

No. 27 July 2005

Victorian Certificate of Education
Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning



VCAA Bulletin Supplement 1

Revised Text list 2006

English/ESL

Literature

This text list replaces Supplement 1 to the February 2005 VCAA Bulletin, No. 22 and includes the addition of *Gattaca* to non-print texts for English/ESL.



English/ESL

Text list 2006

The following texts proposed by the English Text Selection Panel have been approved by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority as suitable for study in 2006.

This list is presented alphabetically by author, grouped according to kind of text. Abbreviations in brackets after the titles signify:

A This text meets the Australian requirement

PF This text meets the prose fiction requirement

(#) This indicates the number of years this text has appeared on the English/ESL Text List prior to 2006.

The annotations are provided to assist with selection of texts in accordance with the requirements in the English study design. It is important to avoid genre confusion. Where, for example, the text is designated PF (prose fiction), a non-print version is not acceptable for purposes of the examination, although it might be used in the classroom for teaching purposes.

Teachers are reminded that:

At least three of the four texts studied should be selected from a list published annually in the VCAA Bulletin. The fourth text, if not chosen from the set list, should be selected in accordance with the guidelines published annually in the VCAA Bulletin. At least one of the selected texts must be by an Australian or about Australians.

It should be noted that there will be no provision for students to write in the examination on any text not on the list. Such texts may be used for the achievement of outcomes, but not for the examination. The guidelines referred to are provided at the end of this notice, after the annotations.

It should also be noted that for all students, no more than one non-print text may be studied.

Note: While the VCAA considers all the texts on this list suitable for study, teachers should be aware that in some instances sensitivity may be needed where particular issues are raised in certain texts. In selecting texts for study teachers should make themselves aware of these issues prior to introducing the text to students.

Novels

- Ammaniti, Niccolo, *I'm Not Scared* (PF) (1)
Barker, Pat, *Border Crossing* (PF) (2)
Camus, Albert, *The Plague* (PF) (1)
Hosseini, Khaled, *The Kite Runner* (PF)
Harrison, Charles Yale, *Generals Die in Bed* (PF)
Greene, Graham, *The Quiet American* (PF) (2)
Haddon, Mark, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* (PF) (1)
Hardy, Thomas, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (PF) (2)
Lewis, Janet, *The Wife of Martin Guerre* (PF) (3)
Macauley, Wayne, *Blueprints for a Barbed-wire Canoe* (A) (PF)
O'Brien, Tim, *In the Lake of the Woods* (PF)
Tyler, Anne, *The Accidental Tourist* (PF)
Witting, Amy, *I for Isobel* (PF) (A) (3)

Short Stories

Lawson, Henry *Short Stories* (The stories for study are as follows: 'The Drover's Wife'; 'The Bush Undertaker'; 'The Union Buries its Dead'; 'On the Edge of a Plain'; 'Bill, the Ventriloquial Rooster'; 'The Loaded Dog'; 'Brighten's Sister-in-Law'; 'A Double Buggy at Lahey's Creek'; 'Water Them Geraniums'; 'Telling Mrs Baker'; 'A Child in the Dark and a Foreign Father'.)

(N.B. All of these stories are available in several current editions of *Henry Lawson's short stories*) (A) (PF) (3)

Winton, Tim, *Minimum of Two*, (A) (PF) (1)

Wolff, Tobias, *The Stories of Tobias Wolff* (PF) (1)

Plays

Rayson, Hannie, *Inheritance* (A)

Miller, Arthur, *A View from the Bridge* (2)

Shakespeare, William, *Hamlet* (2)

Sophocles, *King Oedipus* (3)

Non-print texts (film, video & multi-media productions)

Fine Line (Episodes 1, 2 and 5) (A) (Television series shown on SBS Television in 2004)

Gattaca (3)

Lantana (A) (1)

The Age of Innocence (1)

Voices & Visions from India (A)(CD-ROM) The categories for study and on which examination questions will be based are: Being Different, Family, Love, Marriage. (*The CD-ROM is available from the Asia Education Foundation, Level 4, Sidney Myer Asia Centre, The University of Melbourne, phone: (03) 8344 4800*)

Poetry

Plath, Sylvia, *Selected Poems* (1985)

Kelly, Paul, *Don't Start Me Talking: Lyrics 1984–2004* (A)

Non-fiction texts

Gaita, R, *Romulus, My Father* (A) (1)

Levi, P, *If this is a Man* (1)

Pax, Salem, *The Baghdad Blog* (N.B. Print version (Text Publishing, 2004) only to be studied)

Xinran, *Sky Burial*

Annotations

These annotations are provided to assist teachers with text selection. The comments are not intended to represent the only possible interpretation or a favoured reading of a text; nor do they represent a VCAA view. The list is arranged alphabetically by author. Films are listed by title. The VCAA does not prescribe editions; any complete edition may be used. The bibliographic information is provided to assist teachers to obtain texts and is correct, as far as possible, at the time of publication. Publishing details may change from time to time and teachers should consult the VCAA Bulletin regularly for any amendments or alterations to the list.

