# BlackWords Short Story Lesson Plans

# ‘Maiem (Welcome)’ by Samantha Faulkner

The following questions are designed to support the reading and comprehension of ‘Maiem (Welcome)’ by Samantha Faulkner. The framework used the [taxonomy of skills in reading and interpreting fiction](https://www.jstor.org/stable/1162351?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents) designed by George Hillocks and Larry Ludlow (1984).

## Literal Level

**1. Basic Stated Information**

1. Where is Sally’s home?
2. To where does she move for university?

**2. Key Detail**

1. As a kid, what was something Sally longed for?
2. Initially, what does Sally pack in her bag?
3. Whose letter does Sally re-read?

**3. Stated Relationship**

1. How did Thursday Island come to get its name?
2. What is the cause of Sally’s ‘burden’?

## Inferential Level

**4. Simple Implied Relationship**

1. In what sense is the packing scene a metaphor of Sally’s feelings and emotions?
2. Why are Thursday Island and Brisbane described as ‘worlds apart’?
3. What do you think was the most important wish offered to Sally by her Aka?
4. What is the significance of the poem at the end of Aka’s letter?

**5. Complex Implied Relationship**

1. What does Sally learn about the nature of adventure?
2. Why is returning home labelled as an adventure, but not travelling to Brisbane?
3. Given the reputation of young adults (especially Millennials) having little time for older people, why are Aka’s wishes received in the way they are by Sally?
4. What explanation might there be for the title ‘Maiem (Welcome)’?

**6. Author’s Generalisation**

1. What might Samantha Faulkner be suggesting about the transition away from family and into young adulthood?
2. What might Faulkner say is the meaning of ‘home’?

**7. Structural Generalisation**

1. What role does the letter play in the story? Why is it placed so late in the story?
2. What is the effect of integrating the colonial history of Thursday Island into Sally’s story?