Teen sailor Abby sitting tight and waiting for rescue
Debbie Guest, The Australian, 12 June 2010
HAVING spent more than 12 hours nursing her stricken yacht through gale-force winds and mountainous seas, California teenager Abby Sunderland is now “sitting tight” as rescuers steam towards her crippled boat 2000 nautical miles from the Australian mainland.

US teen eyes another world solo sail bid
AAP, The Courier-Mail, 13 June 2010
Abby is now on the French fishing vessel *Ile De La Reunion*, which is heading to the French archipelago Kerguelen Islands.

…

In an interview with the ABC shortly after being rescued, Abby said she was “still a little bit in shock”.

“It’s been a little bit crazy these past few days, everything’s happened pretty fast,” she said.

“But I’m really lucky that there was a boat that could come and get me where I was.”

Despite her ordeal, Abby is determined to make another attempt to sail solo around the world.

Abby Sunderland tried to become the youngest person to sail solo around the world.
1 Read the excerpt from *The Australian* article on page 41, and answer the following questions.

a For how many hours has Sunderland’s boat been ‘stricken’?
_____________________________________________________________________________

b What is meant when she is described as ‘nursing’ her yacht?
_____________________________________________________________________________

c What are rescuers doing as Sunderland waits?
_____________________________________________________________________________

d What conditions is Sunderland facing as she waits?
_____________________________________________________________________________

2 Read the excerpt from *The Courier-Mail* article on page 41, and answer the following questions.

a Where was Sunderland taken after being rescued?
_____________________________________________________________________________

b Who interviewed Sunderland?
_____________________________________________________________________________

c How does Sunderland describe the past few days?
_____________________________________________________________________________

d What is Sunderland determined to do, despite her ‘ordeal’?
_____________________________________________________________________________
COMPREHENSION BY CONTEXT

When you are reading, you will come across words you do not know. This is a good thing, as it is one way to improve your vocabulary. When reading challenging and unfamiliar texts, you will need to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words, especially if you do not have a dictionary close at hand. Readers commonly use the context of a word to deduce its grammatical function and meaning.

Take, for example, the following sentence, which might appear on a woodworking blog.

I couldn’t find my hand saw, so I took off the end with the mitre. It seemed to work fine.

Even if readers are unfamiliar with the word ‘mitre’, they can infer that it does a similar job to a hand saw. Put that together with the fact the sentence is on a woodworking blog (its context), and the reader can infer that a mitre is a type of saw for cutting wood, which it indeed is.

Understanding the parts that make up a word—such as its root word, prefixes and suffixes—can provide clues about a word’s overall meaning.

For example, when reading the following medical sentence readers can infer that ‘bronchiectasis’ has something to do with breathing and the lungs, not only by reading the end of the sentence, but because of the prefix ‘bronchi–’.

A patient with bronchiectasis can have trouble breathing.

1 Guess the meaning of the italicised words below by considering their context, grammatical function and/or parts.

a Instead of playing a natural minor scale, I played a **Phrygian**.

b Donne’s use of **assonance** varies his conventional rhyme.

c The man lifted his **portmanteau** onto the luggage rack.

d The day was too hot to rush. I **ambled** back to the car.

2 In a text you are currently studying, find a word you do not know. Looking at its context, function or parts, guess its meaning. Then, look it up in a dictionary to check.
COMPREHENDING LONGER TEXTS

It can be relatively simple to understand the denotative meaning of sentences and short texts, but you also need to be able to comprehend longer texts, where the meaning is built gradually, sometimes over many pages. A number of strategies can help you to comprehend a larger text.

IDENTIFYING THE MAIN IDEAS AND SUPPORTING DETAILS

Each paragraph in a well-written text should have one main idea. A paragraph will also give details that explain, expand on or justify the main idea.

Practise paying attention to the main ideas of paragraphs. Being able to quickly identify a paragraph’s main idea, and the details that support this idea, will help you to understand its meaning.

YOUR TURN

1  Read the paragraph from the introduction of *Black Chicks Talking*. Highlight or underline the main idea. Then, in a different colour, identify the details that explain or support the main idea.