Ammaniti, Niccolo, *I'm Not Scared* (PF, Text Publishing, 2001)

In this compelling, powerful and engaging novel, we meet Michele Armitrano, a nine-year-old boy living in the small, close-knit Italian village where he was born. His summer holidays are spent in the company of his friends exploring the neighbouring countryside on their bikes. During one of their

games he makes a startling chance discovery which will change his life and the lives of all the families in the village forever. Michele has grown up with the people of his village, but his extraordinary encounter forces him to see the villagers and even his own family in a completely different light. In the process, he is faced with a moral dilemma and conflict of loyalties which culminate in a searing final scene.

This internationally acclaimed novel, translated from the Italian, is a concise and accessible text which invites examination at a number of levels.

Barker, Pat, *Border Crossing* (PF, Penguin, 2002)

This powerful and taut novel focuses on what happens when a child convicted for murder, suddenly reappears in unsettling fashion as an adult in the life of the child psychologist whose evidence helped to convict him. Using some of the conventions of the psychological thriller genre, Barker's swift moving narrative is ultimately a profoundly serious exploration of a range of difficult and important issues. Barker offers no easy answers to any of these questions and grounds her exploration in recognisable and hence believable characters and relationships. It is both a challenging and accessible novel.

Camus, Albert, *The Plague* (PF, Penguin, 2003)

Set during the 1940s, Camus' modern classic examines the reaction of the Algerian town of Oran, which is devastated as a result of a plague brought by rats. Described as a 'chronicle' rather than a novel by the author, the text charts the lives of a number of characters during this time of calamity, notably the courageous Dr Rieux who, through his dedicated work and collaboration with others in their fight against the pestilence, comes to recognise that in spite of their foolishness and ignorance, 'men are more to be admired than despised'.

Not only does the novel act as a kind of parable to that other contemporary 'plague', the German occupation of France in the Second World War, but it also provides Camus with a human situation to further explore his philosophical system of the 'Absurd', which has intrigued and challenged students who have in previous years studied his novel *The Outsider*.

***Fine Line, Episodes 1, 2 and 5* (Television series shown on SBS Television during 2004, distributed by Marcom Projects) (A)**

This series reveals the secret life of some of Australia's best known journalists – the anguished ethical judgments they make, the power they wield and the fine line they walk between privacy, decency and the public right to know.

Gaita, Raimond, *Romulus, My Father* (Text, 1998) (A)

Romulus Gaita fled his home in Yugoslavia at the age of thirteen, and came to Australia with his young wife Christine and their four-year-old son soon after the end of World War II. Tragic events were to overtake them, events which Raimond Gaita explores in his story about growing up with his increasingly troubled father in rural Victoria. This is the story of how a compassionate and honest man taught his son the meaning of living a decent life. It deals with friendship and betrayal, with the fragility of existence, with the cruelty of depression and mental illness and the dignity of work. It is about survival and the struggle to establish a sense of self and integrity of character despite [or because of] the obstacles that fate may provide.

***Gattaca* (Film)**

Set in a bleak future where only those who are genetically engineered to be perfect are allowed to play any significant role in society, *Gattaca* explores the notion of dreams and follows the story of a man who refuses to accept his fate.

Vincent, the central character is an invalid – one who was born without any scientific interference. He is biologically inferior and can never hope to enter the Gattaca facility, which is the launching place for shuttles to the stars, unless it is as a janitor.

Vincent refuses to accept his lot and so takes on the identity of Jerome Morrow who is genetically superior but has been paralysed in an accident. He is accepted into Gattaca but must ensure that his true identity is never discovered; a feat that becomes all the more difficult when his eyelash is found and points to him as a murdered within the clinical confines of the facility.

The film explores the relationship between Vincent and Jerome and raises questions about the burden of perfection and the bleakness of a world where emotion is replaced by automatons that move through cold and controlled environments. *Gattaca* is a topical film that deals with the issues of genetic engineering as well as developing suspense and character. (Rating: M)

Greene, Graham, *The Quiet American* (PF, Vintage, 2001)

The narrator of Greene's classic novel, set in Indochina in 1955, is Thomas Fowler, a world-weary English reporter who is nevertheless an acute observer of foreign circles at a time when Vietnam is trying to assert independence from French colonial rule. The *Quiet American* is the idealistic Alden Pyle, sent to promote democracy under the guise of humanitarian aid. Phuong is the Vietnamese woman for whose affections both men compete. Graham Greene's novel evokes a time and place on the brink of change and turmoil.

The Quiet American raises questions about the motives of individuals and foreign political interests which remain as relevant and interesting now as they did at the time the novel was written in 1955.

Haddon, Mark, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time* (PF, Random House, 2003)

This is a fascinating 'detective' novel that is divided into chapters headed by prime numbers – 'Prime numbers are like life. They are very logical but you could never work out the rules, even if you spent all your time thinking about them.'

It is this judgment that sums up the perspective of the narrator. Christopher John Francis Boone is fifteen years old and has Asperger's Syndrome (a form of autism). This moving and often refreshingly funny novel deals with rites of passage, but the main character's journey is exacerbated by the fact that he can neither express nor understand emotions and cannot decipher the world around him.

The story begins with Christopher's discovery of the neighbour's dog impaled by a pitchfork and the rest of the novel follows his 'investigation of the murder' (adapting the *modus operandi* of Sherlock Holmes!). Throughout the 'investigation' he is forced to confront his own fears, and the mystery that unravels ultimately deals less with the 'murder' of Wellington the poodle and more with the dissolution and dysfunction of the relationships of the adults around him.

