

**Remember:
read the
Teacher Notes
first!**

Lesson 1

Bringing in ideas about visual and multimodal texts¹

Learning intention

Describe a visual or multimodal text with a message about the rail network.

We have provided assessment rubrics at the back of this document (Appendix) for guidance as to how students may achieve the learning intention to differentiated standards.



Teacher Alert

*Year 7 students should concentrate on the use of **gaze, angle and social distance** to create perspective in their multimodal text.*

*Year 8 students should concentrate on any **allusions to other texts** that enhance and/or layer the meaning of their multimodal text.*

¹ Multimodal text: “A combination of two or more communication modes (for example, print, image and spoken text, as in film or computer presentations).” <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/english/glossary>

1.1 Define terms

- What is a visual text?
- What is a multimodal text?

Ask students to:

- **brainstorm** everything they know about visual and multimodal texts. Use text, quotes, drawings and/or images to express these ideas. Ask students to place these ideas on a separate blank hexagon. They can do this electronically using the HookED SOLO Hexagon Generator: <http://pamhook.com/solo-apps/hexagon-generator/> or manually using the included resource **HookED Hexagon Template**.
- **make connections** between individual hexagons by looking for reasons to make straight edge connections (tessellating the hexagons). Students should explain orally or by annotation why they have made the connection.
- **explore** the node where three hexagons share a corner (or simply look at a cluster of hexagons) and make a generalisation about the nature of the connected ideas.

Ask students to step back from the resulting tessellation (clusters of hexagons) and make a group/class claim – “Overall we think a ‘visual text’/‘multimodal text’ is [make a claim] ... because [give a reason] ... because [give evidence].” Keep these definition statements as evidence.

Clarify meaning and create start-up definitions for any of the technical terms students will need to use when looking for **representational** meanings, **interactive** meanings and **compositional** meanings within the text, and between the text and the viewer. For example:

Representational meaning: content, social context, colour, symbolism, reading paths, vectors, processes, actions, reactions.

Interactive meaning: image, act, gaze, framing, social distance, modality, background, colour, lightness, saturation, power, status.

Compositional meaning: salience, positioning, layout, framing, typeface, language techniques, lighting.

Use the included resource **Question prompts for analysing visual and multimodal texts** to assist with this activity.

Extension: Create a class glossary with images, appropriate technical vocabulary and prompts for analysing text for representational, interactive or compositional meaning. Refer to and develop the glossary throughout the unit.

1.2 Describe a visual or multimodal text used to communicate a message

Part A: Supported deconstruction of a visual or multimodal image

Model the use of technical language when describing a visual or multimodal text designed to communicate a message. Add annotations and mark-ups to identify and explain attributes as you describe them.

Look at how the words, images and shapes work together to communicate a message in a visual or multimodal text.

Deconstruct the text and observe how the different elements work together.

Ask students to:

- Identify any **participants** (people, places and things – who, where and what) shown in the text; describe how they are connected/interact with each other within the text and how they are positioned to connect/interact with the viewer of the text.
- Identify any **reference** to, appropriation of or mashup with historical events; social or cultural icons/symbols/referents; or popular media.

Use the question prompts resource to look for **representational** meanings, **interactive** meanings and **compositional** meanings within the visual or multimodal text.

Demonstrate how these representational, interactive and compositional elements are used to put the viewer at ease and engage them with the text through a sense of:

- **unity**, created through proximity – the position of text elements,
- **balance**, created through placement of heavy and light elements – symmetrical, asymmetrical, discordant,
- **dominance**, created through **salience** – making the most important element/s stand out; through **contrast** between any elements in the design; and through the provision of a **focal point**, and
- **rhythm, repetition or consistency**, created through repeated use of the design elements.

Part B: Independent deconstruction of a visual or multimodal text image

Ask students to find their own example of a visual or multimodal text with image(s) featuring **travel by rail** in the present or the past. Look for visual and multimodal texts in advertisements, book covers, railway posters, film promotions, film stills, cartoons, children’s story books, CD covers, online media including blog posts and web pages, photographs etc. *Note: Our high school student media library <http://tracksafeeducation.com.au/students/high/media-library/> might be a good place to start. Teachers should approve the visual or multimodal text selected for this activity to ensure it can provide for the depth of analysis expected at Year 7 and Year 8.*

Ask students to describe the multimodal text using the See Think Wonder strategy and the included **HookED Describe ++ Map**.

Each student places their visual or multimodal text in the centre of a large sheet of newspaper.

Ask students:

- **What do you see?** Describe what you see in rectangles or Post-it notes placed around the edge of the text. Use technical language where appropriate. Use the features and techniques discussed in the previous activity to help you choose important visual features and techniques that catch your attention or make an impact on you in some way – for example, placement, salience, framing, representation of action or reaction, shot size, gaze, social distance, angle, dominant image, colour, font, symbolism, unity, balance, contrast, repetition, rhythm, appeal to cognitive biases.
- **Why do you think it is like that?** Use the speech bubbles to explain why you think it is like that. Why has it been used? Consider representational meanings, interactive meanings and compositional meanings. Ask, “How does it help me understand what the text is about? How does it affect the viewer (me)?”
- **What does it make you wonder?** In the thought bubbles, suggest what the use of this feature or technique make you wonder.

Ask students to step back from the map and think about how these features and techniques work together (are integrated) in the visual or multimodal text. What is the effect of these visual language features on the viewer? What was the writer’s purpose? How effective was the combined use of these features and techniques?

Then ask students: What bigger ideas are communicated through this visual or multimodal text? Think in terms of social, political, cultural and environmental contexts and the time the text was made. Add these as annotations to the map.

Extension: Ask students to prepare and deliver a three- to five-minute presentation combining print, visual and audio elements to interpret ideas, and drawing on knowledge and research about the use of visual and/or multimodal texts in rail safety education.

Appendix: Differentiated assessment rubrics

We have provided guidance for how students may achieve differentiated standards within these learning activities.

English

This rubric may assist you in assessing student achievements within the Australian Curriculum. Results can be recorded via your usual assessment record method.

Describe a visual or multimodal text with a message about the rail network.

Extended ideas	My description of a visual or multimodal text identifies the use of several elements (representational, compositional, and/or interactive) to communicate meaning AND explains how these elements help communicate meaning AND makes a generalisation about the effectiveness of the combined use of these elements to communicate meaning.
Related ideas	My description of a visual or multimodal text identifies the use of several elements (representational, compositional, and/or interactive) to communicate meaning AND explains how these elements help communicate meaning.
Loose ideas	My description of a visual or multimodal text identifies the use of several elements (representational, compositional, and/or interactive) to communicate meaning.

Rail Safety

This rubric may assist you in assessing student achievements within the suggested rail safety outcomes of this lesson. Results can be reflected in the included [assessment of learning](#).

Identify potential hazards on and around the rail network.

(What are potential hazards on and around the rail network?)

Extended ideas	<p>I can identify many relevant hazards for people on and around the rail network <i>[using text, oral language, drawing, visual arts, dance, drama, music etc.]</i> AND can explain why these hazards need to be managed to keep people safe AND can reflect on my role in helping to manage these hazards.</p>
Related ideas	<p>I can identify many relevant hazards for people on and around the rail network <i>[using text, oral language, drawing, visual arts, dance, drama, music etc.]</i> AND can explain why these hazards need to be managed to keep people safe.</p>
Loose ideas	<p>I can identify many relevant hazards for people on and around the rail network <i>[using text, oral language, drawing, visual arts, dance, drama, music etc.].</i></p>