

VCE English and EAL Study Design: ideas and mentor texts

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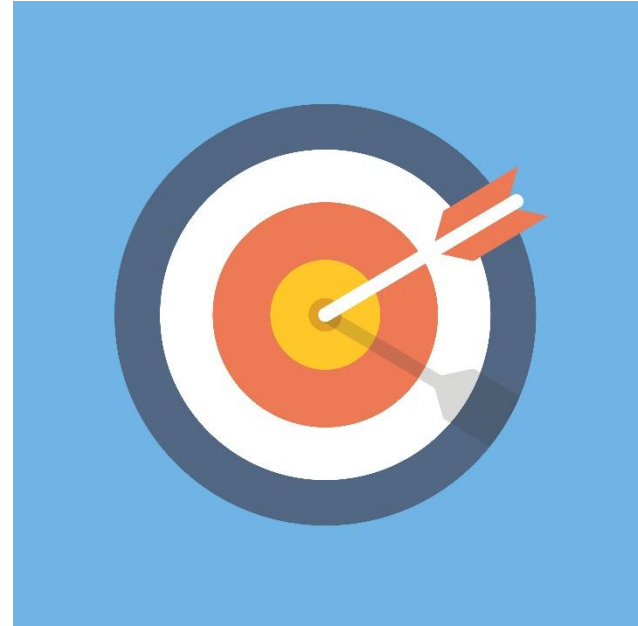


Ideas and mentor texts

Welcome to this presentation

What we will explore

- **Vision**
- **Role**
- **Examples for the classroom**



Vision

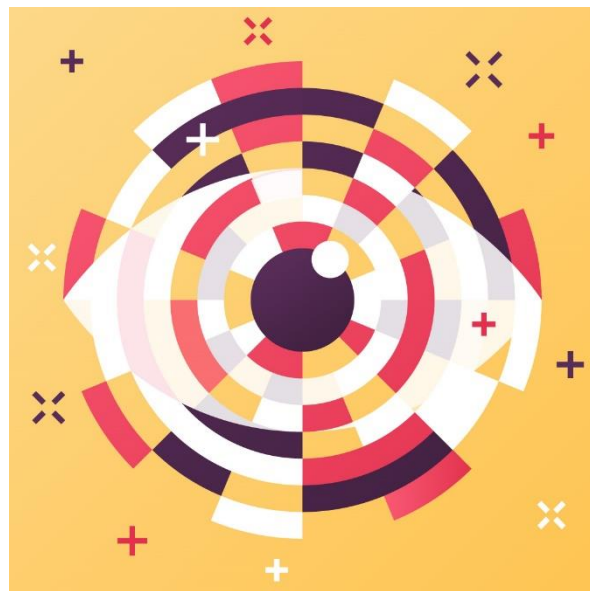
Crafting and Creating texts are designed to:

Shift student perception from writing as a school-based task to a set of skills that can be applied flexibly beyond the classroom

Extend students' engagement with meaningful and purposeful discourse

Equip students to become literate citizens and contribute to their wider society in a respectful and considered manner

Connect students to opportunities for personal expression – in private and public contexts



The role of ideas

Ideas (connected with the Framework of Ideas in Unit 3) play a significant role in the areas of study.

Using an idea will assist in:

Anchoring skills to content; fixing skills to content positively influences both

Developing classroom cohesion

Building personal connections and student voice

Providing a hook for students to extend their own ideas



The role of mentor texts

Mentor texts:

Create opportunities to unpack text structures, language features and vocabulary employed by the author

Offer explorations of the ways textual elements successfully interweave with ideas

Enable students to collaborate with established writers and writing to build understanding and skills

Provide a space for students to consider their writing in a wider context

Can shape students understanding of specific discourse and register

Aid understanding of textual intention and integrity



Choosing ideas



When selecting an idea for Unit 1, consider an idea that:

Opens up and broadens the classroom

Inspires and stimulates discussion

Resonates with students

Is inclusive

Makes connections with students' experiences

Choosing mentor texts



When choosing mentor texts to connect with the selected idea, think about texts that:

Are short and engaging

Represent different forms and purposes

Provide a variety of voices and experiences

Are accessible (multiple entry points for students)

Unit 1 – idea and mentor texts: example 1



Idea: Food

Elaboration: Explorations of how the production, preparation and consumption of food speaks deeply about cultural practice, connections and relationships, and histories.

