

VCE Literature (2023-2027): Implementation webinar series

Exploration of literary movements and
genres

2 June 2022



VICTORIAN CURRICULUM
AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY



Acknowledgement of Country

The VCAA respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria and pays respect to the ongoing living cultures of First Peoples.





VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION FOR
THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

The VCAA acknowledges and values the continued support of the Victorian Association for the Teaching of English (VATE).

Please Note:

The VCE Literature Study Design (2023-2027) has been recently amended.

The following sentence has been removed from page 17:

‘Students must not complete more than two assessment tasks using the same text.’

Assessment must be based on at least four texts selected from the annual VCE Literature Text List, plus an adaptation of one of those texts. The fifth set text does not need to be formally assessed but can be used to enrich student learning, including the sheer joy of reading and discussion.

VCE Literature Study Design page

For the new Study Design, support materials – including text lists – and implementation on demand and recorded live webinars, please visit the VCE Literature Study Design webpage here:

<https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-study-designs/literature/Pages/Index.aspx>

Study design for implementation in 2023


Teachers are advised that the study design listed below is for use from 2023. This is available to teachers in preparation for the implementation of the new study in 2023. Additional resources will be added progressively as they become available.

For accreditation period 2023-2027

- [VCE Literature Study Design](#) for implementation in 2023.
- [Implementation of VCE Literature Study Design 2023-2027 \(for implementation in 2023\)](#)
Online video presentations which provide teachers with an overview of the VCE Literature Study Design and other relevant VCAA documents that can be used to plan their teaching and learning programs



In 2022, schools must ensure they use the [VCE Literature Study Design Units 1 and 2: 2016-2022; Units 3 and 4: 2017-2022](#)

Asking Questions

Ask: All Panelists 

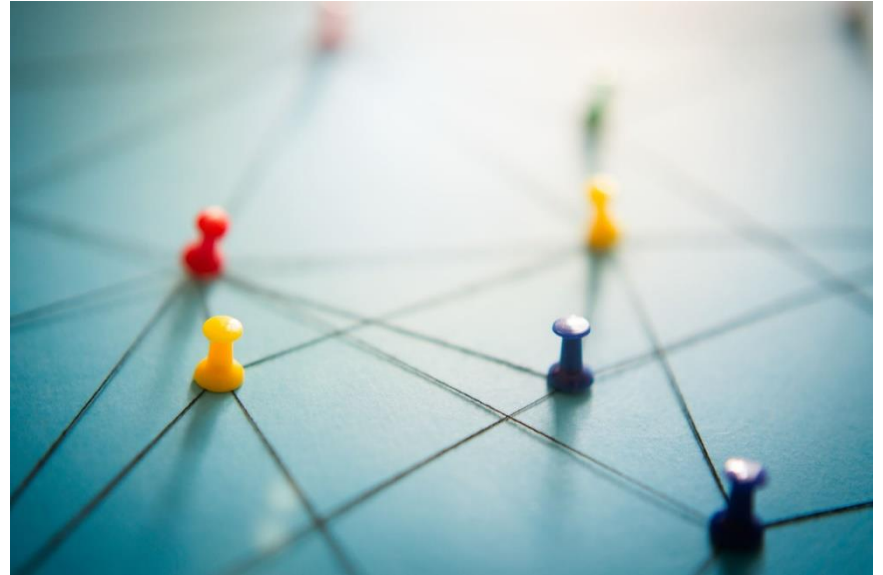
Select a panelist in the Ask menu first and then type your question here.

Send

 Participants  QA

Welcome: VCE Literature (2023-2027) implementation

- Live webinar series to support the new VCE Literature Study Design (2023-2027)
- Each webinar will focus on one of the new areas of study
- This webinar will support
 - Unit 1, Outcome 2: Exploration of literary movements and genres



Unit 1, Outcome 2:

Exploration of literary movements and genres

On completion of this unit the student should be able to explore conventions common to a selected movement or genre, and engage with the ideas, concerns and representations from at least one complete text alongside multiple samples of other texts considered characteristic of the selected movement or genre.

