

VCE English and EAL Reading, exploring and responding to text webinar

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AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY



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Currently available

New Study Design

[VCE English and EAL](#)

Accreditation Period
Units 1 and 2
2023–2027
Units 3 and 4
2024–2027

Victorian Certificate of Education
**English and English as an
Additional Language**
Study Design

Currently available

Implementation support

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Introduction to the VCE English and EAL Study Design (English only)

An on-demand video exploring the new VCE English Study Design

VCE English and EAL Study Design

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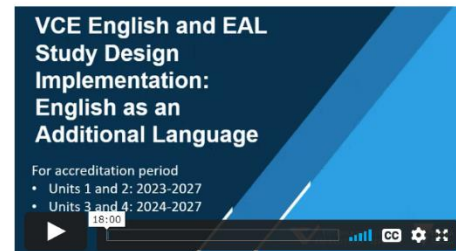


Introduction to the VCE English and EAL Study Design (EAL only)


An on-demand video exploring the new VCE English and English as an Additional Language Study Design

VCE English and EAL Study Design

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Asking Questions

Ask: All Panelists 

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

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Participant 

Structure of Webinar

1. Virginia to present on the English Outcomes for this Area of Study (20-25 minutes)
1. Julia to present on the EAL Outcomes for this Area of Study (20-25 minutes)
1. Responding to questions (10 minutes)

Webinar Objective

To provide practical teacher strategies to support the learning of text structures, language features, vocabulary and ideas in relation to the specific Outcomes for each Unit for this Area of Study.

Some Important Reminders

Students are expected to study **5** texts (EAL students may look at extracts) over the course of Units 1 and 2 **AND** Units 3 and 4.

Texts in Units 3/4 must come from approved VCAA list and be different from texts studied in Units 1/2.

Must include one Australian text.

Only **one** graphic novel OR film.

Opportunity to study a variety of text forms such as **poetry, film, play, novel, short-stories** etc.

Some Important Reminders

You may like to start thinking about your 2023 Year 11 VCE English and EAL student cohorts now and making lists of possible texts which will spark their interests as personal connections to the texts will support their personal responses to the selected texts.

- What are your students' interests?
- Where do your students' come from?
- What texts have they enjoyed / not enjoyed before?
- Topics to avoid? Sensitivities? Perhaps liaise with Year Level Coordinators.
- Involve students in texts selection? Student voice/agency is important

Overview of English Outcomes

	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
Area of Study	Reading and Exploring Texts	Reading and Exploring Texts	Reading and Responding to Texts	Reading and Responding to Texts
Outcome	A personal response to a set text	An analytical response to a set text	An analytical response to text in written form	An analytical response to a set text in written form

Teaching texts. Some notes...

- Many students do not really connect with the text or they lack the confidence to assert fresh or individual interpretations of set texts. Connection is critical.
- Students do not use the text judiciously (preferring ‘the kitchen sink approach’) because they are terrified their knowledge will not be recognised by assessors.
- Students do not address set topics or resolve the topic. They write in response to the topics they wish they’d been given. They are not agile, for example they do not have the capacity to apply what they DO know to the set topics.
- Students often lack understanding of the importance of textual features (for example, with plays or films).
- No particular analytical structure is preferred or stipulated but students ‘cling’ on to scaffolded structures such as TEEL (useful for weaker students).
- There is a lack of awareness that the writer/director has a purpose.

What we all know to do...

Reading and **exploring** texts

- Teaching (and revising) key vocabulary and metalanguage.
- Unpacking essay topics and facilitating appropriate structuring of essays (use of scaffolds to support weaker students e.g. TEEL plus practices such as 'gradual release').
- Crafting effective introductions and effective body paragraphs.
- Editing and re-drafting (including self-evaluation and peer feedback) (PIQs - one positive, one area for improvement, one question to consider for future work).
- The importance of student reflection.
- Writing clearly and accurately (mechanics of language).
- Embedding quotations.
- Encouraging different perspectives (avoiding study guides and rote learning/pre-prepared responses).
- Use of exemplars.

