



# READING BEYOND

2008 AAEGT National  
Conference

Michelle Bannister-Tyrrell

# 2007 Program for International Student Assessment

- ▣ Australian 15 year olds are slipping down the world literacy rankings
- ▣ “Australia's ranking in reading has gone down from 2003 and 2006 because there are fewer Australian students who can read at a high level, which is lowering the average,” Professor Masters (Australian Council for Education Research) said.

# 2007 Program for International Student Assessment

- ▣ Not because literacy standards have decreased
- ▣ The education system was performing well overall, providing high quality and equity ...
- ▣ "Student performances appear to be less dependent on their socio-economic backgrounds than they were in the past,"

# 2007 Program for International Student Assessment

Julia Gillard said the results showed the decline in reading literacy was at the high-achieving end

and meant :

“Quite a number of Australian kids are failing to reach their full potential.”









Time  
restraints for  
planning  
multi-level  
reading  
program



Lack of  
knowledge  
how to  
create  
programs  
for  
talented  
readers



“Not all gifted students are talented readers  
not all talented readers are gifted students.”

Durking & Jackson,

# Characteristics of Talented Readers



Enjoyment of the  
Reading Process

- Reads avidly, with enjoyment
- Uses different strategies for different purposes
- Demonstrates a thirst for knowledge
- Pursues varied interests in & curiosity about texts
- Views books & reading as a way to explore the richness of life
- Seeks & enjoys depth and complexity in reading
- Develops a deeper understanding of particular topics through reading
- Demonstrates preferences for non-fiction
- Pursues interest-based reading opportunities.



# Characteristics of Talented Readers



Reads Early and  
Above Level

- Reads at least two grade levels above chronological grade placement
- Begins reading early and may be self-taught.

# Characteristics of Talented Readers

Advanced  
processing

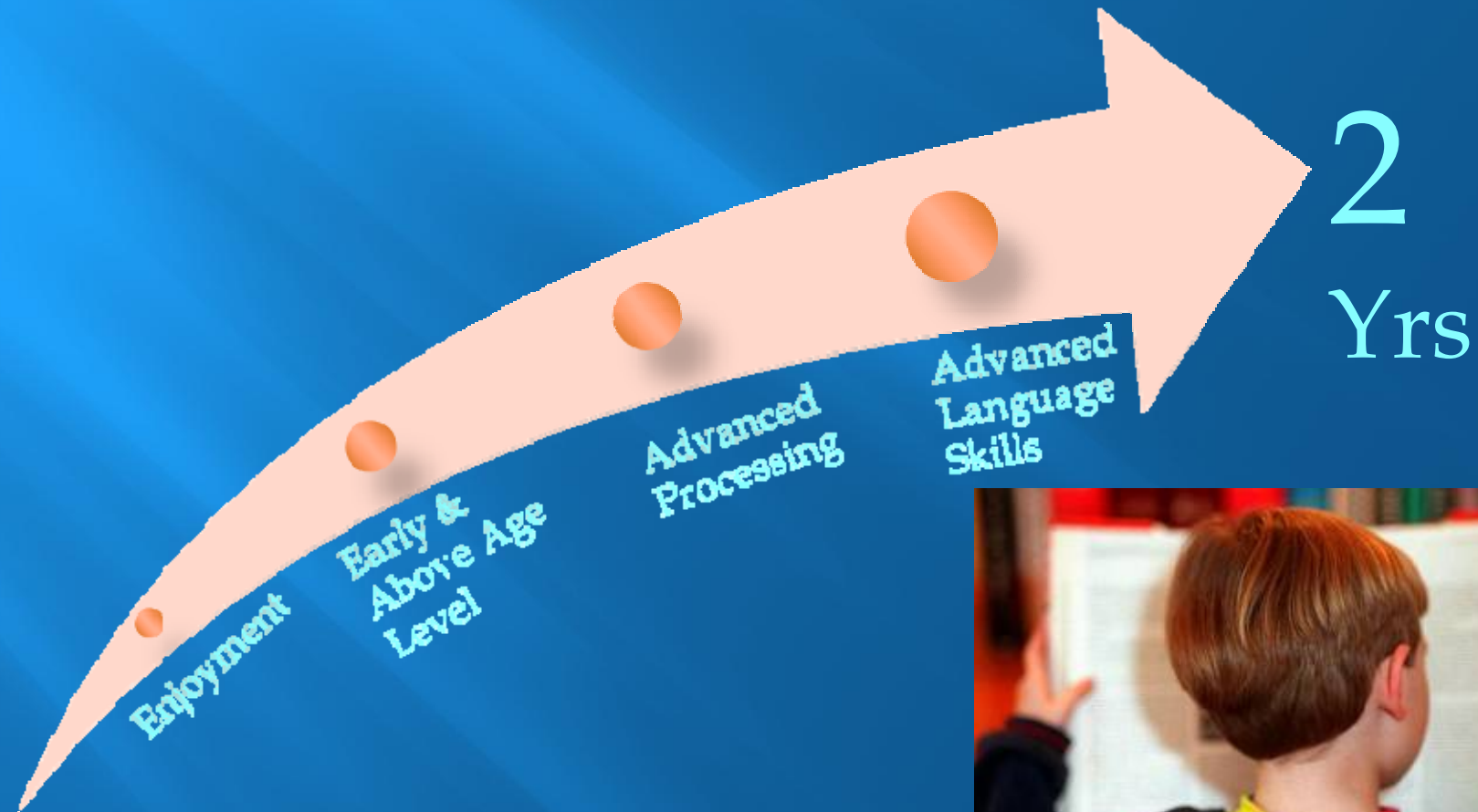
- Retain a large quantity of information for retrieval
- Automatically integrate prior knowledge and experience in reading
- Synthesise ideas in a comprehensive way
- Perceive unusual relationships and integrate ideas
- Grasp complex ideas and nuances

