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You are most welcome to contribute to *Idiom*. Rather than sending us an unsolicited manuscript, however, it would be best to contact the editors to discuss your contribution. We are keen to receive contributions in a range of forms, combining sound theory with concrete detail about actual classroom situations. All contributions will be reviewed, and you can expect feedback to help you shape your work effectively. Don't be afraid to contact us, as this could be the beginning of a fruitful dialogue between us that will eventually lead to the publication of a worthwhile article.

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EDITORIAL

Jan May and Tony Thompson

Good lessons? Tricky business. When I started teaching, I didn't think I would last the term. The staffroom at my first school echoed with the triumphant tones of my colleagues declaiming their successes and 'wins' in the classroom. Meanwhile, I felt like one of those bands that everyone says is better live. My classes were a bit overproduced, a bit flat, and there weren't any real hits. I figured that it would only be a matter of time before someone discovered that I was a lousy teacher and sack me. But one afternoon I found a groove. It was during a lesson on *Romeo and Juliet*. The students had, henceforth, just sat back and watched while I slowly drained the life out of the 400-year-old masterpiece. But this one afternoon, we got talking about gangs, fashion, and the idea of 'sub-culture'. Soon we had a chart on the board going decade by decade. From Bobby Soxers to Grunge, the style of the moment, we covered them all. We talked about the resilience of surf fashion, the paradox of punk, and I told them about my days as a mod in the early eighties.

I wish I could say that *Romeo and Juliet* took off and the students all went on to join the Bell Shakespeare Company. But alas, the unit limped along before expiring in much the same manner as the eponymous characters. To be sure, I had learned something but not completely wrecking Shakespeare's plays came much later, I'm afraid.

WHAT DID I LEARN?

First of all, it soon came to light that most of my colleagues were gilding the lily and anything else that happened to be lying around. But more importantly, I learned that good lessons are existential entities. They can't be planned, they just happen. That isn't to say that we shouldn't plan to teach exciting lessons, only that their success or failure will not wholly depend on it. Teachers are sometimes labelled conservative or set in their ways but I think this is nonsense. Teaching requires a level of flexibility that would send people in most professions straight to the medicine cabinet.

I know you'll find this deeply shocking but I did not find the assigned readings in my Dip Ed very helpful. These chapters and articles, with their lofty jargon and cod research, had little relevance to my own experiences in the classroom. The moment by moment aspect of teaching seemed to defy definition or quantification. But years later, I came across an essay by a 19th century writer called Heinrich Kleist called 'On the Marionette Theatre'. The rather radical proposition put forth in Kleist's essay is that marionettes move far more gracefully than humans because there is no affectation to inhibit them or any of consciousness that might produce self doubt and awkwardness. A puppet simply moves and responds according to the conditions at hand. The puppeteer may be consumed by doubt and fear but this isn't reflected in the graceful movements on the stage. In short, the grace of a marionette is a bit like

Hamlet's idea of action unimpeded by debilitating thoughts. Kleist's essay is readily available online and there is, I think, some wisdom in it for teachers.

The lessons that follow all have the sense of having been developed in the classroom. They may have been planned initially but I am fairly certain that they really took shape in the moment of their teaching. We hope you that you will try some of them. But remember, they will take on a new form in your classroom and you will have to be like the marionette and allow this to happen if the lesson is to be a success.

We would like to thank the teachers who took the time to email their lessons. English teachers are deeply creative souls and these lessons give a good account of the sheer imaginative power that goes into the delivery of this subject in the classroom. I hope you find the selection in this issue of *Idiom* inspiring. We do!

The next issue is about books and once again it is over to you. Firstly, 100 words on a book you have enjoyed teaching, preferably something a bit different, a bit unique, a bit something that isn't by Harper Lee or S.E Hinton. Secondly, 100 words on the best book you have read in the last 12 months. You can have an honourable mention if you really can't decide but stick to the word limit!

We are also looking for original stories, poems, or creative non-fiction from teachers for the next issue of *Idiom*. Space will determine how many pieces make it into print but we are keen to hear from you, particularly if you haven't been published. More details will follow.

So there's your homework. Get to work!

A SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT THIS EDITION OF *IDIOM*

We were overwhelmed by the generosity of those English teachers willing to share their hard work with other teachers throughout Victoria. Some hard decisions about what to include in the print edition were made but the good news is that nearly all the submissions will be uploaded to the VATE Members Lounge, available as PDF, Word or PowerPoint files. Some of the submissions were simply too large to include in this print edition. You will find that a number of the lesson plans have a symbol (right), directing you to the VATE Members Lounge to find the complete version. As well, copyright restrictions have meant that some material has been deleted and a web link substituted instead. And another bonus of the online material is that a number of the lesson plans are in brilliant colour. Sorry, the print version has to be in black and white for practical reasons, just like most of the print resources we give out to our students. (Think money!) Those of you lucky enough to teach with computers, data projectors or IWBs, you will be able to enjoy the colourful layouts of many of the activities.

More
online

YOU ARE THE AUDIENCE

Shaun Reynolds , Glen Eira College

ENGLISH YEAR 8

TOPIC

Advertising (Promotions)/Audience

AIM

That students recognise how they are targeted as an audience. Aiming to increase awareness of targeting their own language use for an audience.

MATERIAL

A current promotional exercise by a big brand. In the case of my **best lesson**—a Pepsi Max internet, SMS and bottle wrap advertising campaign in association with a major advertising corporation and another brand—Apple's iPod. ('conditions of entry' a must read)

LESSON 1

Viewing: Analysis of typical images and language associated with soft drink advertising—happiness—being cool—being sexy—being fit and active—being a rebel. Images and summaries in a table: **writing**.

LESSON 2

Reading Carefully read the competition criteria and the conditions of entry. Look for loop holes (tricks in the language used such as 'might' and 'could' as opposed to 'will' or 'shall'), and examine exactly what is being asked of the contestants. (Discussion of the give and take power relationship between the consumer and the company.)

Thinking Look at the conditions of entry and think about why the company would want a name, address, postcode and so on. (Bring in concerns about privacy using articles from websites and sensationalist newspaper articles.)
Homework: What does Coke, or other, want from you?

LESSON 3

Analysis: Analyse the competition rules and theorise about the best way to win (in this case—an SMS response between 3am and 5am in the morning because that is the time when the company will receive the fewest responses from the target audience—it was a 'one every hour' competition).

Writing In dot points—give your class strategies to win the competition. In the case of written response competitions—what do they want to hear?—Language to use to suck up to your audience (the company—based upon previous analysis of target audience).

HOMEWORK

Students either enter the competitions, or not, based upon whether they believe it is worth giving up certain privacies based upon the competition criteria.

RESULTS

Two year 8 students woke up and sent in texts at 3 am and won ipods, knowing that they had a 1/25 chance of winning at that hour based upon research of the target audience and the competition criteria. At 8am (on the way to school) the chances were more like 1/500.

CONCLUSION

Basically two kids won an iPod because they listened in their English class that day. Welcome to the real power of English. It made an impact on the whole school in terms of what English can deliver. Students spoke to the class about what they'd learned.

WRITERS' SPORTS

Mark Storm, Mildura Senior Secondary College

This activity is an introductory creative writing exercise for years 6–8. Exploiting humour, it attempts to unlock the creative writing skills in any student. Later, any ideas or actual pieces produced can be adapted towards satisfying assessment requirements in an English course.

Speed, intensity and spontaneity are paramount. Be ruthless with the times. Keep the energy up. Don't let the students languish in meditation searching for that 'right' word. Tell them to just write 'nnnnngggghh' if they're stuck for a word. Getting stuff down on the page is the point.

Activities from this set can be picked out depending on length of session or nature of the class.

I recommend no more than three activities in a 50-minute session. You can decide how you want to get them to share or rate the pieces, but I suggest after each writing 'run', leave 5–10 minutes for class members to read and rate each others examples and rate them.

SUGGESTED RATING SCHEME

- * Sucks like a vacuum cleaner! You have no idea what you're doing!
- ** Alright ... I smirked on occasion.
- *** Some signs of inspiration. A definite laugh, tear or two.
- **** We are definitely amused.
- ***** Shakespeare, move over!

1. WORLD'S WORST POEM

Get the class to give you 20 words (five nouns, five adjectives, five verbs, five adverbs or prepositions)

Points may be awarded for:

- worst similes
- finest example of forced rhyme
- best use of cliché
- cringe worthiness.

The poem must have:

- A title, e.g. 'You, Who Have Made My Delicate Heart Bleed Like A Freshly Slaughtered Pig'.
- A theme—a topic, e.g. love/hate/confusion/the complexity of urban civilisation.
- All 20 words are used.
- All 'lines' are sentences of at least five words.
- No sexism, racism, offensive topics or profanity (that's swear words, to you).

Points will be awarded for:

- worst similes e.g. 'Your eyes are like two glimmering headlights of a Holden Monaro V8 on hi-beam!'
- best use of cliché.
- 'cringe worthiness' and finest example of excessive flattery e.g. 'Whenever I see you, I know there's a God—because how else could there be such an angel like you?'

Five minutes of writing time.

2. WORLD'S MUSHIEST LOVE LETTER

At least 200 words long.

Five minutes of writing time.

3. THE LIFE STORY OF 'THE WORLD'S GREATEST LOSER'

(You'll need some post-it notes or coloured slips of paper and a hat or box for this one.)

Points will be awarded for:

- Use of dialogue
- Complexity of life story
- Bizarrely amusing twists.

Don't tell the class straight away what they're writing here ... just follow the steps.

1. Students write down the name of a city.
2. Students write down the name of a disease, disability or particularly nasty way to suffer.
3. Students write down the name of a career, job or profession (prostitute or drug dealer are ixnay!)
4. Students are to take a slip of paper and write a First Name on it.
5. Students are to take another slip of different coloured paper and write a last name on it. Encourage originality.
6. Mix up slips in a hat or box.
7. Students select two different coloured slips.
8. Now... tell them that they are to write;
The biography of 'The World's Greatest Loser'.

250 words.

Ten minutes of writing time.

3A. VARIATION OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST LOSER ... 'THE UP AND DOWN LIFE OF ...'

Get students into pairs. Do steps a) to g). In each pair, let them decide who is 'The positive' and who is 'The negative'.

They are to tell 'The Up and Down Life of'. but each writes for only two minutes. Start with positive. Then you swap. As the titles suggest, each partner may tell events that correspond: 'positive' relates nothing but joyous good fortune. 'Negative': eternal misery. Negative may tell of everything except 's/he died'. Only at the end may you kill him/her off.

Ten minutes of writing time.

4. TWENTY REASONS WHY I SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO GO TO HEAVEN AFTER I DIE

Points will be awarded for:

- Outstanding examples of community spirit.
- Impressive examples of convincing bold-faced lying.
- Overtly sentimental mush.

Encourage extreme boasting. Try to outdo Joan of Ark, Francis of Assisi, Mahatma Ghandi, Nelson Mandela or St Theresa.

No references to body parts or impressive achievements in the 'horizontal refreshment' area may be made.

At least 200 words long.

Five minutes of writing time.

5. (IF YOU'VE GOT A PARTICULARLY TALENTED GROUP) SOMETHING UTTERLY FANTASTIC

Photocopy three full sets of pictures and captions from the book *The Mysteries of Harris Burdick* on A5 size.

Place the pile face down on a table. Each student selects one.

10 minutes to tell the story.

Writers Sports © Mark Storm 1993

CONFUCIUS SAYINGS AND CRAFTY SLOGANS

Leigh Abercromby, Caulfield Grammar School

I hear, I know. I see, I remember. I do, I understand.

LEARNING AREAS—ENGLISH AND HUMANITIES YEAR LEVELS 7–10

RATIONALE

All year 9 students at Caulfield Grammar School attend a learning and residential experience of five weeks in Nanjing, China.

In the learning area of English we are keen to use the experience as part of the curriculum back in the classroom. Prior to students leaving for Nanjing, specific writing tasks are completed based around the expectations, hopes and dreams of each student. On the student's return, reflective writing is the initial focus, which is then extended to creative pieces based on experiences and observations whilst in China.

OUTCOMES

The purpose of this unit is to achieve the following outcomes:

- To explore and understand the significance and relevance of Confucian Philosophy.
- To consider personal, beliefs and values—‘what is important to me?’
- To consider the use of sayings, quotations and slogans as part of popular media.
- To introduce the concept of ‘prompts’ and the way in which a response can be constructed using a variety of written forms as well as a suite of ideas.
- To write a creative piece in the form of a short story in which the Confucius saying is embedded into the narrative.

STUDY AND RESEARCH FOCUS

- Biography of Confucius.
- Confucius and China.
- Confucianism and philosophy.
- Confucius quotations.
- Confucius ‘sayings’ used in humour.

TASKS AND PROCESS—GROUP AND/OR INDIVIDUAL

1. Research the life and times of Confucius. Synopsis in a timeline.
2. Collect a sample of ten Confucius quotations. These are to be presented to the student's work group where each student will discuss the significance and meaning of the sayings. Select one for class discussion.

3. Each student is to develop a ‘saying’ of their own which represents their beliefs and values.
4. Class discussion generated from the ‘sayings’ and the links to beliefs and values.
Why is this saying a reflection of ‘what is important to me?’
5. Write a short story based on the chosen Confucius-style saying. The saying must be incorporated into the short story.
6. Provide at least three images, illustrations and or symbols into the final copy of the short story.
7. A class folio will be collated to display the short stories and images.

RESOURCES

www.quotationspage.com/quotes/Confucius

www.everyday-taichi.com/confucius-sayings.html

www.quotemountain.com/sayings/confucius_sayings/

www.confucius.org/main01.htm

www.humorsphere.com/confucius/confucious_says_jokes.htm

QUOTATIONS FROM CONFUCIUS

David Hohm, David Honey, Sarah Dauncey
Chinese Culture Reader Series for Confucius Institutes
Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press 2008

BUILDING READING SKILLS: INFERENCE

Joanna Carroll, Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School

I have used this activity in the past for students in years 7 and 8 in an effort to improve their close reading skills. The aim is to have students focus on the information 'between the lines' in texts. It helps them to understand the reading process and can also build their confidence by making them conscious of skills they are already employing but have not recognised. It can also be a less overwhelming task for students who lack confidence as the focus is on very short excerpts of text, rather than the entire novel.

The examples in the worksheet are taken from *Goodnight Mr Tom*, the text we were studying at the time, but of course any examples from a text you are studying can be inserted. It works well as a group or pair activity; I usually get groups to report back on their findings. It can also work well as the basis for a discussion of how to support statements with evidence from the text in essays.

INFERRING MEANING FROM THE TEXT

One of the most important skills in English is the skill of inference, or inferring meaning.

Inference means drawing conclusions based on evidence and reasoning. When we read, we often infer meaning without consciously thinking about it. For example:
Bill dropped the vase. He rushed to get the dustpan and brush.

From these two sentences we might infer that because Bill rushes to get the dustpan and brush, the vase that he dropped must have broken into pieces. We also might infer that Bill is worried about what he has done and wants to get rid of the evidence because he rushes rather than dawdles. Even though the two sentences don't clearly say that the vase is broken and that Bill is worried about it, we infer the meaning by 'reading between the lines'.

PRACTISING YOUR INFERENCE SKILLS

1. Find each quote in the table below in your text.
2. Read it carefully several times.
3. Read around the quote by seeing what other information precedes it and follows it.
4. Fill in the right hand column by deciding what extra information you can infer from the quote about the character and their actions or emotions. The first box is completed for you.

QUOTE	PAGE	INFERENCE: WHAT DOES THIS QUOTE TELL US?
Tom, looking up at the coat rack and then down at Willie. He scratched his head. 'Bit 'igh fer you. I'd best put in a low peg'.	3	Willie is short/Tom is a lot taller than Willie. Tom is reasonably caring if he is willing to alter the height of the peg for Willie. Tom wants Willie to be comfortable. Tom may not be used to having small people like Willie around.
'What give you that?' Willie paled and pulled the sock up quickly.	7	
He wanted to make it so that people could see the stone again. It looked forgotten and lost.	12	
He knew that Tom was speaking to him but he couldn't take his eyes off the poker.	15	
Willie was several yards behind, still trying to keep up, his cheeks flushed with the effort.	22	
'You ent gotta clothe 'em, you know. They shoulda brought that with them.'	25	
'Well, he haven't,' said Tom gruffly. 'Can you knit me a jersey or can you not?'		
There was one small towel, a piece of soap, a toothbrush, an old Bible, and an envelope with 'To whom it may concern' written on it.	31	
'I've put the belt in for when he's bad...'	31	
Tom was angry.	33	
He raised the lid, gazed for an instant at the contents and quietly blew away the dust from the tops of the brightly coloured pots.	40	

TEXT STUDY: QUIZ TIME

Joanna Carroll, Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School

I tend to use a combination of the games below in a 'quiz' lesson either at the beginning or end of the study of a text. If it's at the beginning of study, I will let the students know the date of the quiz as an incentive to have finished reading the text. The students enjoy the competitive nature of it, and it's a good motivator. It can also be a very effective way of revising the nuts and bolts of a text before concentrating on the broader themes and ideas. It essentially involves the teacher being the 'quizmaster', and does require a bit of preparation in terms of creating cards, etc., but once done these can be used again and again. I've played these games with students from year 7 through to year 10, and regardless of age or ability, they have all loved them.

