



Assessment task	
Year level	Year 6
Learning area	English
Subject	Reading
Title of task	Comprehension
Task details	
Description of task	Students will read a modern fairy tale in class and answer short-answer questions
Type of assessment	Reading Comprehension
Purpose of assessment	To assess students' ability to interpret and analyse texts, including authors' choices in representing ideas, characters and events
Assessment strategy	Year 6 and Year 7 Moderation
Evidence to be collected	Student responses
Suggested time	Two lessons of approximately one hour each on consecutive days Lesson 1: Distribution and reading of story, including discussion and note-making Lesson 2: Distribution of questions to be completed individually by students
Content description	
Content from the Western Australian Curriculum	<p><b>Language</b> Understand how authors often innovate on text structures and play with language features to achieve particular aesthetic, humorous and persuasive purposes and effects</p> <p>Investigate how vocabulary choices, including evaluative language can express shades of meaning, feeling and opinion</p> <p><b>Literature</b> Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts</p> <p>Identify and explain how choices in language, for example modality, emphasis, repetition and metaphor, influence personal response to different texts</p> <p>Identify the relationship between words, sounds, imagery and language patterns in narratives and poetry such as ballads, limericks and free verse</p> <p>Analyse and evaluate similarities and differences in texts on similar topics, themes or plots</p> <p><b>Literacy</b> Analyse how text structures and language features work together to meet the purpose of a text</p> <p>Use comprehension strategies to interpret and analyse information and ideas, comparing content from a variety of textual sources including media and digital texts</p>

Task preparation	
<b>Prior learning</b>	<p>In preparing for this task, students should examine a number of fairy tales and/or picture books containing a moral or clear message, and consider patterns in the characters, settings and plot lines.</p> <p>The task may be delivered as part of, or at the conclusion of, a unit of work on short narratives, picture books or fairy tales. Alternatively, it may be delivered following some recap on prior learning in relation to short narrative texts.</p>
<b>Assessment differentiation</b>	Teachers should differentiate their teaching and assessment to meet the specific learning needs of their students, based on their level of readiness to learn and their need to be challenged. Where appropriate, teachers may either scaffold or extend the scope of the assessment task.
Assessment task	
<b>Assessment conditions</b>	<p>Students will answer a number of short-answer questions after reading a short text.</p> <p>Questions are based around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• literal recall of some details</li> <li>• inferential reading of some details</li> <li>• identifying the protagonist and the antagonist</li> <li>• interpreting and expressing an opinion concerning their motivations</li> <li>• identifying similarities and differences with this and other stories of its type</li> <li>• expression of the possible purpose of the story.</li> </ul> <p>This is an individual, in-class assessment.</p>

## Instructions for teachers

### Lesson 1: Reading and comprehending the story

Teachers distribute the story (without the questions attached) and activate prior learning and note-making. Questions from the assessment task should not be targeted within this lesson; however, understanding of the story may be scaffolded to suit the learning needs of the students. Approaches might include:

- students individually reading and annotating the story
- the teacher reading the story aloud to and/or with students
- paired, group and/or class discussion
- teacher-directed mind maps and/or note-making.

All or part of lesson 1 may be used to scaffold or extend the scope of this reading comprehension task. Students may use their annotated stories and notes in the next lesson.

### Lesson 2: Task completion

Teachers distribute the questions to be completed individually by the students. Students may refer to notes and annotated stories.

Teachers can refer to information in student notes to assist with assessment judgements.

### Relevant glossary terms

*Imagery* – A use of figurative language to represent objects, actions and ideas in such a way that they appeal to the senses of the reader or viewer.

*Figurative language* – Word groups/phrases used in a way that differ from the expected or everyday usage. They are used in a non-literal way for particular effect (for example: simile – ‘white as a sheet’; metaphor – ‘all the world’s a stage’; personification – ‘the wind grabbed at my clothes’).

*Types of texts* – Classifications according to the particular *purposes* they are designed to achieve. These purposes influence the characteristic features the texts employ. In general, in the Western Australian Curriculum: English, texts can be classified as belonging to one of three types: imaginative, informative or persuasive, although it is acknowledged that these distinctions are neither static nor watertight and particular texts can belong to more than one category.

*Text structure* – A way in which information is organised in different types of texts (for example, chapter headings, subheadings, tables of contents, indexes and glossaries, overviews, introductory and concluding paragraphs, sequencing, topic sentences, taxonomies, cause and effect). Choices in text structures and language features together define a text type and shape its meaning.