Some alternative suggestions for beginning an exploration of a text

- Facilitate engagement and build connections. Involve students in the *exploration* of texts by inviting them to suggest/discuss short texts to be used in the classroom.
- Use flash fiction, poetry or picture books (all are easily accessible).
- The text types above are useful for engagement with different *text structures and language features* and to share experiences.
- Infer meaning from picture book titles/front covers. *Useful for small group or whole class discussion* and low stakes (also good for differentiation).
- Focus on vocabulary building and familiarity with metalanguage. Encourage use of a notebook or an online record such as a *collaborative* Google document.
- Padlet works nicely and can be useful when used as a pre-reading activity to *explore* prior knowledge of language or to generate pre-reading questions by students.

Further suggestions

- Use student-created posters or vocabulary lists around the room (facilitates multiple exposures).
- Gallery walks. Students have the opportunity to **explore** each other's thoughts and ideas but also to provide 'critical friend' feedback.
- Word clouds and Padlets: useful in **exploring characters, settings, plot, narrative voice (point of view), ideas, concerns and tensions.**
- Students demonstrate knowledge using single words (adjectives and nouns) to create the word clouds. Useful for visual learners.
- All activities above can be completed multiple times across a unit.

Overview of English Outcomes

Unit 1 Outcome 1:

Reading and **exploring** texts

On completion of this unit the student should be able to make personal connections with, **and explore** the vocabulary, text structures, language features and ideas in, a text.

Assessment task: A personal response to a set text

Teaching Strategies

Unit 1 Outcome 1: Assessment task: A personal response to a set text

Formative learning tasks with a focus on creating *personal connections* while *exploring* the text.

- Think/pair/share activities based around text-to-self, text-to-text, text-to-world understandings.
- Reading journals (in a workbook or as a collaborative Google document).
- ‘Hot minute’ writing activity. Useful as a revision activity or a ‘do now’/hook activity at the start of a lesson. Provide students with a thinking question about the text. Students have one minute to write as much as they can on the topic given or question posed.

Teaching Strategies

- Explore texts by writing a letter to a character or writing as a character (perhaps a journal entry), using the key ideas and language features of the original text.
- Students *explore* language by selecting a linguistic feature or key vocabulary choice and use these in their own piece of writing.
- Students write a reflective task on how elements of the text connect to their own world (e.g. speed write: five minutes of non-stop writing about a topic).
- For most writing activities, peer feedback (using the PIQs model) is useful and leads nicely into opportunities for reflection, *editing* and *re-drafting*.

Overview of English Outcomes

Unit 2 Outcome 1: Reading and *exploring* texts

On completion of this unit the student should be able ***to explore and analyse*** how the vocabulary, text structures, language features and ideas in a text construct meaning.

Assessment task: An analytical response to a set text

This task has not changed from the current Study Design.

Teaching Strategies

Activities used in Unit 1, Outcome 1 can also be used here to encourage the connection to and engagement with the text (in order to **understand**, **explore** and **analyse**)

Strategy: shared Google slides presentation for use across a unit of study.

The presentation includes:

- Outline of learning to take place e.g. range of tasks to be undertaken/key skills and knowledge.
- Embedded examples of learning activities and subsequent student work.
- Links to Kahoot or Quizlet (mini lessons on punctuation or vocabulary building).
- Color-coded and annotated essays (including student work, drafted across time).
- Exemplar responses (for students to annotate and improve upon).
- Ongoing feedback for the whole class (added to after each hurdle task has been completed).
- Self reflection/feedback.

Overview of English Outcomes

Unit 3 Outcome 1: Reading and responding to texts

On completion of this unit the student should be able ***to analyse*** ideas, concerns and values presented in a text, informed by the vocabulary, text structures and language features and how they make meaning.

Unit 4 Outcome 1: Reading and responding to texts

On completion of this unit the student should be able ***to analyse explicit and implicit*** ideas, concerns and values presented in a text, informed by the vocabulary, text structures and language features and how they make meaning.

Assessment task for both units: An analytical response to text in written form

Teaching Strategies

Activities used in Units 1 and 2 can also be used here. Building connections with the texts continues to be critical. Students can be encouraged to build connections by:

- Viewing/reading interviews with the authors/directors of the set text (e.g. online) and researching the writer.
- ‘Making of’ material for films.
- Listening to teacher-to-teacher discussion of the text.
- Meeting the authors where possible.
- Using social media platforms e.g. Twitter. Some authors readily reply to student questions.
- Viewing performances of the set text.