# Characteristics of Talented Readers

Advanced  
language skills

- Enjoy the subtleties and complexities of language
- Demonstrate advanced understanding of language skills
- Use language for humour
- Display verbal ability in self-expression
- Use colourful and descriptive phrasing
- Demonstrate ease in the use of language.

# So what does this mean?



# Reading Beyond

## LOGICAL SOLUTION

- ▣ take that student onto the next Stage or reading Level

## PROBLEM

- ▣ Resourcing





# Reading Beyond

## LOGICAL SOLUTION

- ▣ Extend beyond Primary Exit Outcomes

## PROBLEM

- ▣ Lack of Secondary training
- ▣ Stay in your own area!



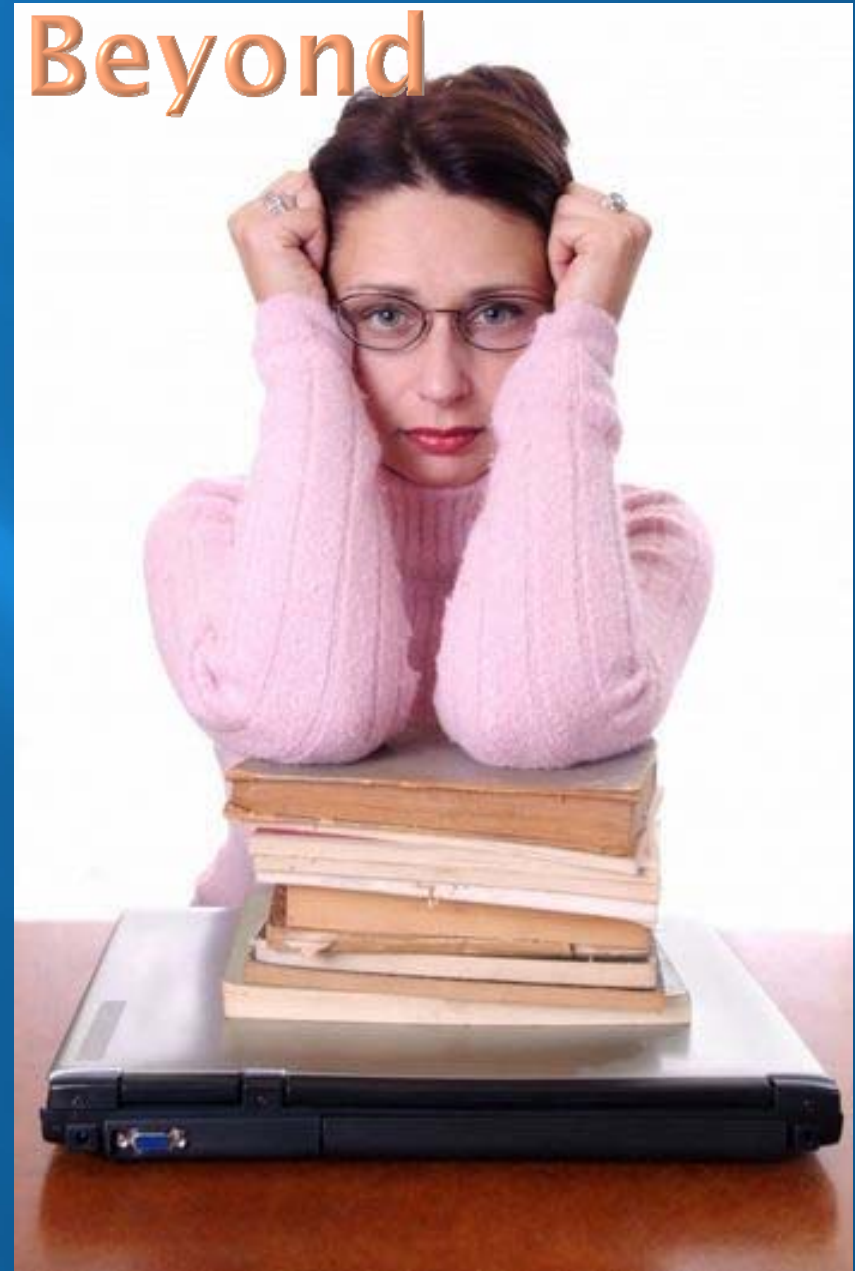
# Reading Beyond

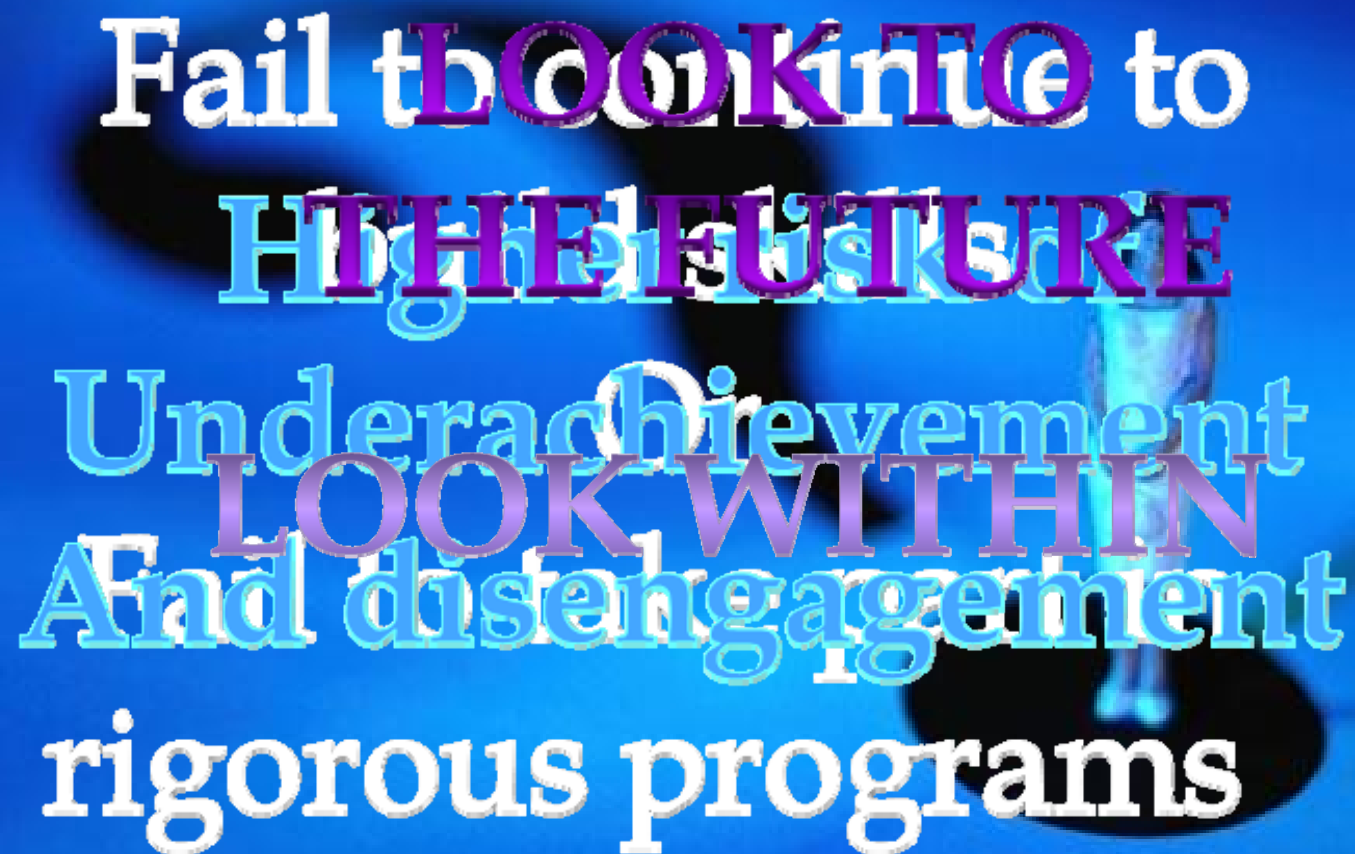
## LOGICAL SOLUTION

- ▣ Choose their own novels