WHOSE LINE IS IT ANYWAY?

Students must attribute quotations from the text to the correct character.

PICTIONARY

Groups play off against each other to draw something relevant to the text on the board and have their team members guess it.

If you lack board availability an alternative to this is charades, where they act out whatever is on the card.

ARTICULATE

For this game you need to make about 60 or 70 cards each with an element from the text on it. Each group must allocate a speaker who will try to articulate what is on the card without saying the actual word while the group guesses. Groups must complete this one at a time, but the other groups don't mind watching—they pick up tips from the others. The group that guesses the most in a minute wins. Speakers are only allowed to pass on one card; once they have passed the card, they can't go back. It's important to stipulate that explanations must always be given in the context of the text.

If you like, you can categorise the cards according to the type of answer, for example, symbols, characters, places, objects, etc.

WHO AM I?

Cryptic clues about a character, object or place from the text are given. The most cryptic or obscure clue is given first and is worth the most points. Groups are allowed to enter a guess at anytime. They may only guess once, and the guess must be written down and submitted. The teacher must record the point at which the guess has been submitted in order to allocate the correct amount of points if the answer is correct. Each clue that is given is less cryptic and worth less points. Once all clues have been given and all teams have entered their guesses, the answer

is revealed and points allocated accordingly. So, for example, a team who entered a correct guess might get five points, whereas a team who correctly entered a guess after the fifth clue might only get one point.

© Joanna Carroll

NEWSPAPER REPORT ACTIVITY

Sharon Gardiner, Marist Sion College



THE ONLINE VERSION
HAS MORE LINES FOR
STUDENT ANSWERS

1. Name of paper.....
2. Date of paper.....
3. Name and number of lift-outs in paper
4. Headline on front page.What is the picture? Does it match the headline?
5. Number of pages in paper. (Not including lift-out)
6. Page index is on
7. What else is on the front page?.....
8. What pages are these things on?
 - The 'Letters to the Editor'
 - The weather
 - The crosswords.....
 - The classifieds
 - The world news.....
 - The Editorial.....
9. Name five things that are found in the classifieds.....
- 10.What are the obituaries?.....
- 11.What is the Editorial about?
- 12.Who do you think wrote the Editorial?.....
- 13.What types of things are found on the pages titled 'confidential'?
14. Describe these pages from *The Herald Sun*.
 - 50/50
 - Text Talk
 - Hot Topic.....
 - Vox Pop
 - Voteline
15. Describe these pages from *The Age*.
 - And Another Thing.....
 - Comment and Debate
 - The Odd Spot.....
 - *The Age* today.....
- 16.What do you need to include when you write a 'Letter to the Editor'. (Instructions at bottom of letters):
17. How many 'Letters to the Editor' are there in your paper?
- 18.What is the Letter of the Day about? Who wrote it? Where do they live?
19. Choose three letters from 'Letters to the Editor' and write down the heading, the author and what the letter is about.
20. Find and read The Quiz in either paper.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

David Newcombe, Brentwood Secondary College

This is an outline of a lesson I undertook with my year 8 English class, but it is applicable across a range of year levels.

Initially we looked at how we make connections in conversation. To emphasise the point I suddenly changed subjects. With no logical introduction, I went from discussing school, to astronomy and then to sport. The fact that I appeared to have lost my marbles helped to grab the students' attention quite effectively! We then considered what steps we could put in place to make my conversation more sensible.

The next step was to engage the students in the same process. We took the subject of sport and tried to make links to food. In our imaginary conversation this was not too difficult as sport is connected to energy and energy to food.

We then considered links between footwear and alien life forms. You can of course choose any subjects you wish, the more extreme the better. The following gives an idea of how students approached this.

STUDENT ONE

Footwear—shoes—moon shoes—real Moon shoes—space—aliens.

(I had no idea there is a style of shoe called 'Moon' but had to give the student credit for a valid link and a shortcut to the goal topic.)

STUDENT TWO

Footwear—shoes—sport shoes—sports records—running enthusiasts—sports freaks—eccentrics—people on the fringe—alien abductees.

(This student pointed out that the term 'freak' was being used in a non-derogatory manner and referred to those who had an almost unnatural ability in some area of sport.)

After this we broke into groups of five or six. All students except for one were given a topic from the word list. This topic had to remain hidden from the others.

The task of students was to bring the topic of conversation around to their topic as seamlessly as possible.

A common topic was given to each group to start. On this occasion they were told to start discussing the weather and manipulate the conversation to their individual target topics.

The remaining student was appointed adjudicator. This student was given the list of the topics. The adjudicator had to assess which student in the group was most successful in introducing their topic in as natural a way as possible. (We had a class discussion on the meaning of 'contrived' and students were told they would earn extra

points on any written piece in which they used this word appropriately.)

The lesson seemed to be very successful in that students were able to differentiate how this process varies from conversation and written work. The activity generated considerable emotion with some students frustrated in their rather obvious efforts to introduce the allocated topic, whilst others were able, almost nonchalantly capable of steering the discussion to their own ends.

At the conclusion all appeared to have a greater appreciation of how to use this in their writing to ensure that their ideas are linked more effectively when developing an argument.

Adjudicator's role: monitor students to see who can most easily change the subject to their allocated topic.

WORD LIST

SPORT	SPORT	SPORT	SPORT
POLITICS	POLITICS	POLITICS	POLITICS
SCHOOL	SCHOOL	SCHOOL	SCHOOL
MUSIC	MUSIC	MUSIC	MUSIC
FILMS	FILMS	FILMS	FILMS
FASHION	FASHION	FASHION	FASHION

**THE FULL-SIZE TOPIC CARDS ARE IN
THE ONLINE VERSION OF THE ACTIVITY**



THE ROBOT IN TWENTIETH CENTURY FILM AND LITERATURE

Astrid Morgan, Luther College

This is a new unit written by me for Term 1, 2011.

Rationale: students study the genre of science fiction. The unit involves viewing early film clips, fostering an understanding of the development of film techniques and the development of the medium, in order to show how the character of the robot developed throughout the century.

Resources: *I Robot*, Asimov, 'Robbie', *The Jetsons* episode 1, *Get Smart*—choice of three episodes involving Hymie the Robot, *Forbidden Planet*, *Lost in Space* episode 'War of the Robots', Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*, 1902 film *Trip to the Moon*, Georges Melies.

Method: introduce students to the genre of science fiction and brainstorm its features. Use *Trip to the Moon* to discuss the genre and its features. Provide students with a step-by-step synopsis to refer to when viewing the film. Discuss the camera's inability to move and the attempts at special effects.

Once a week produce a lesson with a taster of the film clip to be viewed the next week and ask students to predict by viewing trailers and film posters involving the characteristics of the robot. Keep a grid in which students must jot down the features of the robot each time they view. Show excerpts of the resources rather than whole films that are unnecessary and time consuming.

Provide students with instructions for constructing their own robot at home using no more than two shoeboxes as well as trimmings of their choice. Students should bring their robots to school on a prearranged day, with a prepared oral presentation. Give stringent guidelines about correct procedure for oral presentations and the content you wish them to cover. My students were told to discuss the personality and features they gave their robot and to show it to the class. Cue cards are a must.

Read the short story 'Robbie' by Isaac Asimov. We had spelling words for the terms from the story. Undertake word work to consolidate the spelling list. Provide comprehension questions for written and verbal responses.

Set three options for persuasive writing based on the dilemma of the robot being sent away in the short story. Provide the structure and planning for the persuasive response.

Be sure to display your class' robot creations where others can see them.

Assessment: oral presentation including robot model, persuasive writing, contribution to group and class discussion

TEACHER COMPANION FOR THE UNIT

1. Watch the two short clips of *Trip to the Moon* on YouTube directed by Georges Melies, from 1902.
 - Ask students to identify differences between this example of early cinema and current film techniques.
 - Ask students to determine the genre of this film.
 - Discuss what is actually happening in this film. A synopsis can be obtained from the internet.
 - Note that the camera is stationary.
 - Take notes together on the features of the genre, science fiction, and the major differences in film making at the early part of the 20th century.
2. Watch the clip of robot Maria from *Metropolis*. This clip is available on YouTube under the title 'Maria's transformation'.
 - Ask students to identify what is similar to the current stereotype of a mad scientist's laboratory.
 - Discuss and take notes on the special effects used to create the atmosphere of a lab.
 - Maria was a kindly girl who attempted to boost workers' morale in an underground workforce. The mad scientist, Rotwang, created a robot that looked like her to undermine her efforts at creating a vocal workforce.
3. Watch the clip from *Forbidden Planet*, all of Chapter 6.
 - Students examine the setting of the clip.
 - Students should describe Robbie. What does he look like? How does he speak? What does he do? Can you tell what his personality is like?
 - What makes this clip science fiction?
4. Watch all the episode of *Lost in Space*, 'War of the Robots'. Season 1, episode 20.
 - Students should note and discuss the change that occurs to Robot B9 during the course of this episode. Discuss the notion about whether or not robots can be good and evil.
 - Discuss the setting—what is happening in the serial to make it science fiction?
 - Discuss whether robots should be able to demonstrate human emotions.
5. Watch *Get Smart*, Season 1, episode 19.
 - This is the first episode in which Hymie appears. Hymie is a humanoid robot who is created by KAOS to

infiltrate CONTROL and destroy it. However, it takes a liking to the people at CONTROL and exhibits goodness.

- Discuss the unexpected behaviour this robot exhibits. How does he look different to other robots we have studied? What is the genre of this serial? Can a robot be used in genres other than science fiction?
6. Watch 'Rosey the Robot', Season 1, episode 1 of *The Jetsons*.
- How does this robot change our expectations of what robots are able to do? Does this robot exhibit human emotion? If so, what are they? What genre is this serial? How do humans feel about robots?
7. Isaac Asimov's short story, 'Robbie'. Read and analyse with a view to writing persuasively.

HYMIE THE ROBOT

- **Hymie the Robot.** Hymie is built by Dr. Ratton to serve KAOS, but in his first mission, Smart manages to turn him to the side of CONTROL. Hymie has numerous superhuman abilities, such as being physically stronger and faster than any human and being able to swallow poisons and register their name, type, and quantity, though his design does not include superhuman mental processing, most significantly characterised by an overly-literal interpretation of commands. For example, when Smart tells Hymie to 'get a hold of yourself,' he grasps each arm with the other. Hymie also has emotions and is 'programmed for neatness'.
- **Hymie** becomes a featured character on *Get Smart*. He also appeared in a western-style episode in which he must fight a super KAOS robot named Gropo.
- **Hymie** attracts the chief's niece.
- **He** runs a marathon for CONTROL.

Make a list of the ways in which you think Hymie may be used to support CONTROL against the evil organisation KAOS.

ROBOTS

METROPOLIS MOVIE POSTERS

Your task is to predict what the film is about. In small groups, look at the movie poster assigned to your group and make a list of what the poster is suggesting.

Upon completion of the group discussion, each group will briefly present to the class their ideas, while we have the movie poster displayed.

PERSUASIVE WRITING

To persuade is to convince someone else. When we write, we always write with a particular audience in mind. What we believe is our point of view.

In persuasive writing we seek to convince our audience that our point of view is correct and that they should agree with us.

There are ways in which we can do this successfully.

- We present a solid case, including the use of examples and evidence to support our point of view.
- We use carefully crafted language.
- We paragraph clearly so that our audience can see when we change ideas in our discussion.
- We plan carefully so that an audience can follow our ideas clearly.

You are also going to complete our study of the Robot in twentieth century film and literature by writing a persuasive piece.

Base your ideas on the short story 'Robbie' by Isaac Asimov.

Topics to choose from:

1. Write a letter to the local paper explaining why robots make good nannies.
2. Write a letter from Gloria to her parents explaining why Robbie should be found and brought home.
3. Present a written case from Mrs. Weston to her husband explaining why Robbie should be sent away.

Expected length 350–400 words

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

ROBOT—PERSUASIVE WRITING

	VH	H	M	L	NS
CLEAR EVIDENCE OF PLANNING					
MECHANICS OF LANGUAGE					
PARAGRAPHING					
ABILITY TO PERSUADE					

PLANNING FOR PERSUASIVE WRITING

PARAGRAPH 1

- Discuss what the issue is.
- Discuss what the outcome should be.
- Clearly state your point of view.

PARAGRAPHS 2, 3 AND 4

- List three ideas which support your point of view.
- List examples which you could use to discuss these ideas further.

PARAGRAPH 5

- Summarise what you have discussed.

The short story, 'Robbie' can be found at the following web link:

http://preterhuman.net/texts/literature/books_by_author/A/Asimov,%20Isaac%20-%20I,%20Robot.pdf

© Astrid Morgan

**THIS UNIT HAS A NUMBER OF
ACCOMPANYING HANDOUTS.
WE HAVE INCLUDED SEVERAL.
THE REST CAN BE FOUND ONLINE.**



WRITING STIMULI FOR CREATIVE/JOURNAL WRITING ...

SHORT EXERCISES TO MAKE STUDENTS WAKE-UP

Marilyn Kelmann, St Leonard's College

The Oreo ... teaching the power of description, simile and metaphor can be modified according to teacher's strength and energy levels.

The teacher brings in a couple of packets of Oreo biscuits (oohs, ahhs, cries of hunger and destitution from the back row).

1. Ask students to describe what they see (NO EATING!) in exactly 25 words—without using the words black and white.
2. Students share their description with the class. What happens to writing when you cannot include the obvious?
3. Ask students to eat the Oreo biscuit slowly. After this, describe the experience of eating the biscuit in the present tense, concentrating on using sensory descriptions (see, hear, smell, feel and taste). Use three sentences only. What types of verbs and adjectives are students using and why?
4. Students share their descriptions with the class.
5. There will be some students who use a simile and metaphor in their descriptions—alert the class to these devices through a particular student's work. Make sure you write your own that includes a metaphor/simile just in case! Discuss what function they are performing in the sentence and what they add to the description.
6. At this point, you may deviate to a study of a particular poem or thematic study.
7. I also use Freddo Frogs and Easter eggs for variations on this exercise—focusing more on persuasive writing in the form of advertisements.

MY SPECIAL POSSESSION ... A GOOD

ICE-BREAKER EARLY ON IN THE YEAR

1. Students bring in a special possession from home. Suddenly everyone is looking, sharing, whispering, and talking to others.
2. Each student sits next to someone they don't know well and tells them about what they brought in and why.
3. The person ('stranger') has to gather enough information about their 'new' friend's special possession to be able to present it to the class in an original, innovative manner. It may be in the form of an advertisement, limerick, poem, song, news report, or just the usual ... but presentations cannot exceed one minute.

4. Students have to write a paragraph with a clear message in it about their friend's special possession. Usually these are quite sad and themes of loss and death prevail.
5. I can't resist setting the first extended written piece on this—'my special thing'.

© Marilyn Kelman

HARVEY KRUMPET'S 'FAKTS'

Anna Belheiz, Bendigo Senior Secondary College

YEAR LEVEL: MIDDLE SECONDARY

AIMS

- To differentiate fact from fiction.
- To recognise and understand the purpose of fact and fiction in contemporary society.
- To research topics on the internet effectively and efficiently.

LESSON PROGRESSION

CLASS DISCUSSION: FACT AND FICTION (45 MINUTES)

- What is the difference?
- Dictionary definitions of fact and fiction.
- When are both used? What is the use of each type? (Media, entertainment, stories—news vs. fantasy etc.; view examples from different parts of magazines and newspapers, TV etc.)
- Which type do you prefer and why? (Justify personal opinions).

PLAY DVD HARVEY KRUMPET (30 MINUTES)

CLASS DISCUSSION: 'FAKTS' HANDOUT (30 MINUTES)

- Go through the sheet—discuss the sort of information sought (subject area/focus), types of websites that will have it.
- Discuss what key words will elicit the most accurate answers, how to approach internet research.
- State whether each statement is fact or fiction—commit to a decision as a class.

INTERNET RESEARCH: 'FAKTS' HANDOUT (30–45 MINUTES)

- Research facts on the internet—source your answers.
- Collate answers as a class: which were fact and which were fiction? Does this match the class' original decision? How?

THE 'FAKTS' HANDOUT TO ACCOMPANY THIS ACTIVITY CAN BE FOUND ONLINE IN PDF FORM.

More
online

FAKTS

These statements have been made as fact. Verify their accuracy through research:

1. No piece of paper can be folded more than 7 times.
2. The average human body makes enough carbon for 900 pencils.
3. Althaiophobia is a fear marshmallows.
4. Our eyes are always the same from birth, but our nose and ears never stop growing.
5. On average, people fear spiders more than death.
6. A snail can sleep for more than 3 years.
7. Donald Duck comics were banned in Finland because he doesn't wear pants.
8. A full moon always rises at sunset.
9. Chocolate stimulates the release of endorphins in the body. Endorphins enhance one's mood and block pain.
10. Cats have over 100 vocal sounds, dogs only have about ten.
11. Until 1990, sausages were still legal tender in East Germany.
12. Babies are born with 300 bones, but by adulthood, we only have 206 in our bodies.
13. The reason honey is so easy to digest is that it's already been digested by a bee.
14. The human eye sees everything upside down, but the brain turns everything right side up.
15. One quarter of the bones in your body are in your feet.
16. 23 per cent of all photocopier faults are caused by people sitting on them and photographing their buttocks.
17. During a 24-hour period, the average human will breathe 23, 040 times, exercise 7 million brain cells and speak 4, 800 words.
18. The hummingbird is the only bird that can't fly backwards.
19. Only female ducks can quack.
20. During a kiss, as many as 278 bacterial colonies are exchanged.
21. The average human body contains enough phosphorous to make 2, 200 match heads.
22. No two spider webs are the same.
23. It is estimated that at any one time, 0.7 per cent of the world's population is drunk.
24. The ant can lift 50 times its own weight and can pull 30 times its own weight.
25. The electric chair was invented by a dentist.

