

VCE English

Implementation briefing — 2016

Units 3 and 4

Goal

Develop deeper understanding of the new or revised sections of the study design

We will achieve this goal by:

- unpacking key knowledge and skills
- clarifying common misconceptions and answering common questions
- reviewing sample responses
- considering sample teaching and learning resources and activities
- providing activities to be completed later.

Written examination

October/November	Written examination	Marks	Times
<p>(on a date to be published annually by the VCAA)</p>	<p>Section A — Reading and creating texts</p> <p>an analytical response to one of two texts selected from the English/EAL Text List published annually by the VCAA for Unit 3 Outcome 1.</p>	20	<p>Reading time: 15 minutes</p> <p>Writing time: 3 hours</p>
	<p>Section B — Reading and comparing texts</p> <p>an analytical response to a pair of selected texts from the English/EAL Text List published by the VCAA for Unit 4 Outcome 1.</p>	20	
	<p>Section C — Analysing argument</p> <p>an analysis of argument and the use of persuasive language in unseen text/s.</p>	20	
	<p>Total examination score</p>	60	

	UNIT 1	UNIT 2
Area of study 1	Reading and creating texts	Reading and comparing texts
Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar to current Reading and responding area of study • Refinements across area of study description, outcome and key knowledge and skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of text study to include a comparison of the presentation of ideas, issues and themes in texts
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment includes a creative response to a text. 	
Area of study 2	Analysing and presenting argument	Analysing and presenting argument
Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds on existing study by including a more balanced approach to the analysis and presentation of argument and language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds on existing study by including a more balanced approach to the analysis and presentation of argument and language

English students study two texts

Both analysing and presenting in each unit

UNIT 3

UNIT 4

Area of study 1

Reading and creating texts

Reading and comparing texts

Summary

- Similar to current Reading and responding area of study
- Refinements across area of study description, outcome and key knowledge and skills

- Expansion of text study to include a comparison of the presentation of ideas, issues and themes in texts

- Compulsory creative response to a different text accompanied by written explanation; option for creative response not included in examination
- Option to complete the creative response in oral form

Area of study 2

Analysing argument

Presenting argument

Summary

- Builds on existing study by including a more balanced approach to the analysis of argument and language

- Builds on existing study by including a more balanced approach to the presentation of argument and language

- Compulsory oral presentation of point of view accompanied by statement of intention; as per current study, presentation of point of view not included in examination

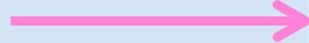
Area of study 3

Listening to texts – EAL students only

Summary

- New area of study to emphasise listening skills for EAL students
- Listening task will be included in examination for EAL students only

English students study two texts. Creative response to a different text than analytical response.



Text selection — Units 3 and 4

English students study four prescribed texts:

Reading and creating texts	Reading and comparing texts
Mankiewicz, Joseph, <i>All About Eve</i> (multimodal) Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi, <i>The Thing Around Your Neck</i> (short stories)	Brooks, Geraldine, <i>Year of Wonders</i> (novel) (A) Miller, Arthur, <i>The Crucible</i> (play)

EAL students study three prescribed texts:

Reading and creating texts	Both outcomes	Reading and comparing texts
Mankiewicz, Joseph, <i>All About Eve</i> (multimodal)	Miller, Arthur, <i>The Crucible</i> (play)	Brooks, Geraldine, <i>Year of Wonders</i> (novel) (A)

Handout
Unit 3 Sample course plan

Reading and comparing texts

Key knowledge p.24

- an understanding of the ideas, issues and themes presented in texts
- the ways authors convey ideas, issues and themes in texts
- the ways in which different texts provide different perspectives on ideas, issues and themes and how comparing them can offer an enriched understanding of the ideas, issues and themes

Key skills p.25

- identify meaningful connections and areas for comparison
- explain and analyse
 - similarities and differences between texts in the presentation of related ideas , issues and themes
 - the choices made by authors to convey particular perspectives
- compare texts to negotiate and communicate a deeper understanding of ideas, issues and themes

Themes, issues and ideas – what's the difference?

