

AFTER ONE YEAR AT SCHOOL

ILLUSTRATING THE READING STANDARD

The Great Car Clean-out by Margaret Mahy; illustrated by Philip Webb

This text is levelled at Green 2.

In this humorous narrative, Mum asks the family to help her clean out the car. Mum's frustration builds as one family member after another says they are too busy looking for their lost belongings. Finally, she manages to convince the family that this is important and, as they all work together on the car clean-out, they discover the items they have lost.

The story has a theme of co-operation and the benefits of keeping things tidy.

Much of the story is conveyed through dialogue, with the illustrations, layout, and punctuation supporting the meaning and adding to the humour.

Students are likely to be able to draw on their own similar experiences to make connections to the context and setting, providing opportunities for them to make simple inferences and form hypotheses.

The following example highlights the sorts of reading behaviours teachers could expect to observe in students who are meeting the standard. Sometimes these behaviours will be in response to teacher prompts and questions, and sometimes they will be spontaneous as the students notice and respond to the ideas in the text. These behaviours may occur during the first or subsequent readings and discussions.

The student responds to the text by sharing their own experiences of losing things and of having to tidy up.

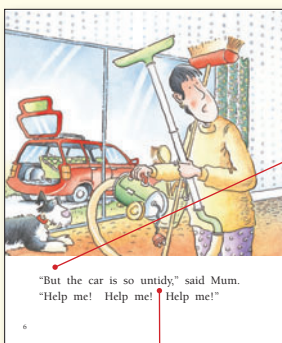


The student can work out the word "cellphone" (which has no illustrative support because it is "lost") by drawing on their grapho-phonetic knowledge, for example, by applying their knowledge that "c" can be pronounced in different ways and that the digraph "ph" has an "f" sound; their knowledge of compound words; and the context.

The student can make an inference about what Dad and the children are like, for example, mostly disorganised and untidy. They may make further comparisons with their own experiences and/or suggest some possible solutions to the problem.

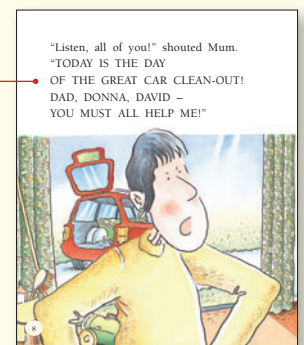
As the story unfolds, the student draws on their own experiences, the illustrations, and Mum's dialogue, to make inferences about Mum's feelings and why she is feeling this way.

The student uses the illustrations and visual information, such as the punctuation (commas, speech marks, exclamation marks, and a dash) and (on page 8) the use of upper-case letters to help them read with appropriate phrasing and expression.

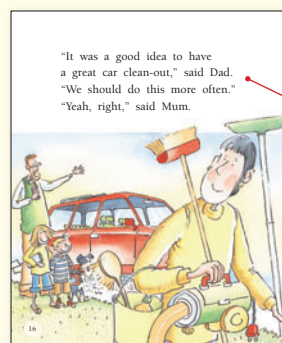


On page 6, the student notices Mum's use of the words "But" and "so" and her repetition of the words "Help me!"

On page 8, the student uses the illustration, the upper-case letters, exclamation marks, imperative language, and the word "shouted" to infer that Mum is getting very frustrated – and to predict that this is likely to be a turning point in the story.



The student works out the word "untidy" by drawing on their knowledge of word structure (the prefix "un"); their grapho-phonetic knowledge (that "i" can have different sounds and that "y" at the end of the word can have an "ee" sound); and the context.



The student can express an opinion about Dad's comment on page 16 and make a prediction about whether the great car clean-out will have a lasting effect on the family's untidy habits.

Once Dad has found his cellphone in the car (on page 11), the student uses their knowledge of the previous lost items to predict that they will also be found in the car.