A SPECIAL TREAT

Margaret Murray, St Pauls College, March, 1970

The songs mentioned are probably still well known to us all.

CREATIVE WRITING IN FORM II: LONELINESS

As a source of inspiration this term, I used the songs of the Beatles, and Simon and Garfunkle.

THE PROCEDURE

The class first listened to 'Eleanor Rigby' by the Beatles, and 'I am a Rock' and 'A Most Peculiar Man' by Simon and Garfunkle. This was followed by a brief discussion on the theme common to the three songs, i.e, loneliness. The song-writers' methods of making their impact were noted: emphasis on realistic, factual detail ('Eleanor Rigby picks up the rice in the church'; 'He has a brother somewhere'), images ('rock' being suggestive of toughness, hardness, insensitivity), repetition ('Wasn't he a most peculiar man?').

Members of the class were then asked to suggest other concrete examples of loneliness, and a list was compiled on the board as follows:

- Someone going to a film or football match by himself.
- Someone having Christmas dinner on his own.
- A man alone at a table in a café.
- A boy just new to school.
- A soldier in Vietnam.
- A leper.
- A slum dweller.
- A patient in a hospital.
- A pensioner living alone.
- Someone in a new country.
- A truck or transport driver.
- An alcoholic.

Finally the students were asked to choose one of these and write a paragraph on loneliness.

Here is a sample of the work done by the class:

The echo of slow footsteps rebounds off the walls of the storehouses in the dimly lit back street, as a drunk staggers to the next pub, the next alley, always to be evicted. This fellow in his beaten-up old pin-striped suit and his holey-soled Julius Marlowes is probably the most lonely fellow on earth. Nowhere to go, no family, relatives won't accept him, nothing. He has to fend for himself, he is alone.

ROMEO AND JULIET ACTOR DIRECTIONS CARDS— PUTTING THE SCRIPT INTO THE HANDS OF YEAR 9 STUDENTS

Lisa McNeice, Kilvington Grammar School

INTRODUCTION

In 2010, I attended an in-school Bell Shakespeare workshop on *Romeo and Juliet* with a group of year 9 students. The presentation was engaging and the students were enthralled. During reflection time at the end, the same question kept emerging in different words. Essentially, the students were asking the actors, 'How do you know to say it that way? Move there? Stand there and react like that? How do you bring so much meaning to the words?'

The actors answered simply: 'It's all in the text'. And that's where the idea for the Actor Directions Cards was formed—I decided I'd get the class to create a set of playing cards which would outline for an actor 'the what, the how and the why' of a series of speeches from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

THE ACTIVITY

In groups of five, the students produced a set of Actor Directions Cards. Individually, each student subsequently presented a speech from the play to a small group, using a card created by one of their peers. The unit's learning foci included: co-operative group work and presentation to small groups; speaking and listening; reading and writing; and peer assessment. The unit took three weeks to complete, with some presentations having to be carried over into the fourth week. It should be noted that we had finished 'going through' the play before starting this activity.

Here are the steps I gave the students. I laminated the cards between steps three and four. They looked amazing!

1. Form four groups of five people. Each group will study a different character: Juliet, Romeo, the Nurse and Friar Lawrence. As a group, discuss your character, using evidence from the text to trace his or her development throughout the play.
2. Choose five important speeches of 12–20 lines for your character. Try to get the speeches to span the whole play. (You might choose one speech from each Act.) If you choose an excerpt from a longer speech, you may leave lines out if you want to. Make sure you indicate where words are missing with an ellipsis (...). Provide the Act, Scene and line numbers of your speeches using the following convention: I ii 23–34.
3. Each member of the group takes responsibility for a speech. You now need to create the card. Please note what you need to provide.

On the front of the card:

- the speech;
- an overall description of the character;
- appropriate visual/s.

On the back of the card:

- the background information to the speech;
- a character description for *this point of the play*;
- directions to the actor as to how to deliver the lines. What is the character's situation and motivation at this point of the play?
- supporting evidence from the text for your directions;
- how the speech explores any of the major concerns of the play.

4. Jigsaw groups

- Once the five cards for each group are ready, the class will form five groups of four. There should be a Juliet, a Romeo, a Nurse and a Friar Lawrence in each new group. Each group member will be given a card. Now you have to prepare and present the speech to your group, using the directions provided on the card and your own ideas.

Note: you must present a character you didn't prepare—for example, if you were in the Nurse group, you will need to present a speech from one of the other three characters.

5. Assessment

This is a peer-assessed task.

- assess the card and
- assess the performance of each group member.

REFLECTION

I really enjoyed taking this unit, as it was so student-focussed and student-driven. What I loved most about it was seeing the text in the students' hands and watching them comb through their selected speeches (and the text notes, which until then few had bothered to read!) to find the clues they needed to create their cards. There was no way to complete the task without each group knowing their selected character (Romeo, Juliet, Nurse or Friar), the arc of their development through the play and their motivation, state of mind and relationship with others at each point of the five selected speeches. Selecting the speeches as a group suited this mixed-ability class, as the students helped each other understand the character at each point. They soon began discussing *how* the text should be interpreted (and *why*) as well as *what* was being said. On the day of the presentations, the groups dispersed around the school with their cards. It was Open Day—I guess visitors thought that kids declaiming around every corner was a normal state of events! I will certainly use the activity again in the future.

© Lisa McNeice

THE ACTOR DIRECTIONS CARD ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

CHARACTER AND CARD NUMBER:

CREATED BY:

ASSESSORS:

Criteria	A	B	C	D	E
Choice of speech and overall background information about the character (Side A)	Excellent choice of speech and creation of background information offers scope for sophisticated analysis and interpretation	Very effective choice of speech and creation of background information offers scope for detailed analysis and interpretation	Effective choice of speech and creation of background information offers some scope for sound analysis and interpretation	Choice of speech and creation of background information offers limited scope for basic analysis and interpretation	Choice of speech did not offer any scope for character analysis and interpretation
Background information specific to the speech. How effectively does it aid the actor with the delivery of this particular speech? (Side B)	Background information offers the actor a detailed and insightful understanding of the character's situation and motivation	Background information offers the actor a detailed and sound understanding of the character's situation and motivation	Background information offers the actor some understanding of the character's situation and motivation	Background information offers the actor little understanding of the character's situation and motivation	No attempt to offer any guidelines for the delivery of the speech
Detailed directions to the actor, supported by references to the text. (Side B)	Useful, clear, insightful directions offered and supported by the text	Useful, clear directions offered and supported by the text	Clear directions offered and supported by the text	Directions offered, but often not supported by the text	No useful directions offered to the actor
Overall layout and presentation of card (Sides A and B)	Outstanding choice of visuals and layout of publishable standard support and enhance the content of the card	Choice of visuals and layout creatively support and enhance the content of the card	Layout and visuals successfully support and enhance the content of the card	Some care and attention to detail shown in the presentation of material	Almost no care and attention to detail shown in the presentation of material

THE PRESENTATION OF A SPEECH ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

NAME OF ACTOR:

ASSESSORS:

Criteria	A	B	C	D	E
Presentation of speech—voice and intonation	Actor used voice and intonation to enhance meaning throughout	Actor used voice and intonation to enhance meaning in most of the speech	Actor made some effort to use voice and intonation to enhance meaning	Actor made little effort to use voice and intonation to enhance meaning	Actor made no effort to use voice and intonation to enhance meaning
Presentation of speech—varied pace and use of pauses	Actor varied the pace and pitch of the presentation to support meaning and aid understanding throughout	Actor varied the pace and pitch of the presentation to support meaning and aid understanding in most of the speech	Actor made some effort to vary the pace and pitch of the presentation to support meaning and aid understanding	Actor made little effort to vary the pace and pitch of the presentation to support meaning and aid understanding	Actor made no effort to vary the pace and pitch of the presentation to support meaning and aid understanding
Presentation of speech—use of script	Actor had the speech by heart	Actor made very limited use of the script	Actor made frequent but brief references to the script	Actor read from the script, looking up only occasionally	Actor read from the script without looking up
Actor's understanding and representation of the character's complexities	Actor very effectively managed to convey an understanding of the complexities of the character's situation throughout	Actor often managed to convey an understanding of the complexities of the character's situation	Actor sometimes managed to convey an understanding of the complexities of the character's situation	Actor rarely managed to convey an understanding of the complexities of the character's situation	Actor never managed to convey an understanding of the complexities of the character's situation

MY KIND OF MUSIC

David Huntley/Jan May, St Leonard's College

Put yourself in the position of a manager of a band or even just one singer. Life being what it is in the 21st century you must use PowerPoint to create a presentation that will win over a big recording label. It is not just about music, or even just about lyrics, it is about image and marketing. But before you go any further, you will have to decide on the following:

1. What kind of music will it be?

It could be rock, country and western, or one of the many varieties that have evolved over the last few years. You decide.

2. Write a mission statement for your group.

What are they on about? For example, are they rebels, are they politically motivated, are they environmentalists? They might be totally dippy, super cool dropout types, or hip Valley girl types (remember *Clueless*). They can be totally humorous, or deadly serious, but they must have a focus of some sort. This mission statement should be about 50 words long and all project members should participate in creating it.

3. What is the name of the group and who is in it?

Names matter in show business, even for singer/song writers who take themselves very seriously. Remember Bob Dylan was Robert Zimmerman, originally. There must be at least one band member for each person involved in this project.

4. You will now have to write a short biography of about 100 words for each of the band members.

You should adopt the persona of one of the band members and develop this biography in an entertaining way that is likely to fit the image you are trying to project.

5. You must now write the songs.

It is not necessary to compose any music but you should have the style in mind. There must be the equivalent of one song for each person involved in this project. Everyone should have a go at this. The songs should be the equivalent of 16 lines each. They do not have to rhyme, but they can. It will depend on your chosen musical genre, to some extent.



6. Finally, you must produce the PowerPoint project.

Using all the material you have so far created, you must put together a hard-hitting, hard selling product. It will contain the mission statement, the biographies, the song lyrics and all the other visual and audio-visual elements that will sell this band. You can borrow bits of existing songs for purely artistic purposes to give your production more realism.

7. Finally, it is important that you divide up the work evenly. It is not necessary to work on one computer; you can import PowerPoint slides from one computer to another. Use the *Insert then Slides from files* command.



**A BRIGHTLY COLOURED
VERSION OF THIS
ACTIVITY IS ONLINE**

YEAR 10 ENGLISH DISCRIMINATION CONTEXT PIECE: ASSESSMENT TASK

Ross Huggard, Cranbourne Secondary College

BACKGROUND

We have been exploring the dimensions and characteristics of discrimination, as it is seen in society. This is, of course, our Context for study and you are now going to gather together some of your considered ideas on this notion to be able to develop a major piece of writing. This will not be an essay or piece on our first text for study related to this Context, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Rather, it will be a written piece that draws from some of the aspects of discrimination it contains in Part One. You may, if you wish, include brief quotations from the novel, but you are not required to do this. However, you must in some way draw from your knowledge and understanding of the text in what you develop and later write.

STEPS TO BE TAKEN

1. Review and revise all of the information you have already been given on this Context, including the detailed handout. Clarify your own thoughts about what actually constitutes 'discrimination'. You may also use the internet to conduct additional research or use newspaper articles you have read or been given.
2. Review your earlier piece on the Context and notes on the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, as well as on your notations made in the text as we went through this in class. Also, consider what the film adaptation revealed and emphasised. Identify the different forms of discrimination we encounter in this novel and how they are shown. Reflect on key symbols, including that of the mockingbird, and what they tell us about the nature and experience of discrimination.
3. Decide what type of writing will best suit you here. You need to be able to show your best writing skills and your clearest sense of the discrimination Context, which connect to the Prompt on which you are going to write. Do not assume that an essay is necessarily the best writing style to adopt here.
4. Plan your piece, making sure that you do directly draw upon some relevant aspects of the novel. Sequence your points so that they can be clearly and logically presented and developed. Write ... re-read ... proof-read ... submit!

FORMS OF WRITING

You have several choices of writing style/form to select from here. None is viewed to be easier or harder than another one. Rather, you should ask yourself: 'Which style of writing will best enable me to show my detailed understanding of the Context of discrimination?'

1. Speech to a group of people at a meeting (nominate an audience).

OR

2. Writing a creative addition to the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* e.g. Atticus giving his reflections on events OR Judge Taylor explaining his views to his wife.

OR

3. Feature article OR opinion piece (as might be published in a newspaper, even one which might connect to the novel).

OR

4. Argumentative essay (have a clear contention) OR imaginative essay (make sure that it is believable and meaningful).

PROMPTS

Select one of the following Prompts on which to develop your writing. The prompt on which you respond is a springboard for your ideas and is intended to stimulate your considered thoughts. You do NOT have to resolve it as you would a topic on a text. However, your piece of writing should still have a clearly defined connection to this Prompt.

Recommended minimum length: 500 words.

1. 'Discrimination is like an epidemic, which spreads rapidly, but is often very hard to end.'

OR

2. 'The world is a better place because of all the different types of people in it. This is why discrimination is so foolish and inappropriate.'

OR

3. 'We should judge others on what they do and say and not on their background or interests or looks.'

REPETITION POEM LESSON PLAN

Neale Baker, Sacre Coeur



**THE SEPARATE
WORKSHEETS FOR
THIS ACTIVITY CAN
BE FOUND ONLINE**

INTRODUCTION

All creative writing contains silences, what we haven't been told. Often what we haven't been told is more important. 'Less is more' so the reader brings their imagination to the writing. e.g. 'The cat sat on the mat'. What are the silences in this? e.g. What sort of mat? Why is it sitting? etc.

1. Start with simple, funny examples.

I like/love ...	I hate ...	I wonder ...
I fear ...	I am ...	Embarrassment is ...
Frustration is ...	Happiness is ...	The future is ...

Or 'Boring Poem' where the second and alternate lines are always the same e.g.

I get up and go to school

Day after day. Day after day

I do as I'm told

Day after day. Day after day.

Write three lines for each example: Go round the class and hear one example from each person. Encourage creativity, imagery, metaphorical writing. Be amusing, thoughtful, philosophical, weird, whimsical ... 'Can be a feeling, an image, a thing, a person ...'

e.g. 'Don't just say 'I love ice cream' ... say 'I love the cool trickle of ice cream glaciers down my throat ...'

2. Increase the difficulty/complexity of task. Have students write a number then only ask for best out of all of them. Could ask class for possible examples of phrases.

I never told anyone...	I am me because...
I used to...	but now I...
If only...	Who knows...
I don't understand...	then end with something you do understand.

3. Poem

'Now we are going to do things differently. You're going to write a closing line.' Have students write the line 'But You Didn't' as a closing line.

Hand out copies of the poem 'But You Didn't' by Merrill Glass. Read, discuss.

Remind the class of the introduction: all creative writing contains silences, what we haven't been told. Often what we haven't been told is important.

What are the silences from this poem? Need to imagine. What haven't we been told? E.g. why didn't he come back? Death? Damaged? She's with a new man? Could ask and answer own questions.

4. Handout copies of the poem 'In Detention'. Similar discussion.

5. Listen to/watch 'What's he Building In There?' by Tom Waites from Mule Variations.
www.YouTube.com/watch?v=nMqxNPsfN50

Discussion: what makes the examples so successful? Unexpected, confusion is created ... so think what you are going to create with yours. What effect are you trying for?

1. Students to write own repetition poem. Generate ideas ... can use ones already written, can use 'But You Didn't' or 'In Detention'. Think of a person you might want to or write for ... think of a common phrase someone uses (list on w/board) ... think of an experience ... what did these two examples make you think of ...?

2. To present finished poem: in a booklet, (using one A4 sheet folded), or PowerPoint, Photostory. Need to think about word order and what appears on each page. What do you want to reveal? How do you want to finish? What impact or impression do you want to make on the reader?

Think about choice of font, layout, illustration which will also create an effect.

REPETITION POEM

You have started writing your own beginning to a repetition poem. Some were simple, some philosophical, some funny, some meaningful ... some just plain weird. Hopefully, you all wrote at least one line that surprised you. You weren't aware of how poetic you could be. That is what writing is about.

We then read the three poems, 'But You Didn't', 'In Detention' and 'What's He Building In There?' which were quite moving. 'In Detention', in particular, showed how a simple poem can actually be quite complex. That there is more meaning than we might have first imagined.

Remember we spoke about the importance of silence in our writing. How you want the reader to bring their imagination to the piece of writing and not just be told everything by the writer.