The detached observational tone of the narration allows the reader to step inside the mind of someone who sees the world in his own idiosyncratic way, yet still manages to reveal much about people and the way they behave.

Hardy, Thomas, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (PF, Penguin, 1998)

Tess Durbeyfield is sent to establish a connection with the d'Urbervilles, unaware that that family has merely assumed the name. Seduced by their son, Alec, Tess returns home, where her illegitimate child dies before being baptised. Seeking a fresh start, Tess travels to Talbothays, where she meets and marries Angel Clare. When she tells him of her past, he abandons her, despite his own previous indiscretions. Alec, apparently reformed, re-enters Tess's life, and pursues her again. Torn between Alec and Angel, who has also returned, Tess murders Alec, is captured and executed. As the novel examines the notions of destiny, free will and religion in an apparently indifferent universe, the contradictions inherent in life itself, and the decline of the traditional agricultural lifestyle of the day, Hardy presents an indictment of the hypocrisy of nineteenth century England in his sad tale of a 'pure woman' doomed by circumstance and personality.

Harrison, Charles Yale, *Generals Die in Bed* (PF, Penguin, 2003)

Drawing on his own experiences in the First World War, Charles Yale Harrison tells a stark and poignant story of a young man sent to fight on the Western Front. This novel brings to life a period of history through the eyes of a twenty-year-old narrator, who reminds us that there is neither glamour nor glory in war.

Hosseini, Khaled, *The Kite Runner* (PF, Bloomsbury, 2004)

A timely and topical novel, the first Afghani novel to be published in English, written by an Afghani physician and resident of California. Set against the backdrop of Afghanistan's recent turbulent history – this is the tale of two young boys and their fragile childhood friendship in Kabul.

Kelly, Paul, *Don't Start Me Talking: Lyrics 1984–2004*, (Allen & Unwin, 2004) (A)

Definitely one of Australia's best loved songwriters and performers and also one of the most prolific, this book gathers together all of his lyrics and poems written between 1984 and 2004. Kelly's greatest gift as a songwriter is his honesty. The lyrics here include low key love songs with a message, always with an edge, although, his speciality would seem to be dealing with the minutiae of the lives of everyday Australians.

***Lantana* (Film) (A)**

This Ray Lawrence film, released in 2001, explores the intertwined relationships of flawed characters against the backdrop of a murder investigation. Part thriller and part exposé, the relationships tangle and weave like the lantana, a plant that produces a beautiful flower yet has sharp, thorny vines that choke the natural bushland. Dark and haunting, bleak and mysterious, the film showcases characters who must endure a search for their own identity before they can come to terms with their relationships. Grief, betrayal, trust and forgiveness are fundamental issues as the film moves to its resolution. (Rating: M)

Lawson, Henry *Short Stories* (PF) (A)

(The stories for study are as follows: 'The Drover's Wife'; 'The Bush Undertaker'; 'The Union Buries its Dead'; 'On the Edge of a Plain'; 'Bill, the Ventriloquial Rooster'; 'The Loaded Dog'; 'Brighten's Sister-in-Law'; 'A Double Buggy at Lahey's Creek'; 'Water Them Geraniums'; 'Telling Mrs Baker'; 'A Child in the Dark and a Foreign Father'.)

(N.B. All of these stories are available in several current editions of *Henry Lawson's short stories*)

The set stories represent a range of the finest pieces of Lawson's work. Some of the best-known comic pieces are here, as well as the exquisitely crafted 'sketch-stories' that present extraordinary impressions of rural life at the end of the eighteenth century. The selections from the Joe Wilson stories which read as a 'discontinuous narrative', an incomplete novel of courtship and marriage, not only provide a window into the past, but also offer keen insights into the human condition.

One may query Manning Clark's claim that 'Australia is Lawson writ large', but the stories are accessible, immensely enjoyable and present an intriguing vision of rural life in this country.

Levi, Primo, *If this is a Man* (PF, Abacus, 2002)

In this searing account of his experience of the holocaust, Primo Levi, an Italian Jew, records the ordeal of being captured by the Nazis in 1943 and interned at Auschwitz, the horrific death camp. A distinguished chemist, Levi recounts with almost clinical precision the daily routines and procedures of the camp, the imposition of power and the response of the prisoners. The monstrosity of Hitler's 'Final Solution' is revealed through the 'funereal science of the numbers of Auschwitz, which epitomise the stages of destruction of European Judaism'.

Lewis, Janet, *The Wife of Martin Guerre* (PF, Penguin, 1996)

In 16th century France, Bertrande is married as a child to Martin Guerre, the son of a prosperous farmer. Martin later runs away to become a soldier, deserting Bertrande and their child. When he unexpectedly returns years later, Bertrande becomes convinced it is not the same man. She finds herself caught between passionate love for a man who may not be her husband, and the dictates of her conscience. This simply-told yet rich tale examines conflicting loyalties to family, moral code, personal interest and religious faith.

Macaulay, Wayne, *Blueprints for a Barbed-wire Canoe*, (PF, Black Pepper, 2004) (A)

City planners create an unusual new housing development in the countryside north of Melbourne. The 'Outer Suburban Village Development Complex' is supposed to be a brave new type of town organised around a central square, with residents enticed by cheap housing and the promise of a fast freeway to the city. Its circular layout is mischievously suggestive of Milton Keynes or Canberra, those triumphs of twentieth-century city planning. But the promised freeway never eventuates, the town dies, and eventually only a few obstinate residents remain. The interest begins when officials attempt to erase this failed urban dream and the residents bunker down against the outside world.