American writer, MFK Fisher once wrote: 'Like most humans, I am hungry ... our three basic needs, for food and security and love, are so mixed and mingled and entwined that we cannot straightly think of one without the others. So it happens that when I write of hunger, I am really writing about love and the hunger for it...' In her words, food and our relationship with it, tells us much more than just what might be on the dining table.

The absence of food can also be considered, as could the transformation of food – highly processed foods for example, or meat grown in a laboratory.

Examples of mentor texts

Charlotte, 'Life in the bush is great ...',

https://www.abc.net.au/heywire/charlotte_goldfields_wa/13674888 (A)

Nicholas Jordan 'A banquet fit for royalty',

<https://www.sbs.com.au/food/article/2022/04/11/banquet-fit-royalty-how-uyghur-family-break-their-fast>

Elizabeth David, 'Pleasing Cheeses' from *An Omelette and a Glass of Wine*

Nigel Slater, 'Birthday Cake' from *Toast*

MRK Fisher, 'How to Boil Water' from *How to Cook a Wolf*

Michael Pollan, 'Breaking Ground: the call of the wild apple', <https://michaelpollan.com/articles-archive/breaking-ground-the-call-of-the-wild-apple/>

Elizabeth Alexander, 'Butter',

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/52416/butter-56d230df0abef>

Annotated sample

'I saw apples with the hue and heft of olives or cherries, next to glowing yellow Ping-Pong balls and dusky purple berries. I saw a whole assortment of baseballs, oblate and conic, some of them bright as infield grass, others dull as dirt. And I picked big, shiny red fruits that look just like apples, of all things, and seduce you into hazarding a bite.

Hazard is, unfortunately, the word for it: imagine sinking your teeth into a tart potato, or a mushy Brazil nut sheathed in leather ("spitters" is the pomological term of art here), and then tasting one that starts out with high promise on the tongue—now here's an apple!—only to veer off into a bitterness so profound that it makes the stomach rise even in recollection.'

Use of senses (yellow)

Juxtaposition of wonder and revulsion (blue)

Change of pronouns (green)

Unit 1 – idea and mentor texts: example 2



Idea: Future

Elaboration: Explorations of the personal, political, emotion and cultural implications of the concept of the future.

The final part of the human trinity of past, present, future, the future can be a site of optimism, of despair, of possibilities. Not fixed like the past, and not immediate like the present, the future can excite and terrify in equal proportions. Long a place for wild imaginations, the future is also a place for improvement, for renewal and for the end of times. The simple question of ‘what next?’ can be an invitation to consider the future, as can questions like ‘what does the future hold?’ and ‘what can possibly come from this?’.

Examples of mentor texts

Jennifer Mills, extract from *Dyschronia*,

<https://www.killyourdarlings.com.au/podcast/kyd-podcast-where-were-going/> (A)

Science Gallery podcast series, 'Greener on the other side',

<https://anchor.fm/scigallerymel/episodes/DISPOSABLE-Greener-on-the-Other-Side-ee8okm> (A)

Tim Flannery, 'After the Future',

<https://www.quarterlyessay.com.au/essay/2012/11/after-the-future> (A)

BBC, *Forest 404*, episode or extract,

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p06tqsg3>

Amanda Gorman, 'The Hill We Climb',

<https://www.cnbc.com/2021/01/20/amanda-gormans-inaugural-poem-the-hill-we-climb-full-text.html>

Annotated sample

'We get in our cars and go down to the water. We don't know why we go that way, only that everybody else has made the same dreamy decision. We drive slowly, looking from car to car and into mirrors at each other, smiling odd still-waking smiles, trying to keep a calm camaraderie, but soon enough we have to wind up the windows and concentrate. Our children in the backseat still half asleep; the dog's snout pressed urgently against the window we won't open. The land spreads out on either side, flat and sandy and unaltered. The dull hills watchful in the rear-view mirror.'

Green: connection, Yellow: familiar, Blue: strange = effect

Syntax: matched beginnings, either definite article or pronoun. Mix of compound, complex, simple sentence = effect

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Authorised and published by the
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