Now is your turn to write a repetition poem ... 'But what will I write about?' I hear you cry.

- You could look back at your long list of starts from the class exercises. Choose one phrase or one of your lines which appeals to you.
- Think about common phrases we all use everyday ... 'I love you' for instance. Can you use one of those and play

with it? Create something unexpected from a clichéd, common expression.

- Look at the three example poems. What did they make you think about? What silences exist in them? Perhaps use their structure as the model for your own.
- Think of your own life experiences. What you've read and seen and heard about.
- The repetition could be of an opening line, the final line, certain images, or phrases ... play with the possibilities ... try not to be obvious and predictable.

WRITING TIPS

- Think about creating 'silences'.
- Edit your writing ruthlessly so only the most important words are left.
- Use strong verbs, vivid adjectives.
- Think about the effect you want to have on the reader.
- Above all play with the language and surprise yourself again.

FINALLY, SOME POETRY QUOTES

TO THINK ABOUT

'A poet is, before anything else, a person who is passionately in love with language.' W. H. Auden

'You don't have to suffer to be a poet; adolescence is enough suffering for anyone.' John Ciardi

'Poetry is language at its most distilled and most powerful.' Rita Dove

'Poetry is thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.' Thomas Gray

'Science is for those who learn; poetry, for those who know.' Joseph Roux

'I've written some poetry I don't understand myself.' Carl Sandburg

'Poetry is the opening and closing of a door, leaving those who look through to guess about what is seen during the moment.' Carl Sandburg

'Poetry is the language in which man explores his own amazement.' Christopher Fry

'You can't write poetry on the computer.' Quentin Tarantino

'Poetry is not always words.' Audrey Foris

'We don't read and write poetry because it's cute. We read and write poetry because we are members of the human race, and the human race is filled with passion. Medicine,

law, business, engineering, these are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life, but poetry, beauty, romance, love, these are what we stay alive for.' *Dead Poet's Society*

'Poets have been mysteriously silent on the subject of cheese.' G.K. Chesterton

'Genuine poetry can communicate before it is understood.' T. S. Eliot

SHAKESPEARE'S GREATEST HITS: AN ORAL PRESENTATION UNIT

Chris Pearson, Presentation College

'Actually, I quite like Shakespeare!'

Some people have visited many a therapist and paid good money in order to be able to say those five words. We in the PCW English Faculty want to cut out the middleman by doing away with the need to recover from Shakespeare. It is our hope that as a result of completing this unit of work you will be able to announce quite publicly and with almost no embarrassment that you admire and enjoy Shakespeare's writing.

Now, before you all guffaw and exclaim in unison, 'As if!', hear us out. Over the course of this unit you will be able to show your knowledge of Shakespeare's work in a way that will suit your interests and abilities as a student of English. You will get a wide taste of Shakespeare's plays and hopefully find one or two that you really like.

Here is what else makes this unit different to other approaches to Shakespeare:

1. While your teacher will help you with your exploration of Shakespeare's work, you get to choose the Shakespeare texts that you want to study in depth.
2. Although there is written work involved, you do not have to complete a formal analytical text response (unless you really want to).
3. You get to choose the oral presentation activity that you will undertake in order to show what you have learned and how well you can communicate.
4. Time allowed: your presentation should be approximately five minutes if you are presenting individually and 10–15 minutes if presenting in a group.

SHALL I COMPARE ME TO A POET?

TASK DESCRIPTION

If you have a love of poetry, both studying it and writing it, then this task is probably for you. After studying Shakespeare's sonnets in some detail, you will be required to write your own sonnets for a poetry reading and discussion in class.

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

1. Become familiar with Shakespeare's sonnets.

Find books or Internet sites featuring Shakespeare's sonnets. Which subjects and themes did Shakespeare explore in his poetry? What sort of poetry elements feature most strongly in his work? Put together your own annotated anthology of favourite Shakespearean sonnets.

2. Become an expert on the sonnet form.

What is a sonnet? Consider how Shakespeare's sonnets are structured in terms of introducing, complicating and resolving the central problem or idea. Note the rhyme scheme and rhythm of a Shakespearean sonnet and how this contributes to the structure.

3. Write your own sonnets.

Using what you know of Shakespeare's sonnets, try your hand at writing your own. Your sonnets need to be connected in some way to Shakespeare's. You are not, however, obliged to use Shakespearean English.

ORAL PRESENTATION ACTIVITIES FOR A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF EACH TASK

Group Presentations	Individual Presentations
Three Saucy Knaves Walk into a Bar... Now you can put the most interesting Shakespearean characters together in the same room.	Did You Know That... Your chance to be a Shakespeare expert/nerd.
D.I.Y. Shakespeare Try your own hand at writing like Shakespeare and show off your work.	Shall I compare me to a poet? Write and recite your own sonnets.
Celluloid Shakespeare (group or individual) Be your own Shakespeare film critic.	Don't mind me, I'm just talking to myself Perform a soliloquy or two from your favourite Shakespeare play.

More
online

THE LINKS TO ALL SIX OF THE ACCOMPANYING TASKS CAN BE FOUND ONLINE. TWO ARE PUBLISHED BELOW

4. Present your work to the class.

You should now be ready to read your work to the class. Choose three of your sonnets to read and be prepared to discuss how they are related to Shakespeare's. In order to help your audience to appreciate your writing fully, you might wish to give them access to your written word, either through photocopies or a PowerPoint presentation. If you do, please ensure that this doesn't detract from your ability to communicate effectively.

D.I.Y. SHAKESPEARE

A friendly warning: As this group presentation requires some detailed research and is demanding and time-consuming, it is vital that each group member contributes equally to the task. Only motivated students with proven collaborative skills should form groups. Ideally, groups should be limited to three or four members.

TASK DESCRIPTION

Just as Shakespeare used existing stories and historical sources to help him write his plays, you will choose a story worth dramatising or a significant historical event around which you will write your own script in Shakespearean English. After relating the plot of your play to the class and explaining its connection to Shakespeare's work, a written scene will be performed.

EXAMPLES OF SUITABLE STORIES OR HISTORICAL EVENTS TO GET YOU THINKING

- The rise and assassination of JFK (consider JFK's power, his brutal and public killing and the speculation and conspiracy theories surrounding his death and you've got a winner in the mould of *Julius Caesar*);
- The life and death of Princess Diana (young love, betrayal, love affairs, conspiracy theories and a tragic ending—perhaps a touch of *Romeo and Juliet* meets *Othello*); and
- Brad, Jen and Angelina (from the tabloid and glossy pages comes this tragic tale of love, lust, and love lost, just begging to be given the Shakespearean treatment).

D.I.Y. SHAKESPEARE—

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

1. Research Shakespeare's plays

Research the type of plays that Shakespeare wrote. From where did he get his ideas? Read some plot overviews on the internet. What is an act? What is a scene? How many acts are found in a Shakespearean play? In terms of plot structure, what typically occurs in each act of his tragedy, comedy or history plays? What are the ingredients of a Shakespearean

play? How did Shakespeare structure his plays? What is a soliloquy? What sort of characters interested him? What themes and ideas emerge from his work?

2. Research/Brainstorm ideas for your play

Based on your research, what 20th/21st century events, stories and famous figures would have interested Shakespeare? What other events from the past, including Shakespeare's own times, might have caught his attention?

3. Research the language of Shakespeare

Study a number of scenes from a play in detail. What sort of writing devices does Shakespeare employ in his work and why? Find examples of imagery, similes, metaphors, symbols, repetition, irony, assonance, puns and alliteration in his plays. What is iambic pentameter? Find clear examples of it in Shakespeare's writing. Put together a glossary of useful and commonly used Shakespearean words.

4. Plan your response

Choose one of your ideas to work into a play. Sketch out a plot (more detail can be added later) using the appropriate number of acts. You will need to consider subplots (if appropriate) and characters.

5. Write your scene to be performed

Using what you have learnt as a result of the above preparatory activities, you are now ready to write a scene from your play.

6. The performance

Each member of the group is to play a part in the performance. As each student will receive an individual mark, speaking roles should be equally shared. If students have small acting parts, they should be given the task of relating the plot and explaining the relationship of your work to Shakespeare's.

THE BEST PIECES WILL SHOW EVIDENCE OF THE FOLLOWING

- Knowledge of the types of stories Shakespeare was interested in telling;
- Knowledge of the themes found in Shakespeare's plays;
- Appreciation of the structure of Shakespeare's plays;
- Ability to write clearly and credibly in Shakespearean English;
- Entertaining and imaginative storytelling;
- Understanding of the literary elements Shakespeare employed, such as imagery, symbolism, metaphors and similes, irony, dramatic irony, puns and alliteration to name a few.

YOUR WRITTEN/PREPARATORY WORK WILL CONSIST OF THE FOLLOWING

- Evidence of research;

- An overview of the plot, according to what happens in each act;
- One scene in its entirety, including a glossary;
- Photocopies/printouts of your sources (where appropriate) and/or a bibliography; and
- A brief explanation of how your response is connected to Shakespeare's plays.

DON'T MIND ME, I'M JUST TALKING TO MYSELF

TASK DESCRIPTION

If you don't mind being the centre of attention, you will probably enjoy this task. Often the highlight of a Shakespeare play, the soliloquy allows the actor to reveal his or her insights into the character being performed. In this case, you have the opportunity to perform a soliloquy from your favourite Shakespeare play. You will also have to provide a brief commentary explaining your interpretation of the soliloquy.

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

1. Finding and understanding a soliloquy

What exactly is a soliloquy? Find a range of soliloquies from Shakespeare's tragedies, comedies, and histories. Choose one to present to the class. You will need to read the play from which the soliloquy is drawn. Keep this in mind when choosing the soliloquy. What purpose does the soliloquy serve in the play? Note: when does the soliloquy appear in the play? What is revealed about the speaker? How does the soliloquy change or add to our understanding of the character and his/her situation? What do you wish to convey to the audience about the character delivering the soliloquy? You should collect a range of critical writings about the play, character and soliloquy in order to help you make a decision about the way in which you will deliver the lines.

2. Rehearsal

Now that you have researched your soliloquy, you need to practise performing it. The soliloquy will need to be memorised and delivered in such a way to reveal that you understand the significance of the lines being delivered. You should not underestimate the impact of a well-placed pause either—these can send shivers up spines or bring tears to eyes.

3. Performance

Before performing the soliloquy, it might be advisable to place it in context for the audience in order for them to understand and appreciate your work. This could be as simple as recounting the plot of the play to the class and placing the soliloquy in it. You may also wish to discuss

some of the work you completed in the lead up to the performance. After your soliloquy has been delivered, you should provide a brief commentary explaining your interpretation of the soliloquy.

SHAKESPEARE LINKS

WEBSITES

World Wide School Library

www.worldwideschool.com/library/catalogs/bysubject-lit-shakespeare.html

A comprehensive site that includes plot overviews of Shakespeare's plays, play scripts, poetry and an extensive glossary.

Shakespeare's Life and Times
shakespeare.palomar.edu/life.htm

A top site for all that you need to know about Shakespeare and the times in which he lived. The site is divided into 'books' and each book has chapters and pop-up notes. It is easy to navigate and full of useful and eye-catching illustrations.

Shakespeare Online
www.shakespeare-online.com

Another very good site, particularly useful to students undertaking the tasks in the year 11 Shakespeare unit of work. Amongst a myriad of topics, you will find information on the sources which Shakespeare used when writing his plays and some very helpful translations and analyses of his sonnets.

YOUTUBE

<http://au.YouTube.com/watch?v=OY4HdGjCjVo>
Humorous biography of Shakespeare

<http://au.YouTube.com/watch?v=cw6Svr-ME40>
Alan Rickman reads a Sonnet

<http://au.YouTube.com/watch?v=X6FFtq5CEoM>
Rufus Wainwright sings a Sonnet

<http://au.YouTube.com/watch?v=IKKGMozN0-I>
Sonnet 18 ('Shall I compare thee').

<http://au.YouTube.com/watch?v=6zEVZGuU3BU>
Richard E. Grant performing soliloquy in *Withnail and I*

<http://au.YouTube.com/watch?v=Vb4X2DuLisc>
Patrick Stewart, 'B or not a B' from *Sesame Street*

<http://au.YouTube.com/watch?v=zTG0vXniDQY>
Laurence Olivier in *Hamlet* (To be or not to be)

<http://au.YouTube.com/watch?v=ke5-SUDrHMU>
Ian McKellen in *Richard III*

© Chris Pearson

ENGLISH WITH BITE—A UNIT OF WORK

Katie Lee, Traralgon Secondary College

The following unit of work was designed for a year 10 English elective subject called 'English with Bite'. This elective focuses on vampires within Literature. Throughout the semester previous work included discussing the history of vampires, vampire mythology and the study of the text *Twilight*.

After watching a variety of different episodes of the television series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* the students were given the opportunity to create their own episode. After discussing the task (see below) as a class we watched several YouTube clips that were similar examples of people creating their own *Buffy* episodes. The students were also given a small excerpt script from an actual *Buffy* episode, as a guideline for how to structure their own scripts.

The students had two weeks to write their script, film their video and then use their school netbooks to edit the video for viewing. In order to film their videos, each group was given access to a school camera. At the end of two weeks, as a class we had a 'Movie Session' where we viewed each groups video. As an additional bonus for the hard work and effort students had put into the project, I used some of their footage to create a behind-the-scenes director's video, showing some of the humorous footage they filmed.

The students really engaged in the study of this television show, and so I was able to be very creative with their assessment tasks. I found this particular activity quite successful because the students felt they had a license to be as creative as they could be about something they had found quite interesting. Because the activity was about more than just a 'writing task' there was a high level of enthusiasm amongst the groups.

What was also significant about this unit was that student's had to complete a self-evaluation sheet upon conclusion. From this I got an insight into what aspects of this unit the students had enjoyed, what areas I can improve on in the future and what the student's believed they had gained from the task.

TASK

CREATE YOUR OWN *BUFFY* VIDEO

Wish you could be *Buffy*?

Ever wondered what would have happened if Angel and Faith had fallen in love?

Wish Willow had have gotten back together with Oz?

Think Xander would have made an awesome vampire?

All of these are possibilities when you create your own *Buffy* episode scene!

For this project you will be working in groups of 4–6 people. You are going to create your own scene from a

Buffy episode! You can use any characters that you want, and anything can happen!

Your scene can be funny, it can be serious and overly dramatic, or extremely romantic—whichever you prefer! You do have the option to begin your episode with the opening song and have opening credits.

GUIDELINES

Your scene must be completely original—a new idea that has not been seen in any other episode or show. Everyone must contribute equally to the project and every member of the group must write out the script. Everyone is going to have their own copy of it, so it doesn't matter if another group member is absent.

We will be performing and videotaping these scenes so everyone must have a role in the scene.

Your scene must go for at least three minutes (which means you will need a script that is at least three pages long).

You are also required to complete a self-assessment for this project, and give yourself an honest assessment on what you have achieved in this assignment.

The YouTube videos watched in class are to help inspire you—they are not quite what you have to do, but they still help give you an idea. And yes, your scene can incorporate elements of *Twilight*—but it needs to be done properly.

We will be videotaping these over the next two weeks. You can tape your scene at home if you would like, otherwise we will use class time to tape them.

© Katie Lee



**THE STUDENT
SELF-EVALUATION
FORM CAN BE
FOUND ONLINE**

YEAR 10 ENGLISH—WHAT'S EATING GILBERT GRAPE?

Charlotte Lennie, St Kevin's College

LESSON ONE

Allocate the following areas to pairs/groups of students in your class and ask them to make notes on their particular area while viewing the opening scenes.

- Cinematography
- Hair, makeup, costume
- Production design
- Sound and music
- Characterisation and casting
- Direction and editing

Show the opening scenes twice then hold open discussion time for each pair/group to provide feedback to the rest of the class.

LESSON TWO

After deconstructing the opening scene as a class, students then have to answer one (or both) of the following two questions in a paragraph (or two) each, using evidence from the opening scenes only to support:

1. Gilbert sacrifices himself before others. Discuss.
2. Nothing much happens in Endora. To what extent do you agree?

1. Gilbert sacrifices himself before others. Discuss.

POINTS STUDENTS COULD RAISE

- a. While the film is titled after Gilbert, and he takes over the commentary at the start of the film, Gilbert chooses to introduce his family with an order that places him last. This demonstrates that quite literally, Gilbert puts others before himself. Arnie is the first character introduced by Gilbert, and indeed the first name we here uttered in the opening credits.

This supports the idea that the Grape household centres around Arnie, that he is the first priority in everyone's lives. When Gilbert blandly states that sometimes you want Arnie to live and 'some days you don't', it conveys the message that Arnie is hard work and demands constant care and supervision due to his retardation. Even the fact that Arnie had only been expected to live to ten years of age and now he was about to turn 18, indicates the length of time and amount of energy that has been spent on keeping the boy 'alive'.

- b. We see Gilbert spending his time with Arnie. Arnie likes to watch the arrival of the campers, Gilbert takes him there; Arnie is upset when he kills the cricket, Gilbert is shown comforting Arnie while Arnie cries

over the loss. It is clear that Arnie is Gilbert's sole responsibility and instead of Gilbert spending his time doing things a 20-something-year-old man may prefer to do, his days are instead filled with meeting a child-like Arnie's every whim.