## PROBLEM

- ▣ Plateau
- ▣ Skills development stops
- ▣ Disengage in Secondary



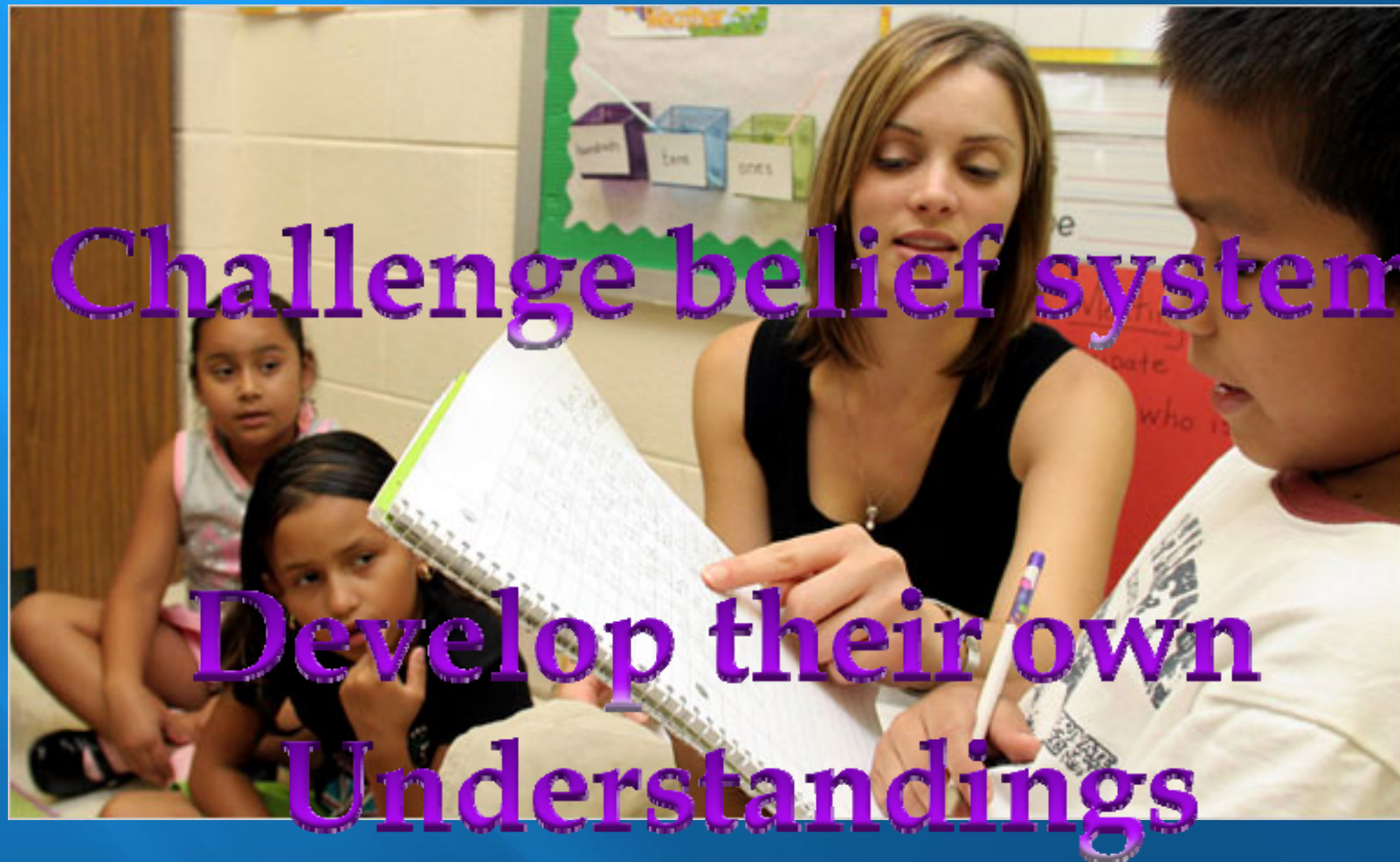


Fail to continue to  
LOOK TO  
HIGHER RISKS  
Underachievement  
LOOK WITHIN  
And disengagement  
rigorous programs





# Critically analyse texts



Challenge belief systems

Develop their own

Understandings





# Reading Philosophies

## *TRADITIONAL READING*



- ▣ Content-based understanding
- ▣ Knowledge is cumulative, linear, fact as opposed to opinion
- ▣ Texts are either neutral or biased.
- ▣ Language is fixed and the tool through which reality & truth are accessed.



# Reading Philosophies

## *CRITICAL READING*

- ▣ Truth exists, and is accessible
- ▣ Texts may be represented truthfully or falsely
- ▣ Focus on context, intention and style of communication
- ▣ Language is fixed

## *CRITICAL LITERACY*

- ▣ Examine meaning within texts
- ▣ Purpose of text
- ▣ Composer's motives
- ▣ Texts are not neutral
- ▣ Questioning ways the text has been constructed
- ▣ Analysing power of language



## Emily Rodda

Emily Rodda's real name is Jennifer Rowe. She is a children's author and has written many books. Her first books, *Rowan of Rhin* won the Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year for Younger Readers Award when it first came out. She has won this prize 5 TIMES! Emily Rodda is also an author of adult mysteries and writes them under her real name, Jennifer Rowe. She has been a full time author since 1994 and has since then become one of Australia's most popular children's author.