*Theme* – Refers to the main idea or message of a text.

### **Resources**

- Copy of text
- Answer Booklet

### **Additional resources**

A selection of fairy tales and/or picture books.

Picture books that may be appropriate for prior learning work:

- Graham, B. (2011). *A bus called heaven*. London: Walker Books Ltd.
- Leffler, D. (2011). *Once there was a boy*. Broome: Magabala Books Aboriginal Corporation.
- Brumbeau, J., de Marcken, G., & Pfeifer-Hamilton. (2000). *The quiltmaker's gift*. Minnesota: Duluth.
- Brumbeau, J., & de Marcken, G. (2004). *The quiltmaker's journey*. New York: Orchard Books.
- Ottley, M., (1997). *Mrs Millie's painting*. Rydalmere, Australia: Hodder Children's Books .

## Year 6 Reading Comprehension

Read the following story and then answer the questions. Remember to give evidence from the story for your opinions.

# Three Roses

This is the story of a gardener who grew the most beautiful single rose the world had ever seen. It was a black rose, which was unlikely, and it bloomed the whole year round, which was impossible.

Hearing of this rose, the King decided to see it for himself. With his entourage, he rode for seven days to the gardener's simple cottage. On the morning of the seventh day, he arrived and saw the rose. It was even more beautiful than the King had imagined, and he wanted it.

'How did you come to grow such a beautiful rose?' the King asked the gardener, who was standing silently by.

'I planted that rose on the day my wife died,' replied the gardener, looking only at the flower. 'It is a true, deep black, the very colour of her hair. The rose grew from my love of her.'

The King turned to his servants and said, 'Uproot this rosebush and take it to the palace. It is too beautiful for anyone but me.'

But when the rosebush was transplanted to the palace, it lasted only a year before it withered and died. The King, who had gazed upon it every day, angrily decided that it was the gardener's fault, and he set out at once to punish him.

But when he arrived at the gardener's cottage, he was amazed to see a new rosebush growing there, with a single rose. But this rose was green, and even more beautiful than the black rose.

The King once again asked the gardener how he came to grow such a beautiful rose.

'I planted this rose on the anniversary of my wife's death,' said the gardener, his eyes only on the rose. 'It is the colour of her eyes, which I looked into every morning. The new rose grew from my love of her.'

'Take it!' commanded the King, and he turned away to ride the seven days back to his palace. Such a beautiful flower was not fit for a common man.

The green rose bloomed for two years, and the King looked upon it every day, for it brought him great contentment. Then, one morning, it was dead, the bush withered, the petals fallen to the ground. The King picked up the petals and spoke to no one for two days. Then he said, as if to convince himself, 'The gardener will have another rose.'

So once again he rode off with his entourage. This time, they took a spade and the palace jardinier.

Such was the King's impatience that they rode for half the nights as well as days, but there were wrong turns and flooded bridges, and it still took seven days before he once again rode up to the gardener's cottage. And there was a new rosebush, with a single rose. A red rose, so beautiful that the King's men were struck silent and the King himself could only stare and gesture to the palace jardinier to take it away.

Even though the King didn't ask, the gardener spoke before the spade broke the earth around the bush.

'I planted this rose three years after the death of my wife,' he said. 'It is the colour of her lips, which I first kissed under a harvest moon on the hottest of summer nights. This rose grew from my love of her.'

The King seemed not to hear but kept staring at the rose. Finally, he tore his gaze away and turned his horse for home.

The jardinier watched him go and stopped digging for a moment.

'Your roses are the most beautiful I have ever seen,' he said. 'They could only grow from a great love. But why grow them only to have these memories taken away from you?'

The gardener smiled and said, 'I need nothing to remind me of my wife. When I walk alone under the night sky, I see the blackness of her hair. When the light catches the green glass of a bottle, I see her eyes. When the sun is setting all red against the hills and the wind touches my cheek, I feel her kiss.'

'I grew the first rose because I was afraid I might forget. When it was gone, I knew that I had lost nothing. No one can take the memory of my love.'

The jardinier frowned, and he began to cut again with his spade. Then he asked, 'But why do you keep growing the roses?'

'I grow them for the King,' said the gardener. 'He has no memories of his own, no love. And after all, they are only flowers.'