Teaching Strategies

Explore and analyse the dynamics of a text, implicit and explicit ideas presented, how historical context, and social and cultural values contribute to meaning and shape readers' understanding, how values are conveyed

- Character ranking (useful for helping students explore, analyse and justify their views on **dynamics** of a text, specifically character motivations. It also encourages discussion and debate of how context and values influence how we respond to characters.

Explore and analyse the impact of vocabulary, text structures and language features and how these shape meaning

- Lift a line activity

Teaching Strategies

- Essay jigsaws. Cut up sample essay introductions into sentences (can also be used for body paragraphs and whole essays).
- Evaluating study guides. What can be endorsed, reconsidered or disputed about what is in a text guide? This challenges student thinking and offers a chance to explore different perspectives.
- Use the previous year's Section A examination topics. Substitute text titles and character names for the title/characters of the text you are using. Students unpack the topics in relation to their set text.

Concluding points

Connection is critical. Connection to texts but also connecting the idea that their learning in Units 1 and 2 are critical stepping stones to success in Units 3 and 4.

- Voice and choice wherever possible. Involve students in the teaching and learning.
- Collaborative documentation and resource creation (within the teaching team and within the classroom).
- Use strategies to facilitate agile learners (for example, ability to respond to any topic).
- Regularly revise/use multiple exposures ('do now' activities such as five-minute quotation or knowledge 'dumps' at the start of each lesson).
- Focus on regular feedback, editing and drafting (self-editing and evaluation, peer editing, critical friend, re-drafting).
- Regularly explore different interpretations and perspectives (class discussion, think/pair/share, Gallery walks).
- Less can be more. Judicious selection and analysis of textual examples is better than writing about everything poorly.
- Do as I do, not as I say. The teacher should participate in every activity asked of students!

Overview of EAL Outcomes

	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
Area of Study	Reading and Exploring Texts	Reading and Exploring Texts	Reading and Responding to Texts	Reading and Responding to Texts
Outcome	<p>A note-form summary of key connections and ideas within a set text</p> <p>or/and</p> <p>A personal response to a set text</p>	<p>A detailed mind map of vocabulary, text structures, language features and ideas from the set text</p> <p>or</p> <p>An analytical response to a set text</p>	<p>An analytical response to text in written form</p> <p>and</p> <p>Comprehension of an audio/audio visual text focused on historical, cultural and/or social values in the set text, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • short-answer responses • note form summaries 	<p>An analytical response to a set text in written form</p>

Suggestions

Start analytical work early in Year 11 to prepare for Units 3/4.

Start listening comprehension work early in Year 11 to prepare for Units 3/4. This should become part of your regular teaching in year 11.

Get students involved - e.g. make a podcast, interview the author, get the author to give a seminar (if possible/viable), listen to interviews with the author, research context.

Set tasks that suit your learners' abilities but also extend/challenge them. You may even need to set both tasks for different students in your classes.

Build their vocabulary/**metalinguage** early.

Unit 1 - Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to make personal connections with, **and identify selected** vocabulary, text structures, language features and ideas in a text.

Tasks: Note form summary **or/and** personal response

Teaching Strategies - Note Form Summary

EAL learners are usually highly visual learners and a note from summary of key **connections and ideas** within a set text is an excellent task for all EAL learners of all abilities.

Students will need **modelling** on texts they are familiar with as well as the necessary **metalanguage for text construction**. Build a metalanguage table with examples → this can be done as a group

Groundwork on the text's thematic ideas as well as characters is essential.

This could be a great **multi-modal task** to engage students' design skills.

Teach students about **sequencing of a text's plot and thematic developments - visually**.

This is **NOT** just a character map! Students will need to go deeper. And write!