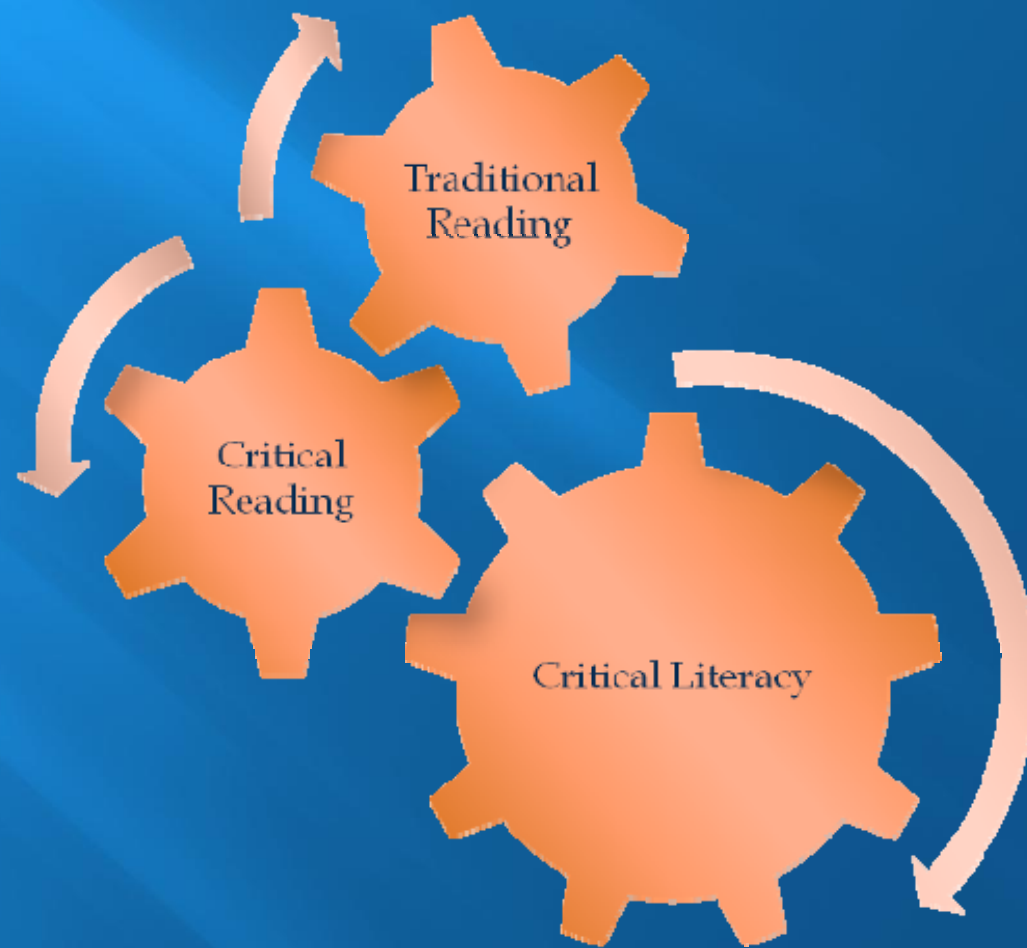


- '...Reading is not simply decoding symbols on a page. Reading is 'a social practice, comprised of interpretive rules and events constructed and learned in institutions like schools, families and workplaces' *(Luke 1997)*



