

# Basic Language Skills

## Book 3

Aligned with the  
**Australian  
National  
Curriculum**



**The Last  
Two Wishes**



**Endangered  
Species**

Text based  
activities to develop  
reading, writing and  
grammatical skills.



**Thief!**



# Contents

Teachers' Notes	4		
National Curriculum Links	5		
<b>Section 1</b>			
The Last Two Wishes	6-7	Getting A Balanced View 5	32
A Storyboard	8	Getting A Balanced View 6	33
The Right Order	9	Finding Key Words	34
A Story Summary	10	Paragraphing	35
Character Descriptions	11	Research	36
The Correct Story	12	A Protest Essay	37
Word Study	13	Simple And Compound Words	38
Completing The Story 1	14	Tense of Verbs	39
Completing The Story 2	15	<b>Section 3</b>	
A Report For The School Paper	16	The of	40-41
Cinquain Poems	17	Reading	42
Nouns 1	18	Ladder Of Events	43
Nouns 2	19	A Story Summary	44
Pronouns	20	Character Profiles	45
<b>Section 2</b>		Weighing Up The Evidence	46
Endangered Species	21-22	Re-telling The Story	47
Matching Headings		Making A Story Map 1	48
With Information	23	Making A Story Map 2	49
Organizing Information	24	Using Your Crystal Ball	50
Substantiating Information	25	A Report For 'Hollywood Stars'	51
Fact Or Opinion?	26	Hollywood Stars	52
Using Vocabulary	27	An Agony Column	53
Getting A Balanced View 1	28	Punctuation	54
Getting A Balanced View 2	29	Adjectives Add Interest	55
Getting A Balanced View 3	30	Comparison Of Adjectives	56
Getting A Balanced View 4	31	Answers	57-59

# Teachers' Notes

A story is a narrative which creates or recreates experiences. One of its main purposes is to entertain its readers. Other narrative forms include informative texts which serve to inform the reader.

There are three narratives included in this book. Two are fiction and one is non-fiction. These texts are used as tools to help children with the focus areas prescribed below.

## FOCUS AREAS

### **Formal Language Skills:**

- Developing conventions of language.
- Identifying the need for punctuation.
- Using apostrophes for possession/contraction.
- Using quotation marks.
- Punctuating sentences.

### **Writing Skills**

- Developing editing skills.
- Consolidation of language conventions in writing.
- Retelling events.
- Writing from another point of view.
- Report writing.
- Exploring narrative text forms.

### **Reading Skills**

- Developing proof reading skills.
- Identifying main ideas of story.
- Using planning strategies.
- Transferring information from reading to writing.

*Basic Language Book 3* is the final book in *The Basic Language Series*. All three books provide activities to help develop children's reading and writing skills. All of the books are linked to the National Curriculum and target specific age groups.

# *The Last Two Wishes*

"I'm the biggest .... I'm the toughest .... I'm the best!" came the loud voice of Bobby Bragg from the back of the line. "Now get out of my way. I want my ice cream," the voice continued as the line dissolved before him. Bobby Bragg was a great mop-headed lout who was always surrounded by a group of smirking attendants.

Tim found himself stumbling sideways as he was shoved from the canteen line by Bobby the bully. His money spilled from his clenched fist and disappeared under the surface of the puddles of rain water by the school canteen window.

"I can't stand him," muttered Tim to himself as he plunged his hand into the icy puddle in the fruitless search for his money. "Why, I just wish he'd eat so many ice creams that he'd blow up!"

But there at the counter stood the unblown up Bobby, and there behind him were several smaller kids like Tim, tears sprinkling their cheeks as they scrambled to recover their money or goods knocked from their hands by the surge forward of the bully boys.

It seemed to be a very regular occurrence now, Bobby the heavyweight thrusting his way forward through the school canteen line. It only matched up with the jumbo squashing that took place on the footy field, and the massive muscling out from the bus line.

When the big lump, Bobby Bragg arrived at Vulcan St Primary, all the other no-hopers in the school had seen the new monster as a sort of focal gathering point and now they all hung round together making everybody else's lives a misery.

Now Tim's searching fingers found the final coin that made up the 60 cents he had to spend. Just as he picked it up though, a big foot came down on his hand and squashed it back into the muddy puddle. "Oh, so sorry," sneered a not-at-all sorry Sam Wilson as Tim writhed in pain, his bruised fingers hardly able to keep hold of the coin.