Miller, Arthur, *A View from the Bridge* (Penguin 2000)

In constructing his play, Miller has borrowed from Greek tragic form and style: jealousy, betrayal and love complicate the life of an ordinary man, Eddie Carbone, and lead to his inevitable corruption and downfall. Eddie confronts a personal domestic dilemma when he cannot control his affection for his niece, Catherine. Tensions emerge when two relatives, Rodolpho and Marco, are housed by the Carbone after illegally immigrating to fulfil their 'American Dream'. Catherine falls in love with Rodolpho, prompting Eddie to fight for Catherine's affection, firstly through verbal humiliation and later by challenging Rodolpho's masculinity and sexuality. When Eddie cannot stop Catherine from asserting her independence and marrying, Eddie betrays the immigrants to government agencies.

Miller's text is accessible and intensely dramatic. It explores notions of justice, identity and honour in the context of an immigration dilemma with contemporary relevance.

O'Brien, Tim, *In the Lake of the Woods*, (PF, HarperCollins, 1995)

Set in northern Minnesota, during the week immediately following a formerly successful politician's first election loss, O'Brien's novel explores, among other issues, the 'win at all costs' mentality of political campaigns, the My Lai massacre in Vietnam, and the cost to human relationships (including marriages) of the compromise of personal integrity; the plot is driven, in part, by the mysterious disappearance of the politician's wife.

Pax, Salem, *The Baghdad Blog*, (Text Publishing, 2004)

Salem Pax is 'the Baghdad blogger', a thirty-year-old Iraqi living in Baghdad, who maintained an internet diary (a 'blog', short for web log) during the build-up, prosecution and aftermath of the war in Iraq. This text is a print version of his diary entries. It is a unique account of the final days of Saddam Hussein and the collapse of the regime. As the countdown to war continued, millions of people around the world followed his funny, terrifying and wonderfully entertaining diary, describing ordinary life in a society gripped with fear and spiralling into chaos.

Plath, Sylvia, *Sylvia Plath's Selected Poetry* (faber & faber, 1989)

When Sylvia Plath's *Ariel* was published posthumously, A Alvarez in the *Observer* wrote: 'If the poems are despairing, vengeful and destructive, they are at the same time tender, open to things, and also unusually clever, sardonic, hardminded ... They are works of great artistic purity and, despite all the nihilism, great generosity ... the book is a major literary event.' This selection from all her work shows that Sylvia Plath is clearly a major poet of the twentieth century.

Rayson, Hannie, *Inheritance* (Currency, 2003) (A)

At the core of Hannie Rayson's ambitious, sprawling epic are some vexed and troubling questions. Both in real and moral terms, she asks whose land is it, those who own it in law, either legal or spiritual, or those who work it? Taking the story of two related clans, the Hamiltons and the Delaneys, over five generations, and the Indigenous 'illegitimate' son of one of the family patriarchs, Rayson mixes mythic narratives with contemporary political and family discourses to tell the story

of Australia. Theatrically, she is attempting something grand; her subject matter is archetypal yet at the same time, immediate, poignant, speaking to and of today's Australia.

Shakespeare, William, *Hamlet* (Signet, 1999)

Shakespeare's revenge tragedy would provide something of a 'core' text for students, dealing as it does with a young man's grappling with timeless questions about the nature of life and death. The play holds a rich double life – on the page and on the stage – and provides the opportunity for rigorous study and individual interpretation.

Sophocles, *King Oedipus* (in *The Theban Plays* trans. E F Watling, Penguin, 1963)

This monument of Ancient Greek drama tells the searing tale of the ill-fated Oedipus who, inadvertently, killed his own father, married his mother and, as a consequence, experienced the tragic 'fall' from an apparent situation of security and power. The play, which is often titled *Oedipus Rex*, examines the dominating character of the ruler, so full of pride and self-assurance, seemingly unaware of the precariousness of human existence. Alongside him we have the frightened cynicism of Jocasta, the nearly puritanical loyalty of Creon, the awesomeness of Teiresias and the uncertain voice of the Chorus.

The dynamic pace of the drama and the profound insight it offers into human motive and circumstance ensure that this accessible and rich study will provide a challenging study for many students.

***The Age of Innocence* (Film)**

Martin Scorsese's sumptuous adaptation of Edith Wharton's classic novel, tells the story of a relationship made impossible by the social context of the characters. The convention-bound society of 1870s New York, with its complex hierarchies, its rules and barriers, is powerfully represented. These conventions form a web that enmeshes Newland Archer (Daniel Day-Lewis), his fiancée, May (Winona Ryder), and her cousin, Ellen (Michelle Pfeiffer), the woman he loves. The film explores the interrelationship of individuals and their society, and the issue of honour and loyalty in collision with personal fulfilment.

Tyler, Anne, *The Accidental Tourist* (PF, Vintage, 1988)

As in many of her works, *The Accidental Tourist* focuses on the complexities of family relationships. In this novel, middle-aged travel writer Macon Leary finds himself alone and miserable after his son is murdered and his wife leaves him. As a result, he realises that he is in danger of becoming 'a dried up kernel of a man that nothing real penetrates'. During the course of the novel, however, Macon confronts his suffering and carves out a new life for himself with the help of an energetic and eccentric young woman and her son.