- Different ways of tackling concepts

Theme	Power
Issue – problematises the theme	Exploitation of power
Idea – unpacks the theme in relation to the text/takes a perspective	That power can be a corrupting force Caitlin Penrose, 2015

Pair	Thematic connections
Davidson, Robyn, Tracks (1) (A) (EAL) Penn, Sean (director), Into the Wild (1)	
Eastwood, Clint (director), Invictus (1) (EAL) Malouf, David, Ransom (1) (A)	
Funder, Anna, Stasiland (1) (A) (EAL) Orwell, George, Nineteen Eighty-Four (1)	<h3 data-bbox="1058 401 1290 458">Activity</h3> <ol data-bbox="1058 468 1877 772" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1058 468 1877 576">1. Select a pair that you are familiar with. <li data-bbox="1058 591 1877 699">2. Brainstorm the thematic connections in your workbook. <li data-bbox="1058 714 1877 772">3. Share with the whole group.
MacCarter, Kent and Lemer, Ali (eds), Joyful Strains: Making Australia Home (1) (A) (EAL) Lahiri, Jhumpa, The Namesake (1)	
Miller, Arthur, The Crucible (1) (EAL) Brooks, Geraldine, Year of Wonders: A Novel of the Plague (1) (A)	
Murray-Smith, Joanna, Bombshells (1) (A) (EAL) Atwood, Margaret, The Penelopiad: The Myth of Penelope and Odysseus (1)	
Wright, Tom, Black Diggers (1) (A) (EAL) D'Aguiar, Fred, The Longest Memory (1)	
Yousafzai, Malala, with Lamb, Christina, I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban (1) (EAL) Cole, Nigel (director), Made in Dagenham (1)	

Pair	Possible thematic connections
Davidson, Robyn, Tracks (1) (A) (EAL) Penn, Sean (director), Into the Wild (1)	Coming of age, journeys, risk-taking, self-awareness, identity, belonging
Eastwood, Clint (director), Invictus (1) (EAL) Malouf, David, Ransom (1) (A)	Leadership, sacrifice, the power of the individual, people as symbols
Funder, Anna, Stasiland (1) (A) (EAL) Orwell, George, Nineteen Eighty-Four (1)	Power, control, resisting the norm, paranoia, human nature, surveillance and observation, isolation, trust
MacCarter, Kent and Lemer, Ali (eds), Joyful Strains: Making Australia Home (1) (A) (EAL) Lahiri, Jhumpa, The Namesake (1)	Cultural change, displacement, heritage, clash of cultures, family, language and names as symbolic of culture and identity, notions of home, fitting in
Miller, Arthur, The Crucible (1) (EAL) Brooks, Geraldine, Year of Wonders: A Novel of the Plague (1) (A)	Mass hysteria, belief and faith, power of the individual to create change, gender and roles of women, superstition
Murray-Smith, Joanna, Bombshells (1) (A) (EAL) Atwood, Margaret, The Penelopiad: The Myth of Penelope and Odysseus (1)	Representations of women, gender roles, challenging gender roles, empowerment, powerlessness, aging/aging as a woman/social expectations
Wright, Tom, Black Diggers (1) (A) (EAL) D'Aguiar, Fred, The Longest Memory (1)	Sacrifice, race, prejudice, courage, standing up for what you believe in, relationships and how they give you strength, support from unexpected places, importance of relationships, the pace of change
Yousafzai, Malala, with Lamb, Christina, I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban (1) (EAL) Cole, Nigel (director), Made in Dagenham (1)	Courage (the nature of courage), women's rights, Sacrifice, personal risk, risk to those you love, standing up for injustice, success and defeat, the relative nature of injustice, political/social contexts for change, importance of having a voice/being heard

Activity

Handout
Word bank of
themes, issues
and ideas

1. Read the passages from *Black Diggers* and *The Longest Memory*.
2. Identify one key theme. Use the word bank or come up with your own.
3. Draw a mind-map with the theme at the centre, and synonyms, antonyms, ideas etc. around the theme.
4. Select 2-3 features of the passages that would be relevant to discuss e.g. structure, a character in each.
5. Discuss/share in table groups.

Structuring a comparative essay

Possible approaches:

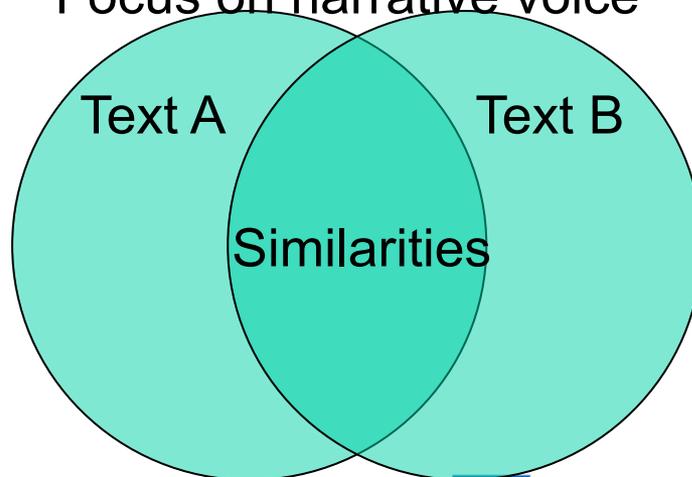
- *text-by-text* (whole-to-whole) - discuss all of Text A, then all of Text B. Use conclusion to bring it together.
- *point-by-point* – discuss one point for Text A then Text B before moving on to the next point
- *similarities-to-differences* – discuss how the texts are similar then how they are different

Handout
Annotated list
of comparative
writing
resources

Miscarriages of justice

Text feature	Text A	Text B	So?
Character			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New insights or understandings • Key differences or similarities • Values or perspectives related to the theme
Setting			
Structure			
Language			

Focus on narrative voice



Language of comparison

Students will need a bank of textual vocabulary and phrases and an understanding of when to use it.

