

# **Layered Voices: Junk Journaling as an Empowering Literacy Practice**

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## **Abstract**

This interactive workshop reframes junk journaling as a multimodal literacy practice that empowers students to author meaning through image, texture, symbol and design. The session explores how layered visual response can strengthen agency, affirm identity and deepen critical engagement with text.

The shared provocation for the session will be Shaun Tan's picture storybook *Eric*. Participants will engage in guided double-page analysis centred on perspective, belonging and representation. Educators will then move through a structured, multimodal response process using collage, mark-making and found materials to interpret the text. This approach foregrounds choice, positionality and symbolic thinking, making comprehension visible in ways traditional written responses often cannot.

Grounded in research on multimodal literacies, identity texts, culturally responsive pedagogy and Universal Design for Learning, the workshop demonstrates how tactile, layered processes increase access for multilingual learners and students with diverse learning needs while strengthening inferential and critical thinking.

Participants will create their own layered journal spread using adaptable prompts for Years 3–10 and reflect on how this approach functions as a pre-writing scaffold, a comprehension strategy and a formative assessment artefact.

Educators will leave with a structured, adaptable framework for Years 3–10; ready-to-use prompts for guiding critical visual response; practical differentiation strategies for multilingual learners and students with diverse learning needs; and a research-informed rationale for positioning junk journaling as a pre-writing scaffold, comprehension strategy and formative assessment tool.

By expanding what counts as response, this session lights the way for classrooms where identity is affirmed and every learner has space to develop and express their voice.