***Voices & Visions from India* (CD-ROM) (Asia Education Foundation, 2003) (A)**

This CD-ROM contains a range of materials across different media, all representing the voices of people as well as the culture of India. It introduces students to both contemporary and traditional texts in the following media: literature, popular publishing, film and television, and visual and performing arts. The material is organised under a number of themes or categories.

Winton, Tim, *Minimum of Two* (PF, Penguin, 1987) (A)

This well known collection of stories from the West Australian writer addresses a number of themes (adolescence and death; swimming/drowning; friendship; thriller/mystery), but, for the most part, examines the way in which characters work to come to grips with past experiences which have often been left unresolved. Indeed, the ritual act of exorcising the past is repeated, and usually it is the male characters who find this most difficult. This on-going concern is very much the subject of the Jerra Neilson stories, which are threaded through the collection as a kind of discontinuous narrative, showing the young man's changing perspective as he struggles toward maturity.

In style and subject, *Minimum of Two* is a delightfully varied collection. Whilst some of the tales are explorations of moral dilemmas and present subtle delineation of character, others are nothing less than a brief slice of life, distinguished by irony and humour.

This accessible collection provides students with a wonderful introduction to this esteemed Australian writer.

Witting, Amy, *I for Isobel* (PF, Penguin, 1989) (A)

Amy Witting's *I for Isobel* is a female rites of passage novel, a 'portrait of the artist as a young woman'. Isobel's quest for independence and separate identity is marked by her intelligence, her anxiety and her sense of the absurd. The story is structured in a series of five self-contained episodes, each luminous with Isobel's insights or epiphanies as she moves from her working-class Sydney home to a Catholic school, a boarding house, encounters with university students and the world of work. Her 'getting of wisdom', that takes her from the entrapment of family into transcendent awareness of her identity as a writer in the 'word factory', is told with compassion, mordant humour and powerful dramatic realism.

Wolff, Tobias, *The Stories of Tobias Wolff* (PF, Bloomsbury, 1997)

Widely regarded as one of America's finest writers of short stories, Tobias Wolff delivers a diverse collection that highlights many of his distinguishing literary qualities.

Wolff's stories display an acute eye for the details of modern life as he explores the moral dilemmas his very ordinary and utterly believable characters confront.

Ranging widely in setting and theme, Wolff's collection reveals a subtle mastery of tone, and his gift for recreating his characters' ways of speaking and thinking render his stories exemplars of the kind of realism associated with Richard Ford and Raymond Carver. Wolff's quirky and at times mordant humour, though, coupled with a darker vision in which his frequently misguided and muddled characters stumble through life, make his voice distinctive and compelling. There really is an abundance of riches for all kinds of readers in this collection.

Xinran, *Sky Burial* (Chatto & Windus, 2004)

In March 1958, a Chinese woman learns that her husband, an idealistic army doctor, has died whilst serving in Tibet. Determined to know what has happened to him, she sets off courageously to join his regiment. To her horror, instead of finding a Tibetan people welcoming their Chinese 'liberators', she walks into a bloody conflict, with the Chinese subject to terrifying attacks from Tibetan guerrillas. Before she can know

her husband's fate, she is taken hostage and embarks on a life-changing journey through the Tibetan countryside- a journey that will last twenty years and lead her to a deep appreciation of Tibetan culture in all its beauty and brutality.

Guidelines for text selection

The text selection panel selected these texts in accordance with the following guidelines.

Each text selected for the VCE English and English (ESL) text list, including school-selected texts, will:

- have literary merit and be worthy of close study
- be an excellent example of form and genre
- sustain intensive study, raising interesting issues and providing challenging ideas
- be appropriate for both male and female students
- **be appropriate for the age and development of students and, in that context, reflect current community standards and expectations.**

The text list as a whole will:

- be suitable for a wide range of students, including second language students
- reflect the cultural diversity of the Victorian community
- include a balance of new and established works
- **include texts that display affirming perspectives.**

The text list for VCE English/ESL must:

1. Contain thirty available texts.
2. Represent the full range of texts indicated in the study design in the following approximate proportions:
 - 13 novels
 - 3 collections of short stories
 - 2 collections of poetry or songs
 - 4 plays
 - 4 non-print texts
 - 4 non-fiction texts.
3. Contain at least ten texts by or about Australians, distributed across as many of the text categories (see point 2) as possible.
4. Contain both popular and frequently-taught texts.
5. Contain print and non-print texts that are freely available, preferably for sale.
6. Contain no titles in common with those on the VCE Literature list.
7. Be reviewed annually, with approximately 25% of the texts being changed. No text should appear for more than four consecutive years and newly selected texts should appear on the list for at least two years to allow for consolidation of use in the classroom.
8. Be accompanied by full bibliographic details where necessary.

Literature

Text list 2006

The following texts proposed by the Literature Text Selection Panel have been approved by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority as suitable for study in 2006.