# Not just 'reading' texts but '*interrogating*' texts!





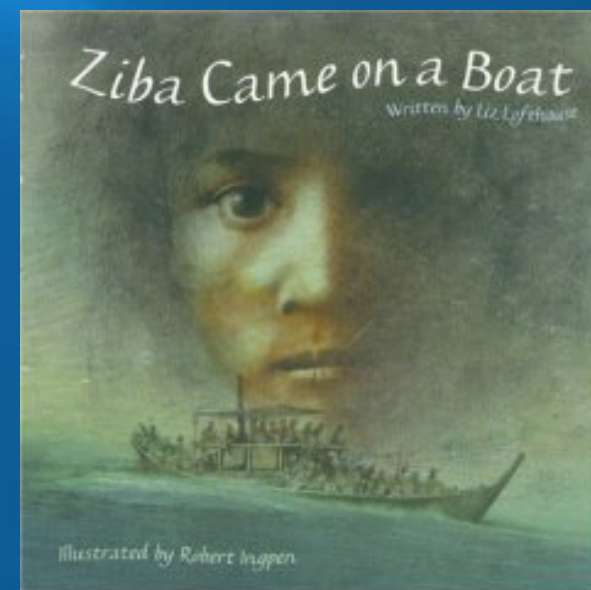
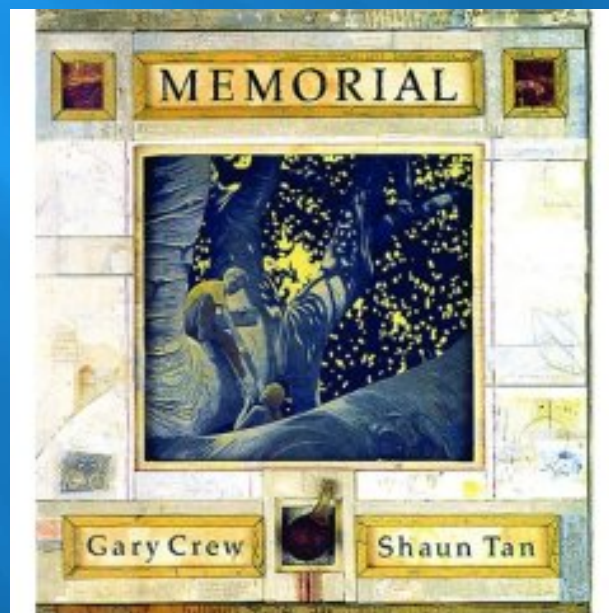
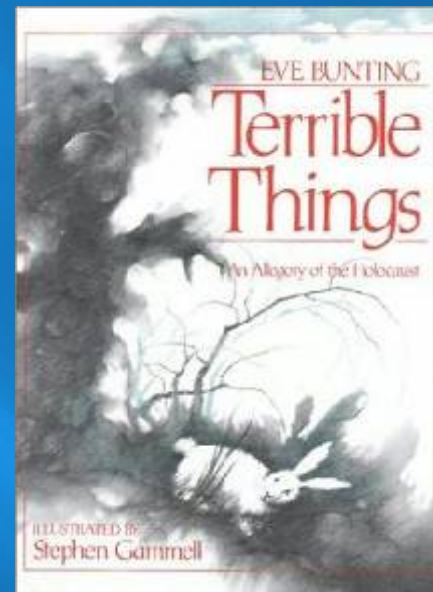
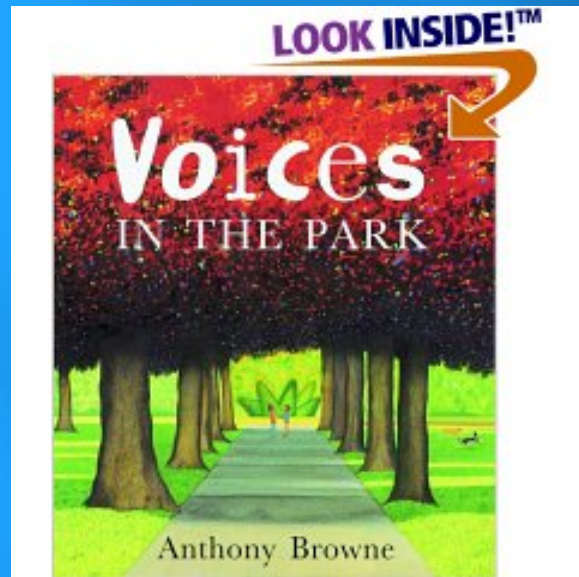
	<b>Traditional Reading</b>	<b>Critical Reading</b>	<b>Critical Literacy</b>
REALITY	Does this text represent reality?	Is this text a true or false representation of reality?	What or whose reality is represented in this story? What assumptions lie behind this reality?
BIAS	Is this story biased or neutral?	Does the story present a biased perspective?	What is shaping the text's perspectives? Who or What is included and excluded?
COMPOSER	Who is the author and what level of authority does s/he have to create this text?	What is the position / agenda of the author?	What has shaped the author's understandings of what is real, can be known or needs to be done?
MESSAGE / PURPOSE	What is the message of this text?	What is the purpose of this text?	Who benefits from or is hurt by this text? What are the implications of this text? What are the sanctioned blind spots / ignorances / contradictions of the text?
FOR MAT	How has the text been written?	Why has the text been written in this format?	How does the text format strengthen / endorse the message?
AUDIENCE	Is the text suited to the intended audience?	Who is the intended audience of this text?	What assumptions are made of the audience of this text? How would the social and cultural background of the audience influence the reception of this text?