[By arrangement with the Licensor, Garth Nix, c/- Curtis Brown (Aust) Pty Ltd]

Read the story 'Three Roses' by Garth Nix and answer the questions below. Make reference to the story to justify your answers where possible. **(8 marks)**

1. Identify two examples of imagery and explain what you think they mean.

Example 1 **(4 marks)**

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Example 2 **(4 marks)**

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2. Explain why the gardener grew the roses. **(2 marks)**

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3. Why did it not upset the gardener when the roses were taken away? **(2 marks)**

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4. From your reading of the story, what do you think the word 'jardinier' means?  
Use evidence to support your answer. **(2 marks)**

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5. Why do you think the roses died when they were transplanted? **(2 marks)**

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6. Describe the character of the King. Why do you think he acted the way he did?  
Give evidence from the story to explain your choices. **(6 marks)**

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7. Describe a situation or a time when you have had a similar experience to the gardener, the King or the King's servants, and explain the similarities. **(5 marks)**

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8. In what ways is this story similar to and/or different from at least one other story you have read? Give evidence to support your choices. **(8 marks)**

Lined writing area consisting of 20 horizontal lines for student response.

9. Explain how the author has presented a problem or dilemma in the story to meet the purpose of the text.

- What is the purpose of the text?
- What is the main problem/dilemma of the text?
- How has the author used the problem/dilemma in the story to show the reader the purpose of the text?

**(8 marks)**

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Marking key	
Description	Marks
1. Identify two examples of imagery and explain what you think they mean.	
Example 1	
Identifies an image correctly.	1
Provides a clear and logical explanation.	3
Example 2	
Identifies an image correctly.	1
Provides a clear and logical explanation.	3
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>8</b>
2. Explain why the gardener grew the roses	
Provides a clear explanation, demonstrating an understanding of the character's motivations.	2
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2</b>
3. Why did it not upset the gardener when the roses were taken away?	
Provides a clear explanation, demonstrating an understanding of the text.	2
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2</b>
4. From your reading of the story, what do you think the word 'jardinier' means? Use evidence to support your answer.	
Determines meaning, drawing upon contextual information and/or knowledge of known words.	2
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2</b>
5. Why do you think the roses died when they were transplanted?	
Justifies opinion, demonstrating an understanding of the text and the significance of the roses.	2
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2</b>
6. Describe the character of the King. Why do you think he acted the way he did? Give evidence from the story to explain your choices.	
Describes the King's character and provides a thoughtful explanation for his actions. Response is supported with relevant and specific examples from the text.	6
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6</b>
7. Describe a situation or a time when you have had a similar experience to the gardener, the King or the King's servants, and explain the similarities.	
Identifies a relevant experience and describes the situation and similarities with clarity and insight.	5
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>5</b>
8. In what ways is this story similar to and/or different from at least one other story you have read? Give evidence to support your choices.	
Makes specific comparisons with at least one story and articulates a range of valid points.	8
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>8</b>
9. Explain how the author has presented a problem or dilemma in the story to meet the purpose of the text.	
Identifies a problem or dilemma. Comments on how the author has presented the problem or dilemma. Identifies a purpose for the story. Explains how the problem or dilemma assist the author to be successful with their purpose.	8
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>

## Marking key: Supporting Information for Teachers

The points below indicate a range of possible answers not a list of preferred responses.