Criteria for text selection

Each text selected for the VCE Literature text list will:

- have literary merit and be worthy of close study
- be an excellent example of form and genre
- sustain intensive study, raising interesting issues and providing challenging ideas
- be appropriate for both male and female students
- **be appropriate for the age and development of students and in that context reflect current community standards and expectations.**

The text list as a whole will:

- be suitable for a wide range of students, including second language students
- reflect the cultural diversity of the Victorian community
- **include a balance of new and established works.**

Guidelines for text selection

The text list for VCE Literature is determined within the following guidelines:

1. Forty texts should be available for the school-assessed coursework. (List A)
 2. Thirty texts should be available for the examination. (List B)
 3. The list must represent a range of forms, experiences and voices, as described in the study design.
 4. Genres for List A must be represented in the following approximate numbers:
 - 10 Novels
 - 10 Performances
 - 8 Poetry
 - 6 Stories
 - 6 Other Literature
- Genres for List B must be represented in the following approximate numbers:
- 9 Novels
 - 9 Performances
 - 6 Poetry
 - 3 Stories
 - 3 Other Literature
5. One third of the texts should be Australian.
 6. Approximately 75% of the texts must be standard texts that would be expected to be familiar to most Literature teachers.
 7. There must be no overlap with the VCE English text list.
 8. **Full bibliographic details must be supplied where necessary.**

Note: Whilst the VCAA considers all the texts on this list suitable for study, teachers should be aware that in some instances sensitivity may be needed where particular issues

are raised in certain texts. In selecting texts for study teachers should make themselves aware of these issues prior to introducing the text to students.

The VCAA does not prescribe editions: any complete edition may be used. However, it should be noted that editions nominated for titles from List B are those from which the passages for the examination will be selected. The bibliographic information is provided to assist teachers to obtain texts and is correct, as far as possible, at the time of publication. Publishing details may change from time to time and teachers should consult the VCAA Bulletin regularly for any amendments or alterations to the list.

No specific editions or poems are nominated for poets from the List A list as the choice of poems is a teacher decision.

List A

(#) This indicates the number of years in the current cycle this text has appeared on the Literature text list prior to 2006.

Novels

- Collins, Wilkie, *The Woman in White*, Penguin Classics, 2003 (1)
- Dickens, Charles, *David Copperfield*, Penguin Classics, 1996 (2)
- Fforde, Jasper, *The Eyre Affair*, Hodder & Stoughton, 2001 (1)
- Gaskell, Elizabeth, *North and South*, Penguin Classics, 1996
- Gibson, William, *Pattern Recognition*, Penguin, 2003 (1)
- Grenville, Kate, *The Idea of Perfection*, Picador, 2000 (A)
- Ham, Rosalie, *The Dressmaker*, Duffy and Snellgrove, 2000 (A) (3)
- Marquez, Gabriel Garcia, *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, Penguin, 1996 (3)
- Leon Donna, *Doctored Evidence*, Random, 2004
- Scott, Kim, *Benang*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1999 (A) (1)

Plays, film or television mini-series

- Aristophanes, *The Birds* in *Four Plays by Aristophanes*, Penguin 1994
- Black Chicks Talking* (TV documentary, SBS Productions) (Available for purchase from Film Australia) (A) (2)
- Bovell, Andrew, *Speaking in Tongues*, Currency Press, 1998 (A) (2)
- Far From Heaven* (Film) (Rating M) (Available for borrowing from video rental stores and for purchase from Maxwell's Tel: (02) 9973 2277) (1)
- Grave of the Fireflies* (Animation)
- Ibsen, Henrik, *A Doll's House*, Penguin Classics, 1986 (2)
- Lawler, Ray, *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, Currency Press, 1978 (A) (2)
- Lorca, Federico García, *The House of Bernarda Alba*, Penguin, 2001 (2)
- Pinter, Harold, *The Birthday Party*, Faber, 1991 (2)
- Webster, John, *The White Devil*, Penguin Classics, 1973

Short stories

- Allende, Isabel, *The Stories of Eva Luna*, Penguin 1991 (3)
- Carey, Peter, *The Fat Man in History*, UQP, 1994 (A) (1)
- Dick, Philip K, *Minority Report*, Gollancz, 2002
- Hospital, Janette Turner, *North of Nowhere South of Loss*, UQP, 2003 (A) (1)

- Jolley, Elizabeth, *Woman in a Lampshade*, Penguin, 1992 (A) (2)
 MacLeod, Alistair, *Island – Collected Stories*, Vintage, 2002 (2)
 Mears, Gillian, *A Map of the Gardens*, Picador, 2002 (A)

Other literature

- Bayet-Charlton, Fabienne, *Finding Ullagundahi Island*, Allen & Unwin, 2002 (A) (1)
 Cunxin, Li, *Mao's Last Dancer*, Penguin, 2003 (A)
 Fuller, Alexandra, *Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight*, Picador, 2002 (1)
 Pham, Andrew X, *Catfish and Mandala*, Flamingo, 2000 (2)
 Wright, Judith, *Half a Lifetime*, Penguin, 2001 (A)

Poetry

- Atwood, Margaret (1)
 Bishop, Elizabeth (1)
 Eliot, T S
 Porter, Dorothy (A) (2)
The Penguin Book of Modern Australian Poetry (Ed Tranter & Mead), Penguin, 1991 (A) (2)
 Williams, William Carlos (2)
 Wordsworth, William
 Wyatt, Thomas

