red earth plains. This doesn't worry the mulga tree. It is its own food factory. It makes its own food through leaf fall. A mulga tree can drop thousands of leaves a year. These fall to the soil, where they rot and provide nutrients for the tree. This is called nutrient recycling. The mulga tree also has long roots to find nutrients deep down in the soil.

The sequence of events in this explanation is 'leaves drop, then fall to soil, then rot, then provide nutrients'. As such explanation sequences often do, it culminates with a technical definition *called nutrient recycling*. A comment on the tree's long roots is then added.

Thus the caption texts shown in Figure 3 comprise a macro-explanation, pictorially supported by the action vectors in the diagram. Only one of the captions has a canonical Phenomenon Explanation structure (Text 5). The conditional explanation about seeding and flowering has no Phenomenon stage; and the leaf colour and branch shape captions are related to factors in the factorial explanation (Text 4). Figure 3 thus illustrates the way in which canonical genres can be abbreviated as captions in multimodal texts to the point where they depend on images and/or related verbal texts for their interpretation.

Summing up, we have reviewed trajectories along which the canonical structure of genres may be re-contextualised in macro-genres and multimodal texts. Macro-genres assemble two or more elemental genres into a longer text (e.g. the report, and factorial, conditional and sequential explanations discussed above). This may involve adjusting headings and opening stages (e.g. Classification and Phenomenon) to fit the elemental genres smoothly into the macro-genre, including omitting one or the other stage or both; at the same time it may involve adding additional headings and opening stages introducing the macro-genre (e.g. the macro-explanation Title and Phenomenon stages noted above). In multimodal texts, verbiage and image share the work of building the field of the text, and verbal elemental genres are adapted for this purpose. Here report and explanation genres may be drastically abbreviated as captions, often to the point where they depend on the image they are accompanying, or the more complete verbal text they are illustrating for interpretation.

Clearly many students would find these complex relations between texts, verbiage and image difficult to interpret without explicit guidance from teachers. It is often assumed that colourful images and interesting layouts make such texts more engaging and meaningful for students, without considering the complexity they add to the reading task. In fact it is the teacher that can make texts both engaging and comprehensible, whether they are magazine-like or more traditional textbooks. In this respect, key classroom genres developed by the Sydney School are Preparing for Reading, Detailed Reading, and Rewriting, in which students are guided to comprehend a text as it is read, then to identify information in it, make notes, and use the notes to write a new text (Rose 2008, Rose & Martin in press). Identifying the genres involved, as well as the field, is a crucial component of this pedagogy, that enables students to recognise the same genres in other texts.

In some textbooks, magazine style presentation of the subject matter as images and captions has reached the point where unabbreviated instances of canonical genres are nowhere to be found. This in fact puts extra pressure on genre-based reading and writing programs to provide complete models of genres, since adaptations in the instance are easier to interpret with reference to ideal types. Without familiarity with ideal types, many students will have difficulty reading and viewing what is going on in the macro-genres and multimodal texts they so often encounter in their reading and research.

3. Longer story texts

The second example we'll explore is taken from the family of story genres, in particular narrative genres with their characteristic Complication Resolution structure. This time we'll begin with an

ideal type, and then consider how it might be expanded by including i. additional complicating action, ii. dialogue, iii. expressions of attitude, iv. a variety of story phases. The story is adapted from an Australian children's picture book, *Way Home* (Hathorn & Rogers 1995), about a homeless adolescent and a stray cat he adopts one evening on his journey home. This story is rendered as an elemental narrative genre below; several stylistic features of the original story have been retained. The Orientation locates the action and brings together the main characters, Shane and his cat. In the Complication they are chased by a gang, and the Resolution stage documents their escape and continuing journey. Finally, in the Coda, they are safely home.

Orientation

In a dark lane in the city, a dog barked and a cat with no name scrambled up a fence. A boy called Shane saw the little cat He lifted the cat with no name from the top of the fence and put it deep inside his zip-up coat.

Complication

Then the boy climbed over the bins and garbage bags in the lane and walked past a row of seamed-up houses. But halfway down the lane he stopped. A gang of boys was standing in the lane. He pushed the little cat right down into his jacket and he ran hard. But the gang ran hard too. Up the lane, all the way they followed him.