- c. Gilbert is the head male in the house and has assumed the father figure head of the household. He has ultimate responsibility in looking after his family. This is shown in two ways in the opening scene. First, when Gilbert introduces his family, his descriptions led to the conclusion that Gilbert is really the only one to take this role: his father 'hung himself out to dry', his older brother 'got away' leaving Gilbert to be trapped, Arnie is retarded and cannot even look after himself let alone anyone else, Amy wears the same clothes as her mother and is the replacement mother—cooking for the family; Ellen is too young and self-obsessed, looking at herself in the toaster and her new braces-free teeth and finally Momma, who is shown as obese and immobile and described as having not left the house in years after once being 'the prettiest girl in high school'. Second, Gilbert tells us that he has to 'keep up the repairs' on the Grape house. This implies both a literal and metaphorical meaning; that Gilbert is responsible for how the house is run and he cannot shirk this duty. He also shows us the grocery store, where he works (and where no one else shops), the implication being that his wages go to supporting his family, just like a parent would do.
- d. When Gilbert offers Arnie a piggyback in the opening scene, Arnie exclaims, 'You're shrinking, Gilbert! You're shrinking!'. This metaphorically shows us what is happening to Gilbert, that he is gradually becoming smaller, losing identity, because he is there for others and not for himself.
- e. When the audience meet Gilbert, we do not meet a person who stands out or who wants to stand out.
- f. He is dressed in ordinary, mismatched clothes—blue jeans, red and white striped shirt, beige suede jacket—in muted, drab tones (even his red and white shirt is covered by a the beige jacket) and his hair is dark, long and unkempt—hiding/cloaking his face—suggesting he has not had the time, nor the inclination, to put himself first and take care of his presentation.
- g. Johnny Depp as Gilbert delivers his voice-over monologue in a dejected, quiet, bored and non-animated voice. There is no excitement, no enthusiasm in the description of his life and family. This tells us that Gilbert lacks spirit and vitality, and along with the family picture presented to us, that his voice

represents a subjugated man who has spent too long living for others. When Gilbert introduces each family member, he briefly describes traits that make them who they are but when Gilbert talks about himself, he simply states, 'And I'm Gilbert. Gilbert Grape.' Again, such minimal disclosure suggests that he considers himself not important enough to know about in comparison with his other family members.

2. Nothing much happens in Endora. To what extent do you agree?

POINTS STUDENTS COULD RAISE

- a. The film opens with a long shot of an empty road, with empty grass fields on either side; the audience are made aware of the sound of crickets and cicadas—that the town is so quiet, you can even hear the insects. We, the audience, immediately feel we are nowhere—in the middle of nowhere—with no man-made structure in sight. Nothing is happening.
- b. Establishing shots of the town show deserted shop facades, faded signs and exteriors, framed with dark gloomy weather and the wind acting as the only movement the shop fronts ever experience. There are no cars and no people walking in the street. Hallstrom even holds one shot on the chemist shop for a few seconds, so we can read the shop sign, 'ENDORA OF THE LINE DRUGS'. Even the name of the town, ENDORA tells the audience what to expect. Or what not to expect.
- c. The town shops that would normally attract the younger generation, like the 'Dairy Dreme' ice-cream parlour, seem closed and abandoned and the outside seats are empty and forgotten. The message here is that, when the youth do not even stay in their own town and hang out, you know the town must be a dead place. If this wasn't enough of a reminder, Gilbert then states to the audience, 'Endora is like dancing with no music' and 'Nothing much ever happens in Endora and nothing much ever will'.
- d. Endora's many dark and dreary shop fronts are then contrasted with one shot of the supermarket 'Foodland', 'where everyone else shops'. We see movement and colour, cars coming and going or already parked, the bright red letters of the shop are picked up by the sun shining over the building. We are also told that 'Foodland' is miles off the interstate, but it is clearly understood that still the citizens of Endora would prefer to travel there and shop rather than stay in their dead-end home town.
- e. While we are told 'nothing much happens', the first few shots of the opening scene now make sense: the 'yearly ritual' of Arnie and Gilbert watching the campers arrive over the horizon is not just one way to spend an afternoon in Endora, it is the highlight of living in the town. It also appears to be the only time people willingly travel to Endora, possibly to get away from the hustle and bustle of life. Up to the arrival of the caravans, there is no music in the opening scene, only the sound of insects and a meaningless conversation between the brothers. But as soon as the first caravan hits the horizon, we hear percussion signalling the arrival leading into a gentle upbeat score as the convoy approaches Arnie and Gilbert. The sun even catches the windows of the campervans, making them sparkle in the light, suggesting excitement and magic. Arnie is then seen squealing and screaming with delight as a tracking shot shows Arnie running alongside the caravans waving at the people.
- f. The Grape house itself looks run down, with a rusted roof and a crooked design, suggesting the whole house, which Gilbert's father built, has warped from disrepair (even though Gilbert's job, as he tells us, is to 'keep up the repairs'). Hallstrom presents the house as the only residence to be shown in the opening credits, almost suggesting that the Grape house IS Endora. We as an audience see no neighbours—indeed the Grape house sits by itself in the middle of a field connected to nothing on either side of the frame.
- g. Arnie is the only character who appears 'active' in the town of Endora. The other characters introduced are either house-bound or 'just passing through'. Arnie is pictured running alongside the campers in a tracking shot; when we first see him and Gilbert by the roadside, Gilbert is sitting down and keeping still but Arnie is the one who is walking onto the road to check for traffic; Arnie is seen in a later shot, contrasted against the stillness of the Grape house—Arnie is not still, he is actively trying to decapitate a cricket outside.

YEAR 10 ENGLISH—MACBETH ASSIGNMENT

Charlotte Lennie, St Kevin's College

MACBETH AND LADY MACBETH RESUMÉ/CV

I. You are to create a Resumé or Curriculum Vitae (CV) for both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. In order to complete this assignment, you must first choose what Act or Acts of *Macbeth* you are using for referencing and preparing your characters' resume details. The only restriction is that both Lady Macbeth and Macbeth must be alive for this task. Remember, you must write a brief statement at the top of each resumé/CV about what Act or Acts you have chosen to concentrate your work on and why.

The details you need to include for Macbeth are the following:

- Name, age, address, marital status, occupation.
- Physical description. (What does Macbeth look like? Provide a description, include an image/picture from the internet to illustrate your description and explain your choice.)
- Next of kin. (Who is Macbeth's closest family member? Why?)
- Emergency contact. (Who is the person Macbeth would call in a crisis and why?)
- Work experience. (What duties and responsibilities does Macbeth have in his life, both personally and professionally?)
- Three attributes. (What are the strongest personality traits for Macbeth and why? Provide two quotes to support each strength.)
- Three areas for growth and development. (What are the weakest personality traits for Macbeth and why? Provide two quotes to support each weakness.)
- Mission statement. (What would Macbeth say about who he is and what he wants to achieve in life? What are Macbeth's hopes, dreams and beliefs? This statement needs be two paragraphs in length and you must include quotes to support—you may wish to refer to one of Macbeth's soliloquies for this, if appropriate.)
- Referees. (Who are the first and second non-family members who might vouch for Macbeth, if need be, and why? Provide a brief statement in each character's voice explaining how he/she sees Macbeth and the nature of their relationship with him.)

The similar details you need to include for Lady Macbeth are the following:

- Name, age, address, marital status, hobbies.
- Physical description. (What does Lady Macbeth look like? Provide a description, include an image/picture from the Internet to illustrate your description and explain your choice.)

- Next of kin. (Who is Lady Macbeth's closest family member? Why?)
- Emergency contact. (Who is the person Lady Macbeth would call in a crisis and why?)
- Work experience. (What duties and responsibilities does Lady Macbeth have in her life?)
- Three attributes. (What are the strongest personality traits for Lady Macbeth and why? Provide two quotes to support each strength.)
- Three areas of growth and development. (What are the weakest personality traits for Lady Macbeth and why? Provide two quotes to support each weakness.)
- Mission statement. (What would Lady Macbeth say about who she is and what she wants to achieve in life? What are Lady Macbeth's hopes, dreams and beliefs? This statement needs be two paragraphs in length and you must include quotes to support.)
- Referees. (Who are the first and second non-family members who would vouch for Lady Macbeth if need be and why? Provide a brief statement in each character's 'voice' explaining how he/she sees Lady Macbeth and the nature of their relationship.)

SONGS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTEST

Prepared by Karen Lenk, Mowbray College

A poet—if poet he must be—must also and at once be truth-teller. Sometimes the most sincere jazzmen, folk and pop-singers get tied to the business of entertainment.

Michael Horovitz, poet and painter.

The protest poem/song speaks openly with a clear voice revealing the folly and injustice of the world. It is sometimes angry, sometimes sweet. It is not 'tied to the business of entertainment' but instead sets out to tell the truth.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PROTEST SONGS

Every major movement in Western history has been commented on by musicians. These include personal, local and global responses in song. Topics have included slave emancipation, women's suffrage, civil rights, anti-war (specific wars and war in general), feminism, environmental issues, injustice and racial discrimination. These songs tend to be popular at the time of the issue in particular. Protest songs are generally associated with folk music, but recently they have occurred in all genres of music.

Protest songs are generally seen as American, but Irish rebel songs, French, German and Russian protest music also exists—along with Latin American, African, Middle Eastern, Asian and Australian protest songs.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT TASKS

1. Short answer questions. (Teacher discretion.)
2. Oral presentation response. (Negotiated task.)

FIVE PRIMARY GOALS OF THE PROTEST SONG

1. Drawing attention to a problem in society—usually in an emotional way.
2. Offering a solution to the problem—in terms of action and a goal.
3. Emphasising the values of individuals involved in the movement.
4. Trying to recruit supporters—by generating sympathy and support.
5. Establishing moral unity and uniqueness in the world view of the song.

—R. Serge Denisoff (Sociologist)

DENISOFF DEFINES TWO TYPES OF PROTEST SONGS

1. Magnetic: fulfil all five criteria.
2. Rhetorical: only fulfil part of the criteria—pointing out a problem only.

Denisoff argues rhetorical protest songs still serve an important purpose in changing public opinion and opening up topics for debate.

'WHERE HAVE ALL THE FLOWERS GONE?'

WORDS AND MUSIC BY PETE SEEGER

QUESTIONS

This song is using an environmental symbol as an analogy for something else.

1. Name the symbol.
2. What does this symbol represent?
3. Explain the suitability of this symbol.
4. Why are so many questions included in the song?
5. What is the ultimate message of this song?
6. Do you think this is an effective work? Explain, particularly after listening to the music.

'BIG YELLOW TAXI'

JONI MITCHELL 1970

'They paved paradise, and put up a parking lot,' sings Joni on this 1970 hit, her first and among her most endearing.

And while she typically veers off at the end into the sort of romantic musings that make love seem like an absurd dance, don't be fooled by her angelic voice: she recognises decay in all its forms. 'Took all the trees, put 'em in a tree museum/And charged the people a dollar and a half just to see 'em,' she sings of a real botanical garden in Hawaii, of all places, which is also where she spotted the parking lot, creeping up on a breathtaking range of mountains.

I wrote 'Big Yellow Taxi' on my first trip to Hawaii. I took a taxi to the hotel and when I woke up the next morning, I threw back the curtains and saw these beautiful green mountains in the distance. Then, I looked down and there was a parking lot as far as the eye could see, and it broke my heart ... this blight on paradise. That's when I sat down and wrote the song.

—Joni Mitchell to journalist Alan McDougall, as cited in *The Los Angeles Times* 7 Dec, 1996.

QUESTIONS

1. Cite examples in the first verse from the lyrics that belittle the progress of paradise.
2. Which line refers to the Foster Botanical Garden in Honolulu, renowned as a living museum of rare and endangered tropical plants?
3. What is DDT? What comment is being made about farming?
4. Until 1986, the old Toronto Police patrol cars were painted yellow. Which line in the song could refer to this?

5. Interpret the events in the second last verse.
6. Quote the repetitious hook lines directly and explain their meaning.
7. Why do you believe the song ends with playful voice in the final sentence?
8. Comment on the relationship between the lyrics and the music in this song.

‘WHERE DO THE CHILDREN PLAY?’

CAT STEVENS 1970

Cat Stevens was an English folk-rock musician who retired from the music scene after twelve years, converting to Islam.

‘Where do the children play?’ covers many issues of concern in the 1960s including poverty, urban development, war and ecological disaster.

QUESTIONS

1. What does verse one suggest about human creation?
2. What is ‘a cosmic train’?
3. What does verse one suggest about human motivation regarding progress? Provide a quotation to support this.
4. The second verse is less ‘pleasant’ in its description of human development. Explain.
5. Who is the ‘you’ in the lyrics?
6. The third verse is increasingly alarmist in its content. Explain.
7. Cite the hook lines in this song. What impact do they have?
8. Explain the relationship between the lyrics, voice and the music of this song.

This lead-off track on Stevens’ genre-defining 1970 LP *Tea For The Tillerman* takes a mildly defensive approach at first, agreeing that technology, innovation and progress can be wonderful things. But when Cat gets to the chorus and asks the title question, he’s really asking us what price we’re willing to pay for such convenience, not just in an interdependent ‘spaceship Earth’ way, but in our very souls. Some might argue that children can play in asphalt-covered playgrounds, which were all the rage at the time, but what child wouldn’t get something more out of a forest?

‘RIVER RUNS RED’

MIDNIGHT OIL 1990

QUESTIONS

1. Who is the ‘you’ to blame in this song?
2. What does ‘the dollar is driving us still’ mean?
3. What action is Midnight Oil asking of listeners?

4. After listening to the song and music, what is the impact of the chorus?
5. Do you think this song is still relevant today? Explain.
6. Do you know anything about Peter Garrett? How is his situation today in real life related to this song? What do you make of the 1990 Peter Garrett who performed this song, in comparison to who Peter Garrett is now? Is such a comparison fair/relevant?

‘SALTWATER’

JULIAN LENNON, LESLIE SPIRO AND MARK SPIRO, 1991

QUESTIONS

1. What is the purpose of this song?
2. Provide three examples of poetic images.
3. What is the hook-line of this song?
4. What is the meaning of ‘wells’?
5. According to the song, from what problems is the world suffering?
6. Explain how the human and natural worlds interact in this song. How effective is this balance?
7. Why is repetition of ‘eyes’ constantly used?
8. What is the impact of the change in style of verses three and six?
9. What does the music and voice add to this work?
10. Write an additional verse to this song.

This single (a hit in the UK) dates from 1991. Julian Lennon is John Lennon’s son and sounds just like him. He created a sad anthem that sounds just like something the ex-Beatle would have done in *Double Fantasy* ... that is, if he’d known the skies were disappearing. Julian shrewdly subverts the utopia of a song like ‘Imagine’ while keeping the empowerment theme, resulting in a hymn for those who’ve decided to stop being so selfish with their bit of the earth. ‘I have lived for love/but now that’s not enough/for the world I love is dying/and now I’m crying.’ Hence, the saltwater.

‘THE RAPE OF THE WORLD’

TRACY CHAPMAN

ACTIVITY

- Write your own six questions related to this song.
- At least one of them must be in relation to the words and music.
- Ask a friend to answer them for you.
- Discuss these answers with a friend.
- Write up their answers to your questions, adding in your own detail and responses also.

TEACHING INSTRUCTIONAL WRITING

Kate Molony, St Monica's College

I wanted to consolidate for my year 10 English students the process of writing instructions—often a dry, boring task but, as this particular class were leaning towards vocational learning in the future, I thought it to be a necessary one.

With many reluctant English students in the classroom, I hoped to give students the incentive to strive towards achievement instead of cutting corners and merely hoping to pass. I wanted students to be engaged, interested and actually taking pride in their work. I decided that they might better instruct me on projects they were adept in, and that I was not—with the added bonus that this would be confidence building for them if they became the teacher. And afterwards I was going to test them out on their expertise.

Students were given a range of parameters to choose from: I freely admitted that I knew nothing about playing soccer; baking; playing computer games; or art. Other students suggested even more complex tasks like servicing a car, which I talked down to an oil change and radiator clean out.

Students were full of bravado at first, and thought it would be the world's simplest task—something they could spend five minutes on. To circumvent their over-confidence, in the first lesson of this unit I asked students to look up the following website: www.origami-instructions.com.

After reaching the website, students were asked to click on the link: simple origami, and then to choose one of the options. Providing them with paper, I asked them to follow the instructions and make the intended piece. They were soon able to see how important instructions are, and after twenty minutes most did not have a finished piece. Now, they were ready to do better with their own projects. We spent two lessons on this task in class, and one at home. They were required to write up the finished piece in class without notes, to avoid Google searches.

It was difficult to do many of the completed tasks in class afterwards—I am in the process of organising to use the auto room so I can practice my mechanical prowess (I hope) and the food-tech room for the same purpose with some of the students' recipes. However, the highlight of this unit was the soccer match, where for 80 minutes I clumsily attempted to follow the four boys' instructions on completing complex formations including:

- 4-4-2 • 3-2-3-2
- 4-3-3 • 5-3-2

And a demonstration of the offside rule.