List B

Novels

- Austen, Jane, *Sense and Sensibility*, Penguin Classics, 2003 (1)
 Conrad, Joseph, *Heart of Darkness*, Penguin, 1995 (2)
 de Kretser, Michelle, *The Hamilton Case*, Knopf, 2003 (A) (1)
 Doctorow, E.L., *Ragtime*, Picador 1985 (1)
 Fitzgerald, F Scott, *The Great Gatsby*, Penguin, 2000 (1)
 Forster, E.M., *Howards End*, Penguin, 2001 (2)
 Garner, Helen, *The Children's Bach*, Penguin, 1999 (A) (1)
 James, Henry, *Washington Square*, Penguin Classics, 1986
 Patchett, Ann, *Bel Canto*, Fourth Estate, 2002 (1)

Plays

- Chekov, Anton, *Three Sisters*, translated by Peter Carson, Penguin, 2002
 Euripides, *Women of Troy* (in *The Bacchae and Other Plays*), Penguin Classics, 2000 (2)
 Murray-Smith, Joanna, *Honour*, Currency Press, 1997 (A)
 Reza, Yasmina, *Art*, Faber & Faber, 1996
 Shakespeare, William, *Measure for Measure*, New Penguin Shakespeare, 2000 (2)
 Shakespeare, William, *King Lear*, Penguin, 1999 (1)
 Shepard, Sam, *True West*, Faber, 1997 (2)
 Thomas, Dylan, *Under Milk Wood*, Penguin Modern Classics, 2000

Short stories

- Astley, Thea, *Hunting the Wild Pineapple*, Penguin, 1981 (A)
 Joyce, James, *Dubliners*, Penguin, 2000 (2)
 Raymond Carver, *Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?*, Vintage, 2003 (1)
 (The stories for study are: 'Fat', 'Neighbors', 'They're Not Your Husband', 'The Father', 'Nobody Said Anything', 'Sixty Acres', 'Jerry and Molly and Sam', 'How about This?', 'Bicycles, Muscles, Cigarettes', 'Signals', 'Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?')

Other literature (3)

- Modjeska, Drusilla, *Timepieces*, Picador, 2002 (A) (1)
 Dalrymple, William, *City of Djinn*, Flamingo (2)
 Drewe, Robert, *The Shark Net*, Penguin, 2001 (A) (3)

Poetry

- Note:** 1. Each poem listed for a poet must be studied
 2. Teachers should note that in the case of longer poems, extracts from the poem may be used in the examination.

Adamson, Robert, *Mulberry Leaves, Paper Bark Press, 2001 (A) (1)*

- The cow bird
 Domestic shuffle
 Fathers' Day
 Mulberry Leaves
 Goshawk over Broken Bay
 Berowra Waters
 My fishing boat
 Growing up alone
 The channels
 Wild colonial boys
 The language of oysters
 The gathering light
 Drum of fire
 After Brett Whiteley

Auden, W H, *Selected Poems*, ed. Edward Mendelson, Faber, 1979

- This lunar beauty
 To ask the hard question is simple
 Look, stranger, at this island now
 Lay your sleeping head my love
 Musee des Beaux Arts
 In Memory of W.B. Yeats
 The Unknown Citizen
 September 1, 1939
 Law, say the gardeners, is the sun
 Lady, weeping at the crossroads
 In Praise of Limestone
 Under Sirius
 The Shield of Achilles
 The More Loving One

Donne, John, *Selected Poetry*, Oxford World's Classics, 1996

- From The Satyres: III On Religion
 The Good Morrow
 The Relique
 The Flea
 The Canonisation
 The Sunne Rising
 Song (First line: *Sweetest love, I do not go*)
 The Anniversarie
 To His Mistress Going to Bed
 A Valediction: forbidding mourning
 From the Elegies: His Picture
 From the Divine poems:
- Holy Sonnets:
 - At the round earth's imagin'd corners blow
 - Death be not proud
 - A Hymne to Christ, at the Author's last going into Germany
 - Hymne to God my God, in my Sicknesse

Harwood, Gwen, *Selected Poems*, Penguin, 2001 (A) (2)

In the Park
Suburban Sonnet
Littoral
The Violets
Father and Child
The Sea Anemones
The Secret Life of Frogs
Mother Who Gave Me Life
The Lion's Bride
Class of 1927
Night and Dreams

Kinsella, John, *Peripheral Light: Selected and New Poems*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 2003

Links
Inland
Wheatbelt Gothic
The Silo
Fog
Goading Storms Out of a Darkening Field
Wild radishes
Drowning in Wheat
The Machine of the Twentieth Century Rolls Through the High-Yielding Crop
First Essay on Linguistic Disobedience
The Shed
Salt Lesson
Cold

Rich, Adrienne, *The Fact of a Doorframe*, W W Norton & Co., 2002 (3)

Storm Warnings
Aunt Jennifer's Tigers
The Knight
Necessities of Life
Diving into the Wreck
White Night (N.B. First line: Light at a window. Someone up.)
Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law
Twenty-one Love Poems (Poems for study: 1 and 21)
North American Time
Integrity

Wright, Judith, *Collected Poems*, HarperCollins, 1994 (A) (1)

South of My Days
The Company of Lovers
Age to Youth
Double Image
Eve to Her Daughters
Fire Sermon
Some Words
Tightropes
The Dark Ones
Smalltown Dance
Woman to Man
Woman to Child

Annotations of texts new to the Literature List 2006

These annotations of texts new to the Literature list in 2006 are provided to assist teachers with text selection. The comments are not intended to represent the only possible interpretation or a favoured reading of a text; nor do they represent the view of the VCAA. The list is arranged alphabetically by author or poet. Films are listed by title.

