

## Frenkel, D. & Snell, D. (2024). *The truck cat*

This text is about a curious cat, Tinka, travelling in a truck with his companion, Yacoub, who has recently arrived in Australia. When Tinka gets separated from Yacoub, he is rescued by a kind baker named Mari, who offers him a home. The eventual reunion—sparked by the familiar scent of Mari’s bakery—leads to a new beginning for all three characters.

Target: K/P - 1

English textual concepts: *narrative; character; connotation, imagery and symbol.*

### Suggested teaching sequence:

This teaching sequence is not suggested as a stand-alone activity; it should be built into a cohesive unit of work, perhaps incorporating other texts that amplify the common English textual concept(s).

Day	Teaching focus	Activity
Monday	Oral language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Invite students to bring in favourite toy trucks and display them in the classroom. Students orally share with the class why they are special (oral language focus). Orally build noun groups together to describe each truck. Record on whiteboard to scaffold writing.</li><li>- Students share cat stories, including favourite cats, breed, what funny things they do. <i>What type of cat is your cat?</i></li><li>- Both of these oral activities are a segue to modelled, guided and independent writing activities and at the same time, they activate background knowledge for the upcoming text.</li><li>- Share where students’ families come from and locate on a world map. Talk about what it may be like for immigrants when they first arrive in a new country. Some students may have family stories to share if they wish to. You may have a family member who is happy to talk to the class about their experiences and answer their questions. <i>What might be the hardest part of moving to a new country and settling in?</i></li><li>- Discuss the cover of <i>The truck cat</i> (front and back). Note the powerful symbol on title page (Big Pineapple) - a placegetter which sets the scene for the text. <i>What do you think this book is about? Why do you think that?</i></li><li>- Take a picture walk through the book, to help students make predictions and connections. Encourage students to discuss the illustrations, activating background knowledge. <i>What do you see? What is</i></li></ul>
AC9EFLE01	Activating background knowledge/ Orientation to text	
AC9EFLE02	Review/ discuss cover and illustrations	
AC9MUFE01	Visual literacy	
AC9EFLA08	Vocabulary	

		<i>happening?</i> Frontload/ pre-teach challenging vocabulary prior to reading the text to the class e.g. <i>apartment, passenger, silences, mewling, daintiest.</i>
Tuesday	Read-aloud  Reading prosody  AC9EFLA06 Figurative language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The teacher reads the text aloud with expression (prosody). Encourage children to respond during the story.</li> <li>- Re-read the text and encourage students to join in.</li> <li>- Pause, identify and discuss the meaning of the figurative language in the text. Notice how words can have a literal and a figurative meaning. For example, <i>Tinka lived everywhere, make a living, keep an eye out.</i> Have copies of the text available for students to explore/discuss the text individually and with peers.</li> <li>- Students illustrate an example of figurative language from text. Write it below illustration. Share with class.</li> </ul>
Wednesday	Fluency  AC9EFLE02 Character  AC9EFLA05 Grammar AC9MUFC01 Creative arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Re-read the text to the class.</li> <li>- Find the words and pictures in the text that describe the characters: Truck Cat, Yacoub, Marie.</li> <li>- Draw character maps: diagrams of each character and write words (noun groups, adjectives) inside them, sharing what you know of each character to display in the classroom. Write a description of each of the characters. <i>How do the main characters interact? What words and picture tell us this?</i></li> <li>- Follow the story paths in the text - the butterfly and the cat on the highway... <i>over, under, here, there, over, under.</i></li> <li>- Have copies of the text available for students to explore/ discuss the text individually and with peers.</li> </ul>
Thursday	Fluency  AC9EFLY09 Alliteration  AC9EFLE01 Writing Oral language  AC9EFLY05 Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Put text on IWB. Invite students to read along with teacher, focusing on prosody.</li> <li>- Explain what alliteration is. Alliteration is a writing tool where words begin with the same sound—typically a consonant—used to create rhythm, mood, or emphasis in writing.</li> <li>- Locate alliteration in the text e.g. <i>beetles in bathtubs, rats in rafters, depots with dragonflies.</i></li> <li>- Students practise writing their own alliterative phrases. e.g. from text, <i>Lorikeets landed in the lemon trees and pigeons pecked in the petunias.</i> Share.</li> <li>- Question students about the text, focusing on meaning making e.g. <i>Why do you think the other truckers didn't understand Yacoub's jokes and his words? How did this make him feel? How could they have helped him more? What did Mari and Yacoub have in common? What words in the text tell us this?</i> E.g. <i>They didn't talk to him.</i></li> <li>- Exit slip question: <i>What might be tough for someone settling into life in Australia?</i> (formative assessment)</li> </ul>
Friday	Fluency  AC9EFLA06 Connotation, imagery and symbol  Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide opportunities for students to re-read the text in pairs/small groups, building reading fluency.</li> <li>- Talk about how words and images can signify more than what they denote (connotation, image and symbol), e.g. the title page shows The Big Pineapple (Nambour, Queensland), <i>Home is everywhere</i>, and Tinka is <i>an everywhere cat</i>. The song, <i>I've been everywhere</i> (Geoff Mack, 1962) is a great match here. It has cultural significance to the text - <a href="#">words</a> and <a href="#">music</a>. Students could keep the beat with simple percussion whilst performing the song.</li> </ul>

AC9MUFC01	Creative Arts Narrative	- Follow the story paths in the text -the butterfly and the cat on the highway... <i>over, under, here, there, over, under.</i>
AC9EFLA02	Reflection	- Learn about prepositions and how they position the noun in the text. Make a <a href="#">preposition poster</a> using the trucks students brought to school, to display in the classroom (photograph and caption). - Students reflect on/ draw their favourite scene in the text and caption it - telling what is happening in the picture and why they chose this illustration from the text. Order illustrations to form a story path and display them. <i>What comes first, next, then... and finally... . Why was this scene special for you?</i>