My most reluctant learners were adamant that if English could always be about football, then they would always learn as much as they did. And I learned, in theory if not in practice, about some previously unknown sporting manoeuvres. These students, with a history of failure in English, had the confidence to attempt a writing skill that had previously been too difficult and of too little interest, for them.

This task can be done using any parameters you like, and can easily be modified for any junior English class. I set a

requirement that the task needed to be complex enough to contain a minimum of twelve steps, which proved challenging, but you can also increase this and decrease depending on the class. But the real enjoyment of it comes from the student's anticipation that you will be assessing not just their technical writing skills, but how well they work in reality.

WRITING INSTRUCTIONS

Writing instructions is a very important task. No matter what you do in life, you will one day have to give instructions, and you will one day need to read them. When we don't give instructions properly, things do not turn out the way they should!

TASK: your task is to teach your teacher how to do something. How? They may not know how to play soccer, cook rumballs, do an oil change or complete move sequences in karate. They may not know how to do a lot of things that you can do!

You will need to discuss with your teacher some things you know well, that they would like to learn about. It should be something you are quite familiar with, as you are going to have to write this out as a simple set of instructions.

Some possible starting points include:

- Cooking a favourite recipe of yours;
- A sporting move—like the offside rule, or the 4-4-2 in football;
- Simple mechanics;
- Creating something crafty or arty;
- Knitting;
- Passing a particular level in a computer game.

Once you have decided upon something, you will need to write up your instructions step by step.

How? Think of a recipe: it lists everything you need, and then goes through the method step by step. When you write instructions, you need to always remember that the person following them may never have done the task before.

- Can you remember and describe every step?
- Can you explain it simply, without being confusing?
- Can your teacher complete the task afterwards?

Your task needs to have a minimum of twelve steps when completed. You may include diagrams to support your written instruction, but they can never replace written instruction for any step.

After this task has been completed, you and your teacher and your classmates will spend a few lessons going through some of the tasks—depending on what is needed to complete it! Perhaps your teacher will try out her new football knowledge, or try to make those rumballs.

So, how good are your instructions?

ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT TEXT STUDY

Stella Louca, Kew High School

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Reflect upon personal experiences via writing and class discussion.
- Explore their concept of war through guided/modelled activities and informational materials.
- Participate in class discussion and activities.
- Demonstrate an understanding of text through critical response.
- Compose written responses to supplied prompts.
- Answer target questions.
- Generate, gather, plan, and organise ideas for writing.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- A copy of *All Quiet on the Western Front*.
- Copies of EXIT slip for students (see Appendix).
- English journals for students.

STEPS

INTRODUCTION (5 MINUTES)

Begin class by handing out journals to each student and explaining 'free write' as: writing about a prompt without stopping for a short period of time, e.g. five minutes.

Write out the following prompt on the board (or use Word on laptop to project on screen):

Imagine that you have just finished year 12. The government has introduced conscription (explain term) so you must enlist in the army, and you know that soon you will be sent to fight in Afghanistan. How does this make you feel? Consider what difference it would make if you felt that the war was necessary or unnecessary.

Give the class about five minutes to write what they think into their journals. When the five minutes are up, the students close their journals.

1. Once the free writes are done, organise the students for the next activity.
 - Ask the students to move all the chairs against the walls and tip over the desks or tables onto their sides, in a large square shape—this is to create the feeling of being in the trenches during a bombardment. The students should then be asked to lie down on their stomachs, or curl up in a ball as if protecting themselves from an attack. They should have their journals and a pen or pencil close at hand. Tell them they need to be able to stay in this position on the floor for up to five minutes, so they need to be as comfortable as possible.

- When the students are ready, ask them to close their eyes and stop all talking and movement. Then turn off the lights and give the students a few moments to adjust to the darkness and the feeling of being alone in the dark. Once this silence is established, begin, slowly, to read the excerpt from Chapter 6 of *All Quiet on the Western Front* (pp. 210–211), which describes a bombardment. The point is for students to go through what Paul experiences when he is trapped in the trenches, to immerse them in the novel before the reading has even started.
(20 minutes)

2. Once the reading is over, give the students a minute of silence to take in the reading, and then turn on the lights. Get the students up slowly and ask them to put the desks or tables back into position, and take a seat. Once settled, begin a class discussion using the following target questions:

- What did that experience feel like?
- How close did you feel to being 'in the trenches'?
- What kind of language was used that made the passage feel so vivid (don't let the students open their text at this point—that way you can see which words resonated in their memory)?
- Did you feel lonely and isolated during the reading, even though your peers were close by?
- How did your free write connect to this activity? Were you prepared for being 'in the dark,' or was it completely unexpected?
- Did this activity and passage remind you of anything else you've read? Plays, books, articles, short stories?
(5 minutes)

3. After the class discussion, get the students to open their journals and read their free writes again. Ask them to think about whether their opinion on going to war has changed since the beginning of the class—or whether their first reaction has been confirmed. They should then write their response in a new paragraph, just under the first free write. We will refer to this free write as our text study continues to look back and see whether their outlook changes in any way.
(5 minutes)

FINISH

To finish off and gain some feedback on the value of the lesson, ask the students to fill out an EXIT slip which you provide for them. The students will need to write a couple of lines about what we did in the class that lesson.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

- Students' participation in free write.
- Students' participation in dramatic activity and class discussion.
- Students' completion of EXIT slips.

APPENDIX

EXIT SLIP

Please provide a brief response to the following:

- Was the lesson effective/interesting/engaging for you?

.....
.....

- How so? Or not so?

.....
.....

- Did the activity help to prompt curiosity about the upcoming novel/unit? Explain why or why not.

.....
.....

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ESL WITHDRAWAL: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

Yasar Duyal, Narre Warren South P-12 College

There are a variety of ways of tackling ESL in a withdrawal class. For me, the best ESL withdrawal lesson, regardless of the types of activities used, is the one which integrates and matches the focus of the lesson and the three areas of learning with a learner's real-life experiences.

Having a particular focus for my withdrawal lesson allows me to modify and cater for a variety of levels and macro skills in my lesson. This focus could include a language function, booking a journey or visiting a doctor, or it could include communication or textual understanding.

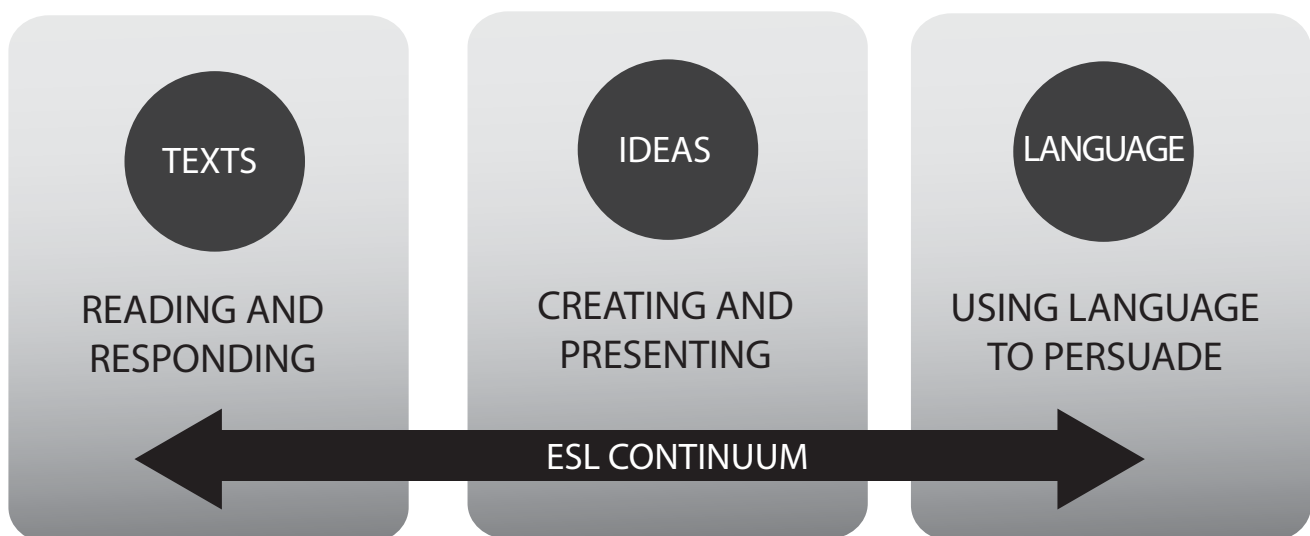
Planning and working under the three areas of learning used in VELS English allows me to organise my lessons in line with the skills and knowledge required in the mainstream English classes. In particular, such an approach further helps fill in the gaps between the English and ESL curriculum providing effective transition for students who have recently come out of English language schools and enrolled into mainstream schools. It builds stronger

links with the mainstream English classroom unlike ESL withdrawal lessons conducted in isolation of the three areas of learning.

The three areas of learning in English, Reading and responding, Creating and presenting and Using language to persuade are adopted for teaching key skills and knowledge to ESL students in withdrawal classes and these make up the three sections in this article.

The most significant reason for adopting such an integrated methodology is its potential to support ESL students' learning in a variety of settings. This approach not only benefits the students in lessons which run parallel to English classes but also the students who are withdrawn less regularly as well as the students in mainstream English classes from years 7-10.

Examples of best ESL lessons together with the relevant activities, assessment procedures and resources will now be explored under each learning area. A 4-Step Lesson structure is used to describe the lesson.



READING AND RESPONDING

TEXT	<i>Camel Rider</i>	LANGUAGE	Descriptions/Use of adjectives
YEAR LEVEL	Year 9 ESL	ACTIVITY	Find someone who...
STUDENTS	Refugee background	RESOURCES	Flash cards

Students have been reading the book with the teacher in class using their glossary of new vocabulary and the comprehension sheet. They have been making notes and collages about each character as they read.

In the previous lesson students participated in a group activity learning about the main characters. Each group produced a large poster about a character from the novel using the teacher's guiding questions.

The lesson started by going over the skills and knowledge from the previous lesson on the characters using the board and eliciting understanding from students. This included reminding students of some of the adjectives used last time.

STEP 1

Following this, the teacher handed out an instruction sheet, which included a diagram explaining the next activity and lesson goals and assessment criteria.

STEP 2

Students were then asked to stand up and line up in pairs facing each other at the front of the class. They picked up a flash card each waiting for teacher's instructions.

STEP 3

The teacher handed out the flashcards and asked students to talk about the adjective on their cards and the character this adjective may possibly describe from the book. This continued for five minutes until the teacher used the whistle or indicated the time for students to move and face the next person listening to their adjective and guessing and so on.

STEP 4

Students turned over the flash card prepared by the teacher to find someone in the class who fits in the description and hands in their card. Hence, the card may say 'Find someone who has the letters *d* and *b* in their first names' and the student will need to find that person and then hand in their card. At the end of the lesson, the student who has no cards left in their hands will win.

This activity encourages even the newly arrived students who are normally more reluctant to speak to do so and enjoy the lesson. Adjectives on each of the flash cards is accompanied by a real photo of a person so that the weaker students use this as a clue and still take part in the speaking activity.

This activity can be followed up with a writing activity where students continue with descriptions and describe one of their friends in class or one of their family members in a paragraph or two using the adjectives learnt in the activity. For students who have a higher level of understanding and control of English, this can take the form of writing a biography, etc.

This activity is a very useful example, which displays integration of skills and knowledge with the relevant area of study, strand and real life experiences.

The lesson integrates the 'speaking' strand from the ESL Continuum and the ability to use descriptive language as well as textual understanding and grammar.

CREATING AND PRESENTING

CONTEXT	Cultural celebrations	LANGUAGE	Instructional language
YEAR LEVEL	Year 7 ESL	ACTIVITY	<i>MasterChef</i> jigsaw
STUDENTS	Recent arrivals (2–5 years)	RESOURCES	Food, cooking utensils and recipe books

Students are able to work through a Context (or theme) in order to develop ideas, which they use in their creative writing to produce a variety of text types. Here, at the end of this unit, the text produced is an instructional text. The lesson focuses on recipes as a type of instructional discourse form.

Throughout the semester, as part of their Context study, students develop ideas about cultural celebrations and use these ideas to produce a variety of texts in different styles. Some of these include writing narratives, manuals, letters to the editors, etc.

This lesson takes place after students have been studying the instructional style of writing for a little while. They have also studied different cultural foods and recipes.

In this lesson, students are to work in groups to reorganise the pieces of a recipe they are given to start cooking in groups.

STEP 1

Each student is given a part of a recipe to read silently.

STEP 2

Students need to walk around the room looking for a match for their parts in order to put these together. They use the clues on the sheets to produce the recipe.

STEP 3

Students who find their match and complete the recipe will form a *MasterChef* group.

STEP 4

Students share the roles and responsibilities to start cooking under teacher's guidance.

The first group to complete the task accurately wins a *MasterChef* recipe book at the end. This activity is then followed by the activity where students write their own cultural recipe at home and produce a recipe calendar or a poster. This is to be displayed at school or sold for charity during the Multicultural Day. Other text types students may produce in this style may also include a manual for learning English, becoming Australian, etc.

USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE

TEXT	Newspapers	LANGUAGE	Persuasive language
YEAR LEVEL	Year 10 ESL	ACTIVITY	Role-play, Listening
STUDENTS	Recent arrivals (2–5 years)	RESOURCES	<i>Behind the News</i> , Quizlet website, Qwizdom.

For the third area of learning English students may start by scaffolding their understanding of the parts of a newspaper, labelling the different parts, comparing two different types of newspapers and learning about a variety of media texts. Media texts that are produced by the teacher play a crucial role here in terms of catering for different levels of English in the withdrawal class. Previously students worked on matching the examples of persuasive language with the techniques and or the definitions with the techniques using online Quizlet activities prepared by their teacher.

This lesson is conducted towards the end of the unit. Once the students learn about the most basic persuasive language techniques they then put their skills into use in a role-play.

While two students role-play and demonstrate the use of these persuasive techniques in their previously scripted role-play, the others in class stop them when they hear the use of persuasive language to gain a point for their teams. The script starts with two to three lines of obvious persuasive techniques and then changes to a full interview script or a debate for later on once the students gain more confidence in the area. Students have been viewing such scripts on *Behind the News*.

STEP 1

Students select a script with persuasive language techniques.

STEP 2

Students take turns from each team to role-play or read the script in front of the whole class also showing the

relevant emotions involved. The role-play or the lines could be between a parent and a teenager, prime minister and a journalist or a customer and a shop assistant overseas.

STEP 3

Students from each team need to listen to the role-play in order to say 'Stop' once they identify the use of persuasive language.

STEP 4

Students then produce their own persuasive text using the knowledge and skills acquired during the study of this unit.

This lesson covers the skills and knowledge required for the Listening and speaking strand on the ESL Continuum. It shows that as well as integrating grammar, real life experiences and formal writing can also be practised.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the opportunities for marrying the three learning areas with the ESL Continuum in years 7–10 withdrawal classes seem endless.

It not only allows the ESL teachers to liaise and communicate more closely with the English teachers but also raises ESL students' understanding and knowledge, which supports their transition into the mainstream English classes.

Currently, an integrated ESL approach is inevitable in any school context where students are withdrawn or work together with other mainstream students and teachers in Open Learning Areas. With effective planning and structure, ESL students benefit enormously from the social and academic environment and the real experience of English language use in the Open Learning Areas when relating to their peers.

Therefore, an integrated ESL approach may be adapted to suit the needs of the ESL learners regardless of their educational and linguistic level.

© Yasar Duyal

YEAR 11 ENGLISH

CREATING AND PRESENTING *IDENTITY AND BELONGING*

Darren Plunkett, Taylor's College

The following activities should be considered as a starting point towards the creation of a piece of expository writing, exploring the ideas and implications contained in the prompt:

Having a sense of being different makes it difficult to belong.

TASK 1

When considering your future career, what are your priorities in terms of working conditions? Rank the following features in terms of their importance to you.

(1=most important, 6=least important)

Non-financial rewards (e.g. meaningful work, personal satisfaction)	
Training (e.g. opportunities to update/learn new skills)	
Salary	
Work flexibility (e.g. part-time/taking leave/work from home/job share)	
Management style (e.g. high-level of control or grants a lot of freedom)	
Staff activities (e.g. social events, travel)	

TASK 2

Supply images for students. These could include for example: a woman wearing a burqa; a young lesbian couple in school uniform, embracing etc. Bearing in mind both the prompt and the broader theme of identity, discuss some of the issues/questions raised by the images.

TASK 3 TRUE/FALSE

Write 'True' or 'False' alongside each of the following statements. Be prepared to explain/justify your viewpoint.

1. 'Everyone should be willing to sacrifice or change parts of their identity in order to belong.'
2. 'The only thing that screws you up more than your family is high school.'
3. 'People make false or unreasonable assumptions about my identity based on my attendance at (insert name of school here).'
4. 'The language we speak forms a big part of our identity.'

5. 'Denying women the right to wear the burqa in non-Muslim countries is denying such women their identity.'

TASK 4 POETRY

Read the poem below and write answers to the following questions:

1. How would you describe the identity of the persona?
2. List some of the metaphors employed by the poet. How does each one add to persona's sense of distance or alienation from the family?
3. Explain how this poem connects with the prompt at the top of the page.