Aristophanes, *The Birds*

The comedies of this Athenian comic poet are of great historical value for their caricatures of the leading personages of the time and their comments on current affairs.

Astley, Thea, *Hunting the Wild Pineapple*

Leverson, the narrator at the centre of these stories, calls himself a 'people freak.' Seduced by north Queensland's sultry beauty and unique strangeness, he is as fascinated by the invading hordes of misfits from the south as by the old established Queenslanders. Leverson's ironical yet compassionate view makes every story, every incident, a pointed example of human weakness – or strength.

Auden, W H

Generally considered the greatest English poet of the twentieth century, his work has exerted a major influence on succeeding generations of poets on both sides of the Atlantic.

Chekov, Anton, *Three Sisters*

Three Sisters is generally considered the best work by this Russian dramatist whose gift of satirical humour has helped his works maintain their popularity.

Cunxin, Li, *Mao's Last Dancer*

A young peasant boy in northeast China has the course of his life changed when Madame Mao's cultural delegates visit his school. He becomes a ballet dancer, feted by presidents and movies stars – a darling of the West.

Dick, Philip K, *Minority Report*

This selection of earlier Dick short stories is a representative introduction to this most imaginative and enjoyable of science-fiction writers. Dick saw the future in a different way than other, more successful writers. His characters were not the traditional heroes and heroines: they were the ordinary citizens of the future, struggling with different versions of all the usual human problems.

Donne, John

Donne's poetry is distinguished by its wit, profundity of thought and erudition, passion and subtlety. He is considered by many the greatest of the writers of 'metaphysical' poetry, in which passion is interwoven with reasoning.

Eliot, T S

T S Eliot (1888–1965) recast twentieth-century English poetry with a whole new vocabulary of technique, giving voice to a bold, vibrantly original Modernist style.

Gaskell, Elizabeth, *North and South*

Written in 1854–5, this book is a study in the contrast between the inhabitants of the North and of the South of England. It is also a study of the relationships between employers and workers in industry.

Grave of the Fireflies (Animation)

A tragic film covering a young boy and his little sister's struggle to survive in Japan during World War II. In the aftermath of bombing, the two orphaned children struggle to survive in the Japanese countryside. To them, their helplessness and indifference of their countrymen is even more painful than the enemy raids. Through desperation, hunger and grief, these children's lives are as heartbreakingly fragile as their spirit and love is inspiring.

Grenville, Kate, *The Idea of Perfection*

This novel, set in a small Australian town, ponders some of the enduring myths about what it is to be Australian.

James, Henry, *Washington Square*

This short novel by Henry James, published in 1880, is praised for its depiction of the complicated relationship between a stubborn father and his daughter.

Kinsella, John

John Kinsella is the author of more than twenty books, whose many prizes and awards include The Grace Leven Poetry Prize, the John Bray Award for Poetry (from The Adelaide Festival), *The Age* Poetry Book of The Year Award, The Western Australian Premier's Prize for Poetry (twice), a Young Australian Creative Fellowship, and senior Fellowships from the Literature Board of The Australia Council.

Leon, Donna, *Doctored Evidence*

This novel, from the crime/mystery genre, follows Venetian police officer Guido Brunetti as he examines a case superiors would rather leave closed. The novel shows how stereotyping can hamper truly solving a case. Like many great crime writers, Leon uses her fiction as a way of highlighting things about the world – in this case specifically Venice – which concern her.

Mears, Gillian, *A Map of the Gardens*

A new collection of short stories by a writer gifted in the language of emotions, these stories read like parables of loss and renewal, and reflect the rural landscape in all its various forms.

Murray-Smith, Joanna, *Honour*

A provocative drama that challenges our notion of honour, our sense of decency and our belief that love will prevail, *Honour* won the 1996 Victorian Premier's Literary Award for Drama and has since been widely produced.

Thomas, Dylan, *Under Milkwood*

In this delightful radio play, written in 1954 and set in the Welsh village of Llareggub, Thomas exploits and mocks the folk-poetry of Welsh speech.

Webster, John, *The White Devil*

Webster's tragedies, founded on Italian *novelle*, show that he approached in tragic power nearest of his contemporaries to Shakespeare.

Wordsworth, William

Wordsworth's celebration of nature and of the beauty and poetry in the commonplace embody a unified and coherent vision that was profoundly innovative.

Wright, Judith, *Half a Lifetime*

Half a Lifetime is a passionate and honest autobiography by one of Australia's greatest writers. In her steely, sensuous prose, Judith Wright recounts the vanished pastoral world she grew up in. She tells the story of her growth as woman and poet, as lover and mother. She also describes her emerging commitment to the environment, the rights of Aboriginal people and the possibility of leading a just and responsible life.

Wyatt, Thomas

Although Wyatt's poetry is beset by problems in the areas of authorship, biographical relevance and artistic aims, he is often viewed as a complex and original writer whose love poems anticipate those of Donne.

Yasmina, Reza, *Art*

A philosophical contemporary French drama. Marc cannot believe that his friend Serge has bought an expensive modern painting, and they quarrel, while the play's third character, a friend of them both, tries to calm them.



Published by

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