Resolution

At last he ran to a large lit up street with the people going every which way. Right to an edge of a wide shiny river of cars. The boy leaped out on the freeway. There was a blare of horns and a screaming of tongues and tyres. 'Ahhhh,' the boy yelled as he dived through. He knew they wouldn't follow him there. All the way down the other side of the lit up road the boy was laughing and laughing. Shane and the cat went by buildings lit up and buildings in the dark, until there was a path. The boy looked up and looked down. Then he crawled quickly, quickly through a hole in a fence.

Coda

This was his place. 'Here we are,' he said. 'We're home!'

Note that the Complication and Resolution are both signalled with conjunctions, *Then, At last,* and both involve a major shift in the action, from picking up the cat to moving down the lane, then from running up the lane to arriving at the lit up street.

One way of expanding this narrative is to include dialogue. Shane's cat of course won't have much to say; but several of Shane's own utterances are quoted in the expanded version of the story below.

Orientation

In a dark lane in the city, a dog barked and a cat with no name scrambled up a fence. A boy called Shane saw the little cat. **'Heeey, wild cat! Wildcat!'** the boy called Shane laughed, **'Heeey, I like you, Spitfire, Kitten Number One!'** He lifted the cat with no name from the top of the fence and put it deep inside his zip-up coat.

Complication

Then boy climbed over the bins and garbage bags in the lane and walked past a row of seamed-up houses. But halfway down the lane he stopped. A gang of boys was standing in the lane. **'Here's a real nasty sight, Animal! Better belieeeve me,'** he said. **'Uh oh, they're coming. Gotta get out of here. Away from them.'** He pushed the little cat right down into his jacket and he ran hard. But the gang ran hard too. Up the lane, all the way they followed him.

Resolution

At last he ran to a large lit up street with the people going every which way. Right to an edge of a wide shiny river of cars. **'Hold tight, Kittycat, while I scare this lot.'** said Shane. The boy leaped out on the freeway. There was a blare of horns and a screaming of tongues and tyres. 'Ahhhh,' the boy yelled as he dived through. **'Those lames can't follow us here, Catseyes.'** All the way down the other side of the lit up road the boy was laughing and laughing.

Shane and the cat went by buildings lit up and buildings in the dark, until there was a path. The boy looked up and looked down. Then he crawled quickly, quickly through a hole in a fence**.**

Coda

'This is my place. Just like I said. It's okay now. You're safe. Here we are,' he said**. 'We're home!'**

Quoted speech of this kind creates opportunities for building up characterisation, as well as expressing feelings and thoughts. The quoted speech above includes inscriptions of all types of attitude - affect (*like, scare*), judgment (*wild, lames*) and appreciation (*bad, safe*). We can hear the character of the boy Shane speaking in youthful slang here, with expressions such as *'Better belieeeve me... The lames can't follow us here.'* Quoted speech also makes it possible to develop relationships between characters. Shane uses a proliferation of names for the cat (*Wildcat, Spitfire, Kitten Number One, Catlegs, Kittycat, Catseyes, Mycat, Black eyes).* As Poynton has pointed out (1984, 1985/1989, 1990; cf. Martin 1992), naming is an important resource for negotiating solidarity in a relationship, and a proliferation of names builds intimacy. Hathorn uses this resource to establish the adopted cat as Shane's closest friend in the world. The quotations being discussed here are reproduced below, with explicit feeling in bold and naming Vocatives boxed in.

> 'Heeey, **wild** cat! **Wild**cat!'
>
> 'Heeey, I **like** you, Spitfire, Kitten Number One!'
>
> 'Uh oh, they're coming. Gotta get out of here, Catlegs. Away from them.'
>
> 'Something **bad** might happen.'
>
> 'Hold tight, Kittycat, while I **scare** this lot.'
>
> 'Those **lames** can't follow us here, Catseyes.'
>
> 'This is my place, Mycat.'
>
> 'It's okay now. You're **safe**, Black eyes. We're home.'

Another way of expanding story genres of this kind is to include additional Complication and Resolution staging. In effect what is going on here is that the Resolution of one Complication leads on to a further Complication which must in turn be resolved. A second such Complication is introduced below, built up around a dog attack and Shane having to rescue his cat from a tree, and both Complications include more detail, as follows.

Orientation
In a dark lane in the city, a dog barked and a cat with no name scrambled up a fence. A boy called Shane saw the little cat He lifted the cat with no name from the top of the fence and put it deep inside his zip-up coat.

Complication 1
Then boy climbed over the bins and garbage bags in the lane and walked past a row of seamed-up houses. But halfway down the lane he stopped. A gang of boys was standing in the lane. He pushed the little cat right down into his jacket and he ran hard. But the gang ran hard too. Up the lane, all the way they followed him.