*Black Chicks Talking, by Leah Purcell*

I wasn’t really excited about a second book; I was thinking of the workload and dealing with the English language. See, I’m not very good at spelling, which makes it very frustrating when you are writing and you have to stop because you can’t think of how to spell a word. People say, ‘Don’t worry about it, you have spellcheck now’, but even my computer doesn’t know what I’m trying to spell in some cases. Then there was everything else I was doing or wanted to do: working on my sitcom, evolving and performing my one-woman show *Box the Pony* all over the world (well, Edinburgh at the time and then London), being a mother, feeding my three cats etc, etc. I’m getting tired just thinking about what I was doing.

a  Which sentence best conveys the main idea of the paragraph?

b  Note down two details from the extract that explain or expand on the main idea.
Shaun Tan is a Melbourne-based author, illustrator and animator. In 2011, his animated film *The Lost Thing* won an Academy Award for Best Short Film. Below is an extract from a profiling feature article from *The Melbourne Magazine*. It discusses Tan’s Oscar win for *The Lost Thing*.

**Don’t Mind Me**  

These days Tan regards Melbourne, where he moved largely to work on the film of *The Lost Thing*, as home. But Perth, where his parents still live in the childhood home he shared with older brother Paul, now a geologist, is seared on his brain. ‘Whenever I paint a landscape it always looks a bit like Perth, even if I’m representing somewhere else.’ It is tempting—even for Tan—to trace the recurring themes of loss and alienation in his work to growing up in a mixed-race family (his mother is a third-generation Australian of Irish and English heritage, his father, Malaysian-Chinese) in an outer suburb of a remote city, in a country with a history of displacement. But he has felt like an outsider no more than anyone else, he says, and theorises that these recurring themes represent ‘more of a deeper existential question of who am I, why am I here, why is it the world looks the way it does, why is it not different, why was I born in this century—all these sorts of questions—what are these words that I use, where do they come from, the images that I paint, what are they informed by?’
1. After reading the magazine article on page 45, highlight or underline the main idea. Then, in a different colour, identify the details that explain or support the main idea.

2. Which sentence best conveys the main idea of the paragraph?

3. Note two details from the extract that explain or expand on the main idea.

4. Rewrite the central message of the paragraph in your own words.

5. Pay attention to writer Susannah Walker’s sentence structure.
   a. How would you describe the type of sentences used in the extract?
   b. Why might this be a useful structure in an informative feature article such as this?

IDENTIFYING THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN IDEAS

A good way to understand the overall meaning of a longer text is to think about it in sections. A good writer will provide headings and subheadings that are designed to organise the ideas, help readers locate information and aid comprehension. Recognising how a text is organised will help you to understand it. Once you understand what each section is for, and how the sections are linked, you will have a fuller and more accurate picture of the text’s broader message and purpose.

At other times, readers need to identify words that are used to organise ideas and show relationships between ideas. For example, in the extract from the Mercury on the opposite page, words such as ‘but’ and ‘however’, and phrases such as ‘some of the other issues raised’ are used to link ideas within the article.
Hobart AFL dream closer

Meryl Naidoo, Mercury, 12 June 2010

AFL boss Andrew Demetriou and Premier David Bartlett yesterday discussed playing AFL games at Bellerive Oval.

Apart from confirming that the lunchtime meeting had taken place, Mr Bartlett’s spokesman was not giving much away last night about what the two men said.

But he confirmed they did discuss the prospects for elite football in Hobart.

However, Cricket Tasmania chief executive David Johnston said the meeting was a good sign for southern football fans.

“AFL games played at Bellerive Oval would be a great boost for sports fans in Hobart,” he said.

“AFL games at Bellerive Oval would be popular. It’s a great venue and would suit AFL well.

It would give people in Southern Tasmania the opportunity to see AFL without having to travel to the north of the state.

Bellerive Oval is open to all sport and we are keen for the venue to be used as much as possible.”

Bellerive Oval could hold a football crowd of 16,500.

Mr Bartlett has said the Government was not opposed to the idea of having AFL games at Bellerive but could not and would not come at the expense of Aurora Stadium and northern Tasmanian football fans.

Last year Mr Johnston met an AFL club about the possibility of playing AFL at Bellerive, but there were no further developments.

Mr Johnston said: “We are continually trying to invite more sporting events to the oval and any support in these events will be greatly welcomed.”

A commitment to host AFL games would also help Cricket Tasmania’s push for further expansion of Bellerive Oval.

Some of the other issues raised with Mr Bartlett included grassroots football and the Auskick program, aimed at children aged six to 11.