I AM

By valentina63

*In the shiny house that is my family
I have been
The spare room receptacle,
of the superfluous and chaotic.
In the healthy body that is my family
I have been
The liver, enlarged and diseased,
distiller of the toxic.
In the band of miners that is my family
I have been;
The caged canary sent in solo,
singing silent in the darkness.
In the small regiment that is my family
I have been
The loyal foot soldier with bayonet,
bludgeoned out of the trenches and over the top.
In the flock of geese that is my family
I have been
Forever flying last in formation,
tending to the fallen.
But today in the bright epiphany of morning
I am
the creator tenderly joining
each precious jigsaw piece of past,
and seeing for the first time how
each piece of who
I have been
is essential to my Zeitgeist
part of who
I am*

YEAR 10 CONTEXT UNIT—TOLERANCE

Susanne Haake, St Leonard's College and Karen Lenk, Mowbray College

TEXTS

Novel/Film—Excerpts from *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

Speeches—Martin Luther King and Barack Obama

Film—*Mississippi Burning*

Short Stories—'White Fantasy-Black Fact' by Jack Davis and 'Closer' by David Malouf

Opinion/ News Articles—'We're Not Racist, but ...' from *The Age* (5 April 2008) by Carol Nader and Dewi Cooke.

Poem—'Intolerance' by Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker)

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- To what extent is the society in which we live intolerant?
- How do I react to instances of intolerance?
- How might I help make my community a more tolerant place?

ASSESSMENT

Summative—Questions on texts/personal response

Summative—Expository essay

INTRODUCTION TO UNIT (TWO LESSONS)

- General discussion and definitions of tolerance, racism, prejudice.
- Explore knowledge of instances of intolerance, prejudice, racism from the news, world events, current affairs and history. Endeavour to explore ideas of racism/intolerance being more than just black/white. Where possible, use ICT research to support this activity.
- Personal response—ask students to provide a paragraph long personal response to the issues raised.
- Dr Seuss *The Sneetches*. Read the story and discuss its central message. Why might literature be an important vehicle to discuss issues of tolerance, racism, etc?

TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD (FOUR LESSONS)

- Introduction to *To Kill a Mockingbird*, plot overview, era and Harper Lee as an author.
- Show Film (130 minutes)
 - Diagram—Tolerance—list examples/ instances of tolerance found in *To Kill a Mockingbird* in one colour and include characters. List examples/ instances of intolerance in another colour.
- Return to the following scenes and excerpts for further discussion:

→ 34:46 to 41:10—(pages 25 to 33)

→ 50:48 to 53:28—(pages 82 to 85)

→ 1:00:42 to 1:06:58—(pages 166 to 171, 173)

→ 1:09:03 to 1:11:35—(pages 183 to 186)

- With reference to *To Kill a Mockingbird* respond to the following questions (to be submitted for assessment):
 - Discuss the intolerance shown towards Arthur Radley. How is this manifested in the attitudes and behaviours of the townsfolk of Maycomb? Are the assumptions they make about Arthur Radley correct?
 - Tom Robinson's trial is central to the story. Atticus explains to Jem that they are not going to win the case because '...we were licked a hundred years before we started...'. What attitudes of prejudice and intolerance manifest themselves in relation to Tom Robinson and how do Jem and Scout respond?

SPEECHES (FOUR LESSONS)

- Provide an overview to the speech of Martin Luther King, 'I Have a Dream'.
- Read/listen to the speech of Martin Luther King 'I Have a Dream'.
- Ask students to summarise what the aspirations of Martin Luther King were.
- Two lessons of internet research on examples of racism and intolerance during the time of the Civil Rights Movement in the USA and currently.
- Provide an overview of the rise of President Barack Obama.
- Read/listen to the Presidential Victory Speech by Obama (4 November 2008).
- Ask students to summarise the aspirations of Obama.
- With reference to the speeches of King and Obama respond to the following question (to be submitted for assessment):
 - 'The ideals of Martin Luther King in 1963 are still to be realised in 2009.' Discuss.

FILM (THREE LESSONS)

- Provide an overview to *Mississippi Burning*.
- Watch film (130 MINUTES).
- With reference to *Mississippi Burning* respond to the following questions (to be submitted for assessment):
 - Comment on the significance of the opening scene. What does this symbolise?
 - FBI Agent Ward says 'Some things are worth dying for'. FBI Agent Anderson responds 'Down here they see things a little differently. People down here feel

some things are worth killing for.
What do they mean?

- FBI Agent Ward asks 'Where does it come from, all this hatred?' Offer your own personal response to this question.
- Agent Ward says of the Mayor '... He was guilty. Anyone's guilty who watches this happen and pretends it isn't.' Why might this be considered the central message of the film?
- Comment on the ending of the film (the funeral and the inscription on the tombstone). Why has the director chosen to end the film in this way? What message is it reinforcing?

SHORT STORIES (TWO LESSONS)

- Explore the idea of stereotypes and how they inform our prejudices.
- Read 'White Fantasy—Black Fact' by Jack Davis.
- Discuss what are the stereotypes that are portrayed in the story.
- Read 'Closer' by David Malouf.
- Discuss the dangers in judging people based on their appearance, beliefs, lifestyle choices, etc.
- With reference to the short stories respond to the following question (to be submitted for assessment):
 - 'When we judge people based on their appearance or beliefs, we do them a disservice.' Discuss.

OPINION PIECES (TWO LESSONS)

- Read the opinion article 'We're Not Racist, but ...' from *The Age*.
- With reference to 'We're Not Racist, but ...' respond to the following questions (to be submitted for assessment):
 - What do you believe being Australian involves?
 - What examples of racism, if any, have you witnessed or experienced?
 - What strategies might be employed to combat racism and racist attitudes?
 - How would you respond to someone who says Australia is a racist country?

POEM (ONE LESSON)

- Read and discuss 'Intolerance' by Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker).
- With reference to 'Intolerance' respond to the following question (to be submitted for assessment):
 - What is the central message of Oodgeroo's poem 'Intolerance'?

- If we were to use the poem with reference to other cultures/ groups in our community, what might the poem contain?

EXPOSITORY ESSAY—ASSESSMENT TASK

- Provide a structure for expository essay.
- Sample Prompts:
 - 'We live in a tolerant world'. Discuss.
 - 'Racism is everywhere'. Discuss.
 - 'The world is less tolerant than we imagine it to be'. Discuss.
- Discuss the examples that could be used—recap texts.
- Assessed topic: 'Although societies appear to agree on the ideals of tolerance, the reality is quite the opposite'. Discuss.

WARRIOR GIRLS: NEGOTIATING IDENTITY AND BELONGING IN CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIA

Carmen Stehle, Methodist Ladies' College

EXPLORING ISSUES OF IDENTITY AND BELONGING THROUGH THE ARTWORK OF KATE BEYNON AND THE TEXT *GROWING UP ASIAN IN AUSTRALIA* EDITED BY ALICE PUNG

YEAR 12 VCE ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE LESSON PLAN

		Time
Year/subject	Year 12 VCE English as a Second Language	
Classroom context	ESL Mixed ability Single-sex 11 students from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan	
Rationale	To enable students to gain an appreciation and understanding of texts (visual and written) as vehicles to connecting to ideas, values and the wider community.	
Resources	<i>Warrior Girl</i> Kate Beynon National Gallery of Australia website http://nga.gov.au/tales/Kate.cfm 'A Call to Arms' by Michelle Law in <i>Growing Up Asian in Australia</i> edited by Alice Pung	
Learning Outcomes VCE Unit 3, Area of Study 1, Reading and Responding Outcome 1	Students should be able to analyse, (orally or in writing), how a selected text constructs meaning, conveys ideas and values, and is open to a range of interpretations	
Method E5 instructional Model	Engage	10 mins
	Think, Pair, Share <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What defines your identity? Yourself? Others?• How do we know when we belong to a place or group?• How does a sense of where you come from help form your identity?• How has your experience of learning English and living in Australia changed you?	
	Explore <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Show visual <i>Warrior Girl</i> by Kate Beynon.• Elicit from students what we know from the artwork and what we want to know about the artwork, what assumptions we have about the girl Li Ji in the work.• Students work individually and then share responses with the class for discussion.• Students read excerpt from 'A Call To Arms' by Michelle Law pp. 243–244.• Students compare and contrast representations of Chinese women in both works using a Venn diagram in pairs, then whole class feedback.	30 mins
	Explain <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give background information on Kate Beynon and interpretations of <i>Warrior Girl</i> found on NGA website.• How artists negotiate identity: Chinese heritage but living in contemporary Australia.	10 mins

	<p>Elaborate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a class, discuss how texts construct ideas on the following: • Representations of Chinese female identity: stereotypes, traditional versus contemporary perceptions. • Belonging to more than one culture but not wholly belonging to either culture. • Language to include and exclude others. <p>Evaluate Short Written Text Response (Interpretive, analytical, or discursive)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it possible to have multiple identities? What are the challenges and rewards? Refer to your own personal experience of living in another culture and to one or both the texts. 	<p>10 mins</p> <p>15 mins</p>
Monitoring and assessment	<p>Pair work.</p> <p>Class feedback and discussion.</p> <p>Venn diagram.</p> <p>Text response.</p>	
Homework	<p>Finish reading ‘A Call to Arms’. Complete short written text response and use as basis for imaginative extension piece.</p> <p>Extension: Write an imaginative piece from point of view of either girl in the works, about growing up Chinese in Australia.</p>	
Next lesson	<p>Exploring Australian Identity and Belonging continued.</p> <p>Indigenous perspectives, ACMI Generator ‘Ngi Bali, Hello Welcome’.</p> <p>The immigrant experience, Shaun Tan <i>The Arrival</i>.</p> <p>Identity and belonging to a group, Bruce Dawe poem ‘Life Cycle’.</p> <p>Identity and belonging to a group, Vanessa Amorosi song ‘This is Who I am’.</p>	

Post Box Activity Lesson Plan

Louise Robinson-Lay, Mentone Grammar School

I use this lesson plan to get students exploring their ideas and the ideas of the whole class on a topic that we have been studying. I have done it with various classes both before and after a teaching unit. Before, it can be to explore their preconceptions, and after to get an idea of how they have interpreted the material they've read and discussed.

Students are given the post box sheet with at least four numbered questions on it and they are to answer them in writing in silence. They are not to discuss their answers with anyone else and the questions are open ended so there should be a variety of responses.

When this is done they are to cut the sheet up into one section for each question and they are to place each sheet into the appropriate numbered box. They are then placed in groups of four to five students. I then distribute the boxes to groups of students to analyse.

Students have a sheet of butcher's paper on which to organise the responses and their task is to categorise them in any way they see fit. The students are doing VCE Unit 1 Area of Study 2, Technology and Communication; and they are to write opinions on various aspects of social media. These can then be organised into positive and negative and then types of reasons. This takes about 20 minutes.

Each group then has to present to the whole class the types of responses and summarise the thinking of the whole class as they interpret it. This usually takes a whole single lesson 50–60 minutes, by the time they have the ideas explained and then do the writing, thinking and interpreting.

The resulting sheets of paper can then be displayed around the room as they are useful for further writing tasks.

If you have a website or a Learning Management System you can either take photos of the sheets or videotape the final presentations.

I have used this with year 7 to year 12.

Post Box Activity Technology and Communication

- What are the main challenges with using technology? Give reasons for your response.
- What are the best things about using technology? Give reasons for your response.
- What are the main challenges with communicating with others online? Give reasons for your response.
- What are the main benefits of communicating with others using technology? Give reasons for your response.
- What do you identify as the issues facing society due to social websites such as Facebook? Give reasons for your answer.

UNIT 3 ENGLISH: TEXT ANALYSIS—A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Shelly Beamish, Chairo College

LEARNING AIM

To study the text so that students will be equipped to respond, ultimately, with an analytical essay.

PEDAGOGICAL AIM

To purposefully apply differentiation so that:

- Students are facilitated to take ownership and initiative with their learning.
- Learning behaviour can be modelled to students.
- All student understanding can be extended (based on individual ability).

DAILY IMPLEMENTATION

Setting up the task, the first lesson:

- Introduce students to the assignment, explaining the outline and expectations of work standards.
- It is important that students understand that they will be expected to organise how their group operates, stay on task and keep each other accountable. Reassure students that you will notice if there is someone in the group not pulling their weight.
- Group formation: this depends on the culture of the whole group. It may suit to allow the self-formation of groups, or it might be better to nominate groups in order to balance ability levels within the groups. Remember that you are aiming at five groups (one for each stave of the text).
- Clarify any questions.
- Once the groups are formed allow movement of tables and chairs so that students can actually sit in groups.
- Allocate the staves to the groups.
- Direct the groups to nominate roles and begin the task.
- Move from group to group writing down student names and nominated roles. As you do this, identify the weakest group—this will be the group you work with first.
- Working with the groups: it is important that you model the type of learning behaviour expected. This means sitting with groups, listening to their discussion, and asking open-ended, higher order questions as appropriate. The aim is to equip students with strategies for analysing the text through discussion and the completion of the task.
- End of class reflection time: allowing time to reflect at the end of each class validates the work done in that lesson. Therefore allocating several minutes for the group to discuss what they have learned that day and then requiring each group to share becomes an opportunity for whole group learning.

DAILY IMPLEMENTATION

- As a whole group, recap some aspect of the text. For example, ask questions about characters, turning points or themes.
- Direct students to move into group time. Work with each group, checking progress and modelling problem-solving strategies.
- Reflection time: allow time for each group to reflect and share what they have learned from that lesson.

PRESENTATION CLASS

- Students are to provide enough copies of their notes and quiz for everyone in the class.
- Each group will work their way through their notes, reading them out for the class to follow and answering any questions.
- Then they will run their quiz and provide the answers. (Alternatively, the quizzes can be collected for use later in the year when revising the text.)

ASSESSMENT

- Assessment can be completed using the Assessment rubric during the group presentations.

TIMELINE

(ASSUMING PERIODS ARE 90 MINUTES LONG)

- First class—introducing the task and setting the tone.
- Four periods of class work time.
- One period of presentation time.



**THE ASSESSMENT RUBRIC
IS AVAILABLE ONLINE**

PERSONAL REFLECTION—HOW DID THE UNIT WORK IN MY CLASS?

My class of 21 students consisted of a wide range of abilities and personalities. Of particular note were several very outspoken, loud students who were easily distracted. I was aware that I would need to regularly check that they stayed on task, while also encouraging their peers to do likewise. Initially these students became louder, making it difficult for other groups to talk. I was able to relocate that

particular group to an empty room next door, where they could be regularly checked but not nagged. The group then settled to the task.

The group I chose to work with first consisted of five boys, all low-to-mid range students. Several members of the group were particularly quiet and reluctant to share with the whole class. I listened while they read part of the text together and as they began to make points for the scribe to write down I asked leading questions about the information. With every answer I asked another leading question with the aim of demonstrating how to question the text and how to look beyond the obvious. I purposefully affirmed suggestions that were made and deliberately allowed silences while students thought about how to answer. I approached the group with an attitude of 'facilitator' rather than 'teacher'. In this way I was able to engage with the process, modelling the value of co-operative learning. A break-through moment occurred when the weakest student demonstrated unrevealed verbal strength. A lack of confidence had held him back from contributing to the whole group, however, this moment became a turning point for this student. He began to offer more during whole class discussions and his confidence grew as he gained the respect of his peers. His SAC result for this outcome was a grade above his average.

Once the task was set students knew what was required of them and came to class with the anticipation of settling to group work. They quickly rearranged the room and effectively worked together. The reflection time became a valuable conclusion where students not only shared new knowledge but also, without prompting, considered how the lessons from the text applied to real life.

The drawback of the unit was time. Due to timetable anomalies we were left with only one 45-minute lesson for the groups to present and run their quizzes. With such limited time, students were only able to present their notes. The quizzes and answers I collected for use in revision time. Students were happy with this compromise as it retained the authenticity of the task, and I have an engaging, fun way to begin revising the text later in the year.

WOULD I DO IT AGAIN?

Absolutely. It put the responsibility of learning back onto students and allowed me, as their teacher, the opportunity to implement discursive, inclusive strategies, extending every student in the room.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL—GROUP ASSIGNMENT

AIM

To understand the text through plot, setting, character, history and culture.

PROCESS

- In groups you will work through one stave each, analysing the text and creating a handout/list that reflects this analysis.

- You are to look for words/phrases/actions/descriptions that indicate how the society operated, character traits, plot movement, symbolism and meaning.
- Look up all of the endnotes.
- Research further those details that aren't clear.

END PRODUCT

- A set of handouts/notes to teach to your fellow students.
- A twenty-question quiz.

GROUPS (4 STUDENTS PER GROUP)

NOTE TAKER

Responsible for organising the creation of the notes/handout.

QUIZ MAKER

Responsible for organising the creation of the quiz.

LEADER, HEAD PRESENTER AND RESEARCHER

Responsible for the general well-being of the group, organising the presentation and the research.

ENDNOTE EXPERT

Responsible for organising the checking and understanding of the endnotes.

An example of what your work should look like.