Unit 1, Outcome 2:

Exploration of literary movements and genres

Key Knowledge

- conventions of a movement or genre, including language, settings, narrative structures and characterisation
- the ways the conventions of a movement or genre contribute to meaning
- the ideas and concerns embedded in text typical of a movement or genre
- assumptions and representations in texts typical of a movement or genre
- the conventions of presentation, discussion and/or debate
- the features appropriate for written and oral responses, including structure, conventions and language

Key Skills

- explore the replication of conventions across at least one complete text alongside multiple samples of other texts typical of a movement or genre
- comment on how the conventions of a movement or genre contribute to meaning
- analyse and reflect on the ideas and concerns raised by texts typical of a movement or genre
- explore and experiment with the assumptions and representations in texts associated with a movement or genre
- develop and produce analytical and creative written and/or oral responses to texts

Defining Movements and Genres

Movements:

- Temporal
- Completed: has beginning and end
- Social/Historical
- Zeitgeist
- Shared formal responses to shared values/concerns
- Authorship and intention known and significant.
- Manifestos/Justifications
- Fragile and temporary
- Reception relevant

Genres:

- Trans-temporal
- Ongoing: not completed
- Shared formal features, varying concerns?
- Authorship and intention less relevant?
- Can include popular genres
- Resilient and recuperated/commercialised
- Reception relevant

Classroom Implementation

Movements

- Courtly Poetry
- Elizabethan poetry
- Romanticism
- Realism/ 'social novel'
- Modernism
- Modernist Poetry
- Confessional Poetry
- Socialist Realism
- Postmodernism
- Nouvelle Roman
- Oulipo
- New Formalism

Genres

- Gothic
- Magic Realism
- Science Fiction
- Film Noir
- Poetry of Witness
- Postmodern Novels
- Memoir/Autobiography/Life Writing
- Creative Non-fiction
- Popular genres:
- Superhero films
- Contemporary YA fiction
- Romance Novels

Unit planning & text selection: Your context

- Look at your sequence Units 1-4.
- What text might you lose from Unit 1? Can it go to Unit 2?
- What skills have you been hoping to work on earlier?
- Who are your students and what are they interested in?
- What is their broader context as readers? What do they read? What do they believe is the purpose of Literature?
- How can you avoid overlap and seize reinforcement?

Possible Activities

- A survey: 1 complete text and range of other samples
- Explicit Historicist teaching of Movement/Genre
- Exploration phase: curated student research including choice among texts
- Excursions: museum, gallery and other links.
- Student research presentations on texts within movement
- Students select one main text as supplement to class main text
- Reading historical material
- Close reading activities
- Passage analysis/ close analysis essay
- Creative writing adopting conventions/features/voice
- Reading literary criticism for reception and revision

A genre family tree . . .

When movements end, they become part of tradition/ traditions.

Eg: Gothic . . .from C18th beginnings . . .

Mysteries of Udolpho

Frankenstein

Northanger Abbey

Poe

Australian Gothic

Noir?

Twilight

Harry Potter

The Well, Van Diemen's Land

Visual culture: 'Dark Academia' clothing trend.

- A tradition tree!
- A genre tree
- A phylogenetic chart
- A dichotomous chart
- Classroom displays
- Group tasks
- Students situate their own chosen text within family tree.
- Students open up 'branches' and connections to main tree



Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/gallery/2015/jan/23/a-language-family-tree-in-pictures>

Unit 3: sample draft . . .

Joan Lindsay's seminal 1967 *Picnic at Hanging Rock* represents the Australian bush as a harsh environment destabilised by the euro-centric colonial presence that has been imposed upon it. Lindsay employs dramatic irony in the mythologising foreword and within the text's narrative voice, implanting the setting and colonial characters with a homely familiarity to the Australian reader. This narrative voice emerges from the binding traditions of Australian Gothic literature; translating the othering view that Colonial Australians typically attached to the bush into an undercurrent of familiar menace that flows through the novel. The Australian reader's recognition of their own culture and literary tradition within Lindsay's ironic and all knowing narrative voice directly implicates a contemporary reader in the perpetuation of colonial attitudes, while her simulation of historical source texts anticipates a postmodern questioning of truth or stability in an Australian identity.

Movements: a possible unit on Modernism

Visual Art
Architecture
Music

Criticism:

Tradition and the Individual Talent - TS Eliot
Imagist Manifestos/Introductions - Ezra Pound
Cambridge Companion to Modernism
The Shock of the New - Robert Hughes
The Rest is Noise - Alex Ross

Perspective: Psychoanalysis

Texts:

TS Eliot, *The Waste Land*
Prufrock

Virginia Woolf *To The Lighthouse*
A Room of One's Own

Imagist Anthologies
James Joyce, *Ulysses*
Claire Lispector, *Agua Viva*
William Carlos Williams *Poems*

Genres: a possible unit on Science Fiction

Science Fiction texts :

Mary Shelley *Frankenstein*

HG Wells *War of the Worlds*

Karel Capek, *War with the Newts*

Aldous Huxley *Brave New World*

Jorge Luis Borges - short stories

H. P. Lovecraft - short stories

Isaac Asimov *I, Robot*

Ursula Le Guin - short stories

Philip K Dick, *Bladerunner*

Orson Scott Card, *Ender's Game*

Suzanne Collins, *The Hunger Games*

Film Texts:

Gattaca

The Hunger Games

Children of Men

Which among these could be the complete text?