Location / Setting	Quotes and Evidence	Analysis
Deane	<p>"She watched as the kite hovered above Deane's Line, a narrow red dirt track skirting the western boundary of the town. The Line ... had been named in honour of the early squatter and land speculator, Eli Deane." (pg. 2)</p> <p>"Deane carried the blood of so many Aboriginal people on his his people it could never be scrubbed away..." (pg. 2)</p>	
Quarrytown	"We've always called it Abo-town because it used to be overrun with Abos." (pg. 97)	
Gatlin		

Device	Definition	Example
Allusion	An allusion is a reference, typically brief, to a person, place, thing, event, or other literary work with which the reader is presumably familiar.	
Archetype	An archetype is a "universal symbol" that brings familiarity and context to a story. It can be a character, a setting, a theme, or an action.	
Colloquialism	Use of casual and informal language in writing, which can also include slang	
Connotation	Connotation refers to a meaning that is implied by a word apart from the thing which it describes explicitly. Words carry cultural and emotional associations or meanings, in addition to their literal meanings or denotations.	
Denotation	A word's denotation is its literal, dictionary definition. Denotation is the objective meaning of a word, with no associated emotion.	
Exposition	Exposition is when the narrative provides background information in order to help the reader understand what's going	

Teaching Strategies - Personal Response

Similar to the English Outcome, this task enables students to make **personal connections** with a text's characters and thematic concerns. Engage with the text personally → how relatable is the text to their world, experiences etc. Therefore, text selection will be important. You will need to bring any text to life **visually**.

For EAL learners, **prompts and possible topics** rather than an open-ended task may be better. Consider what **from** you want your students' responses to be e.g.

A letter

A diary

A personal account

A review

A podcast script

Provide **scaffolds and models** of suggested texts for EAL learners and work backwards.

Dean's Line?



Odette's bathtub?



Unit 2 - Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able **to identify and develop analysis** of how the vocabulary, text structures, language features and ideas in a text construct meaning.

Tasks: mind map or analytical response

Teaching Strategies - Mind Map

Similar to the note-form summary - a great visual task

Students create a mind map of **vocabulary, text structure, language features and ideas** → **metalanguage is important here! Build on the note-form summary.**

What programs / software might they use? Canva? Google Slides? InDesign?
[Mural](#)? [Miro](#)? [MindUp](#)? Try to go beyond a poster.

Weaker EAL students may only manage this task. This might be a better task for a visual text such as a graphic novel, play or a film. Texts such as *Black Diggers*, *7 Stages of Grieving*, *Mabo*, *Persepolis*, *12 Angry Men*, *Ladies in Black* etc. might be suitable here. Or even a collection of poetry?

Teaching Strategies - Analysis Yr 11

If your students are capable, I would encourage them to complete BOTH the mind map and the analysis. Perhaps the former could be a formative task (or a group work task) and the latter the SAT/Outcome.

Analysis has not changed in the new Study Design. Students would likely respond to an analytical prompt, as per current Outcomes and Area of Study 1 as well as Part A of English/EAL examination.