Description	Marks
1. Identify two examples of imagery and explain what you think they mean.	8
<p>In response to this question, the student could identify two of these examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• colour of roses</li> <li>• withered rose with fallen petals</li> <li>• harvest moon on summer night</li> <li>• gardener’s comparisons: night sky – black hair; light on a green bottle – eyes; red setting sun; wind – kiss</li> </ul> <p>Reward other relevant examples.</p> <p>Reference to visual imagery as well as imagery that appeals more broadly to all senses is acceptable.</p> <p>The choice of imagery will determine the scope to explore meaning.</p> <p>In response to this question, the student might identify that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the rose’s beauty is expressed through the imagery</li> <li>• the beauty of the roses helps the reader understand why the King was so eager to acquire the roses</li> <li>• the imagery associated with the roses in bloom suggests the wife’s beauty</li> <li>• the intensity of the images enhances our understanding of how deeply the gardener loved his wife</li> <li>• love can transcend the physical – that love is powerful and beautiful – and the imagery helps us understand this.</li> </ul>	
2. Explain why the gardener grew the roses.	2
<p>In response to this question, the student might:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• detail how each rose reminded the gardener of a different aspect of his wife’s beauty – hair, eyes, lips</li> <li>• explain that the roses were planted to remind the gardener of his wife and/or to express his love for her</li> <li>• identify that the roses were all planted to commemorate his wife – the day she died, on the first anniversary of her death and three years after – a sign of love and honouring her</li> <li>• identify that the gardener’s motivation in planting the first rose was to remind him of his wife, but after that, he grew them ‘for the King’</li> <li>• explain that the gardener, after the King’s first visit, was motivated by compassion for someone who had not experienced love. (The last line indicates that the rose has shifted in significance for the gardener.)</li> </ul>	
3. Why did it not upset the gardener when the roses were taken away?	2
<p>In response to this question, the student might:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• state that the gardener grew the roses for the King after the first rose</li> <li>• explain that the gardener realised his memories could not be taken away and that the roses were ‘after all ... only flowers’.</li> </ul>	
4. From your reading of the story, what do you think the word ‘jardinier’ means? Use evidence to support your answer.	2
<p>In response to this question, the student should identify that ‘jardinier’ is another word for ‘gardener’. Students should make reference to the story, explaining how they determined the meaning. They might refer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the similarity of the words ‘jardinier’ and ‘gardener’</li> <li>• the jardinier’s action of digging up the rose bush</li> <li>• the jobs are the same.</li> </ul>	
5. Why do you think the roses died when they were transplanted?	2
<p>In response to this question, the student might state that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the King could not care for the rose in the same way as the gardener</li> <li>• the King does not have the love within him to keep the roses alive</li> <li>• it was the gardener’s love for his wife that caused the roses to grow. Away from him, the roses cannot survive.</li> </ul>	

6. Describe the character of the King. Why do you think he acted the way he did? Give evidence from the story to explain your choices.	6
<p>In response to this question, the student might refer to some of these character traits of the King:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• his arrogance</li> <li>• his entitled attitude caused by his status and power</li> <li>• his inability to love or feel compassion for others</li> <li>• his selfishness.</li> </ul> <p>The student might identify the King’s motivation as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• caused by his desire for love or contentment</li> <li>• due to his character weaknesses or social status</li> <li>• a result of his desire to have the best of everything</li> <li>• arising from his love of beauty.</li> </ul> <p>For full marks, the student must provide evidence from the story (either quotes or paraphrasing).</p>	
7. Describe a situation or a time when you have had a similar experience to the gardener, the King or the King’s servants, and explain the similarities.	5
<p>The student might identify a situation where they experienced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• love, loss or generosity (gardener)</li> <li>• theft (gardener)</li> <li>• a desire for something (King)</li> <li>• bewilderment (King’s servant)</li> <li>• obedience or a feeling of duty (King’s servant).</li> </ul>	
8. In what ways is this story similar to and/or different from at least one other story you have read? Give evidence to support your choices.	8
<p>A range of responses will be acceptable for this question. The student should identify at least one other story and specify how the story is similar to and/or different from ‘Three Roses’.</p> <p>Some of the conventions of a story the student might consider include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• character</li> <li>• point/s of view</li> <li>• setting</li> <li>• conflict</li> <li>• structure</li> <li>• plot</li> <li>• theme</li> <li>• ending.</li> </ul> <p>If students choose to focus on fairy tales, they may refer to conventions specific to the genre such as stereotypical characters and the moral of the story.</p>	

9. Explain how the author has presented a problem or dilemma in the story to meet the purpose of the text.	8
<p>The student might identify a purpose, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to present a moral</li> <li>• to communicate values and attitudes</li> <li>• to entertain.</li> </ul> <p>The student might identify a problem or dilemma, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the King’s dilemma of wanting to possess an object of profound beauty, but his inability to keep it alive</li> <li>• the gardener’s dilemma in relation to the King’s repeated theft of his roses – how to obey the King while still keeping the memory of his wife alive.</li> </ul> <p>The student’s explanation might include reference to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the King wants to keep for himself an object of beauty, but this leads to its destruction – showing that taking things that don’t belong to us will lead to terrible consequences. His greed, ultimately, does not lead to a lasting sense of peace or fulfilment either</li> <li>• the way that the King responds to his dilemma reflects his arrogance and lack of ability to love which is contrasted with the gardener’s capacity for love</li> <li>• the way the gardener responds to his dilemma reflects his wisdom and inner peace, knowing he has experienced profound love and will always have his memories to sustain him</li> <li>• love is shown as being of value through the dilemmas because it enables people to be at peace and to be able to help others.</li> </ul> <p>Strong responses might explain the author’s choice in structure and language.</p>	