## The Last Two Wishes

### Word Study

\*Read "The Last Two Wishes" on pages 6–7 to help you with these activities.

☆ Select the word or words from the story which best fit each description below.

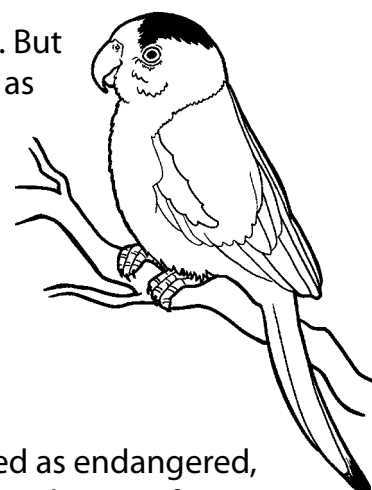
Description	Word/s from the story
disappeared	
held very tightly	
pushed	
falling all over the place	
stitching comes undone	
remarked in a derisive way	
sore and battered	
shop service area	
in rags	
useless and without result	
move forward in a rush	
stuttered	

☆ Use eight of the words above in sentences to show their meaning.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_

# Endangered Species

There has been a lot written about saving endangered species. But what exactly is an endangered species? Can birds be classified as endangered species, or flowers, or even earthworms? How do species become endangered in the first place and what can any ordinary person do to prevent their extinction?



Firstly, species is a classification referring to any single plant or animal living on the Earth. Therefore, a trapdoor spider, a macadamia tree and a hairy-nosed wombat are all separate species.



When a species is classified as endangered, the species is considered in danger of extinction, and its survival is unlikely if the factors endangering its existence continue to occur. A species is considered to be extinct if it has not been definitely located in the wild in the last fifty years. Unfortunately, the extinction of a species is not a rare occurrence.

In the last 100 years, in Australia alone, at least 20 species of birds and mammals and 1000 species of plants are presumed to have become extinct. Furthermore, 209 species of plants and about 59 species of birds, mammals, reptiles, frogs and fish are classified as endangered, which, as we know from the definition above, means that all of these animals and plants are considered in danger of extinction unless the factors making them to be endangered are isolated and remedied. In addition, there are numerous plants and animals considered vulnerable, that is, likely to be classified as endangered in the future.



The main causes of extinction of Australia's wildlife are the destruction of habitats and the killing of native species by other introduced species.



Habitats have always changed through natural influences such as changes in weather patterns and geographical features. In such cases the changes are gradual and species adapt or become extinct. However, habitats today are more likely to change as a result of land being rapidly cleared for housing or agriculture – certainly too quick a process to allow a species to adapt its lifestyle to its new environment.

Mining, too, has been a major cause of destruction and disturbance of habitats. However, public pressure has



***Imagine...***

One day as you ride your bike down the road that leads past the bush area you hear the unmistakable sound of heavy earth moving machinery. You ride round the corner and amidst the clouds of choking dust you are horrified to see huge bulldozers crushing and clearing the natural bushlands.

## ***What will you do? ...***

★ Write a protest email to either ...

### – The local newspaper

- The developers of the language

– **The local council.**

 Ready-Ed  
Publications



## Tense Of Verbs

When we are writing it is important for understanding that we don't confuse the **tenses** of the verbs within a sentence.

**TENSE** means the **TIME** that the action described by the verb is happening.

The tense of the verb can be in the PAST, the PRESENT or the FUTURE.

e.g.            *Present: I play today                      or I am playing today*  
                   *Past: I played yesterday                      or I was playing yesterday*  
                   *Future: I shall play tomorrow                      or I shall be playing tomorrow*

(Hint: As an aid to deciding what tense a verb is in place the words yesterday (past), today (present) or tomorrow (future) in front of the sentence.)

★ Write down the verbs in these sentences and state the tense of each.

Sentence	Verb	Tense
The girls will play netball on Saturday.		
The new manager started last week.		
The dog barks loudly.		
Who goes there?		

★ Write two sentences that are in the **past tense**.

E.g. *I was pleased to welcome him to our school.*

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★ Write two sentences that are in the **present tense**.

E.g. *Everybody is too busy to notice.*

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★ Write two sentences that are in the **future tense**.

E.g. *We will all be going on a picnic to the National Park.*

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