Resolution 1
At last he ran to a large lit up street with the people going every which way. Right to an edge of a wide shiny river of cars. The boy leaped out on the freeway. There was a blare of horns and a screaming of tongues and tyres. 'Ahhhh,' the boy yelled as he dived through. He knew they wouldn't follow him there. All the way down the other side of the lit up road the boy was laughing and laughing.

Complication 2
Along the street they went, past the light-and-stripe of the slatted shop blinds, past houses all lit up, past a thin forlorn park. The boy called Shane peered down another long lane and decided to head that way home.
But a dark shape came bounding out of the long lane. And the cat with no name saw a flash of cruel teeth, heard the angry loud bark of the monster dog, smelled the blood and the hunger and danger.

Quick, in a panic, the cat jumped out of the coat, onto the fence, and into a tree. Then up and up and up he climbed. The cat scratched and scratched to the topmost, thinnest branches. It was hanging high in the night city sky.

Resolution 2

Patiently, the boy called Shane, hand over hand, climbed up and up towards the topmost, thinnest branches. His steady brown hand reached out Soon the cat was in the soft zippered jacket again and all the warmth against the chest of the boy called Shane.

Hand over hand, branch over branch, down the slippery trunk to the tindery fence. It was an easy jump to the ground. The boy called Shane took the cat with no name back down. They went by buildings lit up and buildings in the dark, until there was a path. The boy looked up and looked down. Then he crawled quickly, quickly through a hole in a fence.

Shane and the cat went by buildings lit up and buildings in the dark, until there was a path. The boy looked up and looked down. Then he crawled quickly, quickly through a hole in a fence.

Coda

This was his place. 'Here we are,' he said. 'We're home!'

Treating Complication Resolution staging as a recursive resource in this way makes it possible to indefinitely extend a narrative. The faster and more unexpectedly new Complications arise, the more drama is added to the tale. Without appropriate scaffolding, young writers find this way of developing their stories more challenging than might be expected since they often find it is easier to get characters into trouble than to get them out again. Thus many teachers will have encountered anti-climactic 'easy-out' endings such as *Then I woke up* or *Just at that moment a wizard appeared* when a convincing Resolution defies imagination. Careful work by teacher and students building field, and pre-writing planning for story staging can help students avoid getting stuck at crisis points in this way.

4. Phases in story genres

In addition to expanding the narrative with another Complication and Resolution, the plot within each Complication is also expanded with a series of events that are problems for the boy and cat - seeing the gang, being chased, seeing the dog; and the characters react to these problems by expressing their feelings – saying 'here's a real a nasty sight', running away from the gang, jumping up a tree in panic, which then creates another problem. The boy also reacts in the first Resolution by laughing. The second Resolution is also built up with a series of events, as the boy climbs up, rescues the cat, climbs down, and heads home.

A key resource for engaging readers in stories is to create tension with unexpected problems. Reactions serve to intensify this tension, while solutions release the tension. Here is the first Complication again, expanded with a series of problems and reactions.

Orientation	In a dark lane in the city, a dog barked and a cat with no name scrambled up a fence. A boy called Shane saw the little cat He lifted the cat with no name from the top of the fence and put it deep inside his zip-up coat.
Complication	
setting	Then the boy climbed over the bins and garbage bags in the lane and walked past a row of seamed-up houses.
problem1	But halfway down the lane he stopped. A gang of boys was standing in the lane.
reaction	'Here's a real nasty sight, Animal! Better belieeeve me,' he said. 'That lot down there, they don't like me. Don't panic now, Catlegs. Act kinda cool. Cool, right. That's us.'
problem2	The boy called Shane glanced back. 'Uh oh, they're coming. Gotta get out of here. Away from them.' He pushed the little catface, right down into his jacket. And he ran hard. But the gang ran hard too.
problem3	It was very black down there for the cat in the coat. There was a loud thump and a hard knock and a thud, thud, thud as the boy ran fast. The gang followed.
reaction	'Go! Go!' the boy panted.

problem4	Up the lane, all the way the gang followed.
reaction	Fast as anything, scared as anything the boy ran. 'Go! Get away! Go!'

