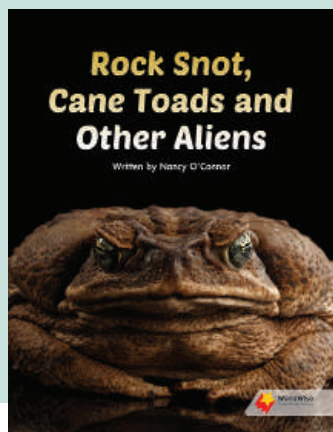


Lesson Plan

**Advanced Fluent
Upper Primary
reading stage
Level T**



Rock Snot, Cane Toads and Other Aliens reports on living things that have been introduced to new environments and the problems this has caused. The book explains how these pests have affected native plants and animals and disrupted the balance of the ecosystems they have been introduced into. It also outlines various strategies that are being undertaken to eradicate these pests and restore natural environments.

Informative text types:
Report

Science Curriculum links

Australia

- **BS (ACSSU43)** Structural features and adaptations of living things assist their survival
- **SS01.3** Sustainable patterns of living rely on the interdependence of healthy social, economic and ecological systems

New Zealand

- **LW:** The key structural features and functions to the life processes of plants, animals and micro-organisms
- **NS:** Scientists' investigations are informed by current scientific theories and aim to collect evidence that will be interpreted through processes of logical argument

Key concepts

- Some introduced species become pests because they damage the ecosystem they have been introduced into
- Introduced plants and animals can cause native plants and animals to become endangered
- Many people work toward eradicating introduced species so as to restore the natural balance of ecosystems

Content vocabulary

algae, alien, biodiversity, bounties, breeding program, captivity, competitors, conservation, ecosystem, endangered, eradication, erosion, extermination, extinction, facility, feral, fibre, flammable, germinating, introduce, invasive, larvae, microscopic, native, over-grazed, pelt, pest, pupae, regenerate, reintroducing, repel, repopulation, reproduce, resistant, species, sterilised, toxin, weed

Text features

- Text boxes, illustrations, map, sidebar, captions, glossary

Reading strategy

- Summarising information

First reading session

Getting started

Introducing the book

Give each student a copy of the book *Rock Snot, Cane Toads and Other Aliens*. Have the students browse through the book. Say: *As you browse through the book, think about what you already know about pests – plants and animals that are introduced to a place and take over. What connections are you making?* Have the students discuss their thinking with the group.

Exploring vocabulary

Ask: *What words or phrases would you expect to see in a book about plant and animal pests that damage environments?* Have students work with a partner and record their words on sticky notes. Say: *When you are finished, stick your words on our group chart.*

If some words or phrases are not known, have the student who recorded the word explain what it means. Compare the students' vocabulary words with the words in the glossary.

Introducing the reading strategy focus

Say: *Summarising information helps you to understand a text more fully. Making clear, accurate summaries takes practice. After you have read sections of this book you will get the chance to practise your summarising skills. What things do you need to think about when you summarise factual information?* Discuss that summarising involves identifying the big ideas or main concepts in a sentence, paragraph, page or chapter.

Reading with teacher support

Say: *Read the introduction and chapter 1 to yourselves. As you read, think about the "big ideas", the main points, in each section.* Have the students discuss their thinking with their partner, and then have a group discussion. Ask: *How has the author helped you to see the main concepts about introduced plants and their impact on the environment?* Have the students record their ideas on the Graphic Organiser and compare it with their partner's. Say: *Be ready to talk about what you noticed with the whole group.*

Second reading session

Building understanding

Choose to have students either read independently or, if they need more support, to meet with you in a small group.

Independent and partner work

Have the students read chapters 2 and 3 independently. Say: *As you read, use the same process we used with the introduction and chapter 1. Read the chapters to yourself and keep track of your thinking by adding to your Graphic Organiser, then meet with your partner to discuss the big ideas you noted under each heading.*

Have the students meet as a group to share and talk about what they have read and what they recorded on their Graphic Organiser. Monitor the group's progress and support them, if necessary.