Activity

1. Read the sample responses.
2. Highlight or underline textual features.
3. Consider the role that each feature has in the responses e.g. extending an idea, contrasting/ highlighting a difference, drawing attention to a similarity.

Tips for Reading and comparing

- We do want students to use the knowledge and skills they build in Units 1 and 3.
- This isn't Contexts:
 - No need to use additional material.
 - Don't select one theme and only teach to that.
- Students already compare characters, texts, short stories to gain insights into texts – encourage them to use these skills.

When designing tasks:

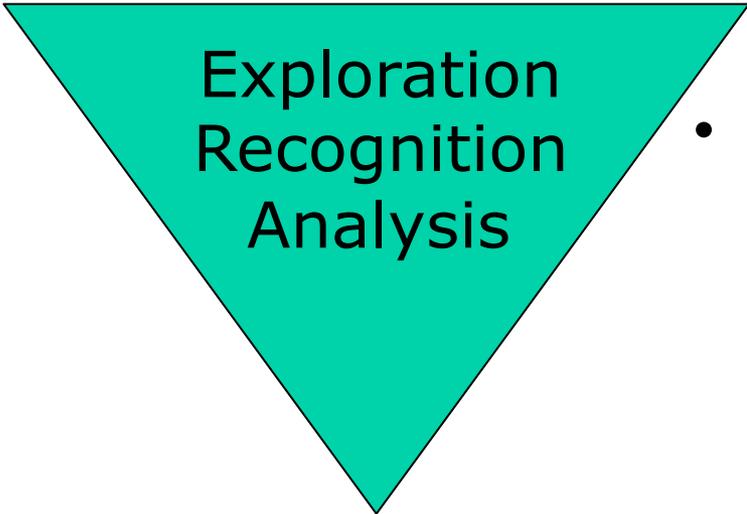
- Assessment shouldn't try and trick students with obscure themes, however shouldn't be so broad that students can use pre-prepared responses.
- Finding connections is an important upper range discriminator so provide opportunities for this – don't make it too narrow.
- Focus on comparing both:
 - the ideas, themes and issues presented
 - *AND how* the ideas, themes and issues are presented

Analysing and presenting argument

- A balanced approach to the study of both argument and language; supports comments made in Examination Report:
 - 2014 – *Successful responses were able to show the inherent connection between the general ideas of the piece and the language used to present those views.*
- Students compare to support the analysis of argument and language.
- Students are not asked to evaluate which text is better; analyse the relationship between the language and argument.

Intention of the writer
(Background)

Contention



- Who is the author?
- Where are they coming from?
- Who is the audience?
- What's the pitch?

- Construction – the means by which the argument is put together

Specific examples of written
and visual language

Approaches

What?

the argument

How?

how the argument is presented using written and visual language

Why?

the intended impact/effect with reference to audience, purpose and context

- Consider: ‘What is the writer up to?’ to recognise how the argument is set up to position the audience?
- Consider the values of the writer.
- Step back and look at the piece as a whole.
- Based on the context, purpose and audience, what could you expect to see?

Sample analysing argument response

Broderick's persuasive approach is one of direct, straight talk. Although readers certainly cannot mistake where her sympathies are situated, she resists highly emotive, elaborated descriptions of the 'personal narratives' of the 'individual distress' suffered by some employees, inferring here, rather than revealing directly, that these employees were women. Her approach blends language drawn from a place of rationality, logic and uses words which weave in various appeals to our desire to be modern, up-to-date and fair; 'The case for change is overwhelming', 'Women are critical to an effective, contemporary police force', 'skills and adaptability'. She continues in this vein from her opening argument, which accuses the Victorian Police of being out of touch with social norms, to her final demand that the report must act as a 'catalyst for change in all of our male-dominated command-and-control environments'.

Activity

Consider how the response analyses both argument and language.

Tips for analysing argument

- Students will need to analyse argument and language, written and visual material
- Students should respond to the material in front of them, not focus on splitting their analysis evenly between argument and language.
- Just as they do now, students will need to make choices about what they analyse. They can't cover everything.