STAVE ONE: MARLEY'S GHOST P. 33

- Marley—Scrooge's business partner who has died.
- 'Change (1)—A trading centre in the City of London 157–1939, 'The Royal Exchange'.
- Scrooge—protagonist.
- Scrooge has a good relationship with The Royal Exchange—indicating that money was important to Scrooge.
- Coffin nail—death is obviously something that is talked about.
- Ancestors (2)—Tory politicians: a conservative political party, mocked by Dickens.
- Scrooge isn't sad about Marley's death—reflects a character trait of Scrooge and that the relationship was not at all close and 'friendly'.

QUIZ

- What is the change? *A reference to The Royal Exchange.*
- Why does Scrooge have a good relationship with The Royal Exchange? *Because money is the focus of both Scrooge's world and the world of The Royal Exchange. Pursuing money is what motivates both parties.*

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AN ORAL PRESENTATION PLANNING CHART FOR VCE

Ross Huggard, Cranbourne Secondary College

ELEMENTS TO BE ADDRESSED IN PRESENTATION (PLANNING AND ACTUAL PRESENTATION)	TICK ONCE ACHIEVED
How best can I quickly gain the instant attention and interest of the audience?	
In what ways can I draw on their own experience, interests and level of connected current understanding?	
Should I incorporate some anecdotes or narratives as a means of increasing the accessibility and relevance for the audience?	
Which points and arguments should be stressed most? In what order?	
Should I 'signpost' (e.g. firstly, secondly, ...) to indicate the number of the key points I will be raising?	
How much factual material is needed as opposed to argument? Should I cite specific media texts or key stakeholders as a means of support?	
Would visual material assist in my presentation? How best can I intersperse this?	
If using a PowerPoint presentation, how can I best avoid simply reading out comments already made on slides?	
How can I most effectively vary the pace of the presentation? How can I best avoid any tendency to rush (especially if nervous)?	
When and where might pauses add key emphasis?	
What tonalities should I adopt and which words would best suit this?	
Which words ought to be emphasised in my delivery?	
How can I ensure that I access all the audience through my eye contact?	
How much gesturing should I use for emphasis? At what points would be best?	
Where should I position myself in the room for maximum impact?	
Which sections can I memorise and how can I best utilise the hand-held key points on cards which I will develop?	
What would be the most effective way in which to conclude? With what ideas, thoughts and feelings do I want the audience to be left?	

YEAR 11 LITERATURE

HOW TO TEACH METAPHYSICAL POETRY AND REALLY LOVE IT

Stav Mouzakis, Viewbank College

Aim

- To increase student engagement with 'classic' texts.
- To 'teach' literary techniques such as symbolism/metaphor/simile in a practical way.
- To find links between the middle ages, reasoning and contemporary humanity.
- To satisfy the requirements of Area of Study 1 of the Unit 1 Literature study design.
- To make my work as a teacher more enjoyable and to increase the profile of Literature within the school (not that it needed a lot more help).

RESOURCES

- Copies of Andrew Marvell's 'To His Coy Mistress' for each student. (www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/marvell/coy.htm)
- Copies of The Rolling Stones 'She's so Cold' lyrics. (www.sing365.com/music/lyric.nsf/she's-so-cold-lyrics-the-rolling-stones/)
- YouTube video of The Rolling Stones performing their hit 'She's so cold' (www.YouTube.com/watch?v=qrRSEVRgqVY)—there are many versions.
- Butchers' paper (lots). The teacher should photocopy the relevant poems (I call the lyrics to the song a poem too) and adhere them to the middle of the butchers' sheets so students are able to write all around them.
- Markers.
- Functioning interactive whiteboard with clear speakers.

INSTRUCTIONS

I am assuming the class has been taught or they have researched the meaning of specific literary terms such as symbolism, metaphor and simile.

Students should be put into groups to locate the metaphors/similes in each poem. Groups may be organised in a variety of ways e.g each group may discuss both poems or you can have specialty groups or each poem can be divided into sections and groups could be given these sections for analysis.

You may allocate one group who have iPhones the job of looking up Marvell's references to Humber, Flood, conversion of the Jews, Ganges and references to rubies, etc.

The groups will come back and report to the whole class.

The YouTube video can be played for enjoyment before or after study. I am a Rolling Stones fan from way back and some dancing may also ensue (Don't play too loud or the whole school may want to join in).

ADDITIONAL IDEAS

- You may want to study the concept of the feminine and misogyny or supposed misogyny during the middle ages and today by comparing Shakespeare's sonnet No 130 ('My mistress's eyes are nothing like the sun ...') to The Rolling Stones ('Under my thumb ...').
- Students may offer similar more 'modern' lyrics illustrating the idea of nihilism or existentialism. I would like to hear what suggestions your students come up with. Please email me at stav@viewbank.edu.au
- For all you History teachers out there, here is a freebie. Which famous Led Zeppelin song is perfect for study on the Vikings? I have specially prepared questions on that too. Email me your answers and I will email you a copy.

POETRY LESSON WITH YEAR 11 ENGLISH

Mary Weaven, Victoria University

This is a poetry lesson that has become a bit of a personal 'benchmark'. I had been teaching English for about 15 years, always including poetry for each cohort, when I moved to a TAFE setting and was confronted (and affronted) by suggestions that TAFE students would not understand poetic form, and I'd be better off teaching a film instead. Ever one for a challenge, I decided to press ahead with some Bruce Dawe.

My students were a very mixed bunch, but what they had in common was a sense that they had 'dropped out' from mainstream schooling. This was an adult VCE group: some were straight from year 10, where they'd clashed so badly with school authority that they moved into the TAFE setting, others were people who had been in the workforce or unemployed.

All had stories of dissatisfaction with schooling. Poetry was the very thing to enrich their lives.

We began with one simple ground rule: please don't interrupt while I'm reading a poem; it's only short, and you can ask questions at the end. If there were any difficult words, I'd explain them before the reading, and we'd have plenty of time for discussion afterwards.

Next, we established that each time a poem was read, we would have five minutes of uninterrupted writing time to capture our own thoughts on the poem.

Finally we would go around the room and share our understandings of the poem, jotting down each others' interpretations and insights.

In previous lessons, using this approach, we read through 'Drifters' because it is short and I thought the combination of transience, pain and optimism may resonate with the group. It did. Things progressed nicely so we moved on through 'Elegy for Drowned Children', 'Katrina'—where I had to warn them that I might weep and need to call on one of them to finish the reading for me—and 'The Family Man'.

Then came the quantum leap.

'Condolences of the Season' was the poem, and Rebecca, previously one of the more surly students, announced that she had looked up 'cosmogony' before the session and was delighted to find it was a 'real' word. Her confidence in Dawe had been shaken a little when she couldn't find 'ickle man' in the dictionary. I was so elated that when I finished reading the poem aloud I broke one of our 'rules' and started to talk about it immediately. These students, recent neophytes to the field of poetry, promptly reminded me of protocol by saying that they did not want to be 'contaminated' by my ideas before they'd

had a chance to develop their own. Privately, I thought a more tactful term could have been employed, but I duly gave them what had by now extended to a ten-minute writing period before going around the room and sharing. We were all adequately rewarded.

On the board I wrote their ideas as they offered them. Rebecca's handwriting was extremely neat so I borrowed her notes and typed them up to share with everyone the next day. What follows are not my ideas but theirs. From this opening paragraph, they each went on to write their own analysis for 'Condolences' and we used a similar approach for many other poems. It was a truly collaborative experience, which certainly contributed to the success, and everyone's ideas were valued ... in due course. When teachers see their students gain the confidence to insist that their voices be heard, something powerful has occurred. A transferral of authority from teacher to student has taken place and that, as much as anything else, is what has lingered in my mind as a lasting memory about this series of sessions culminating in the one described here. Below is our collaborative paragraph.

Bruce Dawe's 'Condolences of the Season' acknowledges the love between a father and his son. Although the word 'condolences' in the title suggests some sharing of grief, we soon learn that there is a gentle irony here. The 'season' is a season of birth and renewal, and the overall sentiment is a positive celebration of inescapable family ties. The tone of the poem is cheerful and affectionate. Dawe is advising his son on the strength of family connections. He refers to the family as a 'pack' who cannot be shaken off. There is a conspiratorial element in the bond that Dawe seeks to establish: 'you and I, my son'. Although Dawe playfully raises some concerns, 'Identi-Kitted out as fulsomely/ as the most wanted criminal' the poem ends on a confident note. Dawe reminds his son that as long as the two of them remain united, everything will be alright: 'all is well I see/catching your droll heretical wink at me'.

BEST LESSON ON *THE KITE RUNNER*

Danielle Bunker, Swinburne Senior Secondary College

This was an activity that I developed for my year 11 English class during our study of *The Kite Runner*. Instead of just having them write the standard chapter summaries I modelled the following activity for them to complete in order to present textual information in a new way. This is a really handy activity because it took my students by surprise and it really engaged them. When I later asked for feedback this was one of the most popular activities we did throughout *The Kite Runner* unit.


FIRST STEP


I showed my students a version of what I wanted them to eventually do which is readily available on the internet.


ROMEO AND JULIET


RECENT ACTIVITY


 Count Paris and Juliet Capulet are now friends.
About 2 days ago [Comment](#) • [Like](#)

 Lord Capulet likes this.


 Peter, Samson and Gregory and 11 others are attending Capulet Ball.
About 2 days ago [Comment](#) • [Like](#) • [RSVP to this Event](#)


 Romeo Montague and Rosaline Capulet are in a relationship
About 2 days ago [Comment](#) • [Like](#)


 Romeo Montague and Juliet Capulet are now friends.
About 1 day ago [Comment](#) • [Like](#)

 Romeo Montague is single.
About 1 day ago [Comment](#) • [Like](#)


Rosaline I effin h8 u.


 Tybalt and Mercutio are attending DUEL.
About 1 day ago [Comment](#) • [Like](#) • [RSVP to this Event](#)


 Romeo Montague and 58 others have joined the group RIP Mercutio.
About 8 hours ago [Comment](#) • [Like](#)


 Lady Capulet and 34 others have joined the group RIP Tybalt.
About 8 hours ago [Comment](#) • [Like](#) • [RSVP to this Event](#)


Juliet Capulet ▸ Romeo Montague: :)
About 4 hours ago [Comment](#) • [Like](#)

 Lord Paris and 135 others have joined the group RIP Juliet.
20 minutes ago [Comment](#) • [Like](#) • [RSVP to this Event](#)

 Lord Capulet, Lady Capulet and 3 others have joined the group RIP Paris.
15 minutes ago [Comment](#) • [Like](#)

 Benvolio and 62 others have joined the group RIP Romeo.
12 minutes ago [Comment](#) • [Like](#)

 Lord Capulet and 6 others have joined the group RIP2 Juliet.
8 minutes ago [Comment](#) • [Like](#)

 Lord Capulet is attending Poison Prevention Education.
Moments ago [Comment](#) • [Like](#) • [RSVP to this Event](#)

SECOND STEP

I had my students follow this model and work on summarising a few chapters we had read of *The Kite Runner* in Facebook form. They had to include key events, quotes, character relationships and character information.

THIRD STEP

I broke the class up into groups of two and three and they completed this task. I also had them read their summaries out to the class.

SHAUN TAN—TWO DIFFERENT LESSONS

Jan May, St Leonard's College

LESSON 1: CONFORMITY AND THE LOSS OF IMAGINATION YEAR 9 OR 10

This was one of those lessons that just seemed to happen without much planning at all. Shaun Tan's *The Lost Thing* had just won the Oscar for Best Short Animation and I immediately ordered the DVD as I was keen to see it. All my classes watched it, not just once, but two, three and four times over. The students kept spotting more and more in the film and by my tenth or so viewing, I was astonished at the 'little things' still being pointed out. One student commented that a particular scene in *The Lost Thing* reminded him of the John Brack's painting, *5pm Collins Street*. Another student mentioned a YouTube clip about baby chicks on assembly lines. Relevance? When I watched the clip, I could see why she had made the connection. Yet another student thought of *The Busy World of Richard Scarry*. We tracked down a clip from YouTube.

By the time I came to show *The Lost Thing* to my year 9 class, I had a little collection of material and decided to see how they could link it all together. We enjoyed a fascinating discussion about the busy urban world, pressures of modern life, pressures to conform, loss of creativity and individuality ... and the baby chicks starting life on an assembly line will definitely provoke a reaction. I asked students to write a homework reflection on one or more of the bits and pieces we had looked at. I'm sure you could find more clips/visuals to add.

RESOURCES USED

- *The Lost Thing* DVD.
- *The Lost Thing* picture book.
- Website for the short film: www.thelostthing.com/
- Richard Scarry clip: Intro to the busy world of Richard Scarry found at www.YouTube.com/watch?v=cgV3vdOT09I
- John Bracks painting *5pm Collins Street*.
- Life of chickens and humans clip from YouTube: www.YouTube.com/watch?v=H_W9JnJK3O8

SHAUN TAN LESSON 2

YEAR 11 LITERATURE CLASS BUT SUITABLE FOR OTHER CLASSES AS WELL

RESOURCES USED

- A class set of Shaun Tan's picture book, *The Red Tree*.
- We spend time looking closely at a wide range of genres in year 11 Literature and this is the picture book I have used in recent years. The written words are minimal, the illustrations gloriously intricate and the issues raised by the

picture book are relevant to students. They all seem to find something of themselves in the illustrations. After our close study, the students wrote a reflection on *The Red Tree*.

Here is a sample from one of my 2011 students. Lana has given permission for her work to be printed.

THE RED TREE BY SHAUN TAN

A REFLECTION BY LANA PEGGIE

Sometimes you read a book that seems to be deliberately written for you. The illustrations and the simple words create such an instant connection to the feelings and emotions that I have had before. It was a little bit concerning how much I related to the book and how the illustrations and the detail depicted such a clear picture of an emotional time that I had experienced myself. Even the monster of sadness that was following the girl down the street that felt like a great weight on her shoulders, was not a monster at all but rather an illustration of her sadness.

The other illustration that I felt a connection to was the girl in the bottle with the deep-sea diving mask. I didn't even have to read the words to understand what the picture was about, which is a little bit scary that someone could have a picture that hit so close to home. The picture was drawn from the imagination of Shaun Tan, yet it was portrayed in a way, allowing me to look at the picture and instantly feel the sadness that was held within each line of the drawing. My heart strings were pulled as I could think back to times in my life where I too have felt like being trapped in a bottle with no way out. Where you feel isolated and alone and as if no one can understand you. Every time you try to explain something all you achieve is fogging up the glass of the bottle, isolating yourself further as now no one can even see you, and then trying to get out of the overwhelming loneliness, just feels like an impossibility.

The whole story scares me a little, because as I started to look deeper into the picture book, for the true meanings of each line used to create a perfect portrayal of emotion or each simple word used to add meaning to the images, I found it so easy to relate to. The attention paid to detail in the drawings seemed to grow more vivid as I just stared at them. Just absorbing the images alone, without the words, was an overwhelming experience as they contain so many person emotions that can get tapped into, just through a simple imagined image. I think it is the fact that the drawings are not photographs but rather abstract images from someone's imagination and because they seem just that little bit unreal, they are images that you can place yourself in and imagine the emotions that flow with them in your own minds eye.

The drawings portray lots of different emotions and feelings such as confusion, boredom, fear, insignificance and loneliness, but mostly the impact of the drawings is a sense of overwhelming comprehension of what these feelings are. To do such amazing pictures the artist would have to have such a clear image of what these emotions and feelings he is conveying, look like to him in his imagination. The way that he conveys the images allows readers to understand their meaning through relating them to personal emotions and also considering what it would feel like to be the main character of the book.

I could relate to the picture of all the ships crashing down on the girl, conveying that all your troubles come at once, instantly. With the simple use of words to get the message across and a complete over exaggeration of images to portray the emotion held within the words, the first thought that raced into my mind was that the giant ships were like important tests or assignments, all coming down at once. I had an Indonesian assessment task racing towards me on the left, I had a maths test staring me down from above and blocking my way, I had a geography SAC that wasn't letting me go anywhere. I was able to imagine myself as the girl in the little, red, sail boat, looking up at the overpowering ships then down to the water, watching the peacefulness of the ocean below the surface and feel its strong pull of temptation, showing me how easy it would be to just end it all and not face a thing. I would manage to break away from the temptation, and I never did jump off the boat.

There is a tiny, red leaf drawn onto every page of the book, always not that far away from the young girl. This red leaf can be represented as a slim streak of hope within a dark day of a confusing, lonely, scary world. The leaf is not always obvious and at times can take a while to be spotted, although it is always there, just waiting to be found. This can convey that the leaf, hope, is always there, you just have to look hard for it. It can feel as if all hope is lost, which is what saddened me throughout the story because in each image hopelessness is conveyed. I can relate to feeling as if there is nothing that can be done to help you as no one understands your troubles, sometimes even you don't. This leaf is that light at the end of a dark tunnel, it's always there, always shining, some days it's just barely lit, forcing us to walk further and try harder to find it.

The utter beauty of the drawings, leading you into the darkest depths of your soul to feel emotions so personal, not to be shared with others, is strongly contrasted by the simplicity of the story and the use of words used to convey, it's just another day.

Please note: I have not made any changes to Lana's response. Her writing shows her absolute engagement with Shaun Tan's book. These are the sort of responses that make our lives as English teachers so worthwhile.