The Complication here begins by re-setting the action, from picking up the cat to moving down the lane. The first problem is then signalled with counterexpectant *But*, and is intensified by the boy's reaction, expressing his feelings about the gang (telling the cat to not panic and act cool imply that he is feeling frightened himself). The tension then worsens with the second problem, as the gang follows, the boy runs and the gang chases him. The third problem shifts perspective to the cat, unable to see, but feeling and hearing the chase, intensified again by the boy's reaction, *Go! Go!* The fourth problem extends the tension, and the boy's fear is now explicit, *scared as anything*. This kind of pattern, in which tension is built up through a series of worsening problems and intensifying reactions, is a very common way of constructing Complications in narratives (whether there is a single Complication or more than one Complication).

As well as expressions of feelings in reactions, another device for engaging readers in stories is by characters reflecting on the events. Reflections are typically expressed as characters' thoughts, but in this particular story, Shane reflects on the events by speaking to the cat. Here is the Resolution and Coda again, expanded as a series of events and reflections.

Resolution	
setting	At last he ran to a large lit up street with the people going every which way. Right to an edge of a wide shiny river of cars.
solution	Suddenly the boy leaped out on the freeway. There was a blare of horns, a screaming of tongues and tyres. But the cat with no name felt safe in the boy's jacket. 'Ahhhh,' the boy called Shane yelled as he dived through. They wouldn't follow him here.
reaction	And all the way down the other side of the lit up road the boy was laughing and laughing.
events	Along the street they went, past the light-and-stripe of the slatted shop blinds, past houses all lit up, past a thin forlorn park. They went and went by buildings lit up and buildings in the dark, until there was a path.
reflection	'Not far now. Yeah. It's spooky right here. But we got each other, right? Tread light, Shane boy. Real light.'
events	The boy looked up and looked down. Then he crawled quickly, quickly through a hole in a fence.
reflection	'From here on it's okay as anything, Noname. No dogs, I promise. No fights. And milk like I told you. Heaps of it. Hang on now, we're nearly home. Down there and round here and we're almost – hey, hold on real tight a minute, through here and yes, yes!'
Coda	
reflection	'This is it, Mycat! This is my place. Just like I said. It's okay now. You're safe. Here we are. We're home!'

The Resolution begins first by re-setting the action as they arrive on the bright street, followed by the unexpected solution as Shane leaps out on the freeway, signalled by counterexpectant *Suddenly*. The release of tension created by this solution is then intensified by Shane's laughing reaction. This is followed by a series of events as they head home, interspersed with Shane's reflections about the secure home and friendship he is offering the cat.

Story phases such as settings, problems, reactions and solutions are basic building blocks that authors and storytellers use to create stories of various kinds. They manipulate these phases creatively to engage readers and listeners in the story. Common types of story phases include the options in Table 1 (Martin & Rose 2008, Rose 2005, 2006).

Table 1: Phases for story genres

phase types	engagement functions
setting	presenting people, activities, places
description	describing people, things, places
problem	unexpected events creating tension
solution	events releasing tension
events	expected events
effect	expected result
reaction	participants' feelings
reflection	participants' thoughts
comment	narrator explains

Settings introduce people, activities and places at the start of a stage (the start of the Orientation, Complication or Resolution). Descriptions pause a sequence of events to describe people, things or places. Problems create tension with unexpected events; solutions release this tension. Unlike problems, ordinary events are expected within the storyline and do not create tension. Effects are the outcome or result of events. Reactions express characters' feelings; they intensify the tension of a problem or the relief at a solution, or enhance a description (e.g. pleasure at a sunset). Reflections are characters' thoughts about the events (rather than feelings); they are typically about the meaning of the events for the characters. Comments are made by the narrator of the story, to explain what is going on, or draw a conclusion, such as a moral message.

Story phases can be expressed in many different ways. For example, we saw above how reactions may be expressed by speech - *'Go! Go!' the boy panted*, by behaviour - *the boy was laughing and laughing,* and by action - *Fast as anything, scared as anything the boy ran.* For this reason we cannot rely on grammar to identify phases, just as we would not start with grammatical choices to plan a story. Phases are the steps in which the field unfolds through a story - its plot. To identify stages and phases we must look for shifts in the sequence of activities, from settings to problems and solutions, and from the outer world of events to the inner realm of reactions and reflections. Then we can ask how these elements of the plot are realised grammatically. In this respect story phases are no different from phases in other genres. For example, we saw that the factorial explanation in Text 3 above included three factors, which were the phases of the explanation. Likewise the conditional explanation in Text 4 included a series of conditions and effects, and a final ecological comment, which were its phases.