Will all students study the same complete text?

Possibilities for differentiation?

Questions for discussion

- Who likes this genre? What do they like about it?
- Why do you hate this genre?
- What *concerns*, *assumptions* and attachment or interest in certain *representations* do you associate with people who like this genre?
- Why is this genre popular at the moment?
- What genre is the sibling/opposite of this genre? why?

Perspectives, movements and genre

1. Historicism

Historicism is implied in the AOS.

2. Psychoanalysis

- Text as wish-fulfillment
- Text as safe rehearsal of fears and aggressions
- Text as the expression of a culture's fears, hopes, wishes and aggressions

3. A perspective of your choice.

AFTER establishing the genre or movement through Historicist inquiry.

One or two perspectives may suggest themselves.

Opportunity for backwards planning, scope & sequence planning.

Genres: a possible unit on Science Fiction

Key Knowledge

- conventions of a movement or genre, including language, settings, narrative structures and characterisation
 - the ways the conventions of a movement or genre contribute to meaning
 - the ideas and concerns embedded in text typical of a movement or genre
 - assumptions and representations in texts typical of a movement or genre
- Settings are temporal as well as physical.
 - If science fiction is often set in the future, what does this convention imply about the present concerns of the authors and audience?
- Ideas and concerns: philosophy of mind, political philosophy.
 - Hero's Journey and moral philosophy.
 - Utopias and cultural pessimism
- Assumptions and representations could include:
 - the potential role of technology in human futures
 - Simplicity of human motivation
 - Continuity of human nature
 - the changeability of human biology
 - The reader's willingness to suspend belief

Activities with extracts and passages

- Blind reading: present extract #1 as the first activity of the unit: how can they tell, with no other information, that it is science fiction?
- Blind reading: use a longer passage as the basis of a close reading, after conventions are learned.
- Jigsaw groups: students work on extracts in moving from station to station, annotating and gradually discovering similarities.
- Give the dates: which one was written when, and how do you know?
- Are all the extracts firmly within the genre? What other genres might they call on?
- Exposure to extracts can help students decide which main text they want to concentrate on and one or more supplementary texts.
- Use the students own bingo cards, tables, dichotomous keys etc with the texts.

Extract #1

Chapter 1 -- Third

"I've watched through his eyes, I've listened through his ears, and tell you he's the one. Or at least as close as we're going to get."

"That's what you said about the brother."

"The brother tested out impossible. For other reasons. Nothing to do with his ability."

"Same with the sister. And there are doubts about him. He's too malleable. Too willing to submerge himself in someone else's will."

"Not if the other person is his enemy."

"So what do we do? Surround him with enemies all the time?"

"If we have to."

"I thought you said you liked this kid."

"If the buggers get him, they'll make me look like his favorite uncle."

"All right. We're saving the world, after all. Take him."

continued . . .

The monitor lady smiled very nicely and tousled his hair and said, "Andrew, I suppose by now you're just absolutely sick of having that horrid monitor. Well, I have good news for you. That monitor is going to come out today. We're going to just take it right out, and it won't hurt a bit."

Ender nodded. It was a lie, of course, that it wouldn't hurt a bit. But since adults always said it when it was going to hurt, he could count on that statement as an accurate prediction of the future. Sometimes lies were more dependable than the truth.

Extract #2

After the glimpse I had had of the Martians emerging from the cylinder in which they had come to the earth from their planet, a kind of fascination paralysed my actions. I remained standing knee-deep in the heather, staring at the mound that hid them. I was a battleground of fear and curiosity.

I did not dare to go back towards the pit, but I felt a passionate longing to peer into it. I began walking, therefore, in a big curve, seeking some point of vantage and continually looking at the sand heaps that hid these new-comers to our earth. Once a leash of thin black whips, like the arms of an octopus, flashed across the sunset and was immediately withdrawn, and afterwards a thin rod rose up, joint by joint, bearing at its apex a circular disk that spun with a wobbling motion. What could be going on there?

Most of the spectators had gathered in one or two groups—one a little crowd towards Woking, the other a knot of people in the direction of Chobham. Evidently they shared my mental conflict. There were few near me. One man I approached—he was, I perceived, a neighbour of mine, though I did not know his name—and accosted. But it was scarcely a time for articulate conversation.

“What ugly brutes!” he said. “Good God! What ugly brutes!” He repeated this over and over again.

Extract #3

“God,” Rick said futilely, and gestured empty-handed. “I want to have an animal; I keep trying to buy one. But on my salary, on what a city employee makes—” If, he thought, I could get lucky in my work again. As I did two years ago when I managed to bag four andys during one month. If I had known then, he thought, that Groucho was going to die . . . but that had been before the tetanus. Before the two-inch piece of broken, hypodermic-like baling wire.