Creative responses to text

Plan creative responses to texts by:

- analysing the text, considering opportunities to explore meaning
- selecting key moments, characters, themes worthy of exploration
- taking account of the purpose, content, audience in determining the selected content and approach

- Extend a text – prologue or epilogue written in the style
- Fill in a gap or silence – a moment between two chapters or give voice to a character’s perspective e.g. monologue, diary entry, letter, speech/ newspaper article in context
- Provide new insights – rewrite a moment from a different narrative perspective

Written explanation

Focus questions

- Which story/moment/character/event is your response linked to? You may need to make it clear at what point in the original text your response would fit.
- What happens in your creative response? Mention the *setting*, the *main characters*, *key events*, whose *viewpoint* the story is told from.
- What *key ideas* or *themes* from the text does your response focus on? (e.g. what did the writer say about culture conflict, parent-child relationships, the difficulties of living in two cultures, bullying, multi-cultural friendships, conflict between generations, etc.)
- What *form* of writing have you chosen for your response?
- Why do you think this would be an interesting way to create your response?
- How have you tried to make your response an interesting and effective piece of writing? Explain the decisions you have made e.g. Whose viewpoint? What verb tense? Use of dialogue? Use of description? Use of slang? Have you added anything to the original story?
- What would a new reader learn about the original text by reading your response?

Sample written explanation

For my creative response, I decided to write an internal monologue for the character of Steina in the novel *Burial Rites*. This seemed appropriate given that the text presents the story from a range of points of view, including that of the protagonist, Agnes.

I thought it would be interesting to view the narrative from the perspective of the eldest daughter of Jon and Margret, because there seems to be so much that she would like to say to the murderess who is lodging in her house, yet she is forbidden to do so. Steina recognises Agnes from a childhood incident, and as a result, sees the humanity in her. This is in direct contrast to her mother and sister who initially regard Agnes with disdain and treat her as an animal.

I chose a first-person narrative to allow Steina to express her views about Agnes instead of having to share the views of her mother. I used simple and spare language to reflect the fact that Steina cannot probably read or write very well because she is a girl and the daughter of a peasant farmer. This would have been very typical of the context in which the novel is set.

Drafting

- An important skill that students need to develop related to refining their thinking and ideas through writing - fundamental to the development of students' skills as writers.
- Students need strategies for revising their work.
- Authentication requirements are still in place for SACs.

Improving meaning for the reader

Basic proof-reading

Reworking for stylistic effect

For example:

- Spelling
- Punctuation
- Basic sentence structure
- Capital letters, full stops

For example:

- Text connectives
- Communicating more complex ideas through compound or complex sentence structures
- Consider relevance by mapping topic sentences to the question

For example

- Quality of ideas/thinking
- Shades of meaning, precise vocabulary
- Subtle distinctions across the whole text e.g. what nouns/noun groups are used in relation to a character and how do they build a picture for reader
- Condensing meaning e.g. through nominalisation

Activity

Brainstorm strategies that students can use for revising their work.

Oral assessment

Unit 1	One compulsory oral or multimodal presentation
Unit 2	No oral presentation required
Unit 3	No oral presentation required; option to complete creative response as oral
Unit 4	One compulsory oral presentation of a point of view

Two compulsory oral presentations in total across Units 1–4.

What constitutes an oral?

Any authentic text type that requires students to use the conventions of oral presentations such as pitch, pace, pause, eye-contact, gesture etc.

For example:

- Live presentation in front of an audience
- Video blog.

The assessment must match the mode of oral presentation.

Written examination

October/November	Written examination	Times
<p>(on a date to be published annually by the VCAA)</p>	<p>Section A — Reading and creating texts Text response an analytical response to one of two texts selected from the English/EAL Text List published annually by the VCAA for Unit 3 Outcome 1.</p>	<p>Reading time: 15 minutes Writing time: 3 hours</p>
	<p>Section B — Reading and comparing texts Comparative text analysis an analytical response to a pair of selected texts from the English/EAL Text List published by the VCAA for Unit 4 Outcome 1.</p>	
	<p>Section C — Analysing argument an analysis of argument and the use of persuasive language in unseen text/s.</p>	

Further information and resources

The following are published on the study webpage:

Advice for teachers

Frequently asked questions

Short videos of practitioners discussing key aspects of the new study

Unit 4 Area of Study 1 – Sample responses

Unit 3 Area of Study 2 – Sample resources

Unit 3 Sample course plan for a combined English and EAL class

The materials from this briefing will be published on the VATE website:

www.vate.org.au

You can also access the materials from the EAL briefing and last year's briefings.

Questions and feedback

Contact

Sean Box | English Curriculum Manager

T: (03) 9032 1691

E: box.sean.m@edumail.vic.gov.au

W: www.vcaa.vic.edu.au