Phases in all types of texts are typically expressed graphologically by paragraphs, although there is sometimes more than one phase to a paragraph, for instance a problem-solution pair or problem-reaction pair, or factors or conditions as in Texts 3 and 4. Phases may be expressed by a single sentence, but typically by more than one sentence. A common analysis error is to label each sentence or clause as a phase. Phases typically involve multiple sentences.

Finally, we can note that Hathorn uses a variety of rhythmic devices to enhance the sensation of action and emotion in the story. For example, when they are running from the gang, a series of short exclamations, and punctuation between each phrase gives a staccato effect. *'Go! Go!' the boy panted. Up the lane, all the way, the gang followed. Fast as anything, scared as anything, the boy ran. 'Go! Get away! Go!'* This staccato effect contrasts with the flowing effect of repetition in sentences such as: *Hand over hand, branch over branch, down the slippery trunk they went.*

In sum, some of the resources that authors can use to expand story genres include:
- Extending a narrative with additional Complications and Resolutions.

- Expanding each stage in a story with phases that engage us in characters' problems, feelings, thoughts and relationships, or by describing people, things and places.
- Quoting the speech of protagonists to reveal their character and build relationships.
- Expressing attitudes and solidarity with appraisals and naming.
- Varying the rhythm to enhance action and emotion.

To enable all students to use these kinds of resources effectively in their writing requires more scaffolding than simply showing them the stages of a story genre. Rather they need to be guided to jointly identify the variety of language resources used in a well written model story, and to follow the same patterns in Joint Construction of a new story, before using the same patterns again in their own Individual Constructions. As always, metalanguage is a crucial tool in this process. As each type of resource is encountered repeatedly in model texts they can be named, until all students recognise what the names refer to. Stages and phases can be labelled on the model text, and again in the Joint and Individual Constructions.

4. Recontextualisation

In short, what we have been considering here, is some of the ways in which ideal genres get recontextualised as texts adapt to the cultural niche in which they appear. As outlined in section 2, this may mean adapting themselves to the formation of a macro-genre including two or more elemental genres – including the possibility of macro-genres within macro-genres (e.g. the macro-explanation forming part of the macro-report presented as Figure 1 above). Fitting neatly into a macro-genre may involve adjusting or omitting the title and opening and closing stages of a genre, as well as the introduction of higher level titles and introductions scaffolding a macro-genre as a whole.

We also considered some of the ways in which a genre may adapt itself to the formation of a multimodal text, focussing on an example where most captions act as a bridge between longer written texts and the images themselves. Since captions in this inter-modal context share the work of building field with images and longer verbal texts, they may themselves be considerably abbreviated, involving fewer stages that canonical genres, perhaps simply a single stage (e.g. the leaf and tree shape captions in Figure 1). Conversely they may at times extend the information presented elsewhere, for example expanding one factor in a factorial explanation into a canonical sequential explanation genre (as happened for nutrient re-cycling in Figure 1).

Finally we considered some ways in which a canonical genre can be extended to form longer texts. In story genres phases can be introduced within stages to develop setting, sensual imagery, counterexpectation and evaluation as appropriate. Dialogue can be added to build up characters and their relationships. Writers can also replay potentially recursive stages such as Complication and Resolution for a range of dramatic effects. We might think of this as stretching out a canonical genre (as opposed to combining elemental genres with one another and/or with images as in Figure 1). Masterful deployment of resources of this kind underlies the creation of highly valued story genres, such as those commonly introduced in student readers and prized by teachers when written by students themselves.

Whether combining or stretching genres, what we are exploring here is the flexibility inherent in the instantiation process relating a culture's system of genres to actual texts. The apparent gap between ideal genres and real world texts is in fact an inherent feature of social semiosis as a

communication system. Genres flexibly adapt themselves to co-textual, inter-modal and contextual environments as needs arise; and some adaptations, if recurring often enough, give rise to new genres as a culture evolves.

As far as literacy education is concerned, the important point here is that without control of a system of ideal genres students will struggle to read texts which combine and stretch genres since they can't see what is being combined or what is being stretched. And they will struggle to consciously adapt their written texts to novel tasks and high stakes assessment. Mixed texts are thus in fact an argument for teaching genres, not for avoiding them – initially using ideal types as models for writing, and moving to longer and more complex instances of language use once students have mastered the basics. And the basics for literacy apprenticeship necessarily include learning the genres of schooling.

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