Hawthorn’s frequent visits to Launceston have been a great boost for the local economy, with accommodation and flights almost completely booked out for every game. It is hoped games in Hobart would bring a similar boost to the southern economy.

Years ago southern Tasmanian councils ramped up a campaign for AFL games at Bellerive, but it did not succeed. It put the councils on a collision course with the State Government, which said there would be no AFL games in the south.

AFL Tasmania general manager Scott Wade could not be contacted last night.
YOUR TURN

1. a What is the main piece of information conveyed in the Mercury article on page 47?

_____________________________________________________________________________

b What evidence is used by Naidoo to support this?

_____________________________________________________________________________

2. a What do you see as the separate sections of the article? List them.

_____________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

b Make a second list of words or phrases that are used to link and organise these sections.

_____________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

SKIMMING AND SCANNING

Sometimes when you are reading for literal understanding, you neither want nor need to read every word on the page. This is particularly true when reading for research. A researcher often needs to find out quickly if texts are relevant to their research, yet it is impractical to read every text in detail until the researcher can determine their relevance. In a situation such as this, the skills of skimming and scanning are useful.

Skimming and scanning both involve reading quickly over a text and picking up key words. Think of skimming as bouncing your eye over a text to get the gist of it. Scanning is the skill of quickly casting your eyes over a text to pick up key words and phrases, before reading relevant sections in detail. These two skills are similar, and you will slip between the two as you quickly read a text.

Another strategy is to start by reading the beginnings and ends of chapters and paragraphs to find the focus of each section.
Epistemology, Introduction

Principia Cybernetica Web, F Heylighen

Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that studies knowledge. It attempts to answer the basic question: what distinguishes true (adequate) knowledge from false (inadequate) knowledge? Practically, this question translates into issues of scientific methodology: how can one develop theories or models that are better than competing theories? It also forms one of the pillars of the new sciences of cognition, which developed from the information processing approach to psychology, and from artificial intelligence, as an attempt to develop computer programs that mimic a human’s capacity to use knowledge in an intelligent way.

When we look at the history of epistemology, we can discern a clear trend, in spite of the confusion of many seemingly contradictory positions. The first theories of knowledge stressed its absolute, permanent character, whereas the later theories put the emphasis on its relativity or situation-dependence, its continuous development or evolution, and its active interference with the world and its subjects and objects. The whole trend moves from a static, passive view of knowledge towards a more and more adaptive and active one.

Anti-Apartheid Movement Archives, Introduction

Nelson Mandela Foundation

The international movement of solidarity with the struggle for freedom in South Africa was arguably the biggest social movement the world has seen. Virtually every country in the world has a history of anti-apartheid activity, in diverse forms. In many countries, anti-apartheid activities were linked (formally or informally) with local struggles against oppression of many kinds. Most anti-apartheid movements (AAMs) did not restrict their activities to South Africa, but supported liberation movements in southern Africa more broadly. Besides individual countries, a range of regional and international organisations added their voices to the struggles against apartheid.

What follows is an overview of some of the extant archival records of this extraordinary history. It is a first step towards a more comprehensive picture; it is at this point but a marker.

Since our aim was to create an overview on archival records of anti-apartheid activities, we have included only those organisations for which we managed to locate archival records in the time that was available for this project. As a consequence, unfortunately, many countries and their organisations are not included in this overview and as a result a very Western European/American/Australian view of this history emerges. Since our study relied largely on available internet resources, this problem was aggravated.
1 Refer to the extract on page 49 from a website about epistemology.
   a Set yourself a time limit, say 10 seconds, and write down what each of the paragraphs in the extract is about.

   Topic of paragraph 1

   Topic of paragraph 2

   b With a partner, discuss the topics this website might be useful as a reference for, and write your notes here.

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________

   c Identify the words at the beginning and end of each paragraph that your eye falls on as you scan the extract. Discuss with a partner why you think you focus on these words, and how you use them to quickly build a picture of the text’s content. Then, discuss as a whole class.

2 In the same way, read the extract from Nelson Mandela’s anti-apartheid website on page 49. Set yourself approximately 10 seconds to scan the extract, then answer the questions.
   a What sorts of information might you expect to find in other pages on this website?

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________

   b What is an AAM?

   ________________________________________________________________

   c What, according to the writers, are the limits of the archival sources the website presents?

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________

   d What is the aim of this website, according to the beginning of the final paragraph?

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________