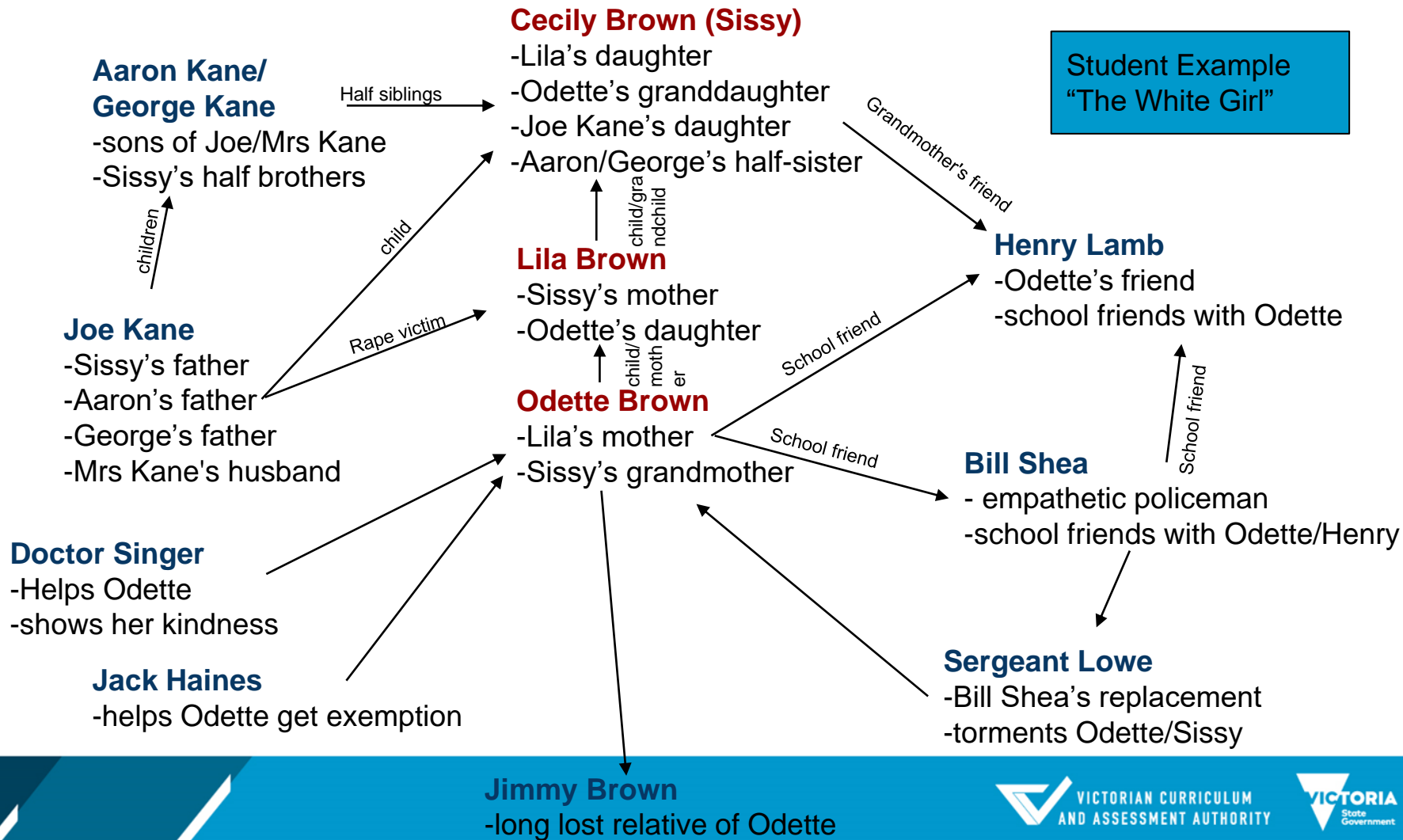
Teaching Strategies - Analysis Yr 11

Year 11 EAL students may need lots of support in completing an analytical text response essay.

Simple preparation tasks can be:

- Start with unpacking essay prompts and looking at a variety of essay questions.
- Make an essay plan on a specific topic.
- Character connections → mind maps.
- Write an introduction to a specific topic - teacher checks then write body paragraphs.
- Get students to write essay questions based on teacher models.
- Unpack a good sample essay - annotate the features of the essay.
- Explicitly teach conjunctions - tell students to use at least 3 per paragraph.
- Build students analytical language skills e.g. analytical verbs, shifting away from phrasal verbs, shifting away from recounting events in texts to analysis.
- Support in integrating evidence/quotes from the text to support their analysis.
- Building quote banks around themes and characters - google docs great for collaboration!
- Divide sections of a text into groups and students give mini analytical presentations to their peers - when kids are doing the thinking, they're doing the learning (a deductive rather than didactic approach is always best)
- Close reading and analysis of key passages - teacher model then students complete → this often supports students' inferential reading strategies.
- Try to move away from chapter questions!

Student Example
"The White Girl"



Character	Key Quotes - describing the character's appearance	Key Quotes - spoken by or about the character by others which revealed their personality	Analysis - how does this quote represent their personality and journey throughout the novel?
Odette Brown			
Sissy (Cecily Anne) Brown			
Lila Brown			
Dr Singer			
Joseph "Jo" Kane (Old Man Kane)	'A strange white man' 'Rubbed his ample belly'	'a failed farmer' 'stubborn Joe Kane' 'increasingly embittered by his failure' 'brooding Joe Kane'	Joe Kane is described in a negative manner in Chapter 1; he is an angry white farmer who has struggled to make a living from the land and takes out his anger and bitterness on anyone he perceives as weak.
Aaron Kane			
George Kane			