On completion, have the students reread the whole book in preparation for the final reading session. Say: *Be ready to talk about your thinking and to discuss your questions and wonderings with the group.*

Reading with teacher support

Ask: *What have we learned so far about introduced species? Share your ideas with a partner.* Have the students read chapter 2 to themselves. Review what the students have read. Ask: *What new information do you have about introduced species and the damage they can do? What is the impact on the environment and on native species of plants and animals?* Invite the students to talk about their understandings. Have the students read chapter 3 and the conclusion to themselves. Say: *Now add your thinking about the main concepts and ideas to your Graphic Organiser.* On completion, have the students reread the whole book in preparation for the final reading session. Say: *Be ready to talk about your thinking and to discuss your questions and wonderings with the group.*

Reflecting on the reading strategy

Encourage the students to talk about what they did to help themselves as readers. Ask: *Were you able to identify the big ideas in each section of text? Did you get better at this skill with practice? How does summarising help you to understand the book as a whole?*

Final reading session

Bringing it all together

Have students talk about the whole book. Use a range of questions to promote discussion and higher-level thinking. Where appropriate, have the students lead the discussion.

What damage can invasive plants do to native vegetation? What are some of the reasons why animals are introduced into an area? Why are many people working to save the Galápagos tortoise? (Inferential)

How are humans responsible for introduced, invasive plants and animals? What sort of things are they doing to try to rectify these mistakes? Are there plant or animal pests near where you live? What damage might these plants or animals be doing? (Synthesising)

Why might the book have been given its title? What are your thoughts on the title? What parts of the book did you find the most interesting? What parts were of least interest to you? (Critical)

Invite students to ask their own questions.

Going beyond the book

Have students demonstrate their understandings by choosing one or more of the following tasks. The tasks can be completed independently, in pairs or in a small group.

Speaking and listening

Have students discuss the main issues and big ideas presented in the book with a partner. To focus the discussion, students can add their ideas to a T-chart:

Reasons why plants and animals are introduced to a place	Problems that pests can cause

Vocabulary

Have students investigate prefixes and their meanings by listing words from the text with the following prefixes: “re-” as in *regenerate*; “ex-” as in *exterminate*; “en-” as in *endangered*; and “eco-” as in *ecosystem*. Have them list other words they know of with these prefixes.

Visual literacy

Have students draw a “before and after” scene showing a habitat before an introduced species invades it and the same habitat after the “invasion”. Have students talk about their drawings in a small group.

Writing

Have the students write a report about an introduced plant or animal using the prompt: *What a Pest!* Provide the students with a template detailing how to plan and write a report. Remind them to write a general classification of the living thing and then discuss aspects such as how it was introduced, the damage it causes and what is being done to eradicate it.

Planning to write a report

Name: _____

Getting started

What is my topic? _____

What do I want to describe? _____

Who am I writing for? _____

Where will I find information? _____

Planning my report

1. General statement

What am I describing? _____

2. Description

What do I describe first? _____

What do I describe next? _____

3. Conclusion

Can I summarise what I have written? _____

 **Hint:** The verbs *is*, *are*, *has* and *have* will help your description.

Additional features I could use

- ☐ Maps to show location
- ☐ Text boxes to provide additional information
- ☐ Photographs and diagrams to support text
- ☐ Captions and labels to explain photographs and diagrams
- ☐ Time line to show history of key events

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Say: *You will need to research to find out about a plant or animal that is a pest.* Encourage the students to talk about their ideas with a partner, then write their report.

Alternatively, the students could choose to write a persuasive argument using the prompt: *We must eradicate pests.*

Graphic Organiser: What are the big ideas?

Name/s: _____

Use the headings below to summarise the main ideas.

Buffel grass	Kudzu
Rock snot	Cane toads
Fire ants	Burmese pythons
Rabbits and foxes	Galápagos Islands
	
Main ideas and concepts about the topic as a whole	

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