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**Using picture books and a visual metalanguage in the primary classroom: Research and practice from Australia**

Multimodal texts are part of many national curricula, including in Australia, and teachers are expected to teach students how to interpret, enjoy and discuss image and text as well as other modes. Using multimodal theory (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), this workshop will present strategies and ideas for teaching students from 5-12 years old to read and discuss visual narratives from picture books. The workshop will draw on research conducted with students in classrooms from kindergarten to grade six.

This multi-site case study used observation, interviews and work samples to assess how students interpreted and discussed a shared reading of a picture book (Callow, 2016; 2017; 2018). The findings suggest that teachers should choose quality literature, have a deep knowledge of the visual and written features of the books and plan questions that explicitly address the interplay of words and pictures. The use of a visual metalanguage should be used to enhance the meaning and enjoyment of the story, not as a test. The workshop will use picture books and video examples to introduce key visual literacy and multimodal concepts. Participants will be involved in viewing, discussing and creating visual texts.