

THE RABBITS JOHN MARSDEN AND SHAUN TAN



F	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
					✓	✓	✓	✓		

Writing	
Ideas	✓
Organisation	✓
Voice	✓
Word Choice	✓
Sentence Fluency	✓
Conventions	✓
Presentation	



Reading	
Determining Importance	
Inferring	✓
Making Connections	✓
Predicting	
Questioning	✓
Summarising & Synthesising	✓
Visualising	

The Rabbits by John Marsden and Shaun Tan is a poignant tale about colonisation. There are obvious links between the story of the rabbits arriving in a foreign land and the white European invasion of Australia. This is a book that makes you think and challenges you to consider colonisation from different perspectives.

Writing

IDEAS: This is a deceptively simple story but one that shows the power of distilling an idea to its purest form. There is so much John Marsden could have written about this topic, but he chose to keep it as simple as possible- a comparison between different types of invasions. **ORGANISATION:** this text contains a strong lead, logical sequencing and a strong resolution. **VOICE:** This would be a great mentor text for discussing tone- how has the author created the tone? What words and phrases have contributed to this? What is the purpose for this piece? What makes you think that? How does the tone match the purpose? **WORD CHOICE:** John Marsden's careful selection of words and phrases make this book. 'The rabbits came many grandparents ago.' Descriptive language helps develop strong imagery 'The land is bare and brown and the wind blows empty across the plains.'

Reading

This book offers a great opportunity for developing rich discussions between students. **MAKING CONNECTIONS:** Students could compare this to current news stories or to other books looking at colonisation and the white invasion of Australia. (e.g., *The Story of Rosy Dock*) They could compare the introduction and subsequent devastation caused by the introduction of non-native plants (e.g. buffel grass) and animals (e.g. cane toads and camels) to the introduction of non-indigenous people. **QUESTIONING:** Students could monitor their questions before, during and after reading. What questions are you left wondering about? How could you research answers for these questions? Due to the many layers of meaning in this text, it could be used as a text for Close Reading with students as a means of peeling back all the different layers of meaning.