Theme	Key Quotes	Analysis - how does this quote represent the development of the theme throughout the novel?
Truth/Lies		
Family		
Place/Country/Land/Home		
Stolen Generations		
Prejudice		
Aboriginal Rights		
Women		

Sample Analysis “The White Girl” and “They Took The Children Away”

Archie Roach’s song “They Took the Children Away”, like “The White Girl” conveys the suffering Aboriginal Australians endured. In a blunt tone, Roach contends that Australia has an unjust history, though the use of a simile. The simile “they fenced us in like sheep”, compares First Nations people to animals and provokes the listener to confront the barbaric treatment Aboriginal Australians faced during this dark chapter of Australia’s past. Similarly, in Tony Birch’s “The White Girl”, Birch uses imagery to illustrate the mistreatment First Nations people experienced when he describes Aaron Kane’s blatant sign of disrespect “[spitting] in the dirt, close to Odette’s muddied boot.” Furthermore, Roach uses malapropism when he switches the pronouns “that” and “this” to create a cohesive rhyming pattern. The cohesive rhyming helps create a meaningful impact on the audience as Roach is then able to state the emotive word “[p]rejudice” (rhyming with this). The noun “prejudice” has negative connotations of discrimination, preconception and disadvantage, evoking feelings of empathy in the listeners. Likewise, Birch conveys a sense of prejudice when Odette worries about her visit to the doctor, scared of his preconceptions. The repetition of the lyric “they took the children away”, reenforces this message in listeners’ minds, urging them to not forget Australia’s tainted history. Both Roach’s enduring song and Birch’s mesmerising novel represent the horrid discrimination Indigenous Australians endured as members of the Stolen Generations.

Unit 3 - Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to **listen to and discuss** ideas, concerns and values presented in a text, informed by selected vocabulary, text structures and language features and how they make meaning.

Tasks: analytical response and listening comprehension

Teaching Strategies - Listening

This should be taught in Units 1/2 as well as 3/4. The main difference here is that the audio texts used are aligned/connected to the text that is being studied for this unit. Some suggestions include:

- Podcasts with authors, filmmakers, poets, directors
- Make your own interview with a colleague who has also read the text
- “The making of” videos and/or recordings
- Videos which examine the text’s historical, cultural and/or social values (this is very text specific)
- Get students to construct their own questions and test each other

Tasks:

- Continuous and cyclical listening comprehension questions and note form summaries e.g. summarise the video/recording/interview; students respond to inferential and literal questions on video/recording (try to balance this)

Unit 4 - Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able **to discuss ideas, concerns and values** presented in a text, informed by selected vocabulary, text structures and language features and how they make meaning.

Task: analytical response

Teaching Strategies - Analysis Yr 12

Similar to year 11, in year 12 it's all about students' **depth of understanding** of the text as well as their capacity to formulate a **reasoned and sustained argument** using the text as evidence. A solid response will also examine the **text's features** - this is especially important for films and plays. Use essay plans and templates to assist students.

Common mistakes:

- Not answering the question and using pre-prepared responses
- Not knowing the text well - a surface level analysis or summary instead of analysis
- Lack of evidence to support analysis
- Inability to integrate evidence as part of analysis
- Lack of fluency of expression and repetitive language (essays are marked holistically; however, fluency and expression matters when it detracts from overall meaning)

Teaching Strategies - Analysis Yr 12

- EAL students need exemplars and models of what constitutes a good essay
- Fast write tasks e.g. write a body paragraph in 12 minutes -> prepare for SACs and examination
- Practice unpacking essay prompts and making essay plans - 3 key ideas
- Practice writing clear and concise topic sentences - a great group activity
- Inferential understanding - model this via close reading tasks and “guided reading” – “ask questions as you read a key passage → this takes preparation but is highly valuable for EAL learners → dig deep into key scenes and passages students can use as anchors for their analytical responses
- Literature circles → go beyond key events see next slides dig deep and ask about narration, structure and literary devices, setting, language, characterisation
- Unpack sample paragraphs and annotate key features e.g. metalanguage, evidence and integrated quotations, explanation of quotes, strong topic sentences - hamburger analogy

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