“You could buy a cat,” Barbour offered. “Cats are cheap; look in your Sidney’s catalogue.”

Rick said quietly, “I don’t want a domestic pet. I want what I originally had, a large animal. A sheep, or if I can get the money, a cow or a steer or what you have, a horse.” The bounty from retiring five andys would do it, he realized. A thousand dollars apiece, over and above my salary. Then somewhere I could find, from someone, what I want. Even if the listing in Sidney’s Animal & Fowl is in italics. Five thousand dollars—but, he thought, the five andys first have to make their way to Earth from one of the colony planets; I can’t control that, I can’t make five of them come here, and even if I could, there are other bounty hunters with other police agencies throughout the world. The andys would specifically have to take up residence in Northern California, and the senior bounty hunter in this area, Dave Holden, would have to die or retire.

Extract #4

From this day natural philosophy, and particularly chemistry, in the most comprehensive sense of the term, became nearly my sole occupation. I read with ardour those nworks, so full of genius and discrimination, which modern inquirers have written on these subjects. I attended the lectures and cultivated the acquaintance of the men of science of the university, and I found even in M. Krempe a great deal of sound sense and real information, combined, it is true, with a repulsive physiognomy and manners, but not on that account the less valuable. In M. Waldman I found a true friend. His gentleness was never tinged by dogmatism, and his instructions were given with an air of frankness and good nature that banished every idea of pedantry. In a thousand ways he smoothed for me the path of knowledge and made the most abstruse inquiries clear and facile to my apprehension. My application was at first fluctuating and uncertain; it gained strength as I proceeded and soon became so ardent and eager that the stars often disappeared in the light of morning whilst I was yet engaged in my laboratory.

As I applied so closely, it may be easily conceived that my progress was rapid. My ardour was indeed the astonishment of the students, and my proficiency that of the masters.

Extract #5

With a clamor of bells that set the swallows soaring, the Festival of Summer came to the city Omelas, bright-towered by the sea. The rigging of the boats in harbor sparkled with flags. In the streets between houses with red roofs and painted walls, between old moss-grown gardens and under avenues of trees, past great parks and public buildings, processions moved. Some were decorous: old people in long stiff robes of mauve and grey, grave master workmen, quiet, merry women carrying their babies and chatting as they walked. In other streets the music beat faster, a shimmering of gong and tambourine, and the people went dancing, the procession was a dance. Children dodged in and out, their high calls rising like the swallows' crossing flights, over the music and the singing. All the processions wound towards the north side of the city, where on the great water-meadow called the Green' Fields boys and girls, naked in the bright air, with mudstained feet and ankles and long, lithe arms, exercised their restive horses before the race.

The extracts

- #1 – Card, Orson Scott. *Ender's Game*. 1985.
- #2 – Dick, Philip K. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*. 1968
- #3 – Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. 1818
- #4 – Wells, H. G. *War of the Worlds*. 1897
- #5 – Le Guin, Ursula, *The Ones who Walk Away from Omelas*. 1973

Using perspectives: a Marxist perspective on Science Fiction

Marxist perspective is interested in :

- Why a genre or movement emerges at a particular moment in history.
- Why a genre gains popularity.
- How ideology is treated in text.
- How revolutionary impulses are represented in texts.
- How a genre or text might be recuperated into Capitalism.

Lukasc: *The Historical Novel*

Fredric Jameson: *Archaeologies of the Future*

Mark Fisher: *Capitalist Realism*

Perspectives in Outcome 2

- Provide a summary of the perspective and some supplementary resources.
- Ask: why would this kind of critic be interested in this movement/text?
- Students read extracts of literary criticism.
- Students produce writing applying key ideas and terminology of perspective to a specific text or extract.

Assessment ideas

- Close analysis of a passage, with introduction.
- Group-written/ Crowdsourced introductions.
- Short Science fiction story.
- Adaptations essay.
- Perspective essay
- Science fiction Trilogy/Ten-books series with film franchise: The skeleton/ treatment and one section completed.
- Blind close analysis: student is presented with short extracts of a completely unfamiliar and unattributed text within the genre or movement.
- Oral presentation: film pitch
- Oral presentation: close analysis of a film scene.
- Oral presentation: perspective on a text.
- How-to-write Guide.
- Comprehensive Family Tree/Phylogenetic Tree with commentary
- Creative response in the style of a specific author.

Contact

Dr Annelise Balsamo

English Curriculum Manager

E: Annelise.Balsamo@education.vic.gov.au

T: 9059 5141

M: 0429 924 972