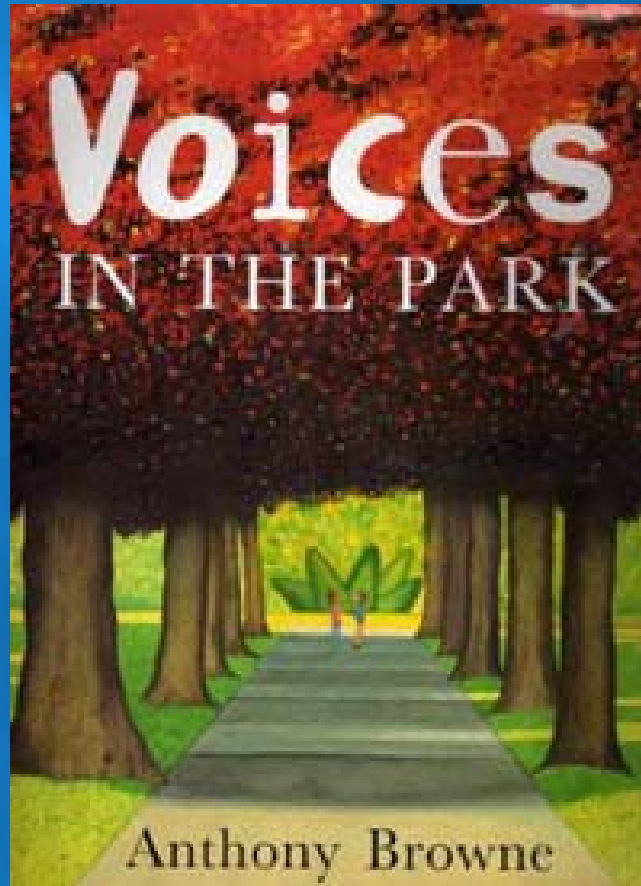
# PICTURE BOOKS











FIRST VOICE



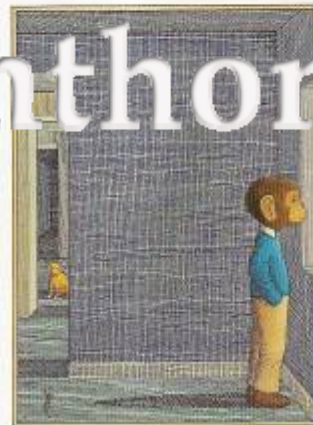
**I**t was time to take Victoria, our pedigree Labrador, and Charles, our son, for a walk.

SECOND VOICE



**I** needed to get out of the house, so me and Smudge took the dog to the park.

THIRD VOICE



**I** was at home on my own again. It's so boring. Then Mummy said that it was time for our walk.

FOURTH VOICE



**D**ad had been really fed up, so I was pleased when he said we could take Albert to the park.

# Voices In The Park

by  
Anthony Browne

# 'Critical books'

Explore  
differences

Give voice to  
traditionally  
silenced groups

How to take  
action on  
important social  
issues

Explore dominant  
social systems

Don't provide  
'happily ever after  
endings' for  
complex issues







Education should not be the transference of information, nor the reproduction of value systems.

Education has the urgent task of equipping people with the necessary 'thinking tools' to make sense of the world, to enable them to understand and evaluate representations of the world.

*(Willeman 2002).*