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READING AUSTRALIA

Task for *Reg Saunders: an Indigenous War Hero*
A metalanguage for talking about images

This guide is not exhaustive and refers only to concepts dealt with in exercises so far in this unit.

- Depicted participants: These can be human or non-human. In a book, fiction or non-fiction, it can be convenient to refer to human depicted participants as characters.
- Processes: In a print text these are realised by verbs of 'doing', 'saying', 'thinking', 'seeing', etc. In an image 'doing' processes are represented by vectors, 'seeing' processes by the character's gaze and 'saying' and 'thinking' processes are often shown in speech and thought balloons.
- Circumstances: In an image a circumstance of place is represented by the setting in the image. Circumstances of time, manner and accompaniment can also be shown within an image.
- A vector: Two lines formed by elements in the image gradually coming together to direct the gaze of the viewer. The lines can be formed by almost anything: two rows of trees; roads gradually coming together; even the posture of a human body.
- Gaze: The act of 'looking at' performed either by one of the represented humans in the image or by the viewer of the image. When performed by a represented human in the image, the gaze can also direct the attention of the viewer to another element in the image.
- Contact/Observe: If a character looks directly out at the viewer of an image then contact has been made. It's possible that the character is making some sort of demand of the viewer. If the character is looking at another element in the image then the character is available to be observed by the viewer.
- Close-up/mid-shot/long-shot: These are concepts borrowed from film language. The choice of shot determines the social distance between the viewer and the represented people in the image. Close-up: personal intimacy; Mid-shot: social contact; Long-shot: neutral public relationship.
- Focalisation: This refers to the way in which the viewer is positioned by choices to do with the gaze of a character, the creation of social distance or connection between depicted characters and viewer by shot selection and so on.
- Ambience: This refers to the use of colour. Colour can be used, for example, to create a realistic natural world, or a world of heightened sensory experiences.
- Salience: The amount of weight given to each element in an image.
- The 'real' and the 'ideal': On a vertical axis the bottom part of a panel represents the 'real', the 'here and now' while the top part of the panel contains the 'ideal', what is most valued by a social group.